



THE VILLAGER

The Official Newsletter of the Plasticville Collectors Association

Volume 22

December 2023

Number 3

AUBURN PLASTIC BARN

JOHN NIEHAUS

Brian Nichols, a former PCA member, contacted the PCA with the following question:

Hello, I hope you can help me identify a vintage snap together plastic barn that I picked up at an estate sale. The only marking is "Made in USA". It measures 12" wide by 6" deep by 8" high. It appears that it was manufactured with an open back, like a doll house. It does not look like anything that I have seen made by Plasticville, Marx or Littletown. The cupolas are square and they help lock the 2 halves of the roof together. When you put the 2 halves of the silo together, a rail is formed on one side and you slide the silo into a slot on one of the walls. Thanks, Brian

I was uncertain as to the manufacturer until Brian sent me a couple of photos. I falsely presumed that it was a Marx barn from the photos. I based this on the similarities to the Marx tinplate barns. Doing various keyword searches on eBay failed to produce anything that would support my belief that it was Marx.

During our email conversations, Brian decided to send the barn to me. As he noted it is plastic and a hard plastic similar to our beloved Plasticville pieces. I assembled it and took the two photos that accompany this article. It was again time for me to do a bit more research on eBay. Much to my dismay my search was again fruitless.

Jackpot! I posted the two photos on the Marx Playset Facebook page and almost instantly received a response. The first response was one word AUBURN. Now, at least I had another lead. Back to eBay. A search using the keywords Auburn & barn showed a couple of Auburn

Large Farm Sets. While I was researching I received additional information from the Marx people including some excellent photos.



There seems to have been at least two different sets numbered 553 and 953. Both were called LARGE FARM SET. Interestingly the box top on set 953 states SOFT RUBBER-LIKE VINYL TOYS as well as SOFT SAFE SCRATCH-PROOF. The box top on the 553 states SAFE SANITARY SCRATCHPROOF. Everything but the barn may have been scratchproof as they were, as noted above, made of rubber-like vinyl.

This barn being an Auburn product was a surprise to me as Auburn was better known for its hard rubber toys.



The Villager

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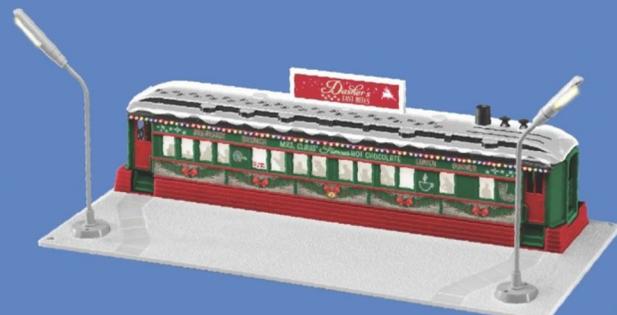
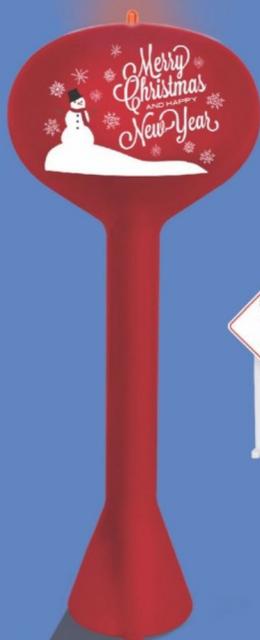
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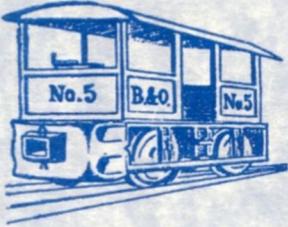
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EDITOR'S COLUMN

It is hard to believe that the holiday season is fast approaching. For me it seems like it was just summer! Due to a last second issue I was forced to skip the York meet this year, I look forward to seeing everyone in the spring for the April meet. Like I had planed for the fall meet I hope that some members will bring their citizens molded in color to trade.

We have a very full issue this time, including part one if a two part feature on Plasticville advertising by Tom Fritsch. At this point I have nearly run out of material for the newsletter so we will need some new submissions for 2024. Please feel free to send in photos and a short write-up of your layout, odd items, or new finds. We could also use regular or semi-regular contributors to report on:

- HO Plasticville
- Littletown & Kleeware
- Kit-bashed Projects

If you would like to contribute please reach out! It can be for one issue, or on a regular basis. You set the timeline and we print what you have when you are ready. I hope to hear from some of you soon!

Matt Harvazinski, *The Villager* Editor
 villagereditor@plasticvilleusa.org

75TH OBSERVATION



Error? The Bachmann website has small inset photos of the new 75th Anniversary buildings. For the hobo shacks it appears that each of the buildings has the bent smoke stack. Typically, like in the artwork, one building has a bent smokestack and one has a straight smokestack. Has anyone received their buildings yet? Is this just an error in the photo or did they not produce the straight smokestack?

Bill Nole PLASTICVILLE for Sale
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Boxed Kits, Complete

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0500 King Apartment House (Brown) \$30	FH-4 Fire Dept W/LIGHT GREY SIREN \$75
0550 King Add A Floor (Brown or Red) \$8 each 3/\$20	1618 TV Station with RARE DOOR Decal 95
1975 Autumn Trees Mint on sprues \$275	1914 School with RARE RED Vane \$95
2413 Poplar Trees (same as 1409) on sprues \$40	PO1 Post Office \$25
2614 Shade Trees MINT \$55	1624 House Under Construction \$30
1987 Barn Scenic Classic \$18 Mint	1804 Greenhouse, \$30
1983 Colonial Mansion Scenic Classic \$20 Mint	1923 Roadside Stand \$20 Mint
1984 Colonial Church Scenic Classic \$25 Mint	1504 Trailer \$30
45985 LCCA Air Admin Bldg Orange/Blue, \$20 Mint	45986 LCCA Hangar, \$20 Mint

No Box Kits, Complete

Railroad Work Car \$10, Suburban Station \$8, Mobile Home (6 different colors) \$12 ea or 6/\$60
Barn \$8, Hobo Shacks \$15, School \$10, Fire Department \$10, Turnpike (green walls) \$15
Diner \$8, Colonial Mansion (red roof) \$15, Colonial Church \$15, King Add A Floor RED or BROWN,
SEALED \$6 each

Accessories

2 Telephone Booths 1 White, 1 Blue \$8, Outhouse (brown) \$4, 2 RED Fire Trucks \$10 per set, Street
Corner signs with original tags 6 for \$8 24 Shrubs 3 each of 8 different colors \$20, Green Bus, Green or
Yellow Ambulance \$5 ea, BBQs 5/\$10

PLASTICVILLE PARTS - \$1.00 ea unless otherwise noted (Reproductions unless noted as original.)

Factory(#1988): original walls, brown platform, Union Station: original walls, roofs, canopies,
platforms, steps, Hobo Shacks: original walls & roof (brown or dark grey), original rear canopy \$5
(brown or dark grey), original Roll Up \$5, original Steps \$5, Railroad work car: original walls & roof,
House Under Construction: shovel, rake, hoe, bucket, Hospital: desk chair, straight chair, 2 Story
House: porch post, Fire Dept: red chimney cap, Police Dept: green chimney cap, Cattle Pen: crossbar,
Turnpike: white lens holder, 2 lenses(Red or Green), Turnpike: white cone 4/\$3, green sign \$3, Post
Office: flag \$5, Frosty Bar: stool \$1, Sign \$5

PLASTICVILLE PARTS - \$1.50 ea (Reproductions unless noted as original.)

Airport: windsock, : CHIMNEY: Log Cabin, Switch Tower, Loading Platform, Watchman's Shanty,
Suburban Station, Cape Cod, Ranch House, Factory: railing Colonial Mansion: half chimney, New
England Ranch: half chimney, ANTENNA: 2 story colonial, New England ranch, Police station, Police
Station: antenna base WEATHERVANE: Barn, School, Independence Hall, Hospital: siren, Fire
Department: siren, Barn caps, Church cross, Split Level downspouts, Watchman Shanty light, Bank:
large or small canopy, House Under Construction: sawhorse (3 pieces)

PLASTICVILLE BUILDING INSERTS \$1.00/SET (Reproductions unless noted as original.)

Corner Store: original Hobby, News, or Sport, Factory: (#1988), original decal, Union Station: original
decal, Motel flowers, Large or Small Gas Station, Large or Small Supermarket, 5 & 10 Store, Hardware
Store, Post Office, Suburban Station: roof signs (2)

Plastic Village Gazette RARE Issue #1, \$2 each, Issues 5 or 6, \$1 each

Dealer inquiries welcome for Plasticville Guides and Plasticville parts listed above.

Shipping: Boxed Plasticville \$7, No Box Plasticville \$5, Parts, \$4

THE MOST WIDELY DISTRIBUTED K-LINE BILLBOARD AND IT WASN'T EVEN MADE BY K-LINE!

DONALD W. HUOVINEN

Although K-Line made over 143 different billboards, the most widely distributed billboard advertising K-Line wasn't even made by K-Line. The July 2001 Classic Toy Trains announced on its cover that the issue included "8 FREE billboards for your layout". Photo 1. The 8 billboards were included in the center for easy removal. The billboards were to be cut out



and placed in billboard frames which the purchaser already had. One of these was an advertisement for K-Line. Stating that "K-LINE Steams into the Future" the billboard pictured the silhouette of their recently announced Pennsylvania B6sb switch engine. Per Roger Carp of Classic Toy Trains the artwork was furnished by K-Line. Photo 2 shows 4 of the billboards included. The billboards were printed on paper that was only 0.008" thick (8 pt.). As such they were pretty flimsy. At some point some entrepreneur cut out a number these billboards and glued them to much thicker stock resulting in a thickness of 0.046", making them far more suitable for use on a layout. These were not one offs as Trainz recently has had a number of them for sale. The author has been unable to determine the source of the

thicker billboards but has confirmed that it was not Classic Toy Trains. Nor were they manufactured by Trainz. Scott Griggs of Trainz said they most likely were included in a collection they purchased.

Photo 3



Per Roger Carp of Classic Toy Trains, the circulation of the magazine in 2001 was approximately 80,000 (55,000 subscribers plus 25,000 single-issue buyers). So the inclusion of the billboard in the magazine obviously dwarfs the production numbers of any billboard K-Line ever made.

But to add insult to injury, as stated previously the billboards were to be cut out and placed in the purchaser's frames. The K-Line billboard was not sized to fit within either of K-Line's two billboard frames. But rather it fits perfectly into the billboard frame of K-Line's biggest rival: Lionel! Oh the irony! Photo 3 shows the billboard in a Lionel frame.

As always I welcome your additions, corrections or comments. This is a work in progress and if you are interested in K-Line buildings and wish to assist please e-mail me at dhuov@aol.com.

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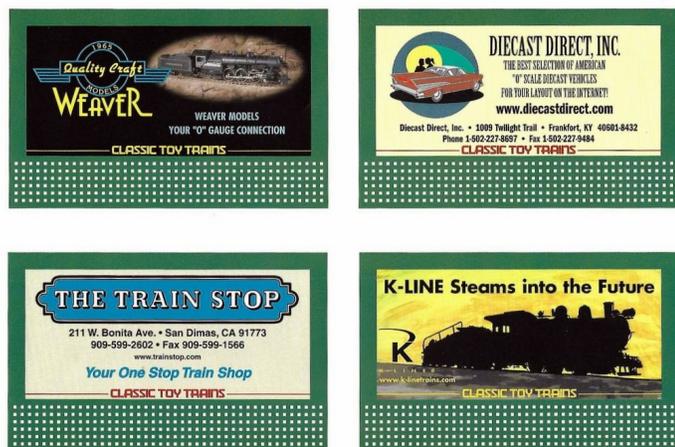


Photo 2

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Charles Siegel is president and buyer for Train City, Inc.

Reprinted from "Plastic Village Gazette" Oct. 2000, Mike Cedro Editor.

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∞ Town Hall ∞

Certainly the most impressive structure ever made by Plasticville or anyone else for O & S scale plastic villages. In 1955 the #PH-1 Plasticville Hall with tan walls and red roof was introduced. Not much later, a red wall and gray roof version came out with "Independence Hall" printed on the front, as well as one that said "Plasticville Hall". Then in 1962 Bachmann decided to package this same building to the HO market (no change in size, just packaged and labeled as HO), and came out with the #2950 with tuscan walls and dark gray roof ("Town Hall" on the front). This same color combination was made again during our country's Bicentennial as the #2921, but this time the lettering was again "Independence Hall". Recently Bachmann has resumed production of this beautiful structure with the #45614 "Town Hall" in a dark maroon with gray roof. On this new one, the ivy-like trim around the clock on the clock tower is painted metallic gold, and all of the windows and trim that was white on the others is cream color.

Current estimated values: Like New/in box Ex+/no box

PH-1,1905	Tan/Red	\$75	\$40
1905	Red/Gray(PV Hall)	\$90	\$50
1776	Red/Gray(Town Hall)	\$90	\$50
2950	Tuscan(Town Hall)	\$90	\$50
2921	Tuscan(Ind.Hall)	\$75	\$40



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K-LINE STREET LIGHTS AND STREET ACCESSORIES



DONALD W. HUOVINEN

The K-Line Street Lights and Street Accessories were most commonly found as components of K-4182 20 Street Lights and 20 Street Accessories, however they were also included as components of other accessories.

The Street Lights are the same as those Marx included in the Airport/Jetport playsets. The streetlights are always silver and are unlit. Photo 1 shows the Street Lights.

The Street Accessories were also made using the Marx molds. The Street Accessories consist of 10 small accessories. The accessories are:

1. Lamp post. The sign on the post reads "ASH"
2. Street sign. The signs on the post read "ELM" and "OAK".
3. Parking meter
4. Police call box
5. Mail box
6. "FIRE ZONE" sign
7. "STOP" sign
8. Trash can
9. Bench
10. Fire hydrant



Photo 1

The Street Accessories were molded most commonly in red, but were also molded in silver and blue. Photo 2 shows the Street Accessories.

As components of K-4182 20 Street Lights and 20 Street Accessories:

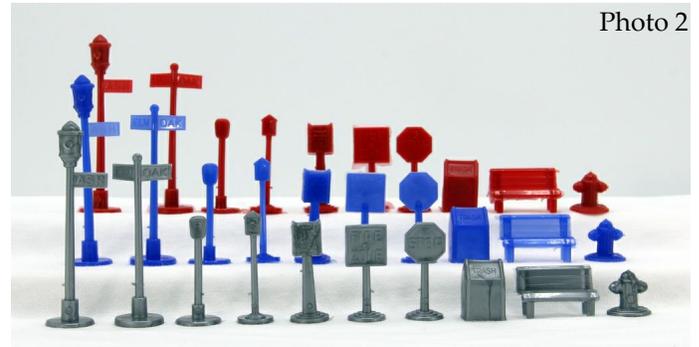


Photo 2

The K-4182 20 Street Lights and 20 Street Accessories is one of K-Line's original accessory offerings, first shown in the 1981 catalog. It was cataloged only a relatively short time, being cataloged only through 1987. Because of the bulk of the items as well as the short time cataloged, the K-4182 is only found in a Type 1 box. The name perfectly describes what was included in the box. As previously noted the 20 Street Lights were always silver. Two identical sets of the Small Accessories were included. They were most commonly red, but can also be found in silver. Photo 3 shows the K-4182 box and components



Photo 3

As components of other accessories:

After a fifteen year hiatus, the Street Lights would return. Two of the Street Lights were included as components of K-407203 Service Station w/figures & accessories. This is one of the Trackside Collection of buildings first cataloged in the 2003 First Edition catalog. It would be cataloged through the 2005 First Edition catalog.

The Street Accessories were always included as components of three K-Line items: the K-4041 Police Station, the K-4091 Firehouse, and the K-4186 Park Assortment. As part of the K-4041 Police Station, the Street Accessories were always red. As part of the K-4091 Firehouse, the Street Accessories were red except for the Firehouse included in the JC Penny K-4000-JCP building set shown in the 1990 JC Penny Christmas catalog. In the latter case the Street Accessories were blue. When included in the K-4186 Park Assortment the Street Accessories were normally red but were sometimes blue.

As always I welcome your additions, corrections or comments. This is a work in progress and if you are interested in K-Line buildings and wish to assist please e-mail me at dhuov@aol.com.

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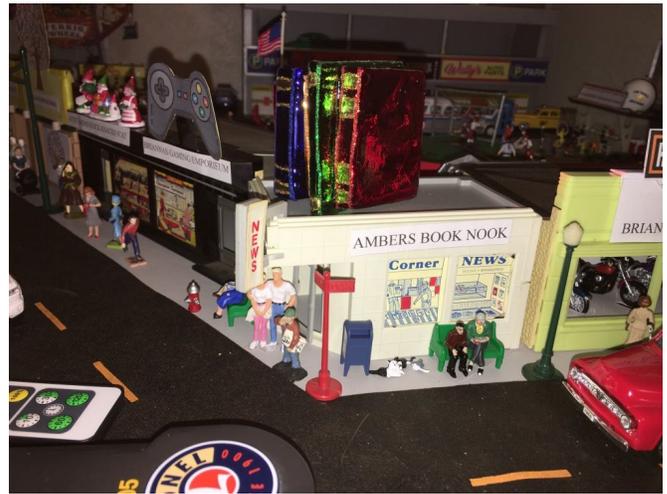
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MAKE IT PERSONAL

JIM BENNETT

Is interest in your Christmas platform waning? Do your guests just give it a cursory glance upon arrival then ask when the ugly sweater contest will start? Has your Plasticville village become shrouded in a cloud of mediocrity? I can emphasize. Nobody was paying much attention to mine either. I'd get a "looking good", or a "fine job" or a "that's so cute" but I wanted more. I wanted applause, fanfare, fireworks, excitement and appreciation for all my hard work. My platform needed that certain je ne sais pas but I didn't know what it was.



Oh the reaction I got the following Christmas! Eyebrows shot up, mouths dropped open, smiles appeared, cell phones clicked out pictures, texts were sent and happy laughter filled the air. There was good natured kidding about who had the best location or the biggest building. It sparked conversation for the rest of the day. They were overjoyed that I included them and their interests on my platform.

Then I read an article in Classic Toy Trains (CTT) magazine about a guy who personalized some of the buildings on his layout with the names of his grandchildren. Bingo! I thought that was a great idea (that's what articles in CTT and this newsletter are supposed to do; give you ideas on how to improve your layout by reading about what others are doing on theirs).

So I sat down and asked myself, what do my loved ones, my children, my relatives and my friends like? What are **THEIR** interests, hobbies, passions, and professions? What are



THEY into? Once I had those answers I proceeded to assign them each their own building based on their interests. I printed out signs and bought inexpensive nick knacks to adorn them with. Nothing fancy or museum quality, I just kept it simple.



So go ahead and ask yourself what your families' interests are and include them of your next layout. The time and effort you spend on it will be rewarded...with interest.



PLASTICVILLE CROSSWORD

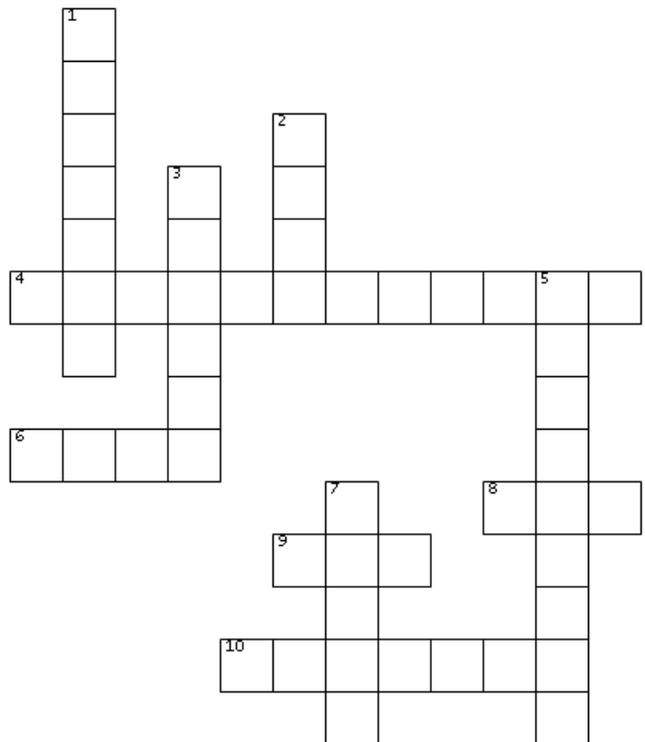
ACROSS

- 4. Some versions of the Plasticville hall were labeled this instead
- 6. A bus or ambulance in this color is special
- 8. This color BBQ can be found in the Make'N'Play
- 9. This building came in small and large varieties
- 10. This house can be found in Aqua

DOWN

- 1. This platform was originally a Littletown structure
- 2. This house is sometimes found under construction
- 3. This is the highest mold number found on the bottom of a car
- 5. A new 75th-anniversary building in O and HO
- 7. This style of barn was reproduced by the PCA

Answers on Page 14



THE HUNT FOR VARIATIONS VI: RED NEW ENGLAND RANCHER

MATTHEW HARVAZINSKI

One of the most difficult to find Plasticville buildings is the red roofed New England ranch house. This kit was found in box 1701 which should be stamped "BROWN" for the window color. The house is a



tan ranch house and the windows and doors are brown. What makes this house unique is the very bright and distinct red roof. The tan sides and brown trim can be found on other houses with either brown or reddish-brown roofs.

This is by far the hardest house to find and is significantly harder to find than the dark blue or aqua Bermuda Ranch house or the charcoal roof 2-story colonial. If you are looking to add this kit to your collection it may take a while! This set is rarely found for sale on-line or at train shows. At the time of writing there were no houses for sale on eBay and no recent sales. I can recall only two or three houses for sale in the last several years.



This house is prominently featured on the cover of Bill Nole's purple guide book, "Classic Guide to Vintage "O" Plasticville". It is the rarest item on the cover excluding the black green house which is a one-of-a-kind item and the dark grey windmill of which only a few examples are known to exist.



The house should have a tan weathervane but it was omitted from the photos because it is fragile. The example on display has the curtains stickers applied to the windows. These could be found in some sets and were an adhesive set of stickers that could be applied to each window to give the appearance of curtains. The entire surface is sticky so they commonly collect dust and dirt. They usually detract from the building because of age.

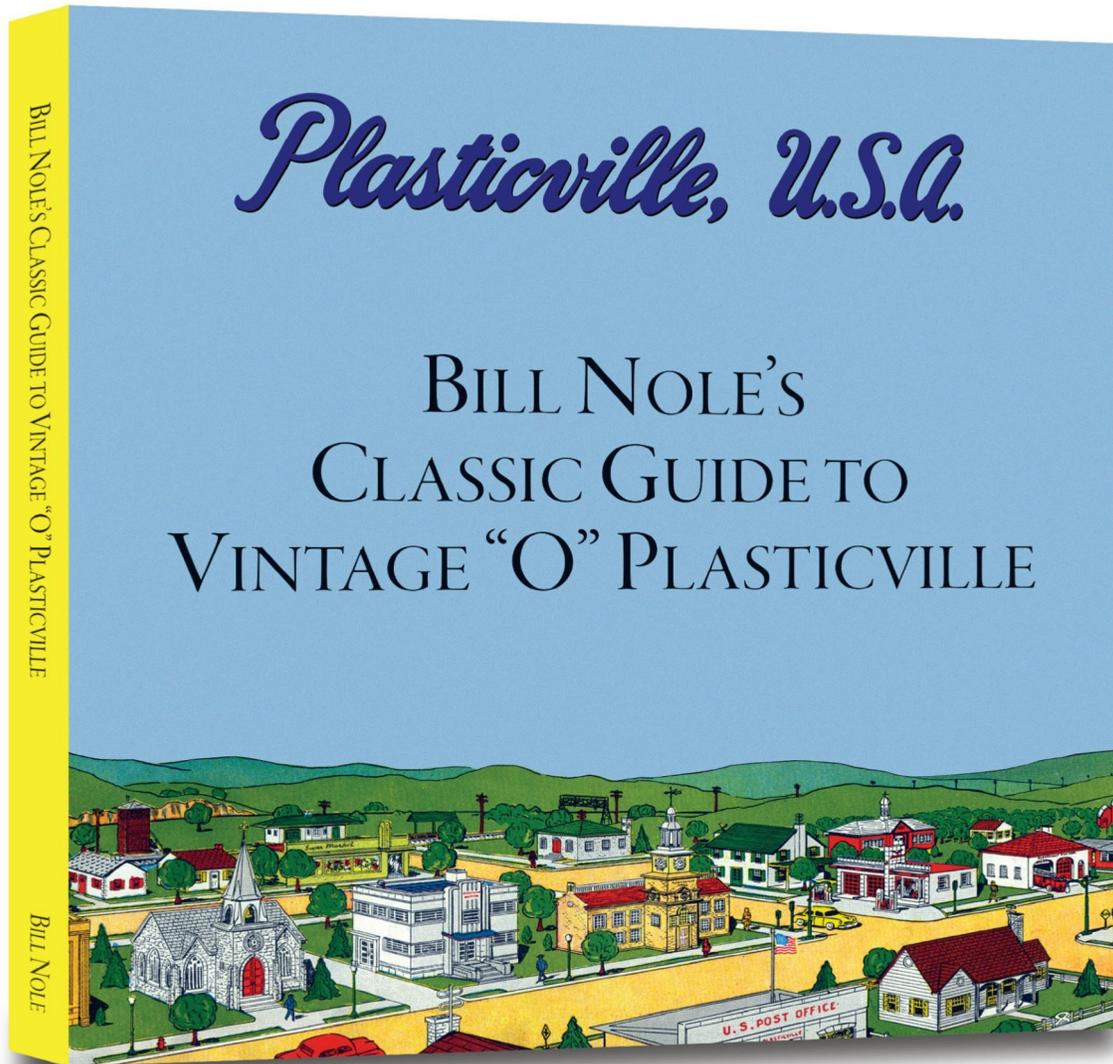


While typically found in the 1701 box there have been reports of this house turning up in the Polybag numbered 5701. That would be an exciting find! If you are unfamiliar with the 57xx series of Polybag's look at the article in *The Villager*, volume 19 number 3.

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MYSTERY TELEPHONE BOOTH

JOHN NIEHAUS

The telephone booth in photo 1 was sent to me by an eBay seller friend. He wanted to know if I could identify where it was used and who may have made it. I contacted him and told him that I was going to have to do some research – which led nowhere. I am now asking you, the readers of this article. if you can help me identify who made it and how it was used.

The unit is slightly under 1 3/4 inches tall or about 6 feet 9 inches tall in 1/48 scale. This makes it quite close in height to the Plasticville telephone booth. The orange base and roof are 7/8 inches square. The base is not a full piece as is the roof but more like a footing on the three sides without the door as can be seen in photo 2.

The word TELEPHONE is in white dropout letters on a blue over red banner on the edge of the roof on the left side of the piece, photo 3 The door has a small tab protruding horizontally from its lower right hand corner, across from the hinge, photo 4. There is a round tapered pin on the interior of the door on the hinge side. See photo 2.

It is my guess that this piece was part of an animated toy. It looks “Fisher Pricey” but research has found nothing to verify that. Any help in identifying it will be appreciated.



CROSSWORD ANSWERS

Across:

4 - Independence

6 - Blue

8 - Red

9 - Gas

10 - Bermuda

Down:

1 - Loading

2 - Cape

3 - Twelve

5 - Cathedral

7 - Dairy

Your Ad Here

Contact: secretary@plasticvilleusa.org

PLASTICVILLE MAGAZINE ADVERTISING - PART I

TOM FRITSCH

In addition to actually collecting Plasticville O kits, I have been collecting vintage magazine ads for Plasticville. I have these displayed on the walls of my train room. I currently have 18 different ads, but continue to look for more. This article details the ads that I currently have.

The first known advertising for "Plasticville" appeared in the November 23, 1946 issue of *Saturday Evening Post* (Figure 1) magazine as a part of an ad for Monsanto Chemicals and Plastics. It states that "Santa Claus is going to town with Lustron." And that Old Santa's bag is bulging with \$200 million worth of toys molded of Lustron plastic. Products from twelve toy companies are pictured in their ad accompanied by Santa. Item 3 lists "Bachman [sic] Bros., Philadelphia, Pa. (fence)." In the illustration is the Picket Fence, which went into production on May 17, 1946. This was three years before Bachmann adopted the "Plasticville" name. The Picket Fence was designed to be displayed around a Christmas tree, rather than for a train layout. Note that Item 4 is a Lionel train running next to the Picket Fence.

Figure 1

Santa Claus is going to town with Lustron

Old Santa knows his stuff, all right! The brightest, the kindest, the most eye-riveting presents in his bagging \$200,000,000 bag this year are going to be molded of beautiful Lustron plastic.

Santa knows he can get faithful models of jugs, railroad coaches, planes... down to the last rivet head... faster and more economically with Lustron, than with any other material. He knows he can get more wonderful colors in Lustron, too... colors that won't come off. He knows his dolls and blocks and toys are all more attractive, smoother, lighter, stronger, and more sanitary when he molds them of Lustron.

Yes, Santa's right... and what thrills young hearts will appeal to millions of others who are going to receive beautiful Lustron presents... the plastic with the Christmas joy molded in.

MONSANTO CHEMICAL COMPANY, St. Louis 4
 (Lustron is a registered trademark of Monsanto Chemical Company, St. Louis, Mo.)

What is YOUR problem?
 Making the most better toys is only one small part when Monsanto Chemistry is manufacturing your "mold to better living." If you have a product problem in your laboratory, no matter what that is, why not see if Monsanto Chem's the answer among the hundreds of materials and formulas... all in an all-around experiment? Your dealer will receive prompt attention.

MONSANTO CHEMICALS - PLASTICS
 LUSTRON PLASTIC - WHICH MEANS SAFETY

- 1. Diverse Co., Portland, O., N. E. (Lustron toy assortment)
- 2. Bachman Bros., Inc., Philadelphia, Pa. (Lustron toys, including No. 4)
- 3. J. Donald Brown, molded by Plasticville Moulding Co., Philadelphia, Pa. (Lustron, No. 1)
- 4. Kalamazoo Plastic, Kalamazoo, Mich. (Lustron, clock, train, etc.)
- 5. Plastic Art Toy Corp., Buffalo, N. Y. (Lustron, No. 1)
- 6. Lustron Co., St. Louis, Mo. (Lustron, No. 1)
- 7. Lustron Co., St. Louis, Mo. (Lustron, No. 1)
- 8. Lustron Co., St. Louis, Mo. (Lustron, No. 1)
- 9. Lustron Co., St. Louis, Mo. (Lustron, No. 1)
- 10. Lustron Co., St. Louis, Mo. (Lustron, No. 1)
- 11. Lustron Co., St. Louis, Mo. (Lustron, No. 1)
- 12. Lustron Co., St. Louis, Mo. (Lustron, No. 1)

The next ad in my collection appeared in *Model Railroader*, December 1949. The ad is sponsored by National Model Distributors of Chicago featuring "PLASTIC ACCESSORIES FOR YOUR 'O' OR 'S' RAILROAD LAYOUTS." It says that "Two Fine Assortments Give Variety and Realism." It showed Bachmann's Railroad Assortment and Community Assortment. No mention is made in the ad of Plasticville or even Bachmann, although the illustration of the Railroad Assortment shows the RA-5 Miniature Railroad Accessories box with "Plasticville U.S.A." clearly visible.

PLASTIC ACCESSORIES FOR "O" OR "S" RAILROAD LAYOUTS

THEY'RE TOYS AND YOU CAN GET THEM FROM NATIONAL

Two Fine Assortments Give Variety and Realism

Mr. Dealer: Give your customers the famous Plasticville accessories in these new assortments. Everybody likes them and the big extra value saves them money. Also individual items - 5, 10 and 25 cents each, list.

RAILROAD ASSORTMENT
 Contains 8 telephone poles with cross arms, 2 billboards, 2 working crossing gates, 1 evergreen tree, 3 street lights. All units complete in smooth, molded plastic. Colorful package.
 Retail \$1.00

COMMUNITY ASSORTMENT
 Gleaming, perfectly molded plastic. 4 houses, white with red, blue, green, brown trim and roofs, church with steeple, two-tone, 1 maple tree, 12 pieces rail fence and gate. Buildings go together in a few seconds. Packed in heavy, colorful, set-up box.
 Retail \$4.50

We Sell to Dealers Only. Railroaders, Please See Your National Dealer. Dealers, Write for Hobbycraft and Railroad Check List and Special Catalogs.

NATIONAL MODEL DISTRIBUTORS
 2512 NORTH GREENVIEW AVENUE, CHICAGO 14, ILLINOIS

72

Figure 2

In the early 1950s, the F. W. Woolworth Company, seeing the possibilities of the Plasticville, U.S.A. concept, put the Bachmann Brothers' product in all of their stores. This gave it the sales push that was needed. A Woolworth ad in *Better Homes & Gardens*, November 1951, (FIGURE 3) states "a grand place for the family to play ... WOOLWORTH'S toy village . . . PLASTICVILLE U.S.A." A winter scene is illustrated highlighting twelve Plasticville kits. The side-

The Villager is looking for new contributors. Contact the editor to find out how to participate and share your knowledge.

a grand place for the family to play...

WOOLWORTH'S toy village..

COMPLETE to street lamps that glow in the dark! That's Woolworth's colorful toy village—Plasticville, U.S.A. Youngsters will spend countless hours of creative, educational play with it. Mom will use it for an unusual table or mantel decoration. Dad will want to help Junior wind his railroad tracks through farm, town and village. Best of all, Woolworth's plastic village is a growing toy. You can start with a few pieces, add more whenever you like—until your village is complete. See Plasticville, U.S.A. at your nearest Woolworth's now. Enjoy a new kind of family fun this Christmas!

SHOP WOOLWORTH'S FIRST... FOR EVERYTHING IN TOYS

F. W. WOOLWORTH CO.

Figure 3

bar says "EVERYTHING FROM A STREET SIGN TO A COMPLETE SHOPPING CENTER." Then a list of the twelve kits with their prices, followed by a list of accessories and finally, a list of packaged sets.

Woolworth's again advertised in *Better Homes & Gardens* in November 1952, (FIGURE 4). This ad states "More fun every Christmas with WOOLWORTH'S wonderful toy village." This seems to imply that this is exclusively a Woolworth product. The illustration is a diorama of thirteen Plasticville kits available at that time with a large "billboard" proclaiming "PLASTICVILLE U.S.A." Note that the hangar contains a non-Plasticville plane even though the Plasticville planes were issued at the same time as the hangar. Under the illustration is the proclamation "The toy that 'grows' year after year. Plasticville, U.S.A.! Your family's own fast-growing community. Exciting new buildings have been added to the already large collection of excellent reproductions. Made of finest plastic with amazing details – movable doors, bells, radio antennae, many other realistic features. Easy to assemble! Choose individual pieces or sets at Woolworth's!" It then goes on

to detail each of the illustrated items along with their pricing. Six other unillustrated items are then listed.

Also in 1952, Woolworth's released their annual Christmas Book. Page 29 was dedicated to Plasticville (FIGURE 5). It proclaims "PLASTICVILLE U.S.A. WOOLWORTH'S wonderful toy village. Start your set this year – add to it every Christmas." Illustrations of fourteen kits are included (including the hangar with the non-Plasticville plane) along with their prices.

Plasticville was advertised in *Model Railroader* in October 1953 (FIGURE 6). Along with a soaring plane, the illustration states "FAST MOVING" and "Plasticville U.S.A. THE TOWN THAT GROWS AND GROWS." This ad mentions the availability of both "O" and "HO" gauge structures. The illustration appears to be an actual photograph of Plasticville structures laid out like a village.

In November 1953 another Woolworth ad for Plasticville appeared in *Woman's Home Companion* magazine (FIGURE 7). My first reaction was, why are they advertising Plasticville in a woman's magazine? Then I concluded that mom would see this and find the perfect Christmas gift for

Figure 4

More fun every Christmas with **WOOLWORTH'S** wonderful toy village



The toy that "grows" year after year

Plasticville, U.S.A.! Your family's own fast-growing community. Exciting new buildings have been added to the already large collection of excellent reproductions. Made of finest plastic with amazing details—movable doors, bells, radio antennae, many other realistic features. Easy to assemble! Choose individual pieces or sets at Woolworth's!

- (A) Railroad Station has rustic platform with ramps, green roof and doors, white sides. **1.19**
- (B) Freight Station to complete railroad depot. **59c**
- (C) Fire House, overhead hanging doors for engine to enter. Red roof and doors, white sides. **98c**
- (D) Cape Cod House, shingled roof, stucco walls. Red, green, blue, white, yellow combinations. **89c**
- (E) Church with gray windows, gray roof, white walls. White belfry has metal bell, cross. **98c**
- (F) Log Cabin with 6 sections of brown rustic fence and gate, 1 evergreen tree. Like real! **89c**
- (G) Barn Yard Animals all made to scale. Plain and painted assortment of farm animals. **18-pc. set 98c**
- (H) School has tower and weather vane on top. Glow-lights on each side of door. **1.29**
- (I) Diner with red or yellow roof, gray sides, red or yellow doors, window blinds. Looks real! **89c**
- (J) Filling Station with gas pumps, oil can racks. Red service doors and roof, white sides. **98c**

- (K) Police Station has radio antenna on roof, door lights glow. Green roof, gray sides. **98c**
- (L) Barn has detachable silo. Red sides and doors, white roof or vice versa. Clever details. **98c**

- Unillustrated:*
- Pond with Bridge **59c**
 - Outhouse **19c**
 - Ranch House **1.19**
 - Super Market **89c**
 - Gate & Fence Sections, Assorted Trees, 5, 10c ea.
 - Street, Yard and Rail Accessories, **set 98c**

This merchandise may be purchased on Woolworth's convenient Lay-away Plan. Ask for details at any of our stores.

F. W. WOOLWORTH CO.

29

GOSH, YOU CAN HAVE A WHOLE CITY!

WOOLWORTH'S HAS THEM ALL!

PLASTICVILLE U.S.A.

WOOLWORTH'S wonderful toy village

Start your set this year -- add to it every Christmas

Exciting new buildings and accessories make the 1952 Plasticville toy village more fun than ever. Start a set under this year's Christmas tree...add to it every year. Realistic plastic buildings are easy to assemble... can be used either outdoors or in.

Freight Station . . . 59¢
 Railroad Station . . . 1.19
 Cape Cod House 89¢
 Church 98¢
 School 1.29
 Diner . . . 89¢
 Fire House 98¢
 Police Station 98¢
 Barn . . . 98¢
 Airport Hangar 1.49
 Street and Yard Accessories 5¢ and 10¢ each
 Barn Yard Animal Set (18 pieces) . . . 98¢
 Set of 12 Road Signs 49¢

GOLLY! THEY LOOK SO REAL WE COULD MOVE RIGHT IN!

Made by BACHMAN BROTHERS, INC. F. W. WOOLWORTH CO.

Figure 5

her son. The ad states "Heart-warming as Christmas in a friendly little town ... Fun for all the family ... all year! At WOOLWORTH'S" A snowy village of Plasticville is depicted followed by a description of eleven kits with their prices. Not every item in the village illustration is included in the list. "Why not start your Plasticville now, at Woolworth's ... and collect a complete community in time to help you celebrate an oldtime, heartwarming Christmas!"

My collection includes a second undated Woolworth's Christmas Book page (FIGURE 8). This is most likely from 1953 since the hospital is included in the listing (the year it was issued). This one proclaims "Build your own CHRISTMAS TOWN ... with PLASTICVILLE Toys!" In this ad, Woolworth's does not proclaim the village as their own. The same eleven kits described in the previously-mentioned *Woman's Home Companion* ad are illustrated along with their pricing. "Made by BACHMANN BROS., INC." is acknowledged at the bottom.

Figure 7 is on page 17.

This is part I of a two part series. Part II will pick up in the next issue which will include ads from Boy Scouts of America's *Boys Life* and 1959 and onward.

Figure 6

FAST MOVING

Plasticville, U.S.A.

THE TOWN THAT GROWS AND GROWS

FIRST

... IN DESIGN
 ... IN PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE
 ... IN CONSTRUCTION
 ... IN PRESENTING NEW ITEMS TO THE TRADE

Stock up with the fast moving items of Plasticville, U.S.A. and watch your sales soar higher and higher. Bachmann again leads the miniature village field by presenting to the trade nineteen new styles and assortments of Plasticville, U.S.A. in "O" and "HO" gauge adding realism and color to any size village or "Pike". Prepare to meet the overwhelming demand for Plasticville, U.S.A., the town that grows and grows.

The beautifully designed items of Plasticville, U.S.A. are made so that even a child can assemble them, yet with an exactness that will please the most critical hobbyist.

THE LEADER—DO NOT ACCEPT A SUBSTITUTE

Plasticville, U.S.A. is sold as individual items, and in units of several items selected to make a specific part of a village, as well as the Master Unit which is actually a "city in a box".

Write for the "O" and "HO" catalogs showing the complete line in color.

120th ANNIVERSARY
 Manufactured by
BACHMANN BROS. Inc. Established 1833
 PHILADELPHIA 24, U.S.A.

October 1953 59

82

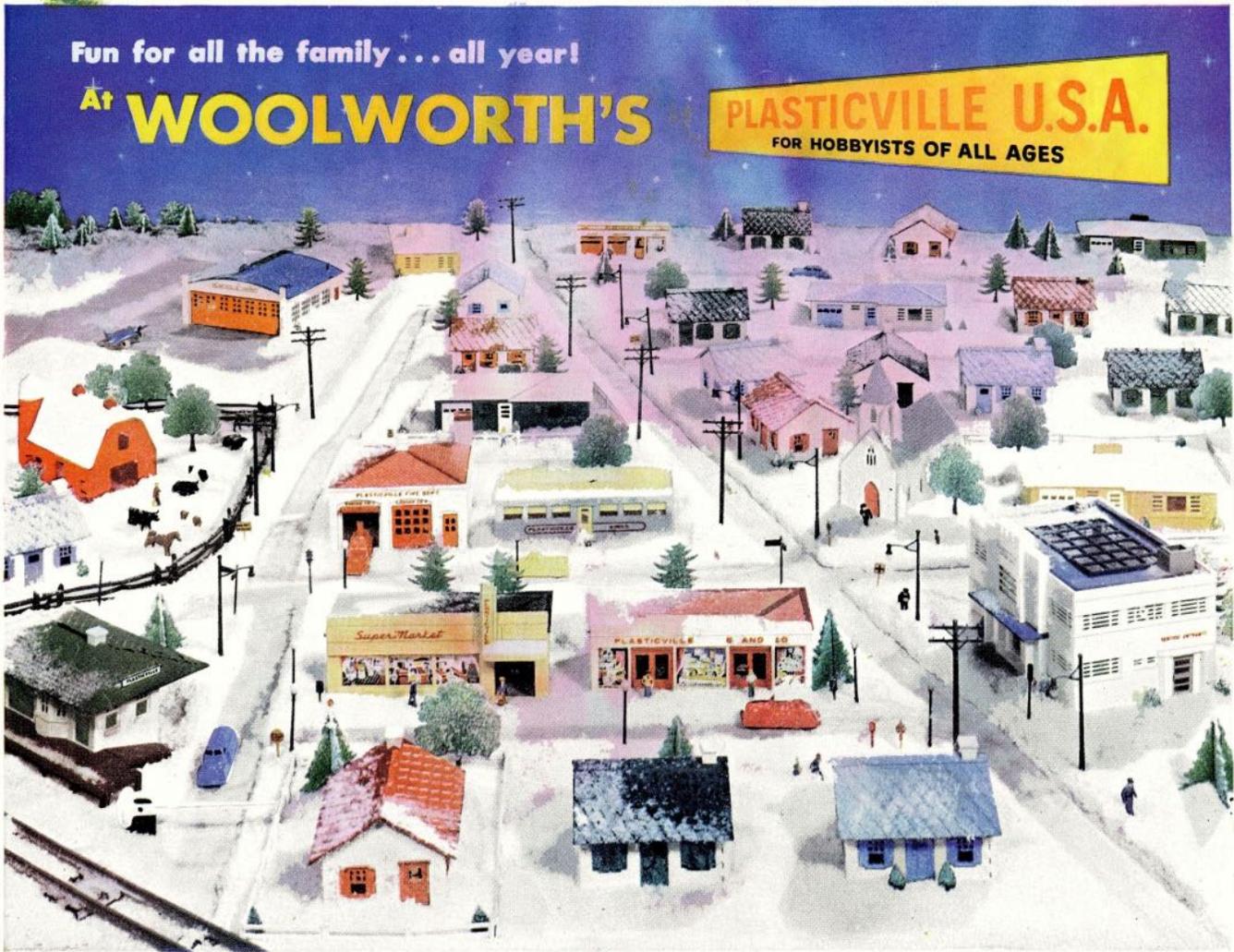
Build your own CHRISTMAS TOWN ... with PLASTICVILLE Toys!

Perfect for under Christmas tree, and with toy trains! In kits ... easy and fun to put together. Plastic ... easy to clean ... and strong. You can get new buildings throughout the year ... at Woolworth's!

<p>CHURCH with colored windows, 9" high. 98¢</p>	<p>HOSPITAL has 7 doors that open, 9 1/4" long. KIT, 1.98</p>	<p>5¢ AND 10¢ STORE with display windows, 9 1/4" long. KIT, 98¢</p>
<p>with everything for painting them. SET, 98¢ 16 PEOPLE</p>	<p>SUPER MARKET with grocery windows, crystal-clear doors, 9 1/4" long. KIT, 98¢</p>	<p>BARN with detachable silo that's 9" high. KIT, 98¢</p>
<p>CAPE COD HOUSE with "stucco" walls...red, green or blue trim. 5 1/4" wide. KIT, 79¢</p>	<p>18 PIGS, HORSES, COWS, SHEEP SET, 98¢</p>	<p>FIREHOUSE with two overhead doors, 6 3/4" wide. KIT, 98¢</p>
<p>RAILROAD STATION with two ramps. KIT, 98¢</p>	<p>AIRPORT HANGAR has large overhead door you can open, 6 1/4" wide. KIT, 1.29</p>	<p>AND MANY OTHERS! START A COLLECTION... WATCH YOUR TOWN GROW!</p>

Made by BACHMANN BROS., INC.

Heart-warming as Christmas in a friendly little town...



Fun for all the family... all year!

At **WOOLWORTH'S**

PLASTICVILLE U.S.A.
FOR HOBBYISTS OF ALL AGES

Have you ever been a part of Christmas in a little village, or in the country? Have you ever carolled in front of a huge, light-trimmed evergreen... the stars sparkling merrily... the air reddening your nose and cheeks? *That's* the friendly, joyous feeling you bring into your home with Plasticville, as you arrange each unit. Imagine the fun of starting with just a few buildings... and adding to them throughout the year, to make your village *grow*. Why not start your Plasticville now, at *Woolworth's*... and collect a complete community in time to help you celebrate an oldtime, heartwarming Christmas!



To go under Christmas tree, or on mantel. Colorful background for cards, gifts.



Your youngster will pretend he's Mayor of Plasticville. For play room, yard.



Model railroaders! Everything scaled to "O" gauge model railroads. Pre-fabricated, easy to assemble, no glue.

Made by BACHMANN BROS., INC. Famous for fine products for 120 years.

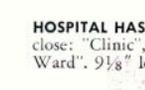


5¢ AND 10¢ STORE windows with drawings of clothing, dishes, etc. 9 1/4" long. Kit, 98¢

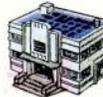
CHURCH has "stained glass" windows... thanks to the window-backing of colorful paper. 9" high. Kit, 98¢



SUPER MARKET shows customers making purchases... on cardboard drawings in window. Crystal-clear doors. 9 1/4" long. Kit, 98¢



HOSPITAL HAS 7 DOORS that open, close: "Clinic", "Service", "Accident Ward". 9 1/8" long. Kit, 1.98



RAILROAD STATION has two baggage ramps... plus ticket office, waiting room. 11" long. Kit, 98¢

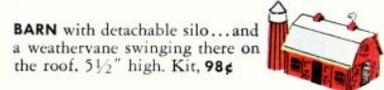


CAPE COD HOUSE is complete with "stucco" walls, "shingled" roof, "shuttered" windows. 5 3/4" wide. Kit, 79¢

16 CITIZENS of Plasticville... men, women, children... and everything to paint them. Set, 98¢



AIRPORT HANGAR has big door that swings overhead to let any planes in. 8 3/4" wide. Kit, 1.29



BARN with detachable silo... and a weathervane swinging there on the roof. 5 1/2" high. Kit, 98¢

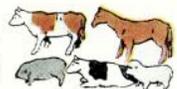


FIRE HOUSE has two overhead doors to let any fire engines rush in and out. 6 3/4" wide. Kit, 98¢

At your nearest Woolworth Store

F. W. WOOLWORTH CO.

18 FARM ANIMALS... cows, horses, pigs, sheep... in barnyard set. Set, 98¢



THE YORK REPORT

DONALD W. HUOVINEN

This fall's York meet was terrific. The threatened rain never really arrived which made for a pleasant meet. The PCA meeting was held on Friday with a reasonable attendance. Several items were discussed and three folks brought something to share.

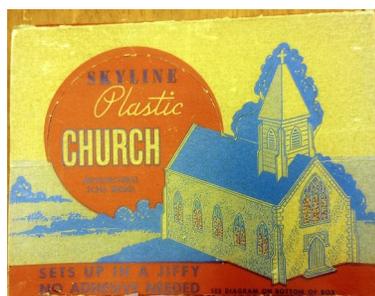
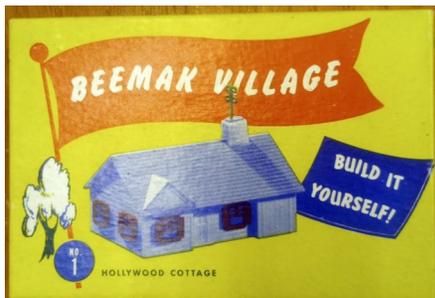
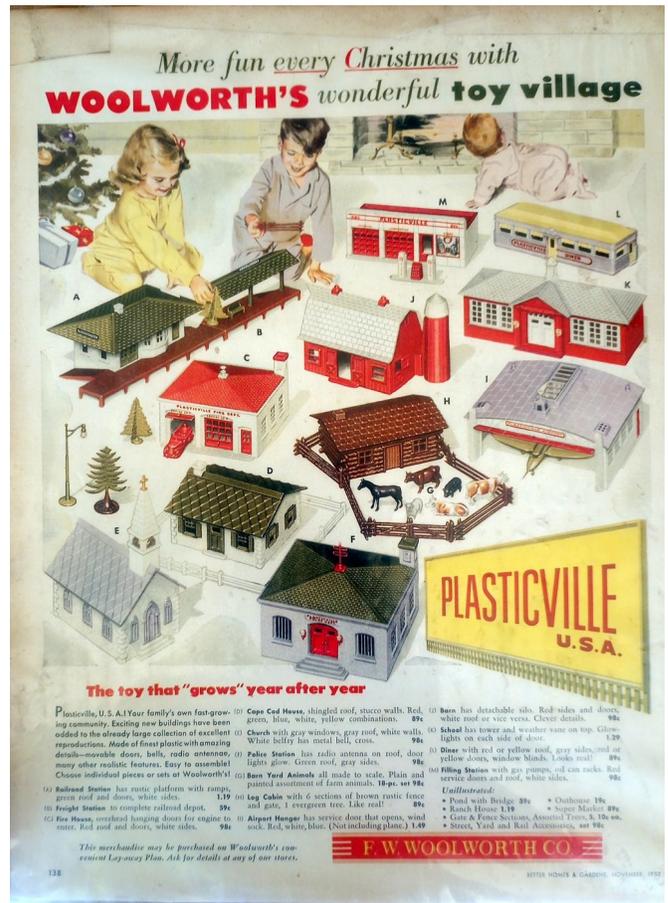
The subject of Plasticville's 75th Anniversary Buildings came up. No one has seen them, allegedly they are "on the water". However the writer noticed that one of the vendors accepting pre-orders is now having a "Backorder Sale", which ends on October 31st, so it doesn't sound good.

Glenn Bowman's Plasticville For Newbies website has been taken down. Apparently Glenn did this when he got out of the business of selling Plasticville. There was a lot of good information on his website and there was interest expressed in getting his information out there on another website.

Tony Santay brought a complete collection of Plasticville's O Gauge catalogs. It was pointed out that Bob Osterhoff has a DVD available (for \$18.00 plus \$3.95 shipping) which covers Plasticville's catalogs from 1950 to 1967 and includes additional information as well. But there is nothing like seeing the real thing.

Jim Farace brought a Beemak Hollywood Cottage, unassembled and in the box. As well as a Skyline K-5 Church, unassembled and in the box. Both items are of interest as they were absorbed into Plasticville's line.

Don Huovinen brought an advertisement from the November 1952 issue of Better Homes and Gardens. It was a full page ad from Woolworth's that featured Plasticville exclusively. It is interesting to note that ad implored the customer to make a "wonderful toy village" and that there is no mention at all of toy trains.

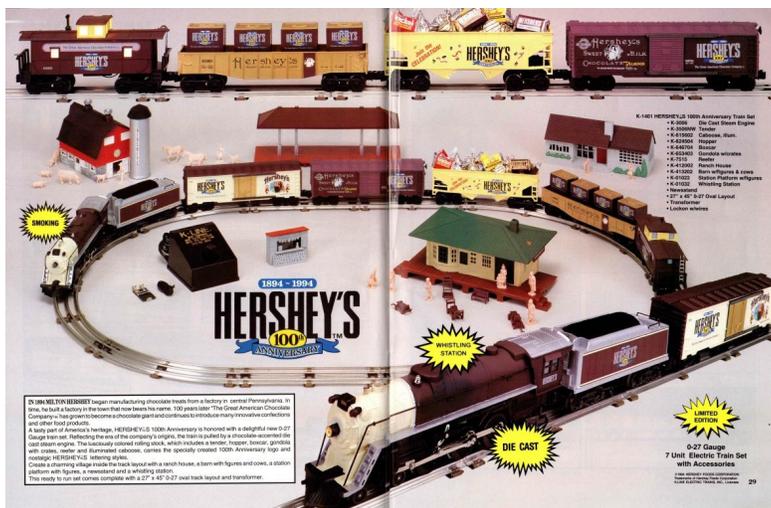


K-LINE KRONICLES: -LINE #K-01032 HERSHEY'S WHISTLING STATION



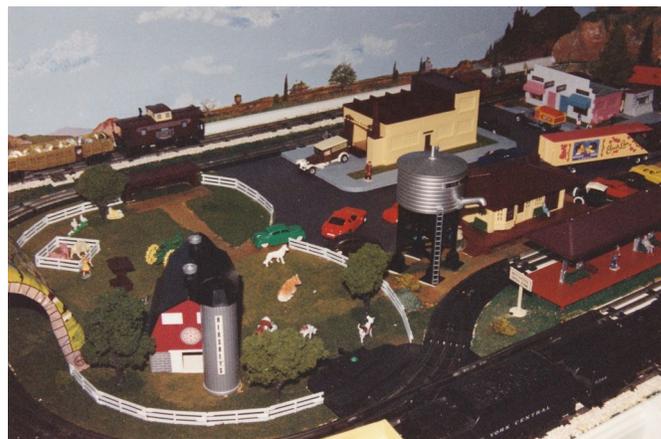
ED BERG

When I pulled out my K-Line No. K-1401 *Hershey's 100th Anniversary Set* from 1994 a few months back, it put me on a whole new path of discovery and rediscovery. The train hadn't been run since 1998 when it was used on a portable train layout I hauled to train meets. I just wanted to take all my Hershey's stuff out and run them again. The train set included a Passenger Shelter, Newsstand, Whistling Station, Barn, Ranch House, and various figures and accessories. In the last Newsletter I covered the Passenger Platform and Newsstand and today we'll look at the Whistling Station.



The station has a milk chocolate brown platform and tan walls with a green roof. Aside from the brown platform, the only thing giving it that chocolatey tie-in are the end signs which read "CHOCOLATE TOWN U.S.A.!" (I had unceremoniously dumped my station in a plastic tote bin many years ago and one of those end signs had been lost, precipitating my need to buy another station on fleaBay for replacement parts!). The whistle is one those old school air whistle's with that wheezy, high-pitched tone but after all these years was still in good working order. The figures in this train set are of the plain beige colored type found in most of K-Line's building kits (a later, separate sale, issue of the Hershey's station would include chocolate brown figures). This particular station with its "CHOCOLATE TOWN U.S.A.!" signs was never available as a separate sale item but K-Line did produce a separate sale, non-whistling version the next year in 1995, with an all brown/cream color scheme and brown figures.

Ed "ICE" Berg
Las Vegas, NV





Sold For \$40,000

**Thinking of Selling Your Trains?
WE ARE A FULL SERVICE AUCTION CO.**

Coast To Coast, We Do The Most!

Willing To Travel & Do All Aspects of Selling Your Collection
Carefully Packing, Hauling, Professional Cataloging
& Marketing Your Trains.

**BENEFITS OF SELLING AT AUCTION
ARE THAT WE ARE WORKING FOR YOU.**

*Our Experience Has Shown That Opposed To Selling Privately,
Our Auction Results Are Often More Than Double!*

QUICK CONSIGNOR PAYMENT FOLLOWING SALE.

**ALWAYS ACCEPTING QUALITY CONSIGNMENTS
ONE ITEM OR ENTIRE COLLECTION**

HO • Prewar • Post War Lionel • American Flyer • Ives • LGB
Modern Era of Numerous Manufacturers
Plasticville & Other Accessories

**WE ALSO SELL TOYS, RAILROADIANA, AUTOMOBILIA
& RELATED ITEMS.**

A Lifetime Of Experience

TED MAURER: Auctioneer - TCA# 66-1613
BOB HOMAN: Auctioneer - TCA# 15-71045
JOHN HUMS: Auctioneer - TCA# 17-73048
RUSS MULLER: Cataloging Team - TCA# 87-24627
GARY SCHOENLY: General Manager - TCA# 10-65778
JARED SCHOENLY: Proprietor - TCA# 12-67424

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Check www.CabinFeverAuctions.com

For Details, Photos and to be placed on our Email List for Upcoming Events.

WHAT READERS ARE SAYING

The unknown paper shown in The York Report of the April 2023 Villager is an ad that appeared in the Boy Scouts of America's "Boy's Life" magazine in April 1964. The boys in the illustration are clearly in Scout uniforms and the boy on the left is using semaphore flags, a common practice of the Scouts at that time. I have an original of this ad hanging on my train room wall along with several other vintage Plasticville ads. - *Tom Fritsch*

Matthew; Attached is the newsletter I just received from King's Hobbies. The first paragraph says "The Bachmann container is finally here with many long-awaited items"! Hopefully that means the 75th anniversary buildings will be shipped soon! - *Jim Bennett*

I found out how you can tell what color is inside a sealed HO gas station box. The color is stamped on the bottom of

the box. If there is no stamp it is the normal red one. Anthony Pagano

I wanted to submit a comment about the rotating beacon article on page 13 of Volume 18 - Sept 2019 - Number 3 issue of The Villager. (Better late than never).

I have been able to greatly improve the rotation of the heat-driven beacons by reducing the weight of the beacon head assembly. To do this, I use a candle to heat an X-acto knife blade for about 10 seconds then insert the knife through the bottom of the beacon and cut the glue joints that connect the red and green lenses. I heat the knife again and cut off each of the 4 pins about 1/8 inch from the front of the lens. I reinstall the 2 lenses using a small amount of Duco Cement or Crazy Glue.

By removing the 4 plastic pins the weight of the beacon head is greatly reduced and it will now rotate much faster. The only drawback is that the beacon head is more fragile without the support of the 4 pins on the inside. I have not found this to be a problem. I just put the beacon head in a small cardboard box when storing it. Perhaps this suggestion will be helpful to readers of The Villager. Fred Hachmeyer (*The beacon to which Fred is referring is show in Photo 1 of the mentioned article.*)

Please feel free to send comments or questions to our editor or any of the other people listed on our Contacts web page.

Plasticville Collectors Association Anniversary Pieces



5th Anniversary
336 total pieces made
\$85 plus shipping



10th Anniversary
240 total pieces made
\$100 plus shipping
only 6 remaining



20th Anniversary
264 total pieces made
\$65 plus shipping

Items are from the Plasticville Collectors Association Archives
Proceeds will be used to support the continuation of the
Plasticville Collectors Association website at <http://plasticvilleusa.org>

Quantities are limited

All buildings are in their factory sealed packages

Contact: secretary@plasticvilleusa.org or mail to PCA, 601 SE Second St, Ankeny, Iowa 50021
to arrange purchase and shipping

BACK IN THE BOX / A CONTINUING SERIES ON REPACKING PLASTICVILLE

1620 & 1817 Loading Platform

JOHN L. NIEHAUS

This one seems simple but quite often I see tops of boxes punctured or pushed up because of the placement of the shed walls. For those of you who were unaware, this piece was made using Littletown molds that Bachmann acquired in the early 50's.

Place the open box on your work space with the lid to the rear

Photo 1: place the walls of the shack in the box upside down with their sides touching the back of the box.



Photo 2: place the three hand carts inside the shack walls and the smokestack, roof support, and sign in between the shack walls. There is no particular order for placing these pieces other than noted above.



Photo 3: place the roof face up with it resting on the bottom front of the box and on the shack walls.



Photo 4: place the platform deck face up into the box near the front of the box with the steps to the right. The back edge of the platform should be forward of the visible shack wall sides.



The photos with this article are my step by step process to get it "back in the box". I would like to hear from anyone who has other methods for getting this piece, or any others, "back in the box".

PRODUCT REVIEW

JOHN L. NIEHAUS

I am a "day late and dollar short" with this review. Somewhere along the line (year) I just plumb forgot to get the 2023 catalog and write my annual article.

Anyway, the 2023 Bachmann catalog is available as both a hard copy and a download that can be saved. The hard copy is \$14.50 plus shipping and handling which is a mere fifty cents more than last year's edition. Click on the CATALOGS AND BROCHURES icon to either order the hard copy or download the PDF version.

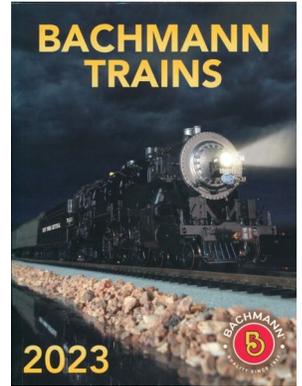
Plasticville is again relegated to the Buildings and Accessories section of the Landscaping, Buildings, Figures, and Accessories major section. The listings start on page 266 through 277.

The same N scale pieces that were listed in the 2022 catalog survived the cut and are in the 2023 catalog. There are a total of 8 pieces. Their prices increased very conservatively from fifty cents to \$1. The listings are all on page 271.

There are a total of 30 illustrations in the HO section. Bachmann decided to release three HO pieces to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of Plasticville this year. They are the Cathedral, Switch Tower, and Motel. The Switch Tower and Motel are reintroductions of long ago discontinued pieces. The Cathedral, if its illustration is accurate has a dark grey roof rather than the normal production piece. Both are listed in the catalog. Prices for the anniversary pieces are \$32, \$24, & \$34, respectively for the Cathedral, Switch Tower, and Motel. Again, prices rose by a mere 50 cents to \$1. The HO listings are on pages 266 through 268. Early promotional flyers for the anniversary buildings included a gas station. When I asked Bachmann why the piece was not in the catalog I was informed that the molds required for it could not be found.

Happily, all 27 pieces in O scale in the 2022 catalog are listed in the 2023 edition. There is also an additional four pieces commemorating Plasticville's 75th anniversary. They are the Cathedral, Split Level House, Roadside Stand, and Hobo Shacks. The Hobo Shacks are just the two shacks as previously released, not the shacks along with the RR Work Car and Outhouse. Again it seems that Bachmann tried to not reproduce any previously used colors on any of these pieces. Prices for the anniversary pieces are \$34 except for the Split Level House which is \$43. The prices for the regular production pieces all rose a gentle 50 cents to \$1. The O listings are on pages 272 through 277.

Bachmann has started to redesign their website. The home page looks the same as in previous years but clicking on the Plasticville logo navigated me to a page that I had not seen before. It had no category for Plasticville! It did have four of the 75th anniversary pieces on this new page but clicking on one of them only navigated me to an expanded description of the item. My contact at Bachmann and I had a short phone call in which I was instructed to click on the O SCALE FIGURES AND ACCESSORIES link. Upon doing so the next page presented me with a Plasticville logo along with other logos that then navigated me to the O scale kits. Clicking on N SCALE under the CATEGORIES heading brought up the Plasticville logo again which when clicked upon navigated me to the N scale listings. Clicking on HO SCALE under CATEGORIES brought the same sequence required to view the HO listings. Downloading the catalog is probably the easiest way to view any of the Plasticville listings if you have a relatively fast Internet connection..



Here's how to download a PDF version of the catalog: 1) go to <https://www.bachmanntrains.com>. 2) Click on the catalog illustration near the top right of the screen. 3) Scroll down on the window that pops up until you see Bachmann & Williams 2023 Catalog and click on it. 4) The front cover of the catalog will now appear. 5) Place your mouse on the arrow near the upper left corner of the catalog cover and click the Download icon. 6) A small pop up window will now offer you the option of downloading the catalog as either a Windows, Apple, or PDF format. Select PDF. The catalog will download after which you can either browse it as or save it.

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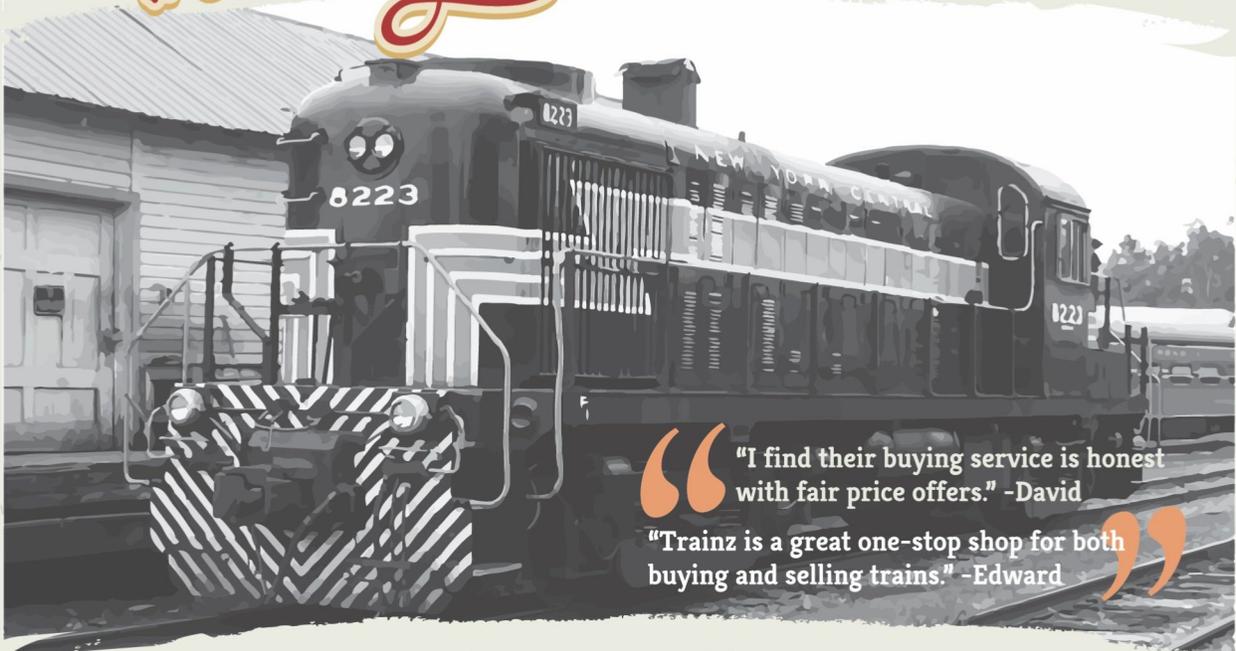
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ITEMS FOR SALE BY THE PCA

Send a description of item you wish to purchase and a check or money order, payable to Plasticville Collectors Association for the total amount to Plasticville Collectors Association, 601 SE Second Street, Ankeny, IA 50021-3207.

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A sheet of 30, personalized, high-quality color labels are available from the PCA. The labels will include the PCA logo in color and up to four lines of address. Each label is a generous 1 x 2 5/8 inches. The price is \$1.00 per sheet plus \$1.50 P&H for up to three sheets. Please add 20 cents per additional sheet over three.

PCA T-shirt

Navy blue 100% cotton, short sleeve shirt T-shirt with the PCA logo printed on the front in white. The prices are \$18 for small through X-Large, \$19 for XX-Large and \$20 for XXX-Large, shipping included, for each shirt. Please order the next larger size if you are concerned with fit. *** Only size M is currently in stock ***

PCA ballpoint pen

PCA silver barrel with blue soft grip, black ink ballpoint pen with silver accents. The pen is imprinted *Plasticville Collectors Assn, www.plasticvilleusa.org* in two lines in blue lettering. \$4.00, postpaid.

**** SOLD OUT ** Coffee Mug with PCA logo ** SOLD OUT ****

White ceramic 11 oz. ceramic mug. PCA blue or black logo. \$9.95 or two for \$15.95, postpaid. Please specify your color choice when ordering. Only 24 pieces of black logo mugs were produced. 1 black remaining.

PCA Ball Caps

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1. "Welcome to Plasticville" billboard inserts Six identical inserts, sized to fit Plasticville billboard frames depicting a 50's vintage auto passing a billboard on its way into town with the same greeting.
2. Seven different subjects plus one "Welcome To Plasticville" inserts including Friskies dog food, Motorola, Mercury and Lincoln autos, Sunoco and Gulf motor oil, and Eberhard Faber pink erasers. All are mid-fifties vintage.

Did You Know?

Recently I received a question about which issue a specific article appeared in. While I am happy to help, there is also a self-help option. On the PCA website hover over the 'Newsletter' tab then pick 'Article



PRODUCT REVIEW

JOHN L. NIEHAUS

Smoky Mountain Railways, Jacob Morgan Plott and Bob Plott, 208 pages, softcover, 6 X 9 format, \$21.99. Published by The History Press, an imprint of Arcadia Publishing. Lightly captioned and attributed black and white photos throughout.

This is the story of the Western North Carolina Railroad as well as one particular branch, the Murphy branch. That branch being named after the town in which it was to terminate. This branch was also the westernmost part of the WNCRR. The railroad later became part of the Richmond and Danville railroad. It became part of the Southern Railway in 1894, then the Norfolk Southern Railway (NS) and, as of publication of this book, the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad.

The book contains an acknowledgment, and introduction, followed by 18 chapters, a glossary of terms, a bibliography, an index, and "about the authors". The final chapter holds a surprise as to who now owns the GSMR.

The authors relate how the majority of labor to create the WNCRR was prisoner labor. As they note in more than one instance those performing the hard labor work were "legal slaves". The majority of the convicts were Black. They were poorly housed, poorly fed, and many times severely mistreated. Those who died were unceremoniously buried in unmarked graves.

The authors compare the percentage of loss of life in building the WNCRR to the Transcontinental in relation to the percentage of deaths relative to the number of miles of track. They found it to be 30 percent for the WNCRR as opposed to one percent for the Transcontinental.

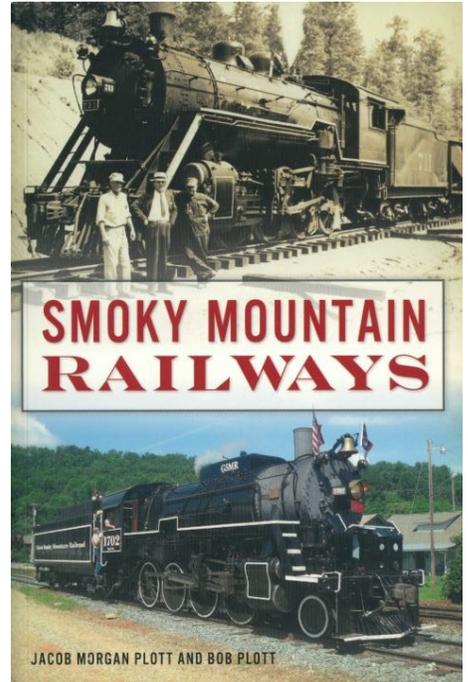
This was a very interesting book. I recommend it to anyone interested in the history of the railroads in western North Carolina or one who has an interest in how the

prisoner laborers were treated.

Smoky Mountain Railways is available from Arcadia Publishing at <https://arcadiapublishing.com>.

Click on the magnifying glass near the top of the home page, type in the book name, and click on the magnifying glass again to be directed to the book. It was listed on Barnes and Noble's website at the publisher's list price. Amazon lists the book for \$20.27. Both Amazon and Barnes & Noble both list a hard cover version although one is not noted on Arcadia's website.

I received the following reply from the publisher when questioning why their website did not offer a hardbound edition, "The book is available in soft cover from our website and retailers. However, Amazon does offer the option to have the book printed on demand in a hardback format." It seems the Barnes & Noble is also having the book printed on demand in hardback.



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