



**Three Lakes Model Railroad Club
Volume 3, Number 10**

**1st 100% Club in Wisconsin
October 2012**

View from the Tower

by P.A. Wussow

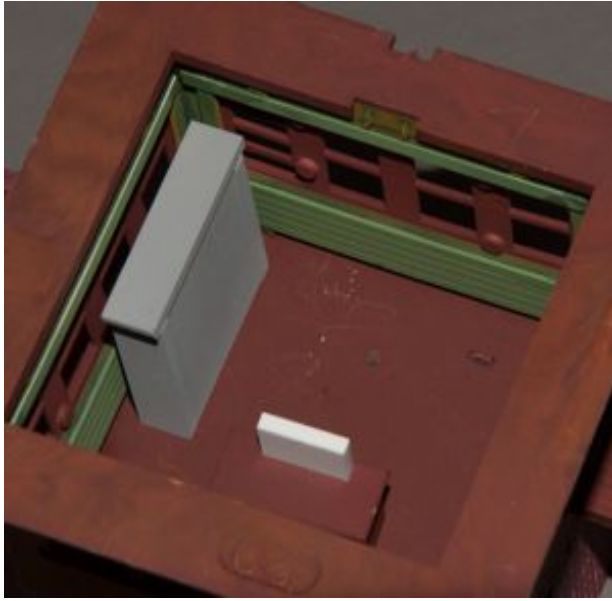
My view from the tower this month is from a sitting position. While pulling the boats, with the help of Bob Dumke and Jack Zimmer I managed to pinch some nerves in my back which sent me home early and has me on restrictive behavior. I want to thank the members who have volunteered to help out as a number of families have had health problems turn members into care givers or care receivers.

Being restricted in my activities allowed modeling to rise on the list of things I could spend time on. I know I was behind with the Kit-A-Long project so this month I have not only built a model but also an article for the newsletter.

Keith Mc Millen, who contributed to the Kit-A-Long project stopped by to check out my progress so I caught a photo of him checking the setup of the second floor of the tower as I was building the interior desks and cabinets.



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You can see the vents that needed to be removed from the windows and additional space in the interior.

I hope that more of our members and guests from around the country will join in and send us photos of the kits they have built from the Atlas Signal Tower so that we can share them on line. Additional photos from the construction will be going on to the pages of the website www.tlmrc.org. Please visit the site and check out other models submitted and progress reports.

The town of Three Lakes WI is very proud of people, organizations and businesses using the Internet. Our town Chairman Don Sidlowski was selected to be a speaker and a panel member at the Wisconsin Office of Broadband Sustainability's meeting on Building Community Capacity through Broadband (BCCB) and will also give a presentation to the Wisconsin Towns Association's annual convention this year.

We at the Three Lakes Model Railroad Club are glad that we are recognized for our use of the Internet to communicate with our local, national NMRA and global members, guests and contributors. From our first meeting, on a cold winter night in the north woods, we have included members and friends from locations all around the world. In all my communications with other NMRA members and friends I include our URL www.tlmrc.org and invite them to visit and join in the fun of modeling the North Woods.

Happy Model Railroading: Paul A Wussow

A Visit to Tri County Model Railroad Club *by R.G. Blocks*

Years ago I'd been to an operating session on a fellow named Marty's layout. Afterwards I'd lost his name and phone number and failed to thank him for what began, for me at least, the spark of an idea to get better at model rail operations. This little note of acknowledgement, many years later, is my latent way of saying, "Thank you Marty."

He was heading out the drive: going to a Tuesday work session of the Tri County Model Railroad Club when I called his number. Members of the Tri County RR Club meet every Tuesday at 6PM for three-hour sessions. They stagger their focus by week with the pattern: "Work, Work, Business and Operations and repeat the cycle monthly."

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Arriving at TCMRRC I began my conversations with Clifford (photo to left) a twenty-five year member of the club who got into the HO rail hobby in 1957.

Cliff has two kids. Son, Mike (below) has been a member of Tri County for the same length of time as his dad and currently serves as club VP. Both are exponents of a positive bright and healthy club picture.

They sell the hobby with a welcoming smile.

Mike described the Tri County organization simply: “Someone always steps-up when something needs doing.”

I saw some very high quality track-work and the scenes blended without difficulty or contrivance. Individuals who volunteer to do a scene present a ‘scenic plan’ to their Scenery Dept. These ‘senior guys’ provide the experience to prevent un-pleasing view extremes and give volunteers only selected limited guidance. The idea is to let the volunteer express himself (or herself) and get the entire organization to vote ‘yeah’ for ‘the volunteer’s scenery plan’.



They illustrated with a view of Clifton, named for Clifford. Ted Barnett did Clifton station town-site and a long stretch of the layout in that area. It is apparent that he does good quality work and plenty of it.

Here, standing next to his namesake is Clifford once again. He and Mike made a point that the layout scenery is neither too extreme nor regimented.

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There were no bookends that could ‘dead-end’ an idea. To further illustrate their point it was observed that the Clifton area was re-done three times to achieve satisfaction in the eye of most beholders. Pride and care were ‘quietly evident’.

The Tri City layout flows nicely. Ted, now club President not only did the Clifton scene above but also stands next to a major quarry operation and railroad client (see below). Ted built the quarry as a set-in module at home and when satisfied with the ‘impression of his depression’ dropped it in place on the railroad.



Jim Beix (black shirt below) is currently Secretary of the TCMRRC organization. He points out that folks in the Racine, Kenosha, Walworth, Milwaukee and Lake County area are in reasonable proximity to 1010 Vine Street, Union Grove, WI (one block west of US 45 and south of the railroad tracks) where the layout resides. The club has been in operation for forty-years and was once located in Kenosha. Seems Tri County understates the realist zone of folks that enjoy this layout. Understating is good.

Jim entered the HO rail hobby in 2000. He’s been a club member since 2008 (5 years). He says he’s always been prone to helping kids with Tyco and railroading inspired him to clean the basement. He didn’t elaborate after that. But he passed along this link to the club: <http://www.tricountymodelrailroadclub.com/>

The view below captures a very small fraction of this huge layout. The next open house is 9 AM – 3 PM Dec 1st. Jim says you must visit to get the ‘big picture.’



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Considerable activity was going on. Jim above was building a fence near the round house while another fellow was cheerfully plastering the second level near Ted’s very convincing quarry operations. Half a railroad away, Mike was cutting foam for a bridge – spillway arrangement (left below) and Steve was playing Vincent Van Gogh (below right) daubing paint in a dry wash, part of a trestle scene I’d presume.



There is another large model railroad in this same building. One of that club’s regulars, Greg Hoppert (leftmost below), who we of the Three Lakes Model Railroad Club remain grateful, (for his presentation of a clinic on making model trees) joined us to kibitz.

At 9PM Greg and I said our goodnights to the assembled throng including Mike (left) and our host Marty (right). A prolific model rail background artist, Marty’s work can be seen on a variety of SE Wisconsin pikes. It was an operating session at Marty’s smooth running home layout that lit a spark in me a few years ago to improve our family layout and operations. I’ve wanted to say this for quite a while, “Thank you Marty.”

A visit to Tri County would be a fine way to spend a Tuesday evening after dinner.



Railroad Happenings: or Semi-local events...

Oct 7, 2012 8 AM to Noon, **Tri City Train Show** at Roma Lodge, Racine, WI 7130 Spring St, Hwy C,

Oct 13, 2012 **NMRA Winnebagoland Division Fall Meet** in Wausau, WI
<http://www.wld-nmra.com>

Oct 13, 2012 from 10 AM – 4 PM Oct 14, 2012 from 1PM – 4PM **North Central O-Gauger's Open House Fremont Public Library**, 11170 N Midlothian Rd, Mundelein, IL

Oct 14, 2012 **Great Midwest Train Show** DuPage County Fairgrounds, 2015 Manchester Road, Wheaton, IL from 9:30 Am to 3 PM.

Oct 21, 2012 **Model RR Show and Swap Meet** – Circle B Recreation 6261 Hwy 60 – Cedarburg, W Info at: www.lammscape.com/cedarcreek

Oct 21, 2012 **Badgerland S Gaugers Swap Meet**, Knights of Columbus Hall, 3200 S 103 Street, Greenfield, WI Sunday 8AM to Noon, \$3 Admission.

October 28, 2012 **Lionel RR Club of Milwaukee Train Show**, 5311 S Howell Ave (entrance on west side of hotel) Sunday 8AM to Noon, \$4.00 Admission

Nov 4, 2012 8 AM to Noon, **Tri City Train Show** at Roma Lodge, Racine, WI 7130 Spring St, Hwy C,

Nov 10 – 11, 2012 **Trainfest**, Wisconsin State Fair Park, West Allis, WI Info at: www.lammscape.com/cedarcreek

Nov 11, 2012 **Great Midwest Train Show** Dupage County Fairgrounds, 2015 Manchester Road, Wheaton, IL from 9:30 Am to 3 PM.

Nov 14th, 2012 2PM and 6:00 PM **An Afternoon with the Three Lakes Model RR Club**, Demmer Public Library, 6961 W School Street, Three Lakes, WI 54562 phone 715-546-3391

Nov 18, 2012 **Lionel RR Club of Milwaukee Train Show**, 5311 S Howell Ave (entrance on west side of hotel) Sunday 8AM to Noon, \$4.00 Admission

Nov 25,, 2012 **Badgerland S Gaugers Swap Meet**, Knights of Columbus Hall, 3200 S 103 Street, Greenfield, WI Sunday 8AM to Noon, \$3 Admission.

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Dec 2, 2012 8 AM to Noon, **Tri City Train Show** at Roma Lodge, Racine, WI 7130 Spring St, Hwy C,

Dec 9, 2012 **Great Midwest Train Show** Dupage County Fairgrounds, 2015 Manchester Road, Wheaton, IL from 9:30 Am to 3 PM.

Dec 16, 2012 **Lionel RR Club of Milwaukee Train Show**, 5311 S Howell Ave (entrance on west side of hotel) Sunday 8AM to Noon, \$4.00 Admission

Dec 30, 2012 **Badgerland S Gaugers Swap Meet**, Knights of Columbus Hall, 3200 S 103 Street, Greenfield, WI Sunday 8AM to Noon, \$3 Admission

On a Spur and loading...

Jan 26, 2013 **GREAT TRI-STATE RAIL SALE**, La Cross Center 2nd & Pearl Streets, La Crosse, WI 54601

May 2 – 5, 2013 Midwest Region Convention, Host is Central Indiana Div
<http://cid.railfan.net/MP50.html> Indianapolis, IN

July 14 – 20, 2013 NMRA Convention, Atlanta, Georgia
Will be covered at: <http://www.nmra.org/>

July 13-20, 2014 NMRA Convention, Cleveland, Ohio
Will be covered at: <http://www.nmra.org/>

Meets On the Main Line ...

Central Wisconsin Model Railroaders, Ltd, business 1st Wed, social 3rd Wednesday, 7PM basement, Bancroft Depot, Portage County Historical Society, Heritage Park, Washington Ave, ex GB&W tracks, Plover, Wisconsin. <http://www.trainweb.org/cwmr/>

Clipper City Model Railroad Club, membership meeting 1st Thursday 7:30 PM, Iron Horse Barn, Manitowoc County Expo Fair Grounds, Manitowoc, Wisconsin (HO, N, O).

Questions? jimchadek@charter.net
or see <http://www.clippercitymodelrailroadclub.org/>

Paper Valley Model Railroad Club (501 c 3) meets Thursday 7 – 9 PM and Sat 1 – 3 PM W2221 Block Road, Kaukauna, WI 54130.
See <http://www.papervalleymodelrailroad.com/>

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Wisconsin Valley Railroad Club, meets Thursday 7:45PM at 403 McIndoe St (Yawkey House basement), Marathon County Historical Society, Wausau, WI (enter through rear door). Rod Beckman, Pres 715-842-7232

See <http://www.wld-nmra.com/Wausau-WiseValley.htm>

Sheboygan Society of Scale Model Railroad Engineers, Ltd. Meets / open Tuesday and Thursday evenings, at Sheboygan Railroad Museum, 1001 N 10th Street, Sheboygan, WI. See: www.sssmre.org

Northwoods Model Railroad Club, business 3rd Tuesday 7 PM Minocqua Museum, Work sessions every Wednesday 7 – 9 PM / Eric Drochner, PO Box 799, Woodruff, WI 54568-0799.

See: http://www.wld-nmra.com/northwoods_model_rr_club.htm

Rhineland Railroad Club, business 1st Wednesday, 7 PM at the Logging Museum Depot, operating / maintenance Wednesday 7 PM same location or 123 Brown Street, Rhineland, WI with modular layout. See www.rrahome.org

Three Lakes Model Railroad Club, dates open, meet at members homes and / or with the Rhineland Railroad Association. See www.tlmrc.org

Questions, comments or problems: call Superintendent: Paul A Wussow 312-543-4989
Praise, congratulatory or simple fun: call Editor: Roger G Blocks 262-989-4338

Bet you Didn't Know: at the current time, what is?

1. **The Longest Railroad in the USA.**
2. **The Shortest Railroad in the USA.**
3. **Railroad carrying the most tonnage in the USA annually.**
4. **The most profitable railroad in the USA.**
5. **The single largest tonnage item hauled by railroads in the USA.**
6. **Roughly the number of ISO containers in worldwide service?**
7. **Roughly the number of containers handled by railroads in the USA annually.**

Email your answers to rgblocks@mac.com . Person(s) who provide us with the “best” answers in the sole “opinion” of the judges “who while reasonably informed will remain anonymous forever” will be named winner. Ties will be broken in favor of the earliest entry (email sent time). Is there a prize you ask? Stay tuned.



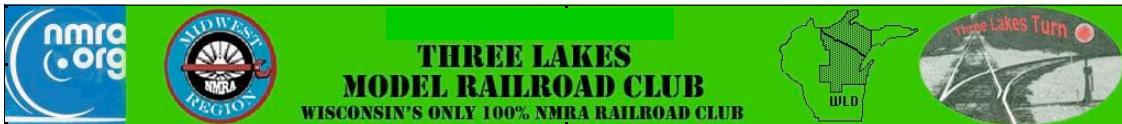
The Demmer Library invites you to...

**“Connect with Your Community
@ the Demmer”**

Wednesday, November 14th, 2012

at 2:00 p.m. AND 6:30 p.m.

In the Lower Level



ALL-ABOARD for an afternoon with the

Three Lakes Model Railroad Club (TLMRC)

**Learn about model railroad building & meet
others who share an interest in railroad models.**

Fun for all ages!

No registration is required for this free event. For more information visit the Demmer Library at 6961 W. School St., Three Lakes, call us at 715-546-3391, find us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/demmerlibrary.org> or visit us online at www.demmerlibrary.org

***Stock built Atlas Signal Tower Kit in HO:
and what I did to make it a better model***

by P.A. Wussow

I started the idea of the Kit-A-Long last year before a number of us found ourselves in need of medical care or as care-givers to members of our families.



A number of folks were able to work on and even finish the towers by this time and others are just getting started. About mid September I thought it would be fun to fill in some time down in Glen Ellyn by building the signal tower, not as a kit-bash or with major modifications, but rather enhance the kit with small additions and careful painting and weathering.

According to my photo data it was September 14, 2012 that with airbrush in hand I started to construct my signal tower.

This Kit originated by Atlas was perhaps inspired by Fine Scale Models (FSM) Signal Tower #30 by George Sellios. It was a craftsman kit using strip wood and thick fiberboard for the brick walls and the shingled roof. Atlas reproduced the kit in plastic and along with many other Atlas kits the tower has become a classic on many model railroads.

Back in the early 1980s John Olson produced a series of articles for Model Railroader Magazine and later combined the articles into a book entitled: Building An HO Model Railroad With Personality. Keith and I saw his layout in person at the 50th anniversary celebration of Model Railroader. John presented many ideas for building and detailing plastic kits while building his project layout. His efforts were a strong influence on my work.

Story of My Tower

This Atlas tower would have started life as an “Armstrong” tower using levers to control the interlocking. (See my clinic on this topic). Later in life the tower would have been upgraded to a Union Switch and Signal Company relay controlled interlocking system. That conversion eliminated the “Armstrong” levers and replaced them with an electronic control panel and relay racks. In the last few years flat screen LCD panels capable of displaying an entire division have been added to

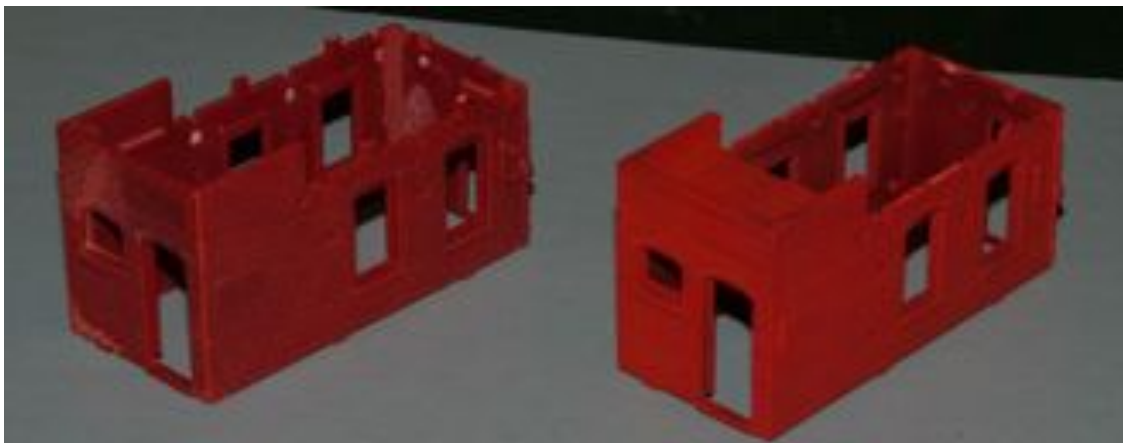
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the operator's desk. This photo (below) shows an actual Union Switch and Signal control panel in operation.



Brick Detail

After cementing brick walls together I airbrushed one kit with Floquil caboose red as a base color to kill the plastic shine and provide a base for mortar and additional weathering. This photo shows the before and after of the brick section assembly.

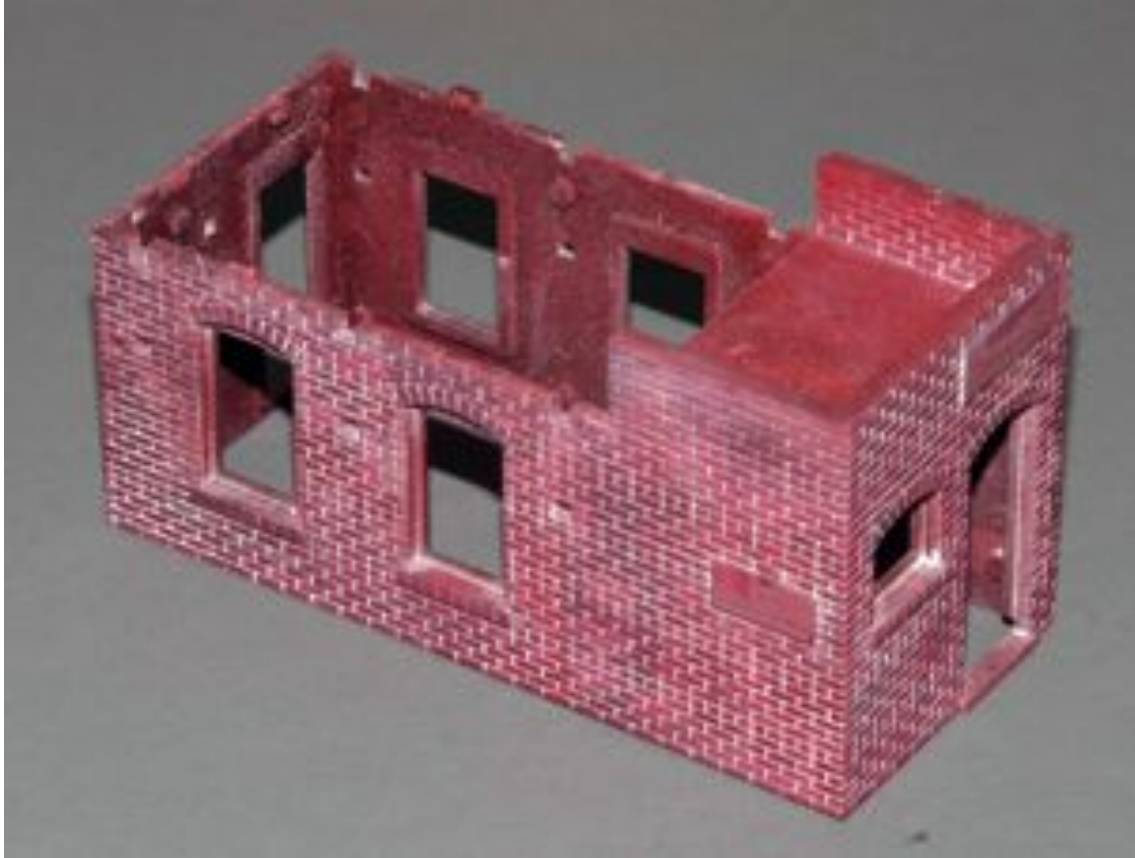


To provide mortar lines between the brick detail I used pastel chalk. Using a #11 blade, I scraped basic white and a small amount of black artist pastels onto a paper

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and mixed them to achieve the desired mortar color. I then used a stiff brush to work the chalk into the grout lines on the walls. A quick coat of Dulcoat showed I needed more chalk. I redid the last step but with a damp thumb cleared most of the chalk off the brick before recoating with Dulcoat.



Dealing with the woodwork

I next concentrated on parts that represent wood but are made from plastic. Dividing up the parts by color to be painted I airbrushed base coats on to the walls, windows and doors. I followed John's color suggestions and attempted to get some faded paint effect on the wood.

You can see (below, next page) I failed to achieve the aging perfection sought and only was able to reproduce a small area of faded paint. This was due to having to take a time out from modeling and letting the yellow paint harden before soaking it with thinner to bring out the Roof Brown undercoat. I later went back and remixed a darker yellow by adding roof brown to paint the outside of the second floor.

What I saw as imperfection was actually the non-uniformity we find in life. My paint job was not what I'd sought; however, it provided an acceptable illusion.

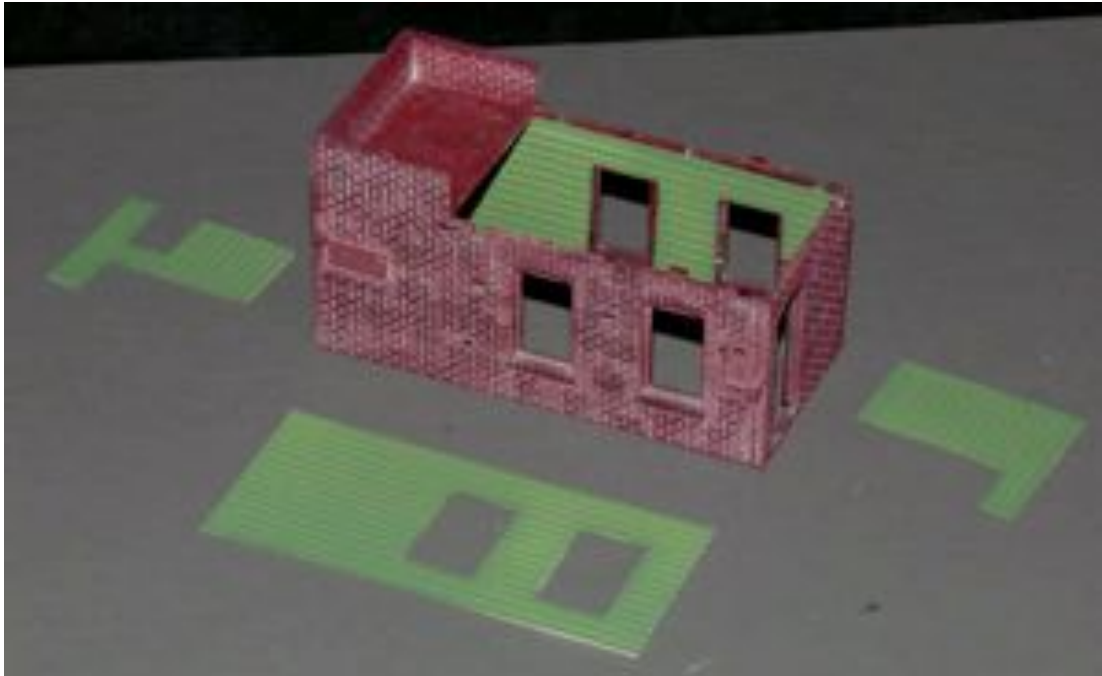


Adding Interior to the First and Second Floor

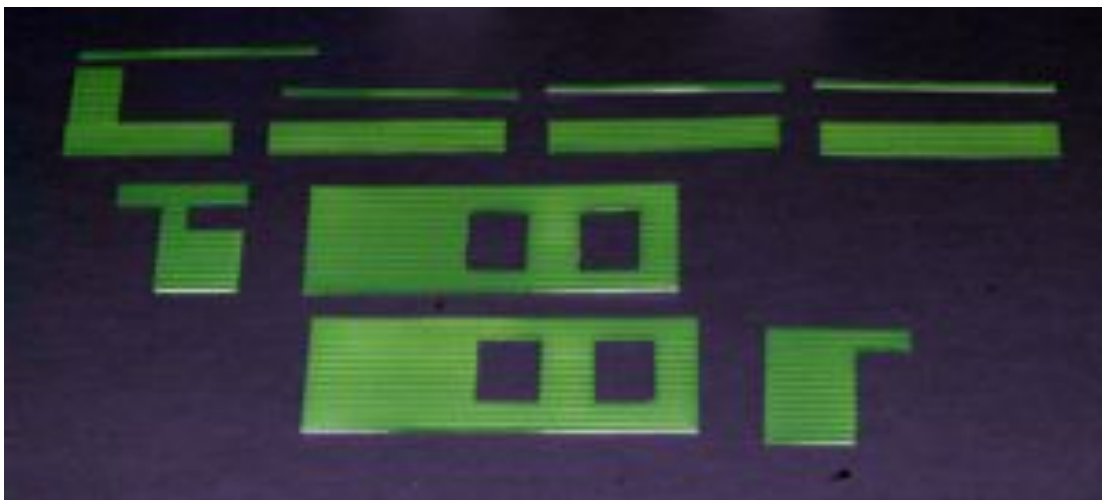
Next, I started thinking about interior detail and lighting to add interest to the tower. When you look in the windows of a stock kit all you molding vents and backs of unpainted walls. The many window openings offered opportunity to provide ample interior detail with expectation that it would be seen and appreciated.

Having been working on a few scratch-building projects I have collected quite a bit of Evergreen plastic so I started by fitting interior walls within the tower. A light-green institutional wall color (made by tinting light green with white paint) for the interior seemed appropriate as you'll see in the photos on the next page.

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The photo above shows the interior walls cut out and some fit into the lower level. The lighter the interior paint the better the view when lights are added. Ejector pins when removed from the model still protrude about 4 scale inches high. Thus, you can put in 2 X4 studs to hold the walls into the space around the windows and doors. Additional details like relay cabinets and a desk fill the second floor space. File, grind or otherwise remove vents from the doors and windows or they will show when viewed close-up.



Here we see the upper level walls before installation.

Sub-assemblies and Test the final Assembly

This kit has at least 2 complete sub-assemblies that allow you to work on each section on its own and then put it together and check to see how it is coming together. I did this many times. During a test fit of the building and with the placement of the windows I noticed that the white color of the windows on the ground floor drew attention to them and there was no reason for focus on these windows. My solution was to find a color that would prevent them from standing out while remaining a contrasting color so as not to be lost in the brick and weathering. My answer was CNW Dark Green. So it was back to the Airbrush and turning the windows green. I used the windows from a second kit as they were on a sprue and easier to paint. Compare the color effect in these 2 photos. The one on the left is aesthetically more pleasing.

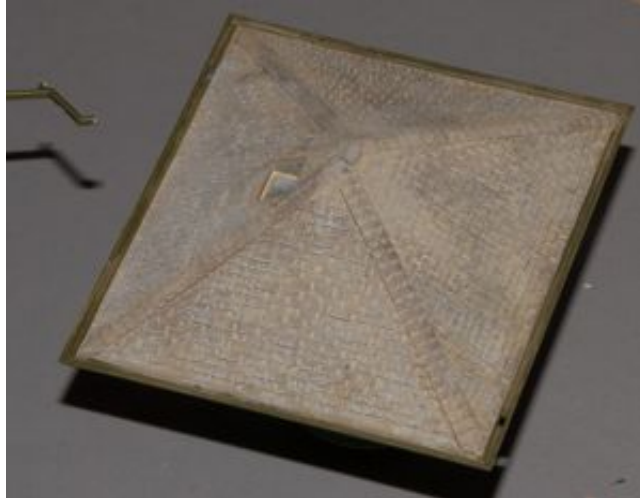


Roof

I put the roof off to be the last major part to work on because it does top off the building and most of the time the people are looking down on the building's roof. I had used John Olson's technique on my Atlas station with great success some 30 years ago and was a little worried about how I would do this time around. Starting with the airbrushing of the roof with gray primer and letting it dry for a number of days, in my case weeks, I started to fill in the gaps between the shingles with a wash of Floquil Roof Brown and thinner. I was pleased that the longer drying time and the new formula of the thinner did not hurt the plastic. I remember the bottom edged of the station's roof starting to melt with the layers of Dio-Sol, not this time the new formula did not cause this problem. After a day or two of drying time I added the aged wood color using Floquil Mud (it falls between Earth and Depot Buff) giving the roof a mixture of aging shingles. The final touch before weathering was to dry brush the edges of shingles with gray primer to highlight the edges to make up for the sunlight we fail to have on our layouts.

Ending Up in the Gutter

While I say I finished the roof most would agree that the gutters are part of the roof as well, but I might point out there other parts of the gutters, like down spouts and drains. These presented another problem as the normal gutter back then was galvanized which rusted over the years or if replaced would be a selected color of modern gutter. Traveling



about I found a building of a similar age with Copper gutters that weathered with a patina of dark greenish brown. Once again wanting to these elements to take somewhat of a back seat to the overall tower I chose the greenish brown over rusted silver. It took a few tests but with small HO scale 1

X 6 painted and rusted I could see how the darker color fell back while not being lost to the viewer. (By the way the 00000 sable brush used to paint the inside of the gutters costs 1.5 times the cost of the kit.)

At this point I will end my newsletter article on the kit as I have yet to detail the plastic base to look like wood. The base that comes with the kit is very helpful is gluing up the brick walls. I have also not addressed weathering nor explained construction of internal details on each floor or addition of the lights. I assure you there is more to come and I will be adding many photos of the process to the Kit-A-Long Web pages accessible from our home page.

See www.tlmrc.org and look for this project. Good luck on your version. Share your ideas and we'll all do a better job.