



THE VILLAGER

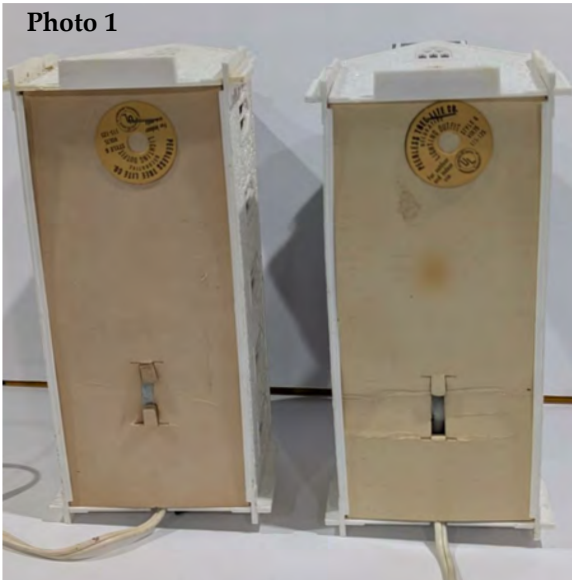
The Official Newsletter of the Plasticville Collectors Association
Volume 24 August 2025 Number 2

FOLLOW-UP ON THE PEERLESS MUSICAL CHURCH

ANDY ZOLA

This article is an additional follow-up on the Peerless Musical Church. I have two of these churches. The bottom of the church has the same round tag that is described in Tom Fritch's article, shown in Photo 1. One of the churches plays Silent Night, while the other song cannot be deter-

Photo 1



mined. The most interesting aspect of my two boxes, shown in Photo 2, is the box manufacturer. The box that I consider to be the oldest has a label on the front with the same info that is contained on the circular label stapled to the cardboard bottom. I consider this the oldest because the manufacturer (Ajax Manufacturing Co. Inc.) shows Brooklyn, NY with no zip code (Photo 3). The other box is missing the label on

Photo 2



the front, and the box manufacturer is now (Ajax Corrugated Containers Inc.), and the address now shows a zip code of 27. This zip code is correct for Brooklyn NY (Photo 4). Since the Plasticville CC-9 Church Kit was first cataloged in 1953, my guess is that the boxes used first were any old stock, and then the new stock when the name changed and the 2-digit zip code was used. These boxed churches are pre-1963 because that is when 5-digit zip codes were used. Does anyone have a third type of box?

Photo 3

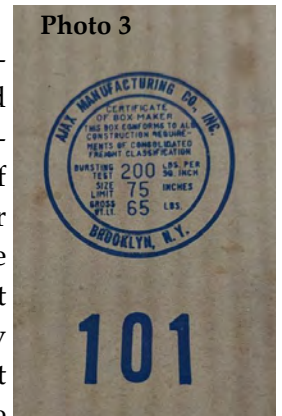


Photo 4



The Villager

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EDITOR'S COLUMN

This news letter is a bit short. Hopefully for December there will be a few more contributions! In this issue we are starting a new series by Robert Kocan, "Who's Who in Plasticville", each issue he will include a few photos of famous figures visiting his layout.


Some of you may still have had trouble emailing villagereditor@plasticvilleusa.org. Hopefully, that will be

corrected. If not, you can always reach me at matt.villager.editor@gmail.com.

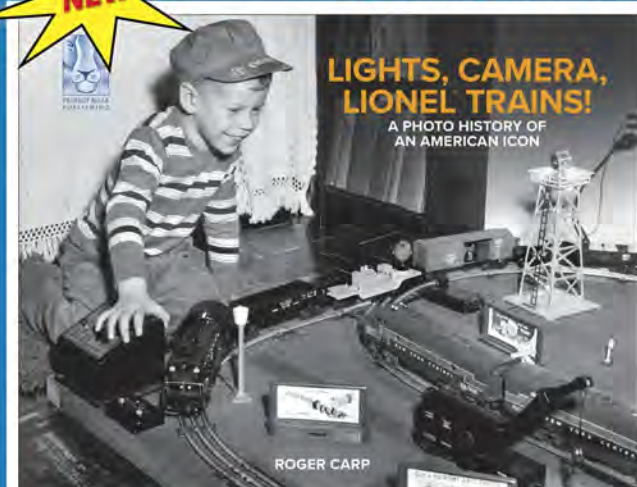
I am looking forward to fall and seeing everyone at York in a few short weeks!

Matt Harvazinski, *The Villager* Editor

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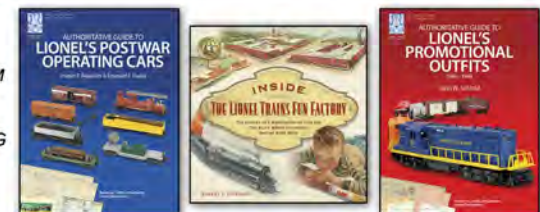
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A LEGO model of a 'HOLY COW' ice cream parlor is shown in a desert landscape. The building is blue and white with 'HOLY COW' and 'UGGER GOODNESS' signs. A winding road leads into the distance under a sunset sky.

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A BILLBOARD MYSTERY

DONALD W. HUOVINEN

Toy Trains And Other Old Stuff had an on-line auction on June 22, 2025 which included two very interesting items of interest to Plasticville collectors. Lots 283 and 284 were listed as "Lot 283: Rare Bachmann Plasticville 1958 State Farm Insurance Driver Safety Billboard" and "Lot 284: Rare Bachmann Plasticville 1958 State Farm Insurance Billboard" respectively. Photos 1 and 2 are of Lot 283 and Photos 2-5 are of Lot 284 (photos are used with permission of the auction house).

Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4



Of course Plasticville collectors realize these items are not Plasticville at all. To get more information, the writer contacted the auction house owner, Wylie Stivers, who graciously shared the information he had about these items, including allowing the use of his photos. Wylie said that in researching these items for listing in the auction, he could not find any information about them. The closest thing he could find was a set of similar billboards that had been sold by Glenn Bowman. As Glenn sold primarily Plasticville, Wylie assumed, mistakenly, that the billboards were manufactured by Plasticville. Wylie further shared that the billboards were part of a collection he had purchased in Staten Island last Summer. The gentleman who owned the collection had passed away before the collection was sold so no further information was available.

Photo 5



The billboard frame, including the distinctive light fixtures, as well as the packaging are identical to those used by Kellogg's Cereals in their 1956 Sugar Frosted Flakes

promotion. John Niehaus wrote an article about these billboards in the May 2004 edition of The Villager, Volume 3, Number 2. Photo 6 is a photo from that article for comparison. There is no doubt that these State Farm billboards were manufactured and packaged by the same company.

With no information there are many questions remaining to be answered. Who was the manufacturer of the billboards? Since there are now 2 different confirmed versions of the billboards, the production for Kellogg was not a one off. Has anyone seen other billboards made by the same manufacturer?

The Kellogg promotion was in 1956. The State Farm promotion was in 1958. Did State Farm contact the manufacturer about having billboards made for them or did the manufacturer contact State Farm about using the billboards as a promotional item?

What was the intended use of the billboards? Were the billboards furnished to State Farm representatives to be displayed in their offices, or were they made to be given to State Farm customers?

The dates on the calendars generally coincide with the Christmas season. Since trains are often associated with



Photo 6

Christmas layouts and displays, was this coincidence or just good timing?

The writer has spoken with the State Farm archivist, Mr. Buck Farley, and I have forwarded the above information as well as the photos to him. Mr. Farley has indicated that State Farm has extensive archives and that he will see what he can find. The archives are not digitized so it may take some time but I am hopeful. When I hear back from him I will update this article in the next issue of The Villager.

Reader input is certainly invited!



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N-SCALE PLASTICVILLE: SNAP-TOGETHER KITS

JIM BENNETT

On page 49 of the 1998 Bachmann catalog, a novel, innovative, unprecedented new concept was introduced. Snap-Together kits with no glue required! In N-Scale! (Photo 1) In the 30 years before this, all



Photo 1

Plasticville N-Scale structures were either pre-assembled built-ups or glue-together model kits. These eight kits, dubbed the N-Scale Silver Series, are:

- 45851 - Passenger Station: (Photo 2)
 - Total pieces – 13. Colors – Maroon roof and base. Cream walls.

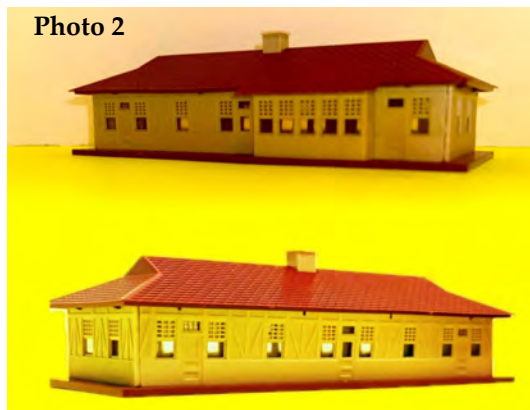


Photo 2

- 45852 - Freight Station: (Photo 3)
 - Total pieces - 15. Colors – Light gray roof, sign, and base. Yellow walls.

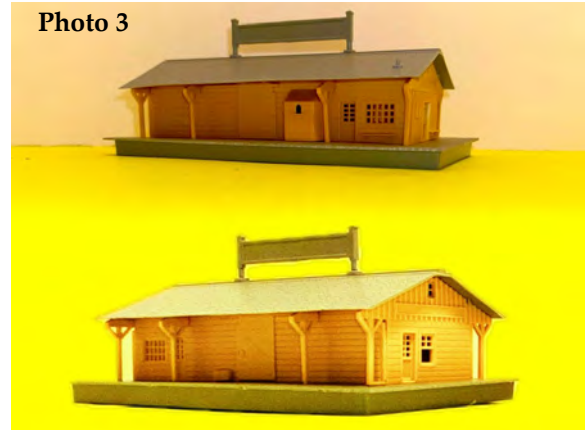


Photo 3

- 45853 - Rural Two Story House: (Photo 4)
 - Total pieces - 17. Colors – Dark brown roof and base. Tan walls.

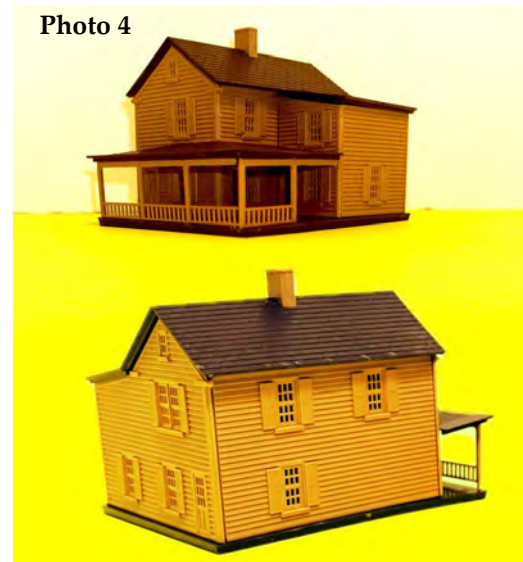


Photo 4

- 45854 - 1930 School House: (Photo 5)
 - Total pieces - 19. Colors - Gray roof, cupola, and base. Red walls.
- 45855 - Emil's Dry Goods: (Photo 6)
 - Total pieces – 12. Colors – Black roof, signs, and base. Off-White walls.
- 45856 - Main Street Apothecary: (Photo 7)
 - Total pieces – 11. Colors – Light gray roof, signs, and base. Red façade. Green walls.

Photo 5

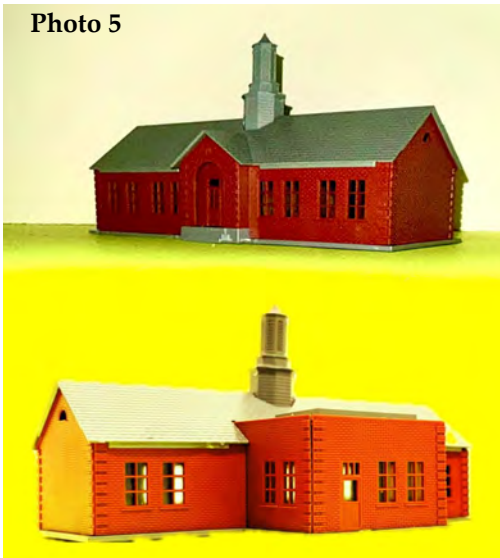
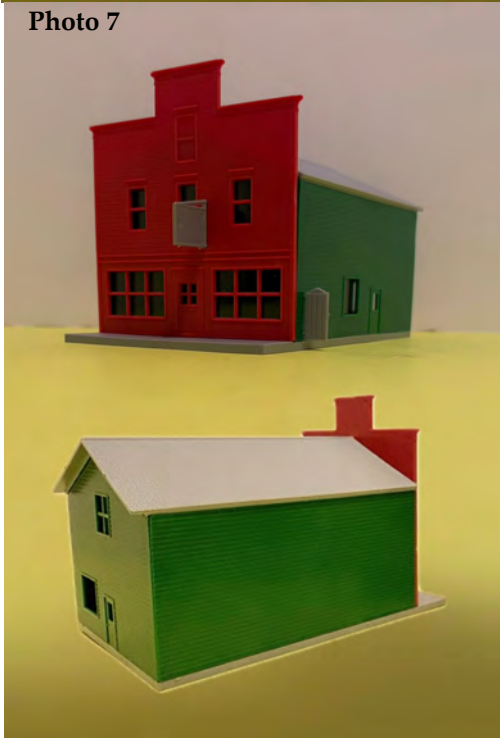


Photo 6

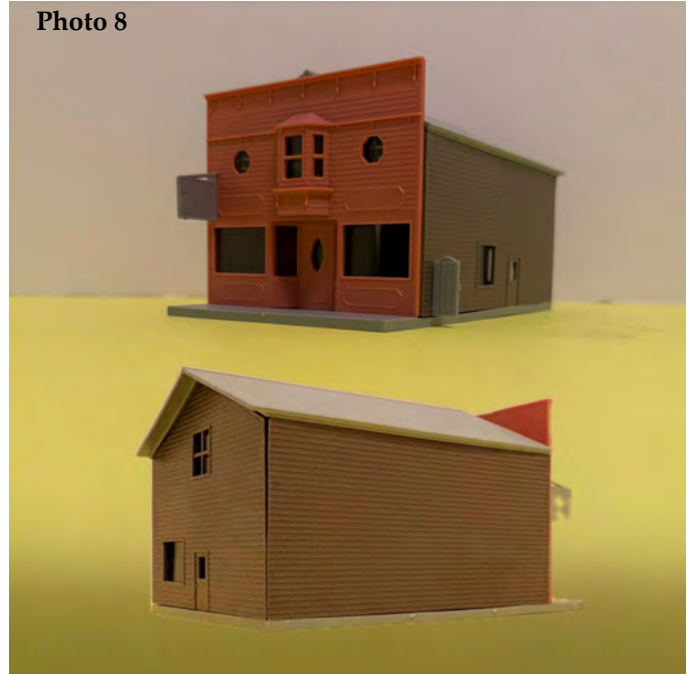


Photo 7



- 45857 - Pink Lady Boutique: (Photo 8)
 - Total pieces – 12. Colors – Light gray roof, signs, and base. Pink façade. Brown walls.
 - (Note - The “This Side Up” on the second-floor bay window is backwards.)

Photo 8



- 45858 - Georgian Mansion: (Photo 9)
 - Total pieces – 15. Colors – Gray roof and base. Red walls and columns.

Photo 9



BOXES: (Photo 10) All eight kits are packaged in 10" x 7" x 2¼" boxes with flaps on both sides. The coloring is predominantly different hues of blue. The front of each

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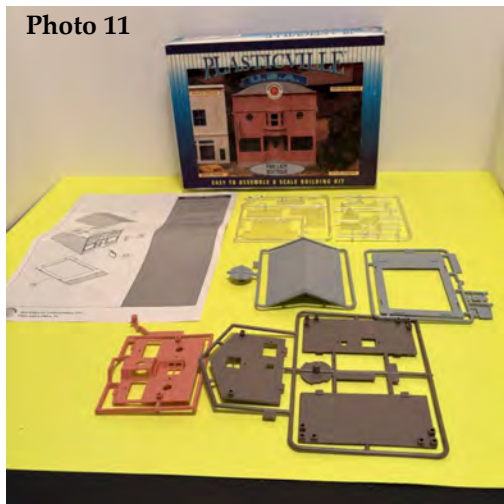


Photo 10



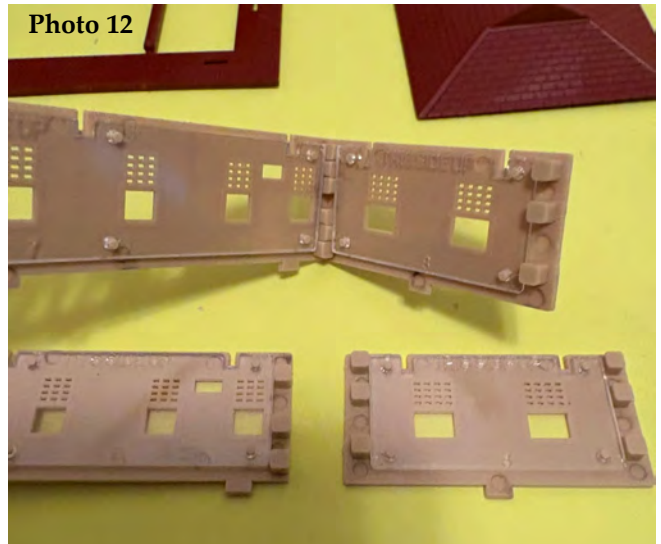
box shows a photograph of the structure in a landscaped setting with the words PLASTICVILLE U.S.A. and the Bachmann logo in the top, center, and EASY TO ASSEMBLE N SCALE BUILDING KIT across the bottom. In the four corners around the photo, it claims REALISTIC DETAILING, PARTS MOULDED IN COLOR, SNAP-FIT ASSEMBLY & NO GLUE NECESSARY. Underneath each image is an oval with the structure's name. Along the bottom is a disclaimer stating that scenery and accessories are not included. The bottom of the box is exactly the same as the front, except it also has Bachmann Industries, Inc., Philadelphia, PA 19124/ Made in Denmark in small letters right below the oval. The left and right-side panels (flaps) have the Bachmann logo, PLASTICVILLE U.S.A. EASY TO ASSEMBLE N SCALE BUILDING KIT and the Bachmann address. In a white box, they state the item number and structure name. The top and bottom side panels are identical to the left and right side panels, except that the white box also contains a UPC.

Photo 11



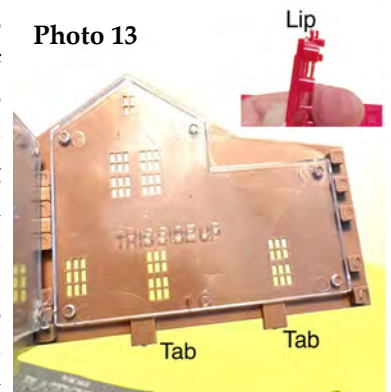
The kits are packed in a sealed plastic bag, still attached to the injection sprues (Photo 11). There is a highly detailed, two-sided assembly instruction sheet showing assembly hints, recommended tools, and assembly sequence. The individual parts need to be separated using diagonal cutters or a hobby knife. Each kit is molded in different colors, and the windows are all clear plastic with the words THIS SIDE UP molded into them (i.e., when you're installing them to the back of the walls, the "THIS SIDE UP" should be readable to you). The windows have square holes that snap over the protruding round pegs on the back of the walls (Photo 12). The walls, without the windows, are pretty flimsy, and the windows add much-needed rigidity. After installing the windows, the walls

Photo 12



can be snapped together using the same type of interlocking lugs as are on the O/S and HO Plasticville structures. Along the bottom of each wall piece are tabs that are inserted into the base. These tabs secure the structure to the base using a lip that securely

Photo 13



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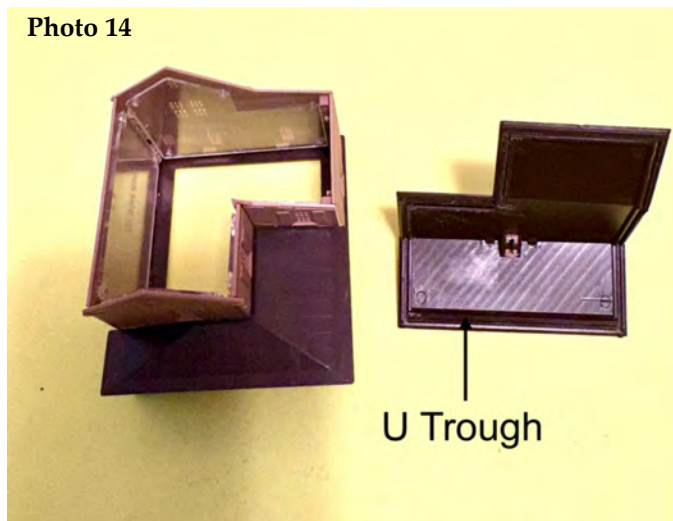
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locks them in place (Photo 13). The roofs on the Two Story House and the Mansion have a U-shaped trough that the sidewalls snap into (Photo 14). The other six kits have either locating pins or lugs to secure the roof in place.

Photo 14



I noticed a disparity in the proportions of the two stations, the two-story house, and the school, when compared to the other four structures. The three stores and the mansion appear to be slightly larger than N-Scale (Photo-15).

The architecture of the buildings is indicative of the late 1800s to the early 1900s. If you are contemplating down-sizing, considering N-Scale, and want to use steam engines as your motive power, these eight kits would be a perfect fit.

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WHAT ARE READERS SAYING

... Outstanding newsletter. Larry Mlynek (*reader response after reading the April newsletter*).



I really like the redesign of this site. Lookin' good. Barrie Matovcik, (*one of our advertisers*)



Very nice job on the new layout for the web page. Andrew Zola



I recently purchased a Bachman coaling station 1957 off of ebay. It was in a sealed bag with the instructions. Assuming all parts were there I began assembly. The final step was to add the roof. Unfortunately the roof was missing. I did a quick scan of other sales on ebay and notice that every bag of building parts there was no sign of the grey roof. The boxed kits all showed the roof. Was this a factory defect and if so is there someone that might have a spare roof? Thank you Dennis Crigler (*The roof to the Coaling Station was packed loose in the box, not in the sealed bag.*)



In the April 2025 issue of the Villager, Tom Fritsch stated that his Skyline musical played "O Come All Ye Faithful".

I pulled mine off the shelf, wound it up and started to hum along. Sure enough, it played "O Come All Ye Faithful"! Thanks for solving that mystery for me Tom! - Jim Bennett



Keep your eyes peeled for a TV commercial for Lipo-Flavonoid. It utilizes Plasticville as a prop. If you don't catch it on TV, go to your favorite computer search engine and type in - "Lipo-Flavonoid TV spot - 'Tom's Story'".



Lipo-Flavonoid TV Spot, 'Tom's Story'

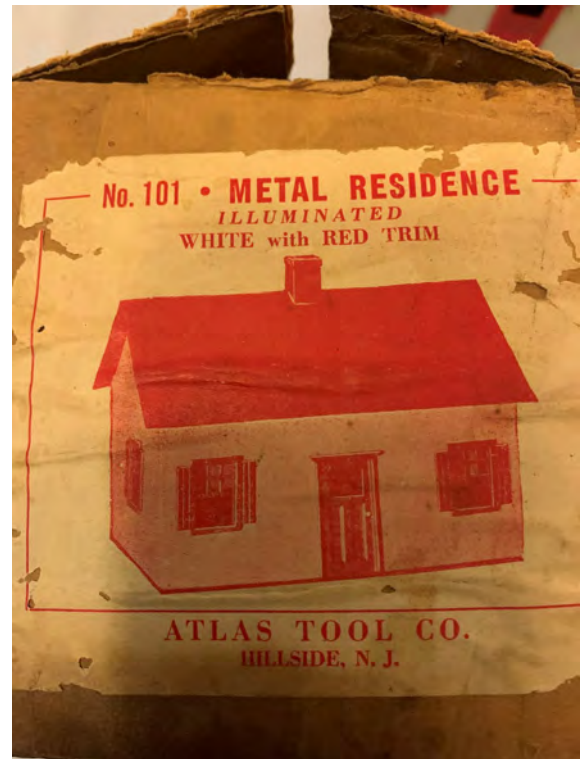
Plasticville Collectors Association Anniversary Pieces

		
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

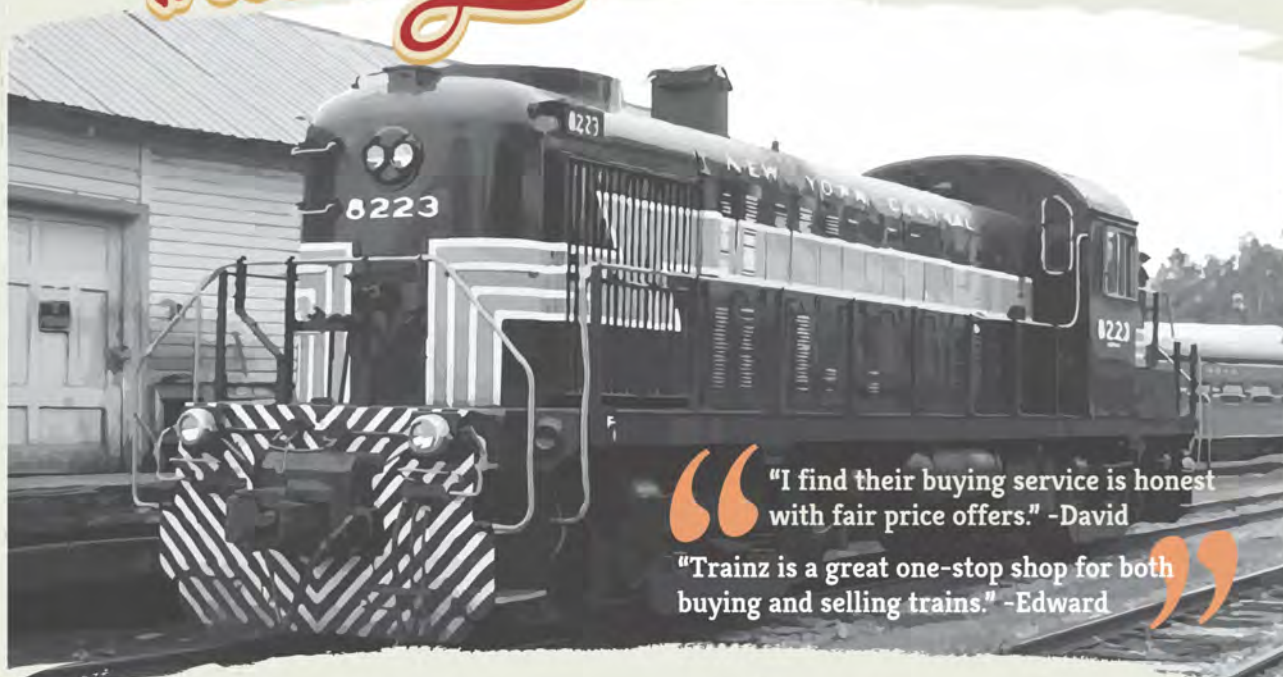
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WHAT ARE READERS SAYING WITH PICTURES

I have 3 boxed houses shown on page 9 of *The Villager* (April 2025), Red, Green, and Blue. The blue box has no label. Nick Ivanoff (Nick has provided the included photos of both a red and green house with a manufacturer of Atlas Tool Co., Hillside N.J. imprinted on them. The question now is if this the same Atlas as the current Atlas Model Railroad Co. of Hillside N.J.?)



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WHO'S WHO IN PLASTICVILLE

ROBERT KOCAN

Bluto, Popeye's nemesis, picked the wrong day to try to win the heart of Olive Oyl. The Plasticville Supermarket just made their weekly delivery of spinach to Popeye.



FDR makes a trip to Plasticville to dedicate the new Plasticville War Memorial Park. The main display piece is the "Betty Grable" tank from the WWII movie Breakthrough. An HO Supermarket marquee sign was used to create the monument.



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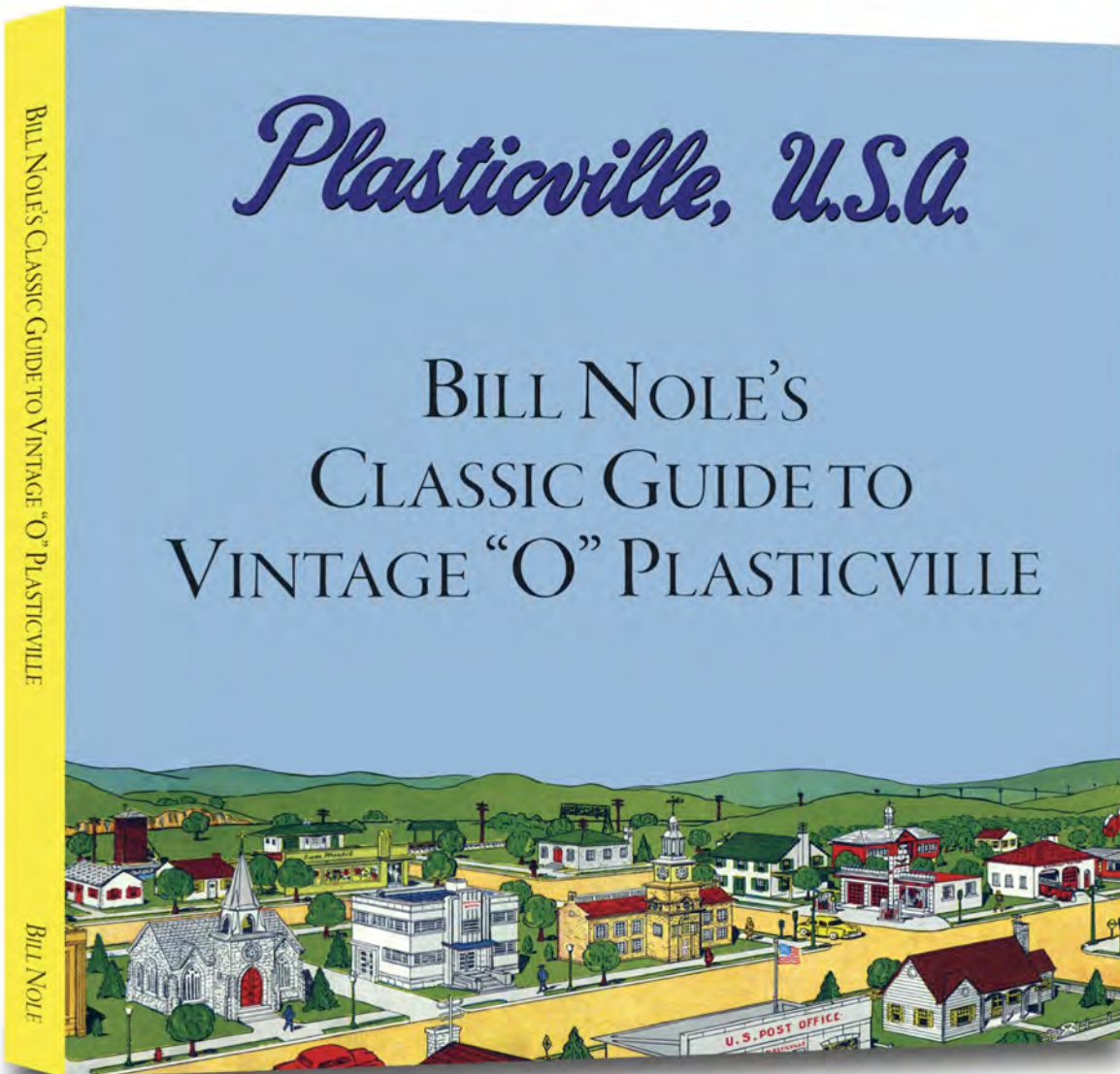
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Did You Know?

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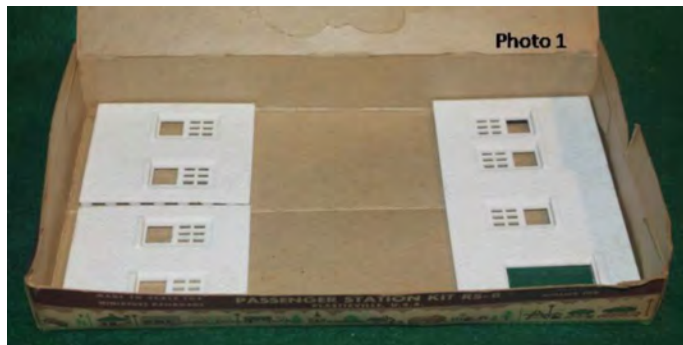
Passenger Station RS-8 and other Similar Boxes

JOHN L. NIEHAUS

This is a fairly easy one to get back in the box yet I see it tossed into a box in a haphazard manner. Let's see how to neatly get this station *Back in the Box*.

Place the box in front of you with the lid raised and away from you.

Place the two side walls, face up with their bottom edges touching the left side wall of the box and the back wall, face up, with its bottom edge touching the right side wall of the box as shown in photo 1.



Place the roof upside down and centered in the box leaving a small amount of space between it and the back wall of the box as shown in photo 2.



Place the platform right side up with the ramps facing forward. Ensure that the back of the platform slips down into the small amount of space you left in the above step as shown in photo 3.



Place the front wall face down in the roof cavity between the platform ramps as shown in photo 4. Place the chimney on top of the front wall. Place the **one-sided** *Plasticville* cardstock signs in the box.



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."

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PRODUCT REVIEW

JOHN L. NIEHAUS

Seventy Is Not So Good... Unless it's Your Golf Score!, Lou Palumbo, 148 pages, softcover, 6 X 9 format, \$14.99. Published by Windy City Publishers.

This is the third book in the author's trilogy. This book follows the same format as the author's previous two books: *I Never Met A Train I Didn't Like* and *Back In The Day*.

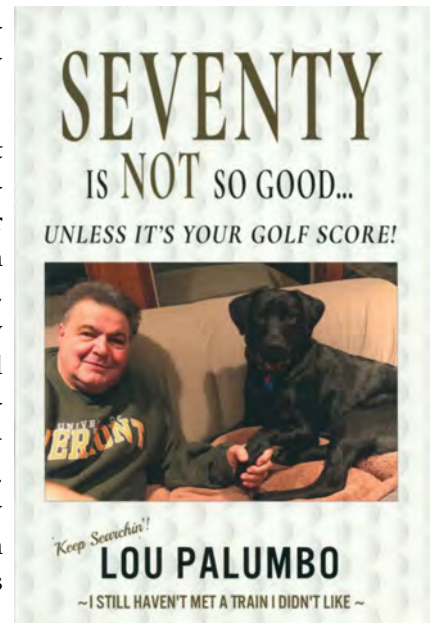
The first part of the book is the author's observations relevant to those who have reached the ripe old age of seventy. One of the observations is the wearing out of body parts. Another is passwords and the difficulty in remembering and/or logging them for future use.

His comments regarding checkout lines at the grocery store hit home for me. I worked for about six years as a sacker in a very busy grocery store after retirement. Just about everything he notes in his comments on checkout lines, I saw, especially the person who not only writes a check for the groceries but also has to hold up the line while they enter it in their checkbook and update the transaction register.

The second part of the book contains selected columns from his "Views From The Underground" column in *Classic Toy Trains*. The columns start with some in the 2018

issues of the magazine through a few from 2023.

It is my feeling that anyone who purchases this book and/or the other two, which are still available, will thoroughly enjoy his comments as well as again enjoy reading some of his *Classic Toy Trains* articles. And maybe get a few chuckles and even see themselves in his comments.



Seventy Is Not So Good... Unless it's Your Golf Score! is available from the author at The Underground Railroad Shoppe, 1906 Wilmington Rd, New Castle, PA 16105. Both of his previous books are also available. I believe that is the only outlet for this book, as I did not find it on Amazon or Barnes & Noble's websites.

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