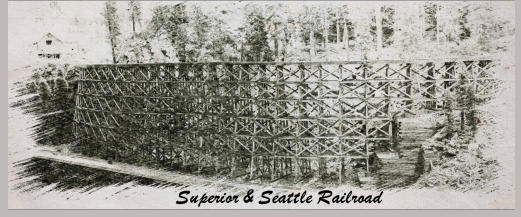
Volume 4 - 25 Number 4



April 1, 2025

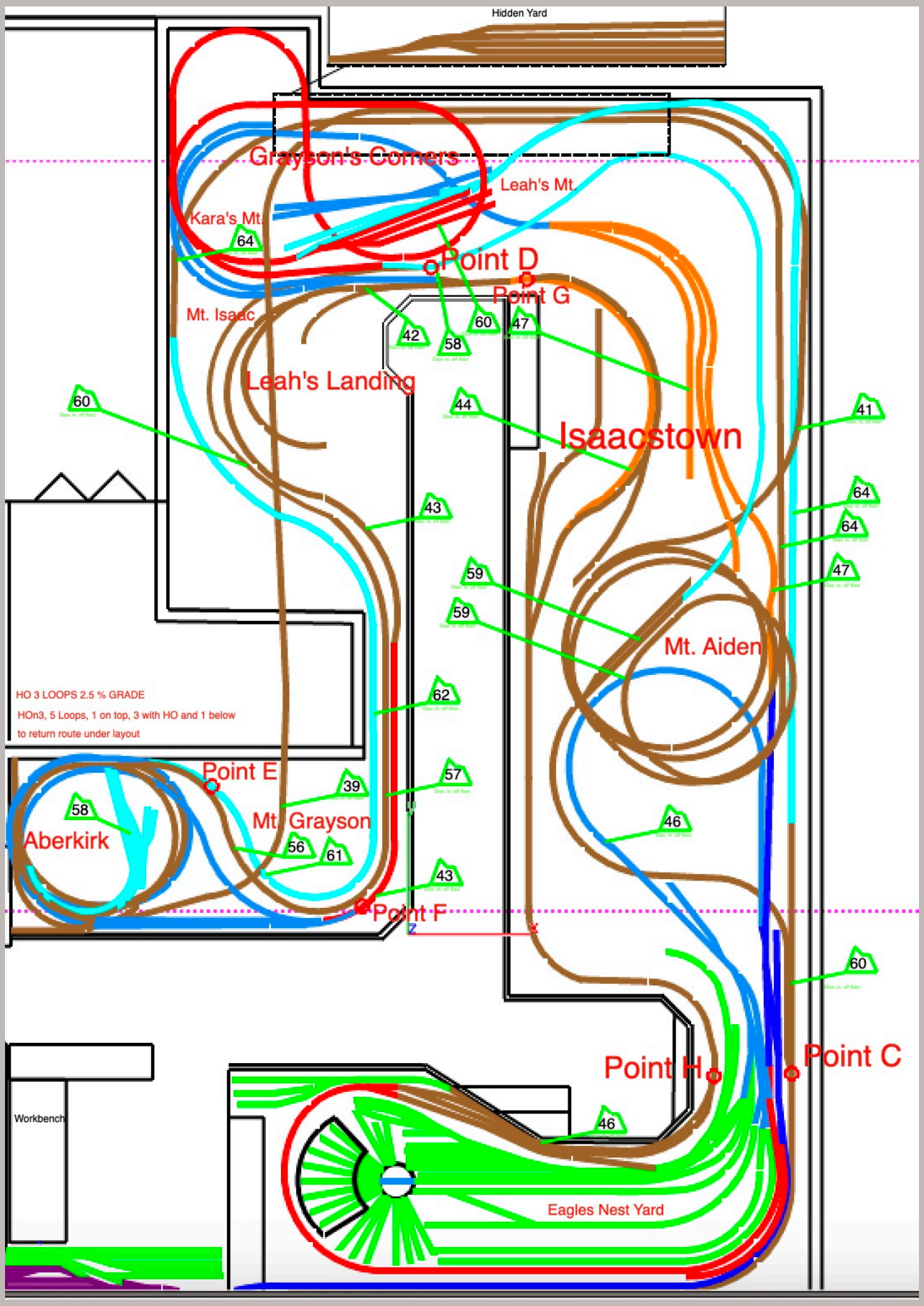
The Superior & Seattle Railroad & Interchanges

Gazette

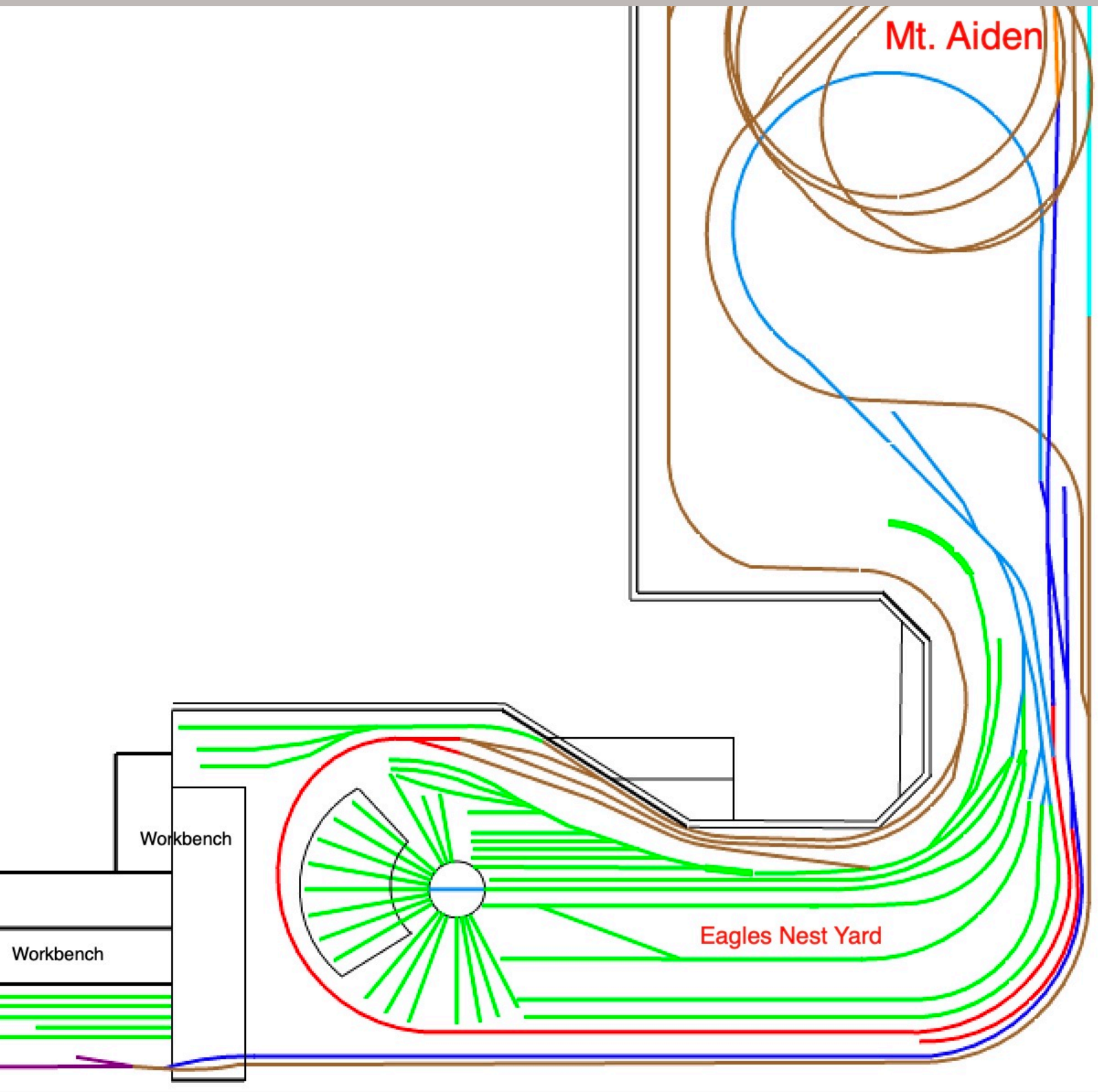


In this issue we will explore more of the Eagles Nest Yard on the Superior & Seattle Railroad. A few more photographs from our train working the yard.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



This concludes our trip around the Superior & Seattle Rail Railroad, for now. These photographs will be used to make changes and improvements in the areas that are finished and will also be used to help design the areas that are yet to be completed. I definitely need to weather the locomotives and rolling stock before the next tour of the layout. I'm concerned that I may run out of projects by the time I'm 105 (about 40 years from now for those that are counting). In our next issue, I will start a photography project where I will start photographing the finished portions of the layout using the focus stacking technique that Karl Osolinski taught me. Stay tuned.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

What's new on the Superior & Seattle Railroad

This month has been a great month for article submissions. We are up over 250 pages for this issue. It looks like a lot of us are getting to spend some time at our workbenches this winter and even better writing build articles for the S&S RR & I Gazette. Please consider writing an article on your layout or diorama build. Last year the article submissions got pretty thin in the summer time when everyone was enjoying their outdoor activities. There were a couple months where I was really discouraged about keeping this eMagazine going. I would also like to encourage emails with comments on the articles. This is the only way to encourage authors to keep submitting articles.

I have been spending a lot of enjoyable time at my new workbenches. The three weeks I spent late last fall remodeling my workshop have really paid off in modeling efficiency and enjoyment.

With this issue I'm continuing the more detailed build thread on my modeling activities. Please let me know if you would like more details on a particular technique or have questions of any kind. I continue to improve my modeling by reading build threads. I seem to always find another technique to try or a simple trick that helps with a task. The discussions of paints, pastels, and glues are always helpful - the products are always changing.

I'm spending most of my modeling time working on the structures for Isaacstown. I'm also working on the design for Leah's Landing but at this point I'm a couple years ahead with the design work. This summer, I hope to start some operations on the layout. This will help me work out the kinks in the track work. I'm going to start with a small group and see where it takes us.

At this point, I'm dealing with a very bad case of Spring fever. We just spent a couple weeks in TX visiting my oldest daughter and her family and the summer like weather and outdoor activities really motivated me to get spring started back here in Michigan. Unfortunately, we drove back home from the airport in a snow storm.

In this issue of the S&S RR & I Gazette - Vol 4, Number 4 - April 25

1) The Superior & Seattle Railroad Track Plan - Eagles Nest Yard 1 - 28
John Siekirk
2) What's New on the S&S RR 29
John Siekirk
3) In this Issue 30
4) Comments on our Last Issue 31 - 32
5) What's on my Workbench - The building of Isaacstown - Part 27 33 - 76
John Siekirk
6) The Franklin & South Manchester Railroad - Part 36 77 - 117
John Siekirk for George Sellios
7) Bob Van Gelder's - South River & Millville Railroad- Part 9 118 - 163
John Siekirk for Bob VanGelder
8) Karl Osolinski's Workbench - Part 8 164 - 168
John Siekirk for Karl Osolinski
9) Tellynott and Shadowlands RR - Update 169 - 179
Mark Dalrymple
10) Building "Cooper's Way," a Bar Mills Kit - Part 3 180 - 205
George Nagle
11) Tuning Plastic Freight and Passenger Car Trucks 206 - 215
Jerry Beach
12) Prototype Structures that Need to Be Modeled 216 - 238
Mark Dalrymple
13) Building a Indoor Vented Waterfalls Paint Booth - Part 3 239 - 254
Bernd Fanghanel
14) Superior & Seattle RR & Interchanges Statistics & Information 255 - 260

Comments on our last Issue

The S&S RR - Some more lovely shots of your masterpiece, John. I particularly enjoyed the shots at the rear of the roundhouse. Such a small area, but it packs a real punch with your scenic attention to detail. The stark white of the aspen trunks with their crooked nature really stands out.

Comments from last issue - Thank you for the comments on my work, Mike, Terry and Jack. I really find this kind of feedback helps keep me motivated. The Selleys product I use to fill the gaps in my plaster walls is, I believe, what you might call a light weight spackle.

What's on my workbench - Some more fantastic progress, John. An extra detail you might consider adding is board ends in your longer pieces of decking. I would imagine in the USA, just like NZ, it would be very unusual to have boards longer than 20' in length (70mm, or just shy of 3") - often significantly shorter. Here, we typically have decking in 14', 16', 18' and 20' lengths. As someone who has built a number of decks, this is something that I immediately notice. The decking besides Chester Rawlings appears longer than this. I would suggest actually cutting the boards to standard lengths (to suit your joist spacing) and mixing them up, so that the various colours of the different boards swap within each length.

The painting racks are a great idea. I've made a quick one up, but need to do a few tweaks for the Mark 2 version.

The F&SM - A very enjoyable journey around South Manchester. I love studying the many different ways George has used the Magnuson resin walls. The side wall of the J. M. Brunswick building where the top two stories of the Magnuson Burndout's fireproof warehouse make up the visible top half of the side wall and the freight doors, that would need removing and another wall spliced in their place, have been hidden behind the unusual sloped Parker and Davis weatherboard structure, is a fine example of George's endless imagination. I also enjoyed the wonderful light patterns from the internal view of the stone station.

The South River and Millville RR - It's always interesting to see what Bob has done with all those SRM kits. I enjoy seeing the different views from the tracks.

Karl Osolinski's workbench - A lovely rendition of the FSM seafood emporium. I love all the extra details, especially the man leaning out the window to talk to his two mates.

Building Coopers way, pt 2 - A very nice build of what looks to be a great kit. Very comprehensive thread, George. I'm looking forward to the next installment.

Cheers, Mark.

I just had a chance to skim through the latest issue of the Interchange. I'm actually 3 issues behind in really reading them. Being a CPA, my free time is limited right now.
You are amazing with both turning out an exceptional magazine and keeping pace on your layout,
Thank-you for brightening up my day
Frank Rawson

Thank you very much,
Mark Wellhausen
Harrison Township, Michigan

What's on my Workbench - The Building of Isaacstown - Part 27

John Siekirk

Structure Builds covered in this issue: Jim McGee's Fine Furniture (Chester Rawlings FSM Kit 220), Butcher's Way (FSM Kit J5) and Barongould Tannery (FSM Kit 250)



I thought I would start out this issue with a photograph of the kit boxes for "what is on my workbench". The yellow boxes on the right are in various stages of the build process. The SRMW boxes and the FOScale boxes are here for reference on the design of Leah's Landing.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

Jim McGee’s Fine Furniture



We left off in our last issue with Jim McGee’s Fine Furniture ready for the detailing. The baseboard was in the detailing area of my workshop.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Before I started adding scenery and detail castings, I wanted to layout where the fencing was going for the Butcher's Way Complex that was going directly behind Jim McGee's Fine Furniture. I'm using a drill controlled by a flex shaft in this photograph for the post holes. The two photographs below show the motor that drives this and the foot pedal that control it. I bought two of these motors on sale for the price of a Dremel that I needed to replace. I burned up a couple Dremel motors trying to use them with a flex shaft. The motors shown have lasted more than 20 years.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Foot pedal on my rolling workbench that controls the flexible shaft drill motor. I use this tool for a lot of different tasks. If I need it on the layout I can move the stand that it hangs from and attach it to the layout baseboards. One of these motors will be spending a lot of time in Isaacstown as I start doing the final detailing.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



A photograph of Jim McGee's Fine Furniture with the detail castings starting to go in place on the workbench. I will be adding a lot more detail when I can combine the process with the Butcher's Way build. As you can see, some dirt and sawdust along with some detail castings has been added. I always do my detailing in iterations. I will be taking the baseboard back to the layout once the Butcher's Way area is completed to see what will be visible from both the aisle way and the track using the camera car. I will take photographs and mark them up on my iPad before completing the next iteration of detailing.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



A photograph of the detailing process with the baseboard on the layout, adding castings and saw dust. I collect the saw dust from my fine grit belt sander (240 grit) which produces realistic HO scale saw dust. The sawdust from my 80 grit belt sander looks too coarse for HO to my eye. I'm just getting started with the details here, Studying the photographs gives me ideas for improvements.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

I just added a note on my iPad photograph that I need to add the tar on the roof detail castings. I start each note on the photograph with a check off box so I have a check sheet as I finish the model. I also added a note to hit the yellow trim on the office with another coat of A&I. Too bright for my taste.



The start of the detailing process from another angle. The turnout and track in this photograph is temporary. The turnout is going to be moved along with the connecting track now that I know the exact locations of the structures in the area.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



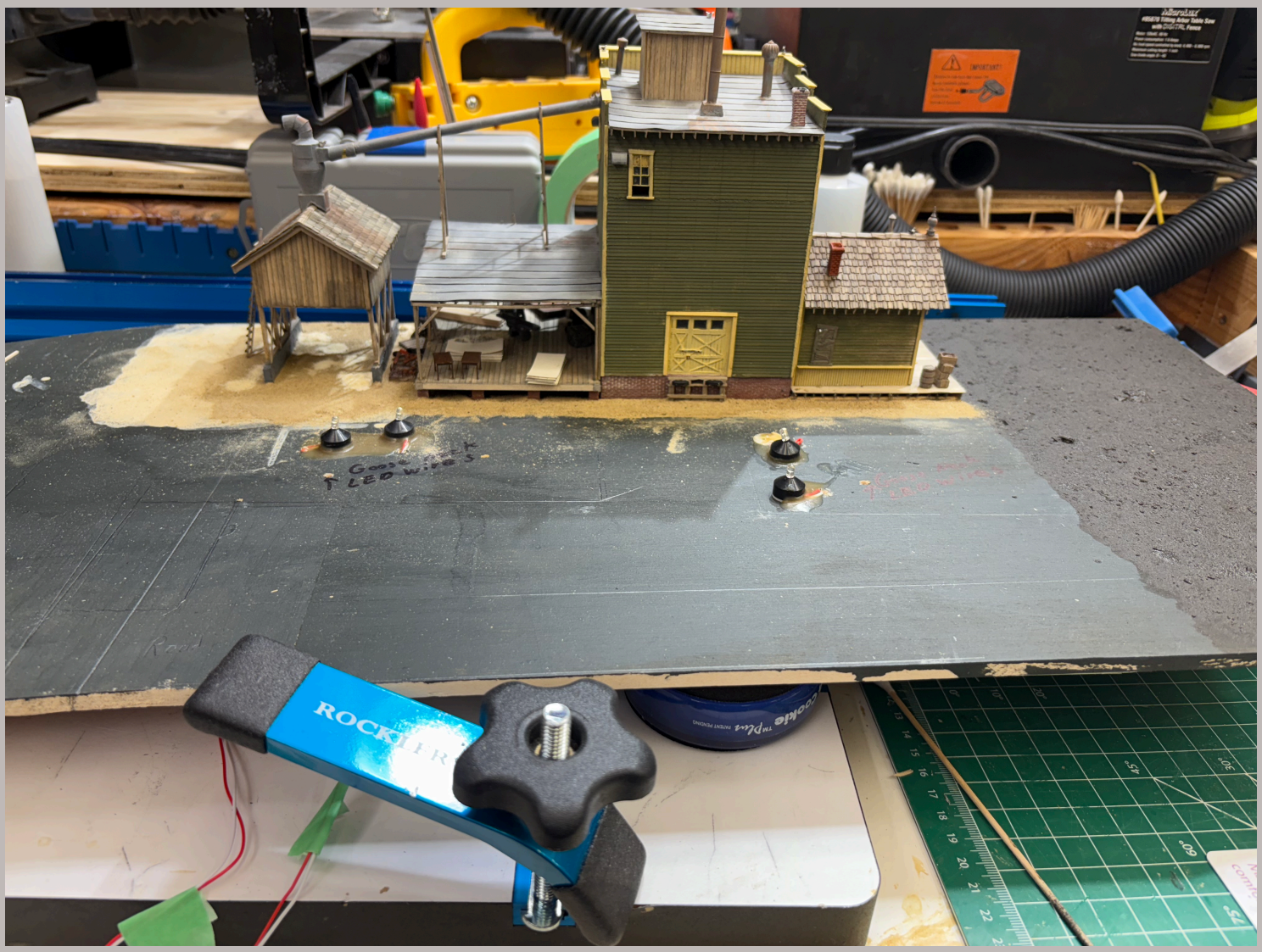
The end view. The turnout and track will be repositioned now that the exact location for the structures has been set.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Another photograph of the details added so far. This gives me the viewing angle of the structure as it sits in location on the layout. We are looking at the structure from a position in the aisle in front of Beach Farms.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



The baseboard has now been moved from my detailing workbench to the rolling workbench where I have more room. I use the T-slot clamping system to hold the baseboard in place so it doesn't tip when I lean on it in the wrong place. You can see that space for the wiring is achieved by using bench cookies.

In this photograph on the far right side I have started adding the mud that will be inside the fenced in area for Butcher's Way. I have made a few notes below on the process (See Butcher's Way Build section). The peel and stick LED's that I'm using for some of my interior lighting can be seen in this photograph. The lights shown will provide light through the windows of the Butcher's Way Structures for the night time scene.

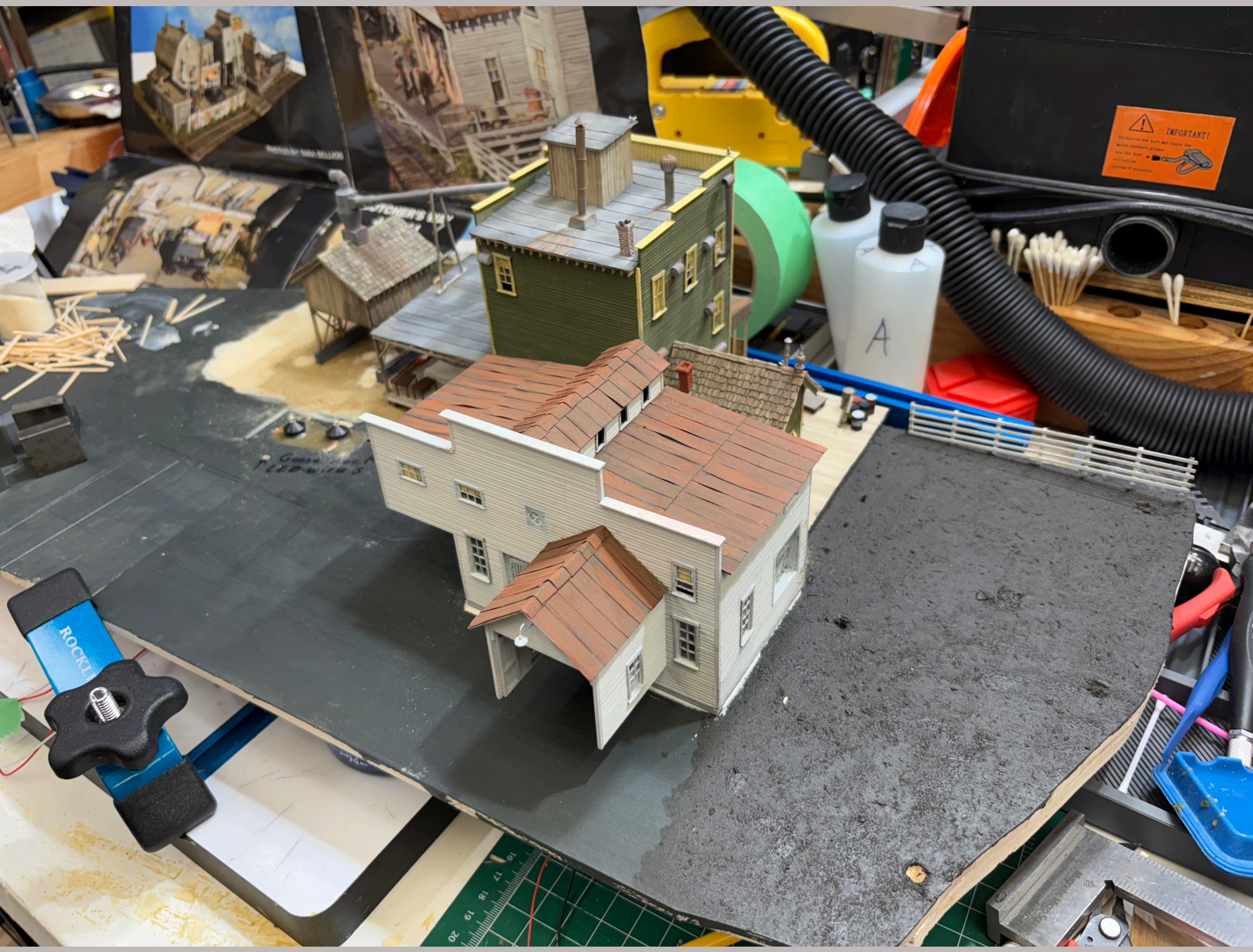
John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

Butcher's Way (FSM Kit J5)



We ended up the last issue with the application of the roofing on the base structures for Butcher's Way. I will first go through adding the structures to the baseboard and then back track to the application of the mud on the right of the baseboard in this photograph. In this photograph the wires for the goose neck lighting are being threaded through the baseboard before it is glued down.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



In this photograph the first structure, the Butcher's Shop, has been placed in its final location and glued down. The building was positioned so the driveway through the left side of the structure lines up with the back door on Jim McGee's Fine Furniture.

Also, notice the glue around the LED lights. The lights and wiring are secured with lots of extra glue so the wires are not pulled out during installation. If a light has to be replaced after construction, a hole is drilled from underneath. It is much easier to do when the baseboard is on the workbench.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

The photographs showing the locations of the LED's are very useful if the lighting needs to be fixed. I always take a picture of the inside of the structure so I know where I can drill a hole for a new light, if necessary. These build threads are an excellent way of keeping notes on the build. I have looked back at them for reference many times. I have backup files with all of the build threads that I did back in the forum days. I have 20 years of build history. If you are writing build thread articles for the Gazette you have an indexed record of your builds, too.



A different angle showing the positioning of the Butcher's Shop. The extra glue on the baseboard was removed with a Q-Tip.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



The second structure was then positioned using a straight edge and glued down. The light for the diner was also added before the third structure was glued down. I use the prewired LED lights for general interior lighting. They work well to just show light coming through the windows.

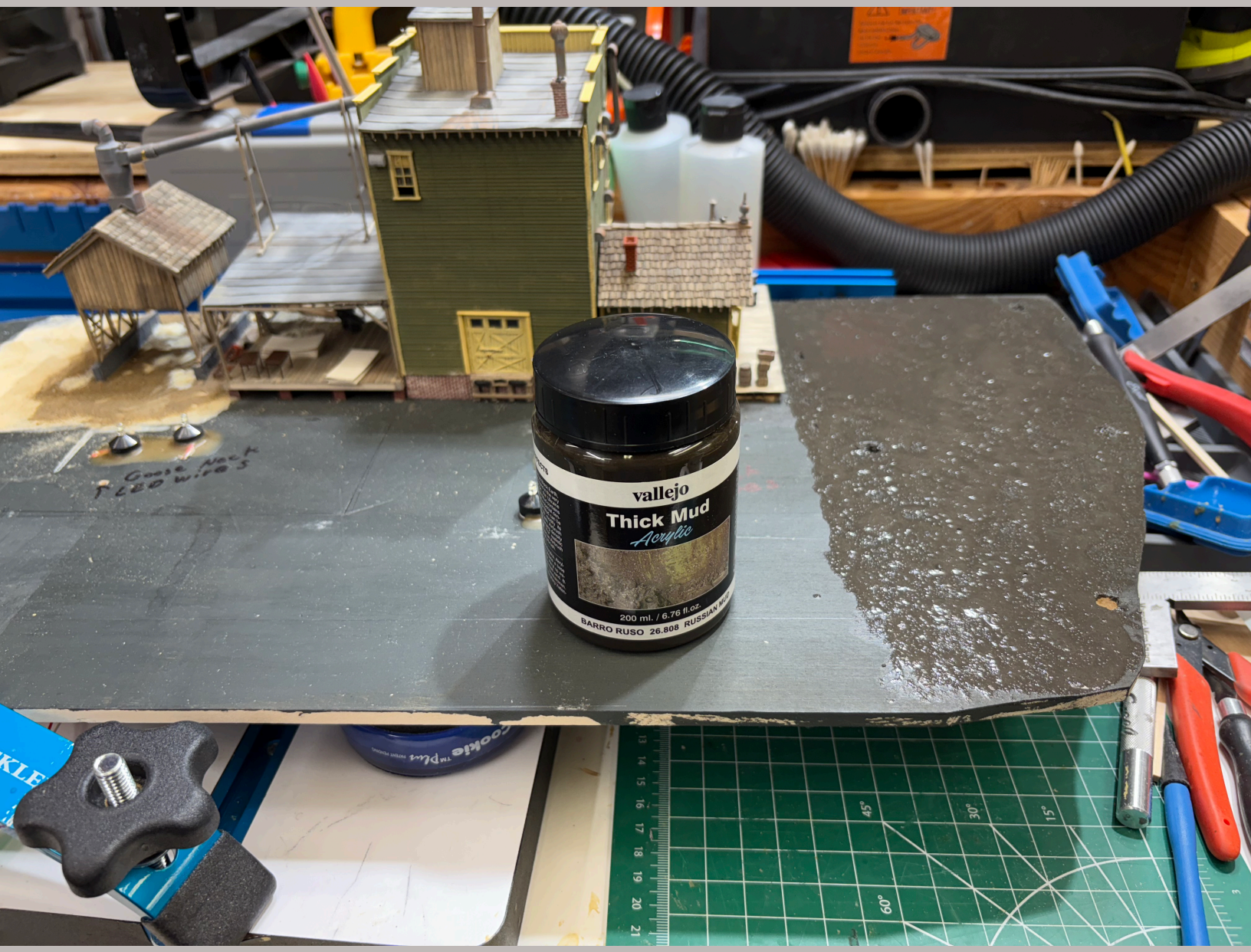
John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Positioning the diner before gluing it down. A square and weights were used to make sure this smaller structure was positioned correctly. I did an inventory of the things that I needed to do to complete these structures, before getting out the glue bottle. Rafter tails on the Butcher Shop for one. I think I have enough room to get at everything.

When I get the structure mounted on the baseboard like this I consider the build one third complete. Adding the details and scenery around the build takes 2 thirds of the total build time, for me.

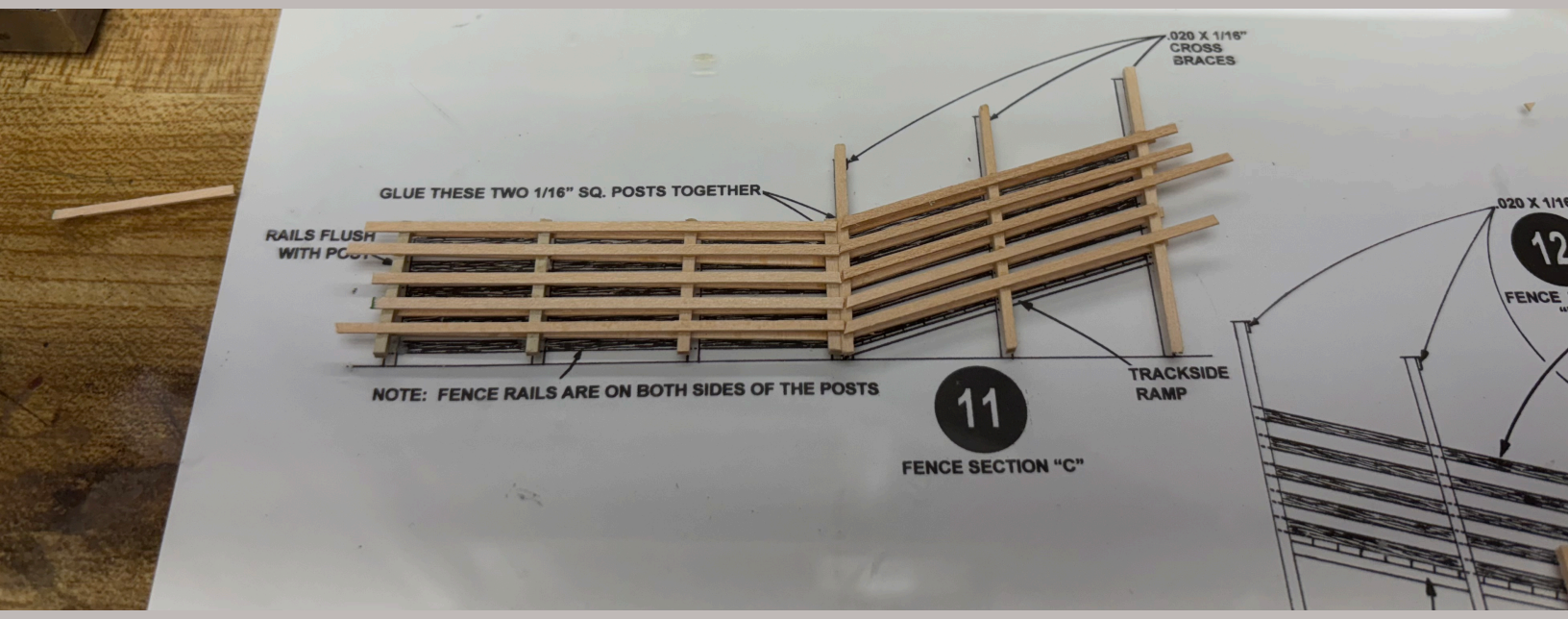
John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

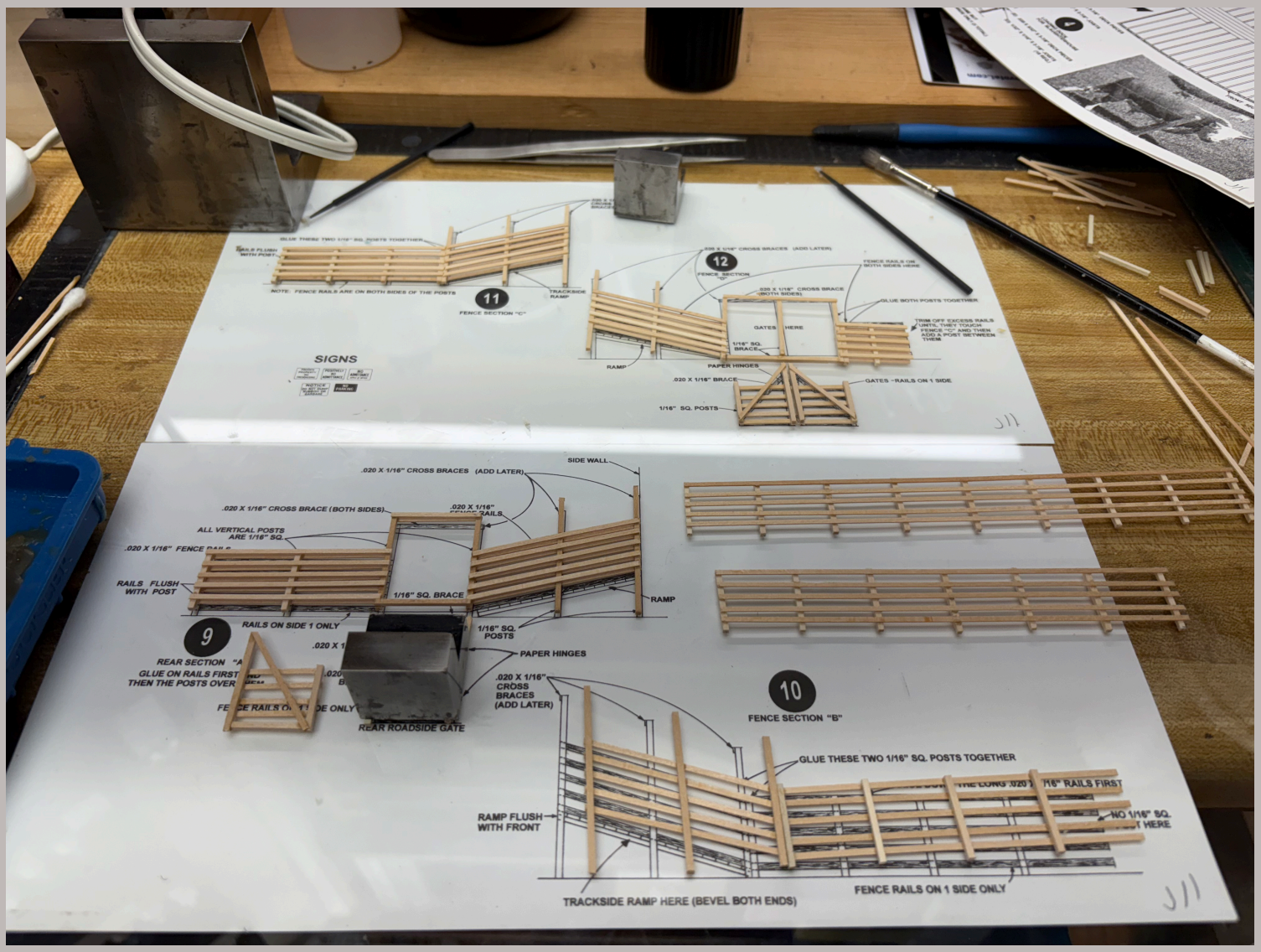


For the mud inside the fenced in area of the Butcher Shop I used Vallejo Thick Mud. I bought this for the pond and barn yard area of Beach's Farms a few years ago. It was not cheap. I found when I opened the jar that it had dried up. I was preparing to mix some acrylic paint with sand for this area when I decided to try adding water to the dried up jar. I came back to it in about an hour and started stirring it with a dowel. I soon had Russian Mud again. I decided to test it on the end of the baseboard and it went on fine and dried as I expected. I have since used this process to save a couple acrylic paint bottles.

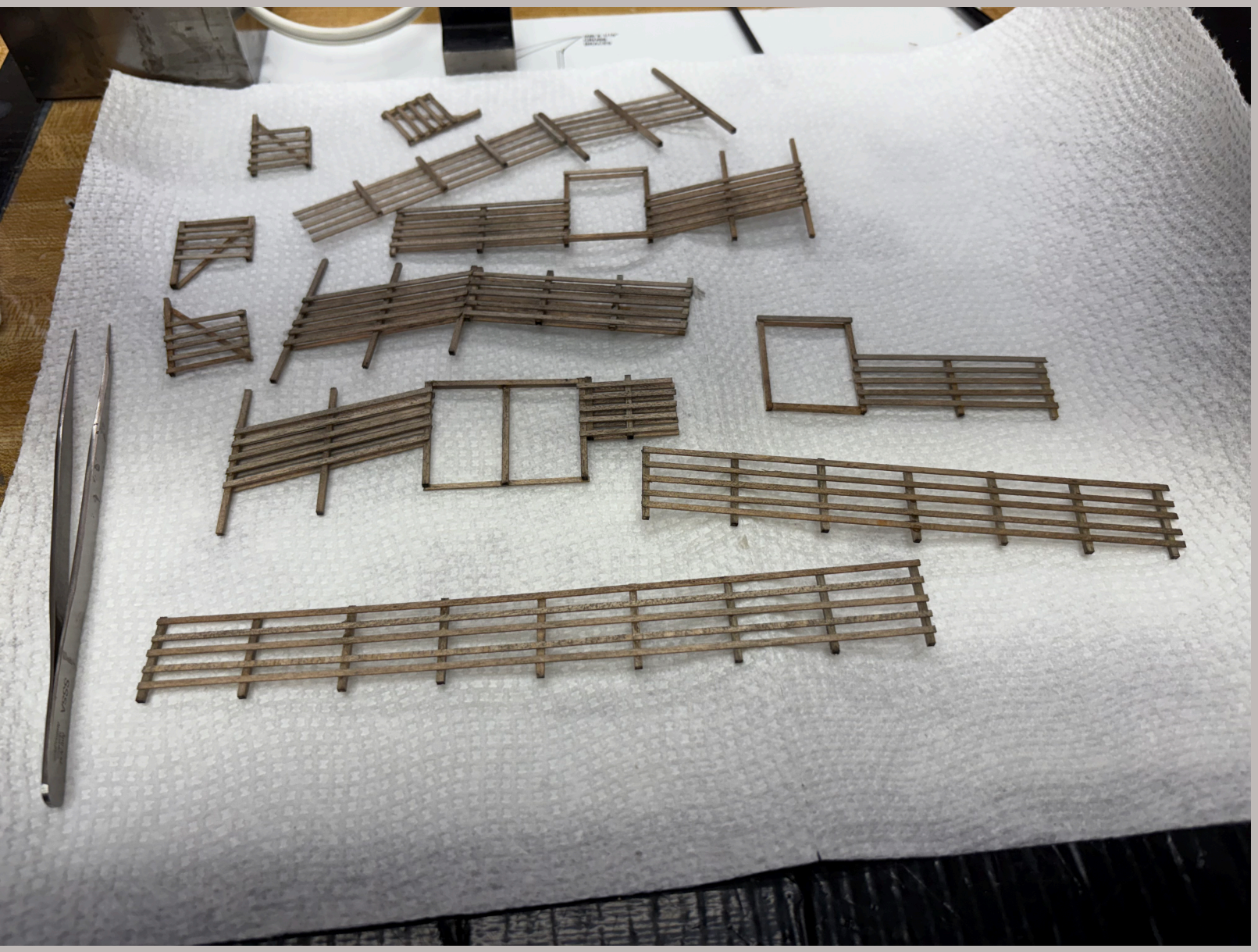
Next, the fence for the coral and unloading station.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





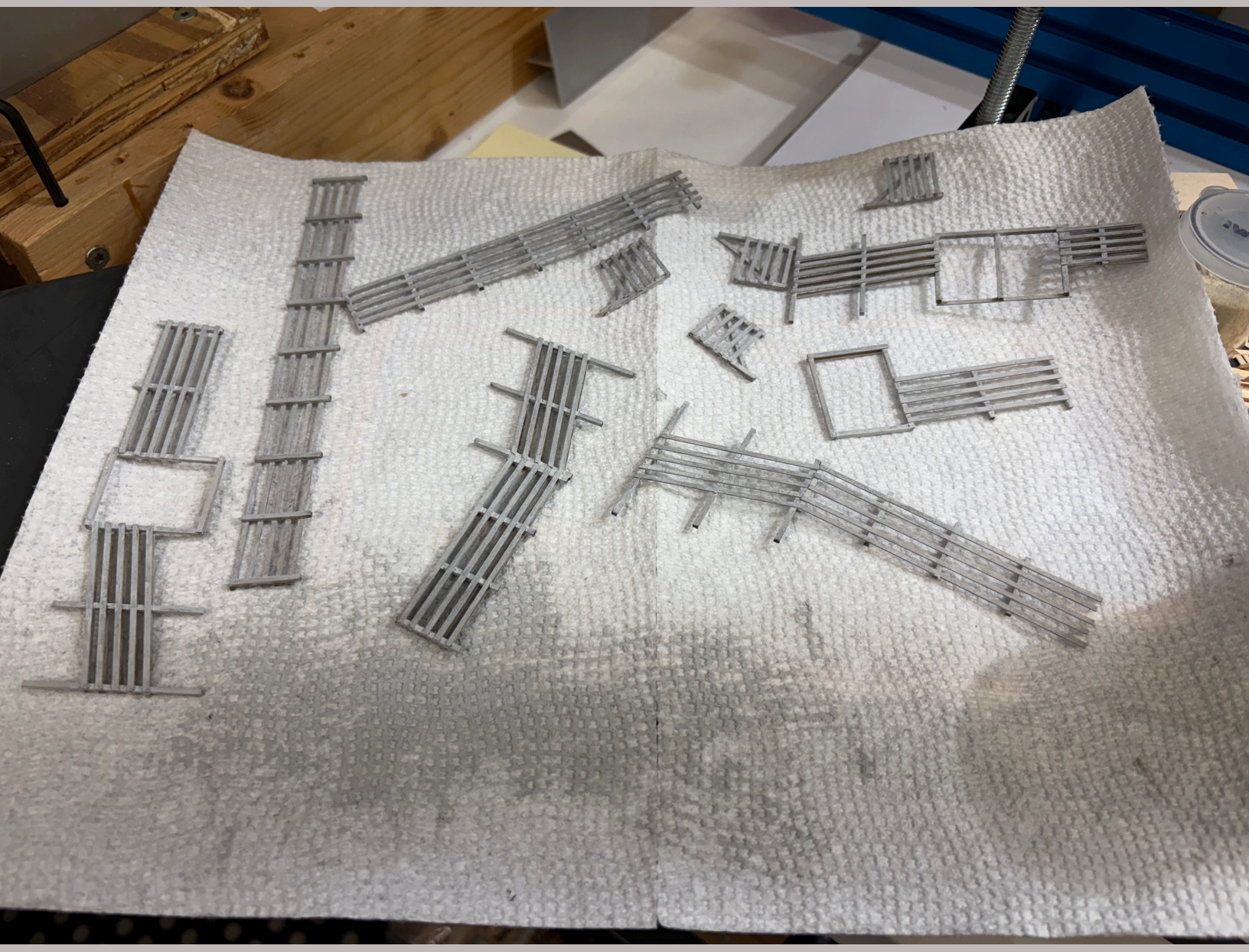
John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



The fence sections were built over the templates provided in the kit. I also made a half dozen custom sections to make the coral fit my space on the layout.

After the glue dried, all of the sections were stained with driftwood Hunterline stain and then painted with the same light gray paint that was used for the Butcher Shop Structure.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



The painted fence sections. They look a lot more grey on top of a white paper towel. I find that this light grey is as close to white as I want to use on the layout. Anything that is whiter than this just sticks out and looks terrible. We will continue with the installation of the fence in our next issue.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

Barongould Tannery (FSM Kit 250)



We will start this build with the location where it will be planted on the layout. This build will be on top of the hatch cover on the East side of Isaacstown. This will be built as one of the original buildings in town before the platform portion of the town was created.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Here the hatch cover is shown in place.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Overview of the location. The baseboard to the left of the Tannery will be the home for the FSM Baxter's Building Supply and FSM Barnstead Lumber Company kits that will be combined into a large Building Supply Company. This build will be featured in a future issue.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



The underside of the hatch showing the handle and bracing that is used to locate it in correct position. Scenery will be used to hide the joint lines on the layout.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



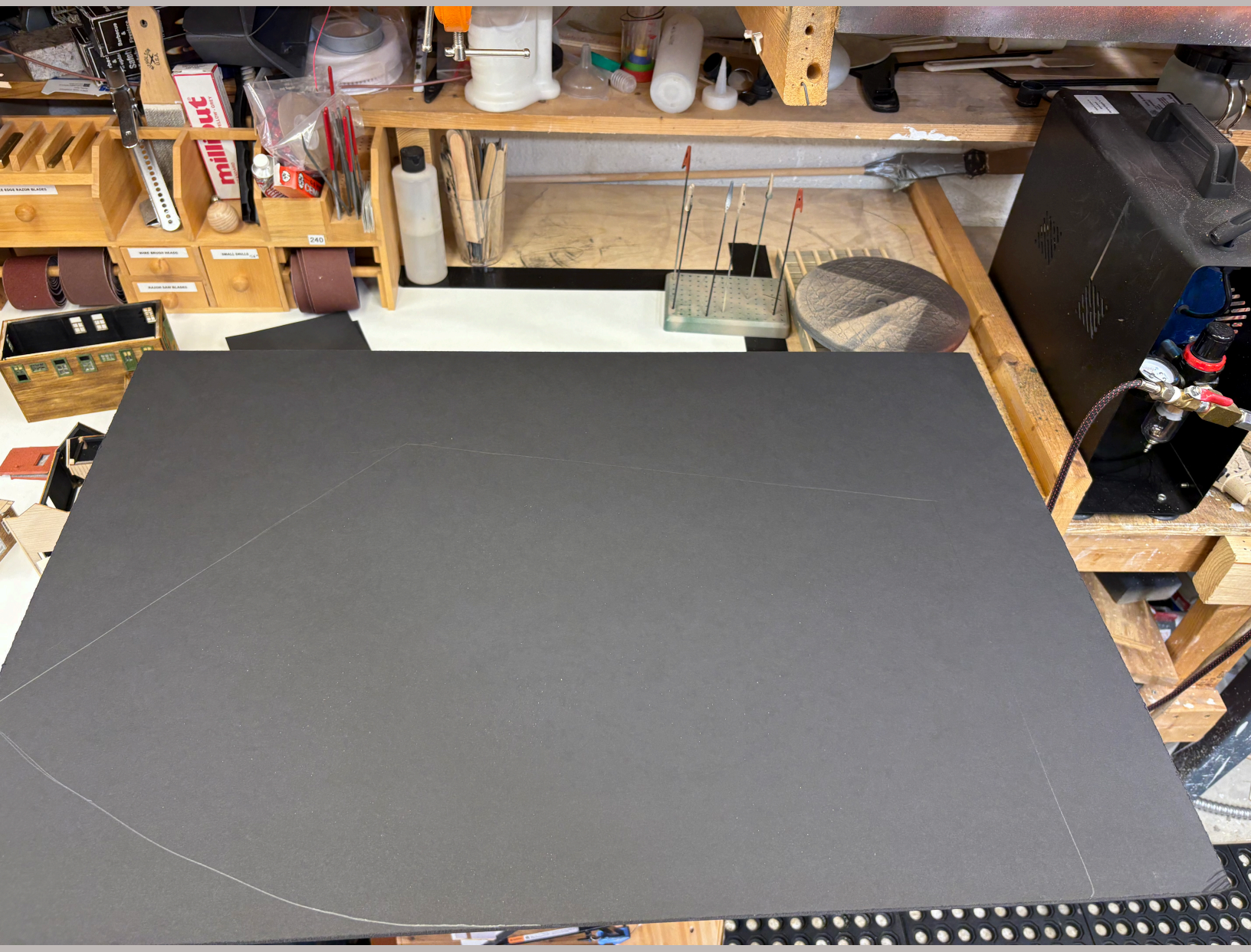
The baseboard in position in my workbench vise ready to be fitted with a gator board top plate that will be used as the baseboard for the build.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



The baseboard shape is traced onto the gator board. I like having the gator board base to work on when the model is on my detail workbench. It is light and easy to move around and position at different angles. The gator board is rigid enough for the build but I usually glue it to the plywood baseboard when it is positioned on the layout.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



The gator board ready for the knife.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



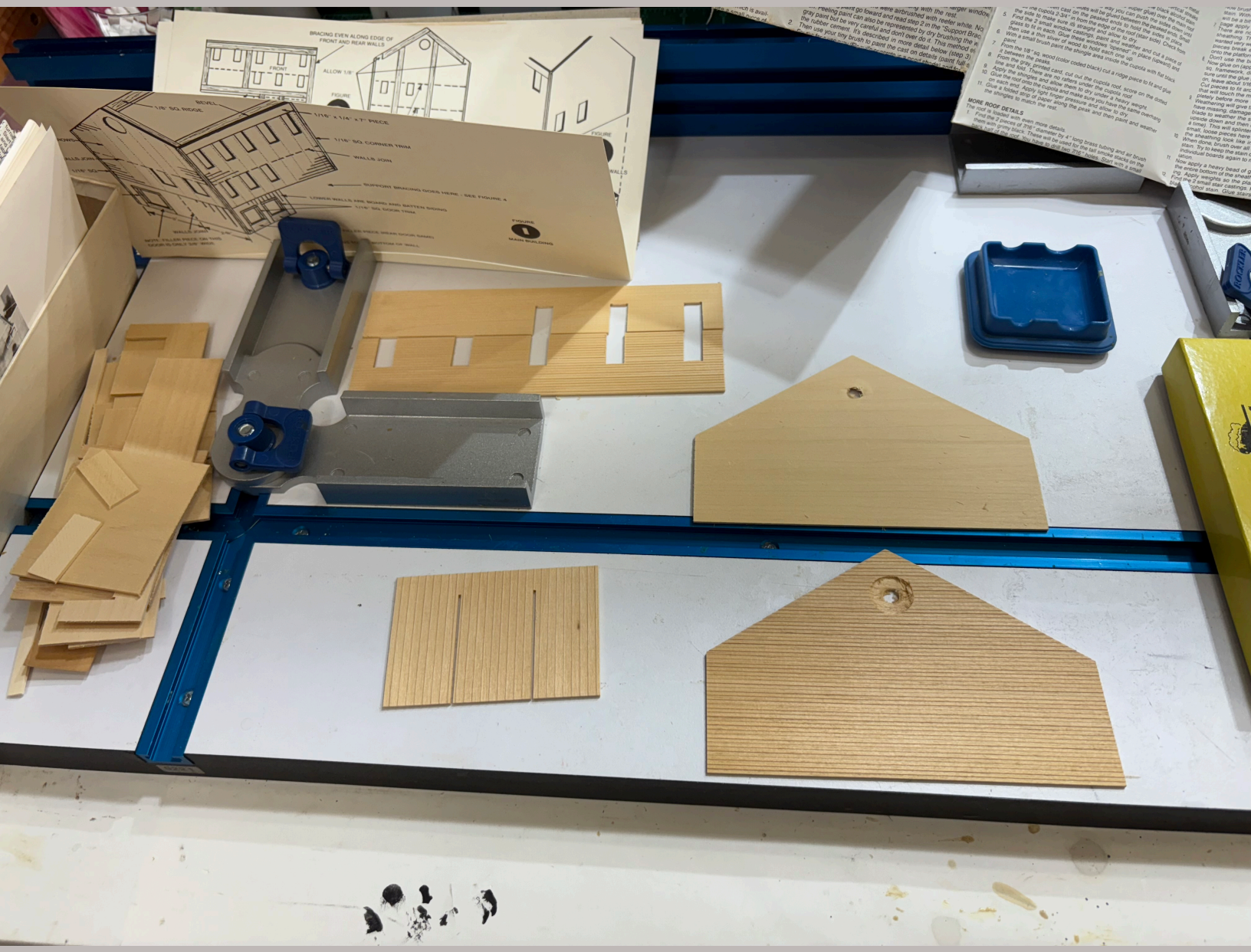
The gator board top plate is now ready for the build. I will be doing an experiment once this build is complete to determine if I want to glue the gator board to the plywood hatch cover or leave it loose so the structure can be removed without the hatch cover. This hatch is there for access to the area for major changes. Most of the area can be reached from the aisle with a long reach.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



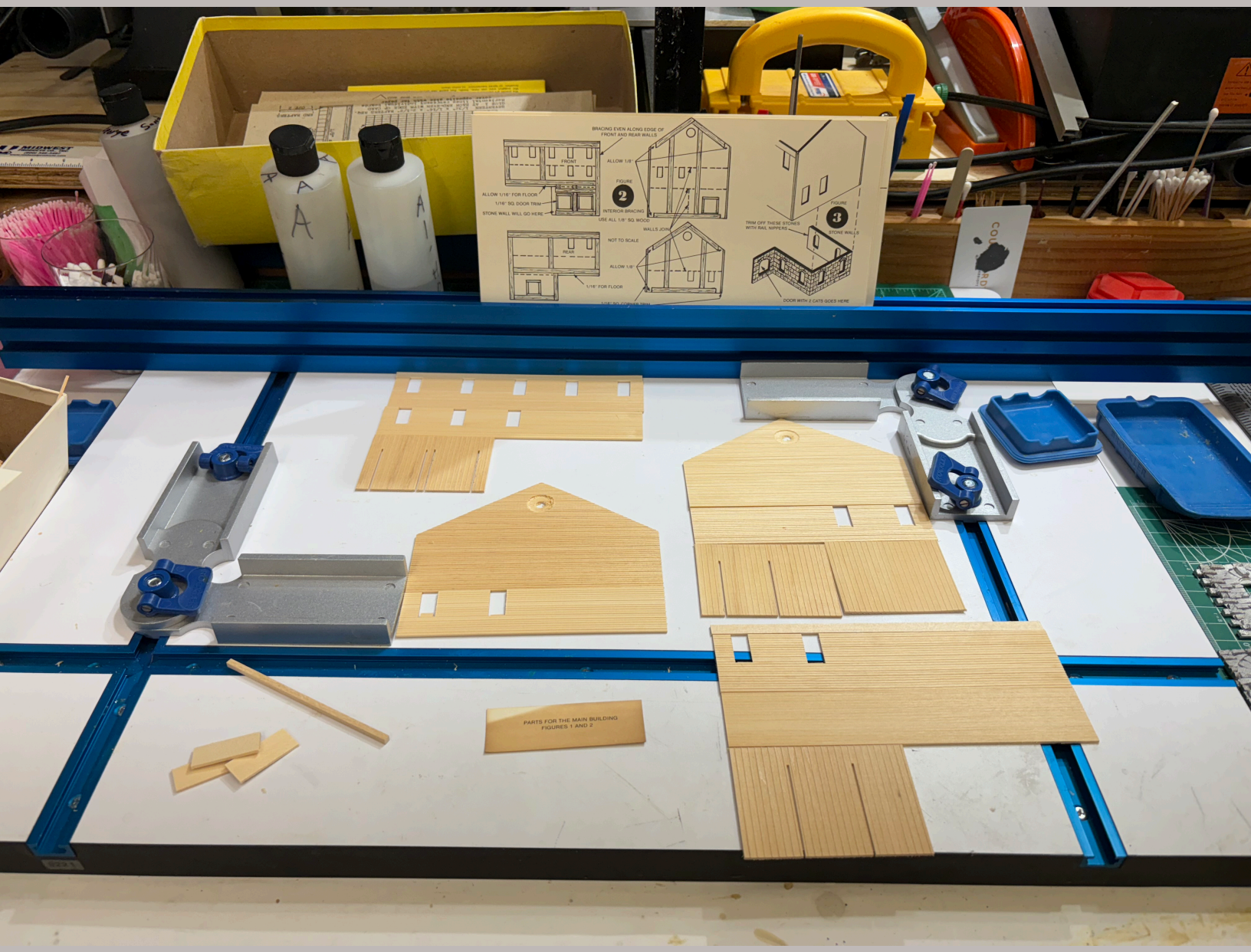
The traditional box opening photograph for this build.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



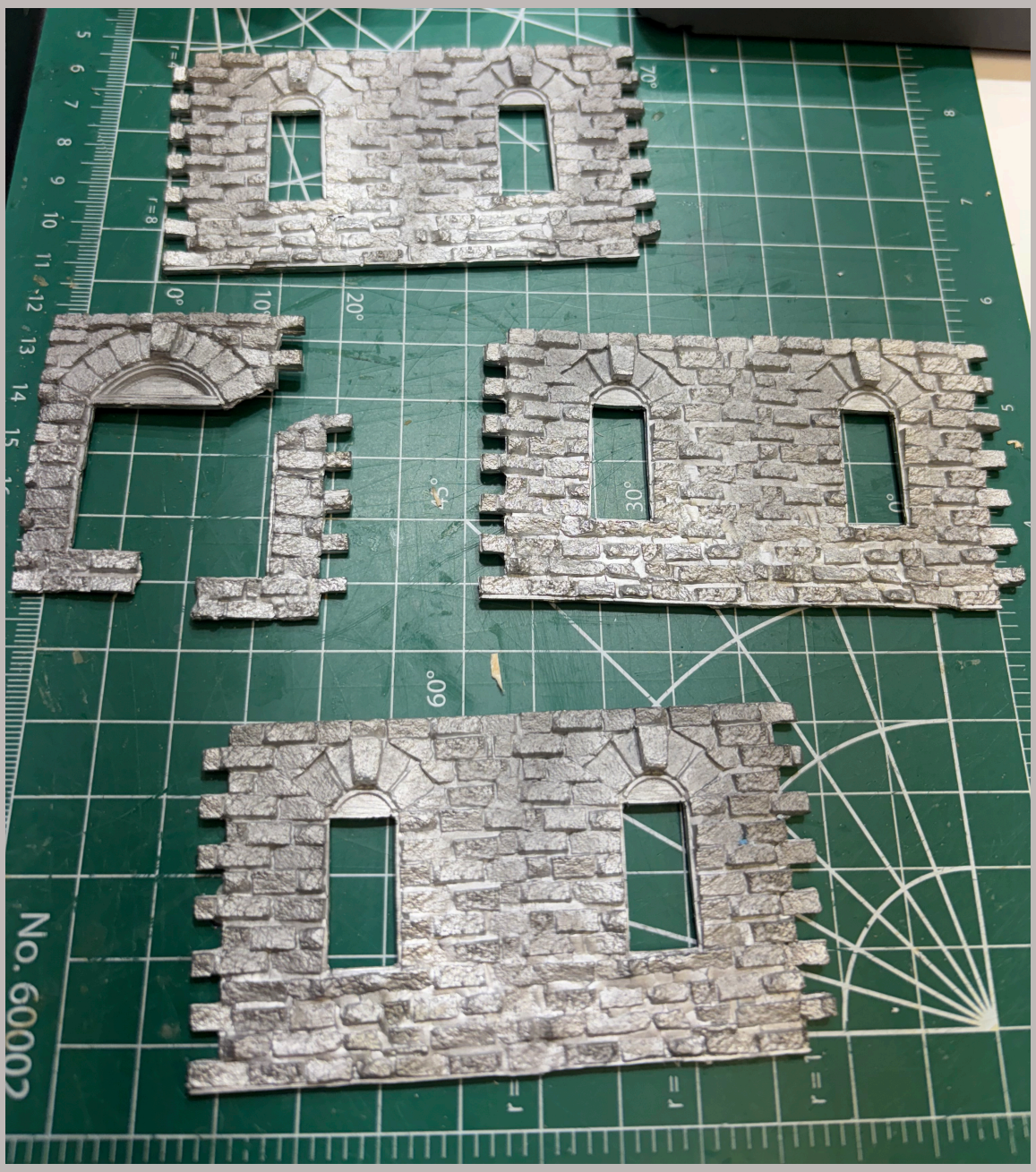
Sorting out the walls and cutting out the door and window openings. This kit is one of the older FSM kits, before laser cutting, where the window and door openings are cutout with a table saw. I use a number 11 blade to make the top cuts and the walls are then assembled by edge gluing the sections of the wall. The large round window openings were cut through using a number 11 blade.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



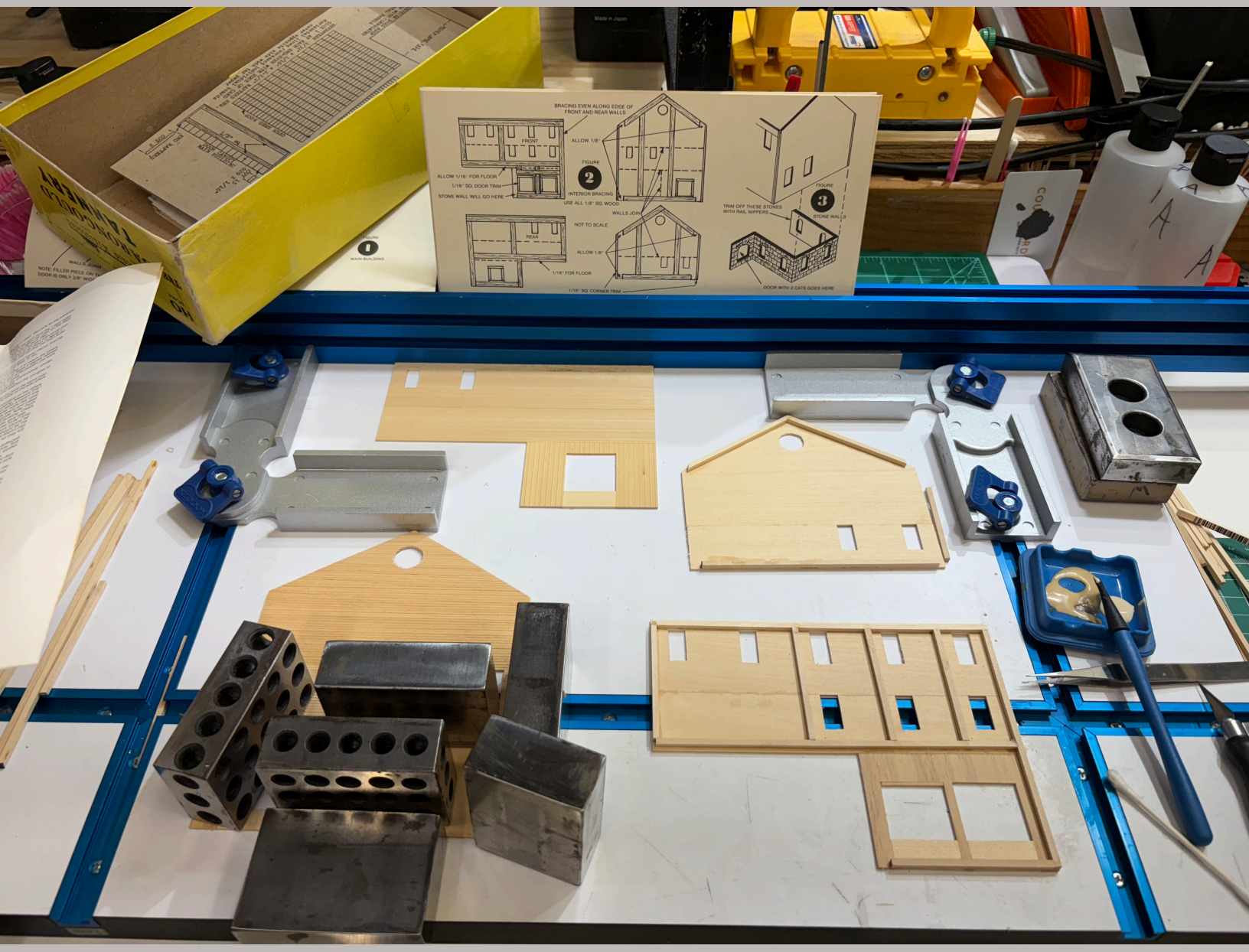
The wall sections laid out on the workbench getting ready for the glue bottle.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



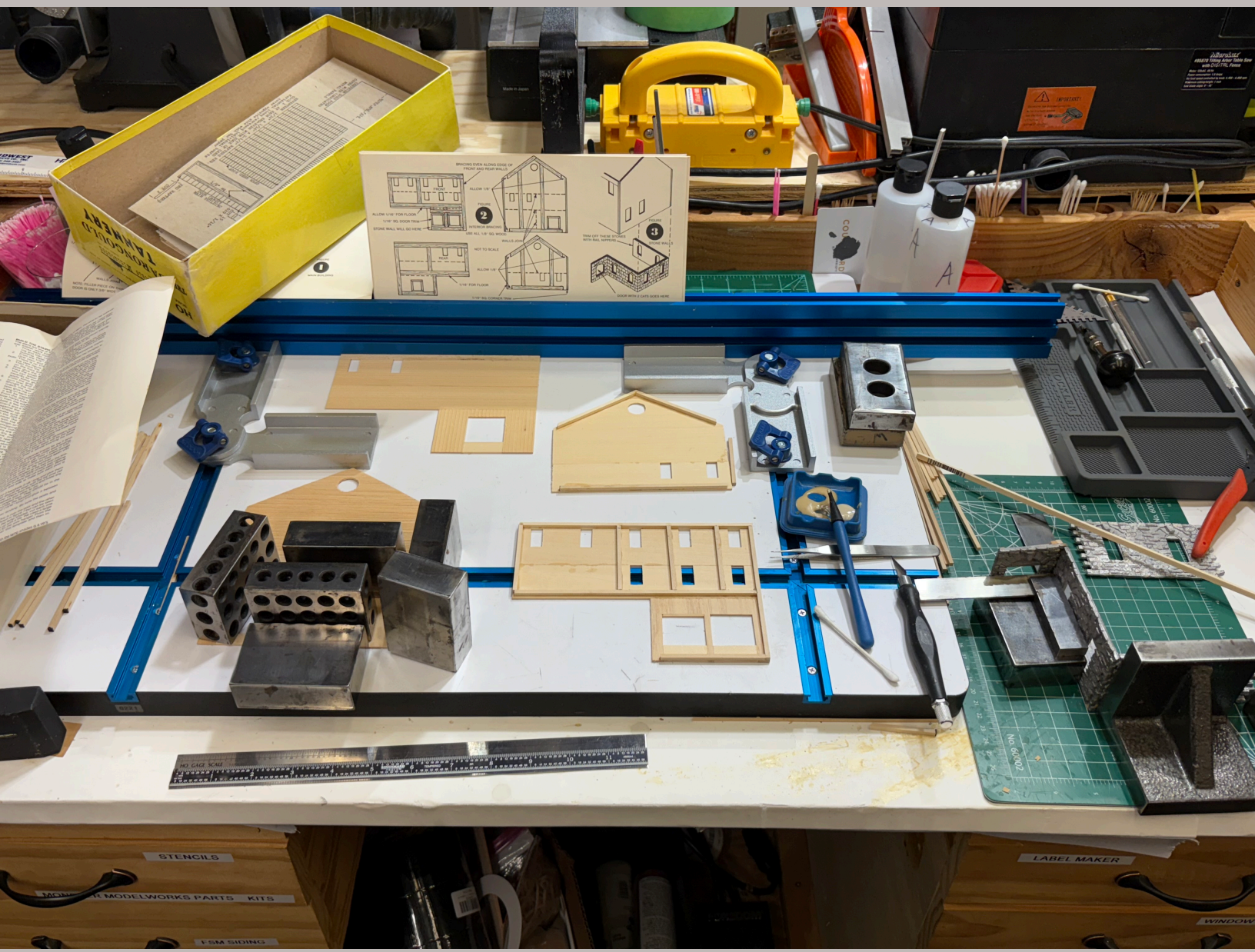
The metal castings for the stone wall portion of the tannery. I had to repair one of the castings that was broken during the many years this kit spent floating through the collectors shelves before I bought it to build it. I believe this was one of the kits that I bought off eBay (when eBay was just getting started). I only used eBay for a few years and then decided to buy directly from dealers because of some disappointments. So far, a quick inventory found that I had some roof cards missing for this build. All of the castings and hard to reproduce parts seem to be here. Stay tuned.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



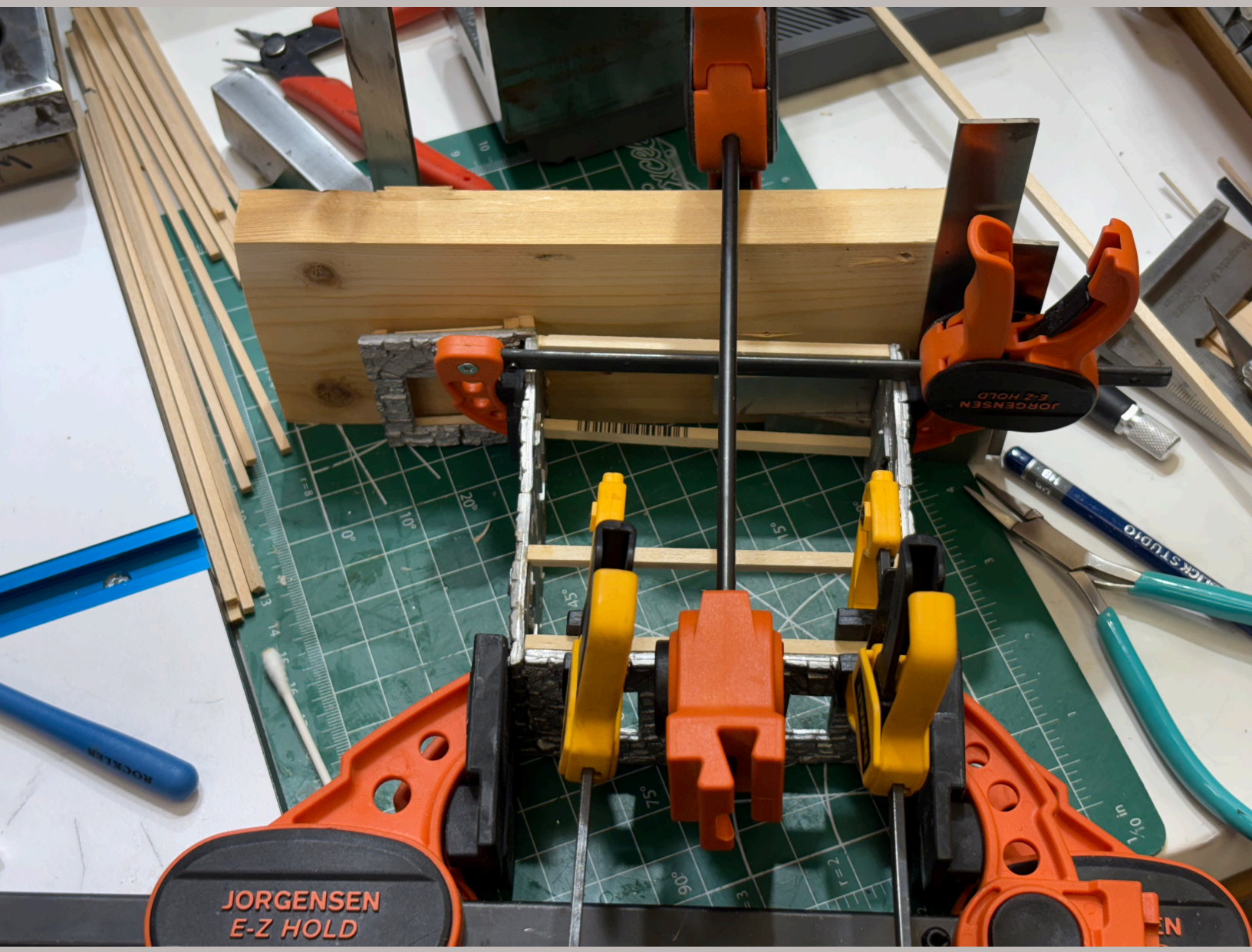
A photograph of the wall gluing process. On the left - wall sections are edge glued to assemble the wall. On the right - completed wall sections with the bracing in the process of being added.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



In this photograph, on the far right, the metal castings are starting to go together. I use the same Titebond III glue for the metal castings that I use for the wood. I find that the bond is as good as I get with the traditional epoxy.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



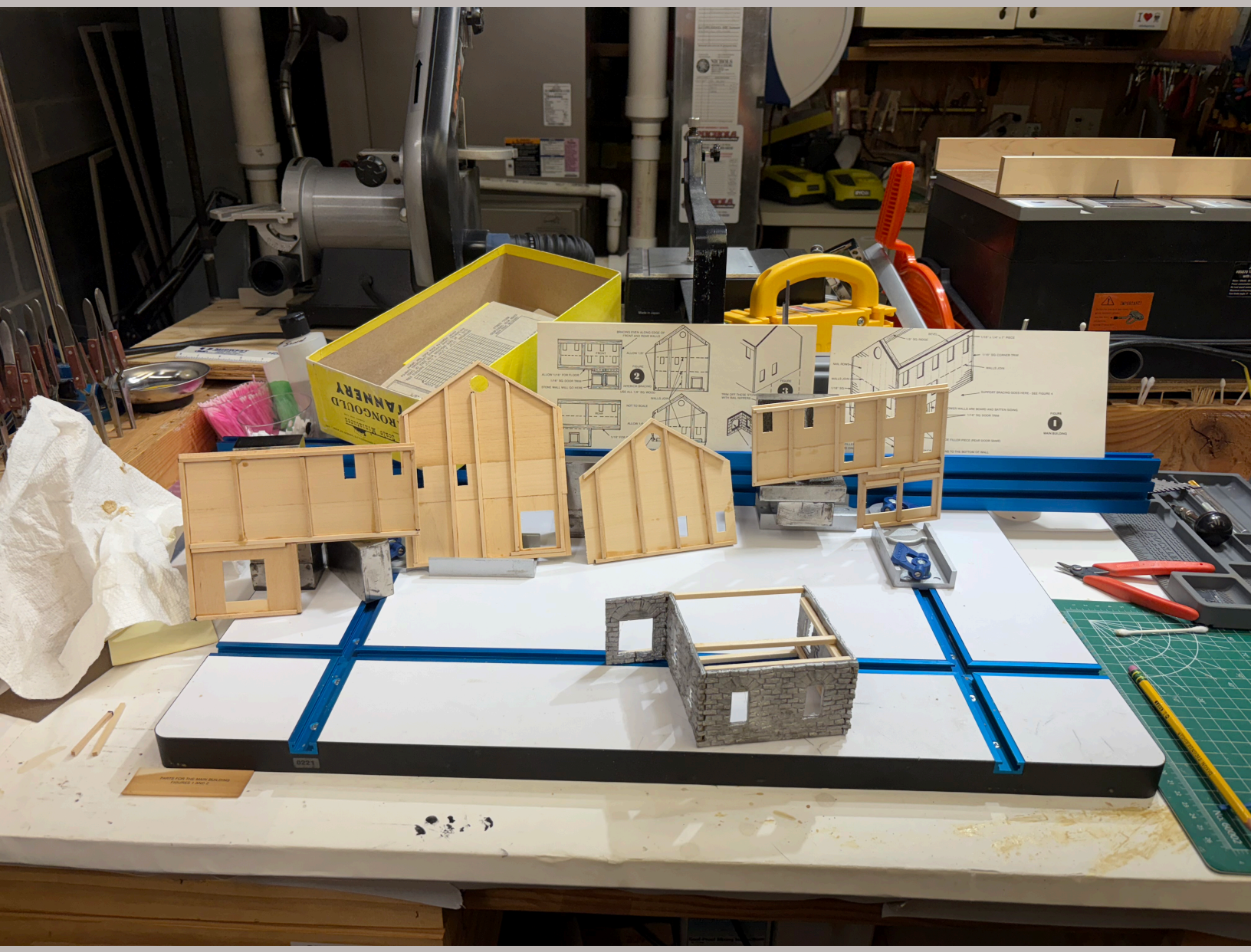
The metal castings are glued together with lots of wood bracing to help hold them in place. The wood provides a lot of strength to the soft metal castings.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



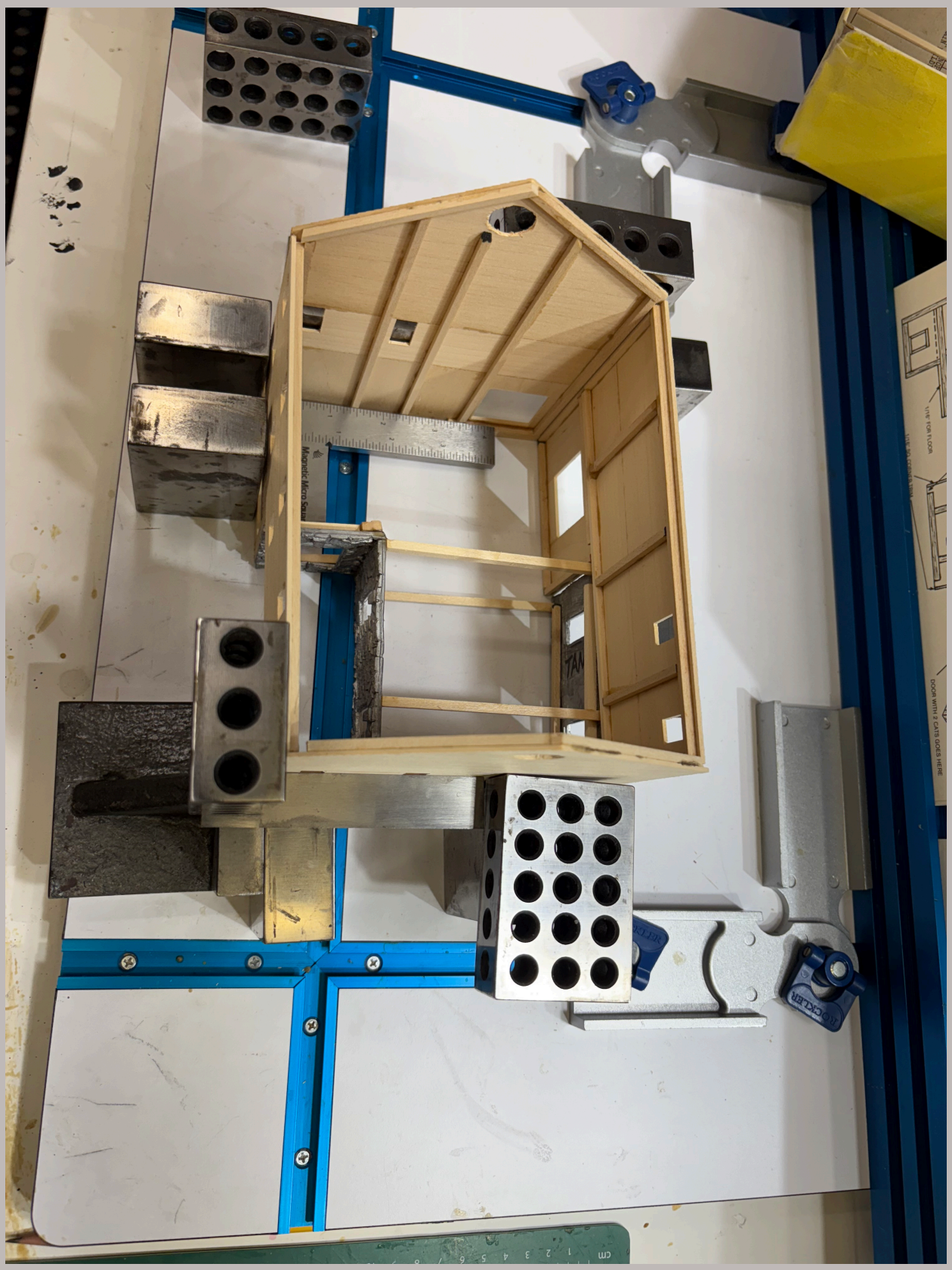
It takes a lot of clamps to get everything square and keep it that way throughout the glue curing process.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



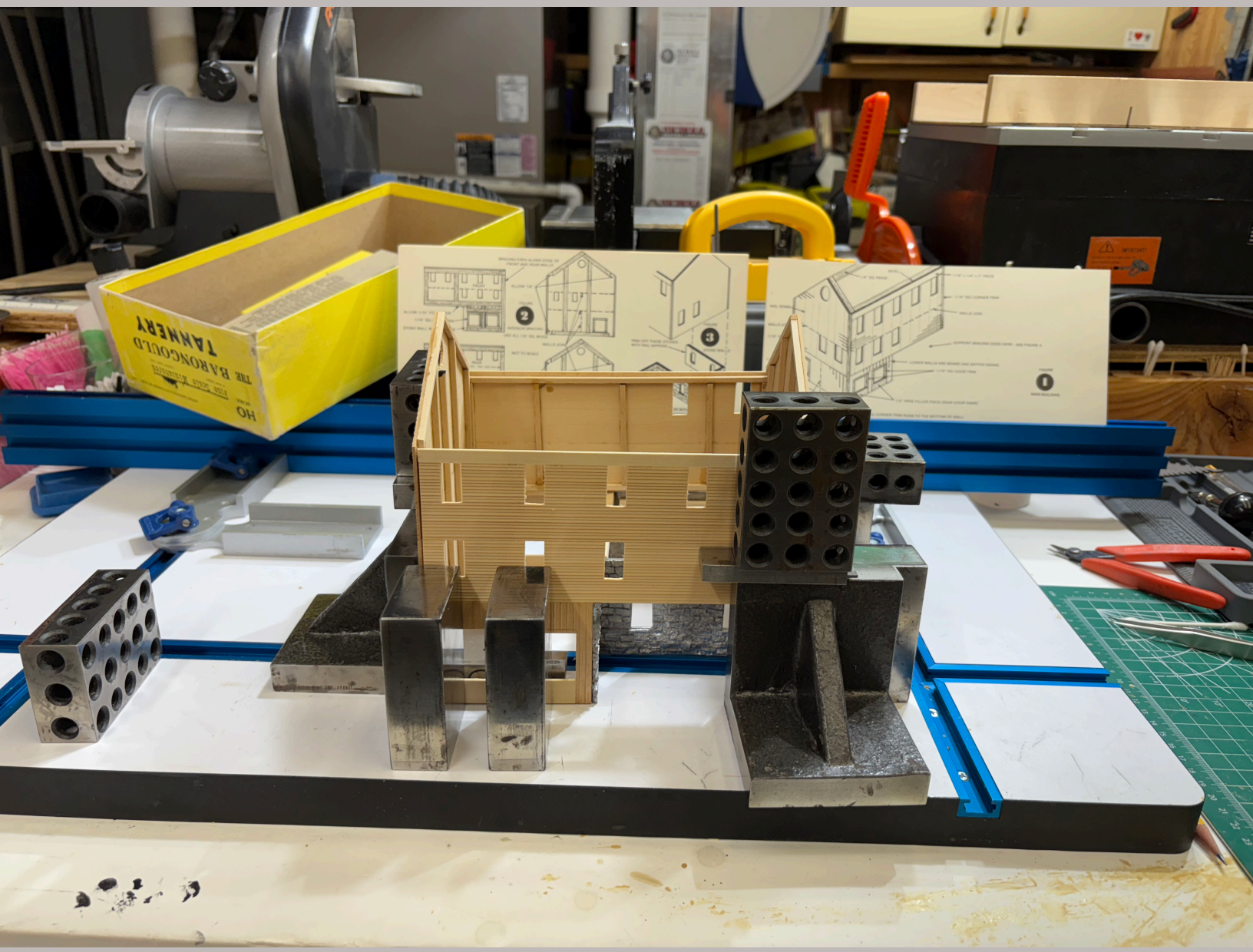
The braced walls ready for assembly.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Test fitting the walls.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



When I test fitted the walls I found that I was going to have to do some work to get a proper fit between the wood portion of the building and the metal portion of the building.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



This photograph shows how much fitting error I had to manage. This was due to tolerance buildup and needing to straighten the metal walls to get a proper fit. I decided to make wood walls the master and adjust the metal walls as needed.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Photograph showing the inside view of the structure and the straightening that was needed to the metal castings.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



For this build I decided to stain and paint the walls before I assembled them. This is a very large building and I thought it would be easier to handle the painting process with them flat on the workbench. George recommends completing the walls before assembly. I will add the window castings and signage after assembly. This is one of those things that I like to do. I started building structures this way a few years back and never decided to go back to the old way. I find that I have much less touchup work to do if I get the building together before adding the details.



The inside of the walls were also stained because the interior will be lighted and I wanted the darkened appearance of the walls through the windows. I have also found that staining both sides of the clapboard helps with reducing warping. I often use black paint on the inside surface of the walls - a dark stain also does the job.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



The stained walls ready for the paint. Notice how each piece of wood took the stain differently depending on the grain orientation and density of the piece of wood. The paint for this structure is AK number 11011 Blue Grey.

More in our next issue.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

The Franklin & South Manchester Railroad - Part 36

John Siekirk for George Sellios

This month, I decided to jump ahead a little on our trip through South Manchester along the mainline. George routed our camera car down one of the sidings that run through the streets of South Manchester. This provides some views that I have never seen before. George's comment was that he hadn't run trains on some of these sidings in 20 years.



To keep track of where we left off on the mainline, here is the last photograph in last months article looking ahead to the next area of the mainline that we will travel through. This is where we will start for the next issue.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



George flips the switch and takes us into the depths of South Manchester. I have always wanted to walk through those concrete canyons with a camera. You can see the camera mounted on a flat car right in front of George's hand. Thank you George.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





Turnouts aligned, let our journey begin.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





We are right in front of the South Manchester bus station.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



From the aisle.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

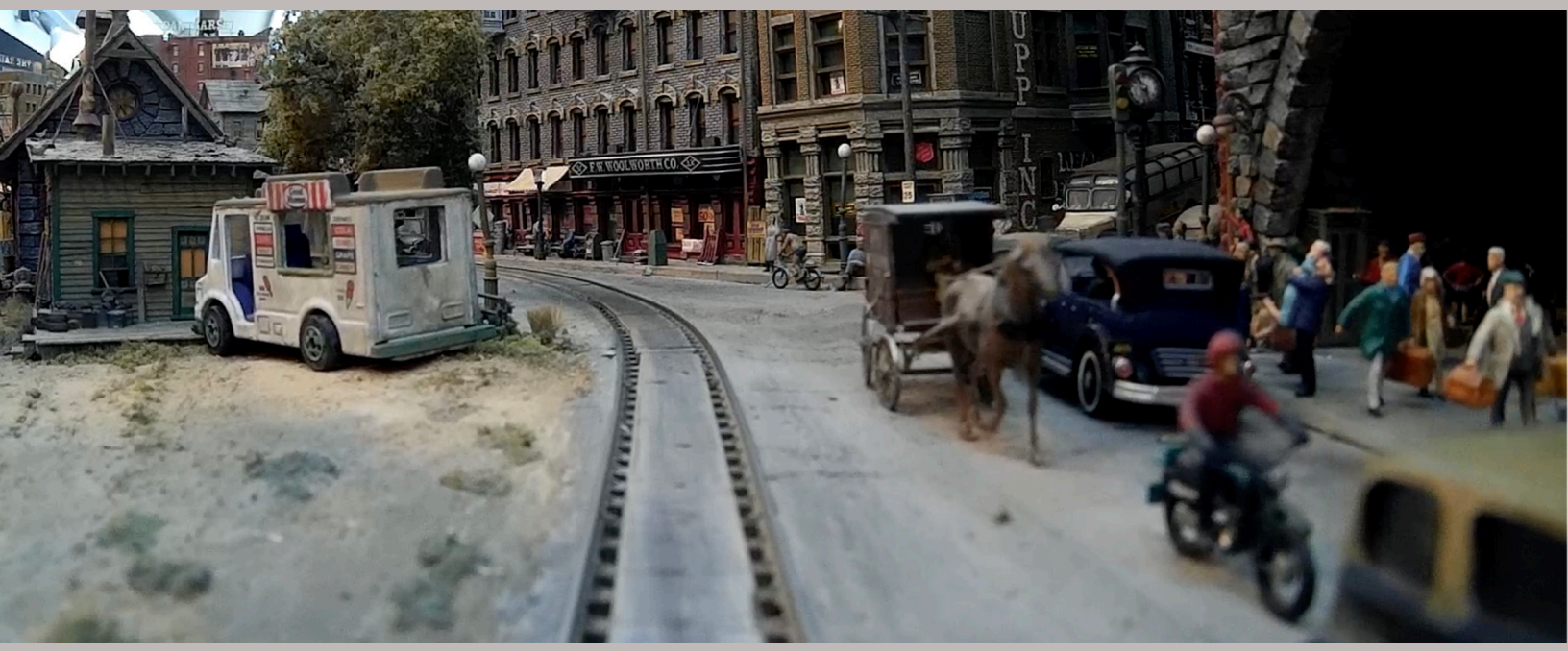


John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



I wonder if George knew some crazy guy was going to run a camera car down this siding when he added all the details.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

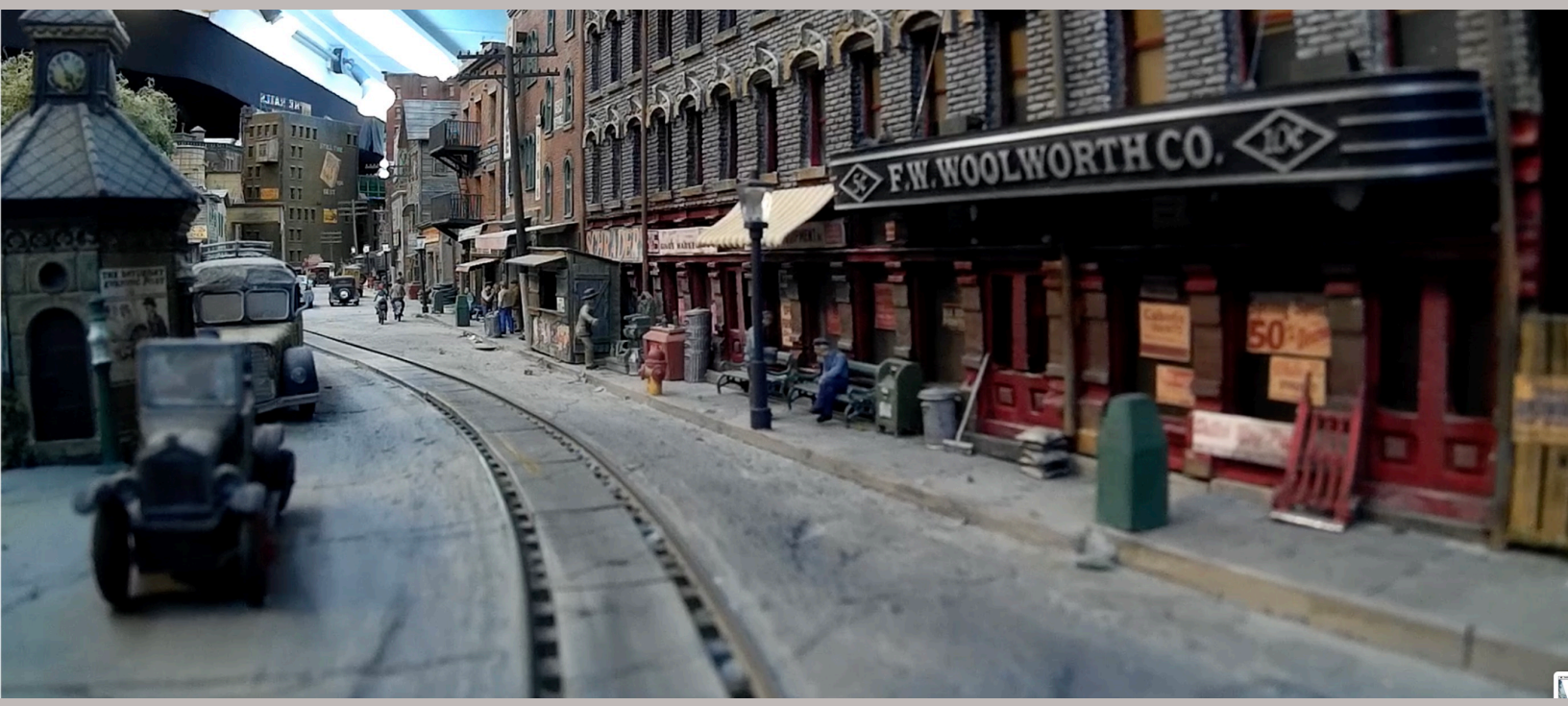


John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



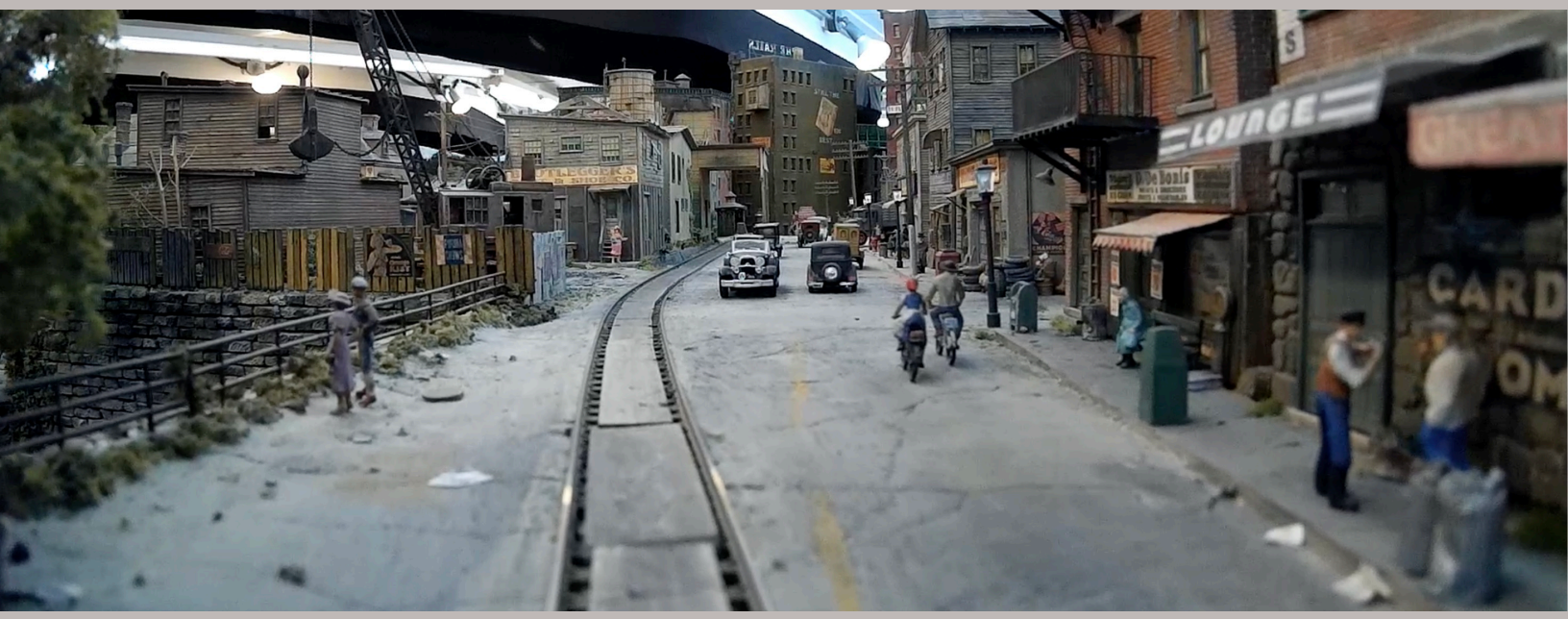


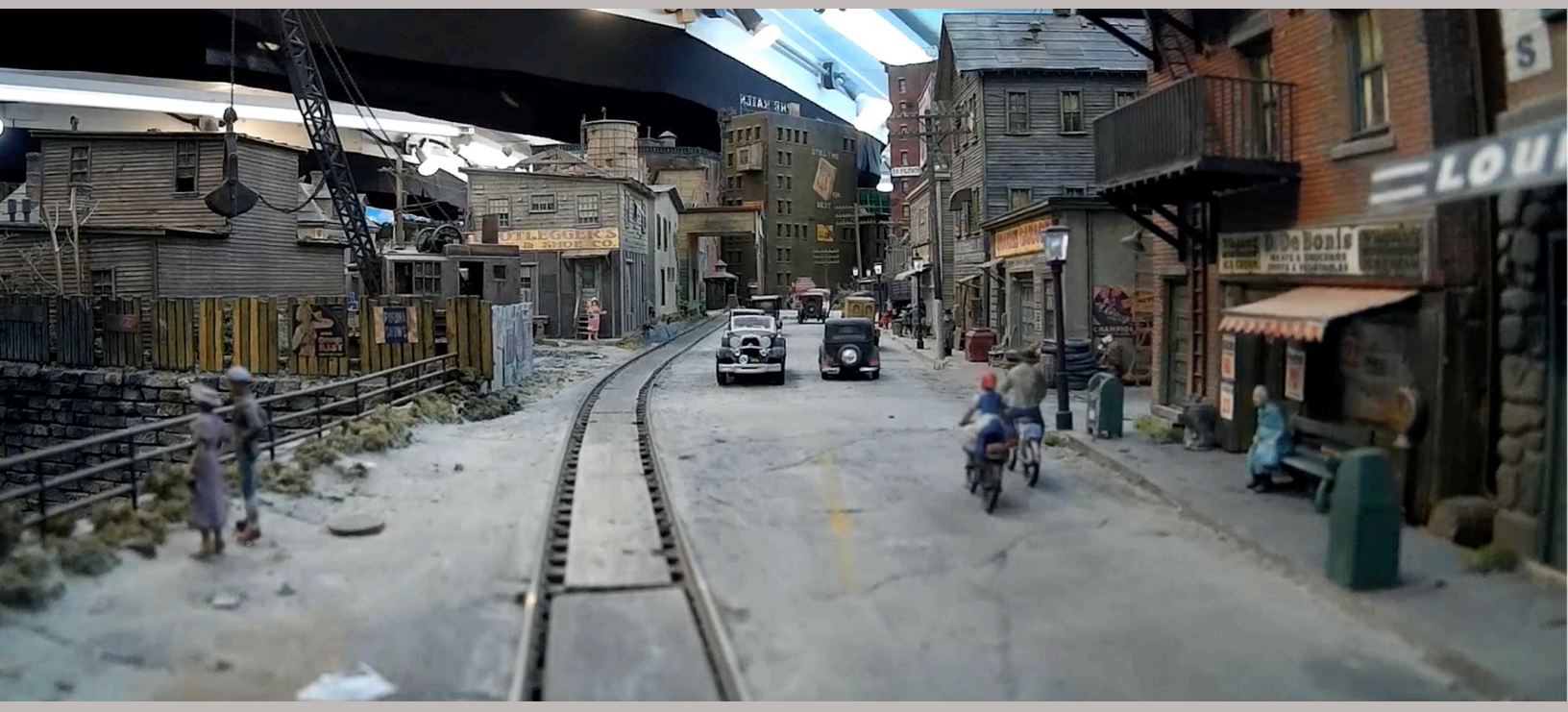
John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



The end of the line is in view as we head back out to the mainline. I'm amazed at all the beautifully weathered vehicles and details along this street. It takes just the right viewing angle to see most of them from the aisle.

We will continue our journey in the next issue.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

Bob Van Gelder's - The South River & Millville Railroad
Part 8
John Siekirk for Bob VanGelder

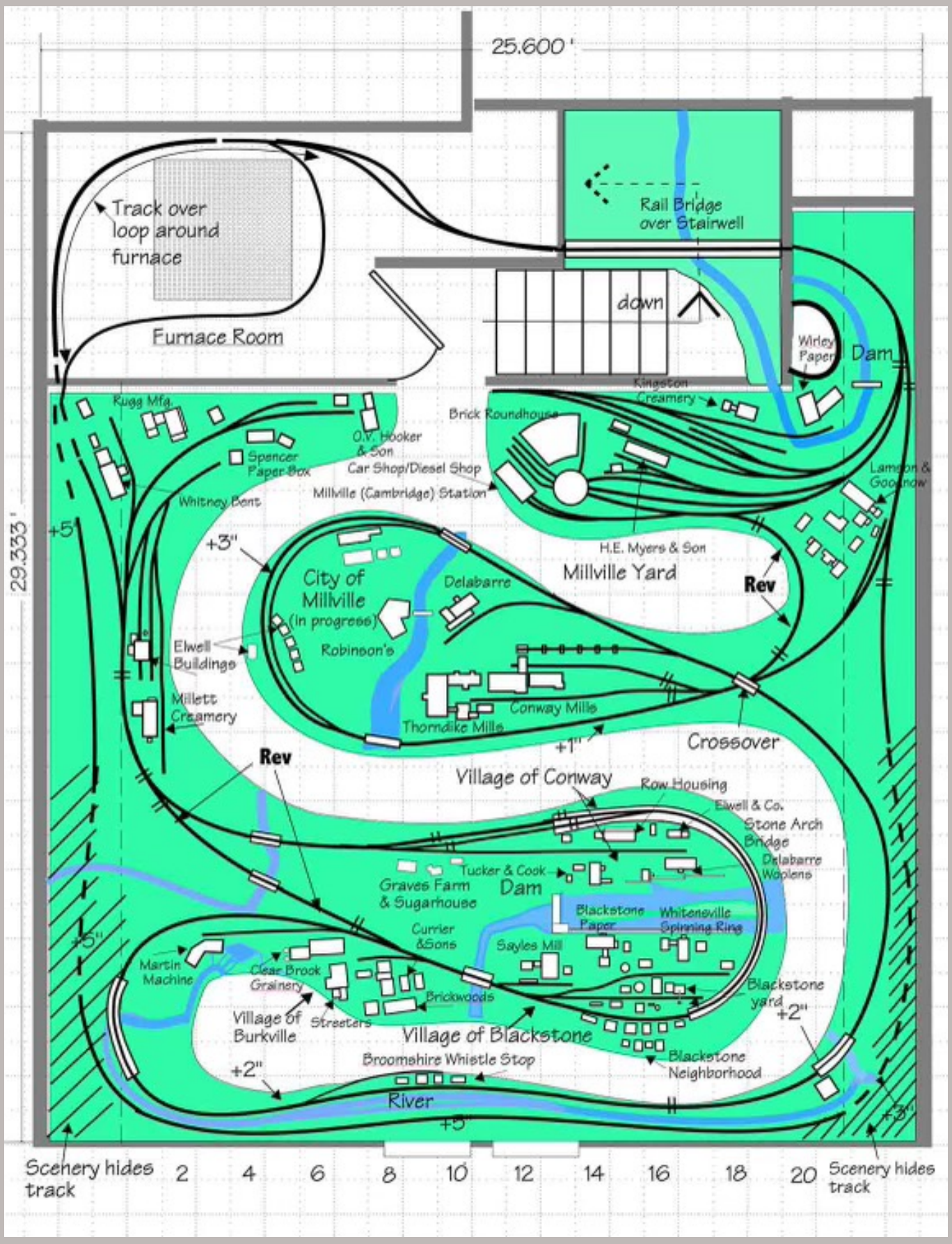


In our last issue we left off in front of the Thorndike Mills. You can follow our route on the layout diagram on the following page. In this issue we are going to make our way around the peninsula and the head back to the back of the layout where we started our journey.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Photographs from the aisle way.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



At this point we are going to travel through an area of the layout that is under construction. I include it here because it tells a story. Bob has a few of the structures from the late Dick Elwell's layout that he is going to incorporate into his layout in memory of Dick. Some of the modules that were cut from Dick's layout were sitting on the end of the peninsula near where Bob plans on planting them. We will take a peek at some coming attractions as our train passes by them.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



The two structures across the aisle in this photograph are also from Dick’s layout.



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Across the aisle from the peninsula we have the following structures. These photographs were taken from the aisle way. Refer to the layout diagram at the start of this article to better understand their relationship to the peninsula where our train is traveling.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Back on the mainline we can see across the aisle as a location reference for the last few photographs.



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Delabarre Tape & Die from the aisle.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com







John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



We are now making our way to the back corner of the layout

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com





We have now reached the location where we started this journey a few months ago. In our next issue we will retrace this section of the layout with the photographs from the rear of the train.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

Karl Osolinski's Workbench - Part 8





This month's Karl Osolinski diorama is called Napoleon's Dynamite Storage. Photographs by Karl Osollnski.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

Tellynott and Shadowlands Railroad - Update

Mark Dalrymple

Hi guys.

Years ago, when I first started on my layout, I decided to build up the land from my harbour area to my track level with a sandwich. This sandwich I built by installing 40mm polystyrene on top of 16mm MDF, and then 15mm pinex on top of the 40mm polystyrene. Track was never laid but just put in place so I could build my cityscape around/ behind it. As I get near track laying in this area, and after installing several Peco motors under my 16mm track bed using extended pin motors in Shadowlands, I have decided that burying the point motors in the Tellynott sandwich with no access and significant relandscaping to remove turnouts in order to access these motors if they should fail, simply would not do. I decided the best course of action was to remove the sandwich between the layout front and the cityscape behind and replace it with 16mm MDF.



Figure 1 Photo showing the existing 71mm sandwich of MDF, polystyrene and pinex.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

I stated by marking the cut lines on the existing sandwich. This included taking out the forefront sandwich to give access to the dioramas behind. I had previously cut the background cityscape into several dioramas to make them easier (possible) to remove and work on. I had cut these diorama bases to include the track in front of the trackside strures. After removing the forefront sandwich, I then removed each separate diorama, removed all the structures, and used my jigsaw to cut the marked line for the back edge of the 16mm MDF. In some cases my jigsaw foot was too large and was inhibited by the hillside, and so I had to resort to hand tools. I also marked the ends of the main trackage and measured and noted down on paper important intersection points to be transferred onto the new track bed. Some tweaking and recutting was needed – as I expected. Once cut to shape the new track bed was laid on top of the old, and I started on the transfer of the intersection points and main track line ends. The waterfront area was cut a few milimetres smaller than the water area to allow room for retaining walls. I also marked the turntable centre and track running to/ through this.



Figure 2 Photo of the new track bed in position with the old sandwich removed and the backscene dioramas trimmed to size and shape. I have also routed out a rectangle for my small red structure which I entered on a convention competition several years ago and had mounted on a MDF base.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Figure 3 A view from the other end. The cutout at the front right is for the cannery.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

So I stated by marking out all the trackwork and used my Peco turnouts to make sure everything worked as it should and to mark the position of the motors. I had recently bought several turnouts second hand, although still new in their boxes. Peco straight left and right turnouts come in three sizes in code 75, small, medium and large. I am generally using the small turnouts on my layout, but the purchase had come with two medium turnouts. These proved very helpful in two circumstances – in creating a larger radius in front of my station platform, and in moving a motor away from one of the module joists. I had to cut one joist out for access to motors, and I have cut two extra joists to install each side. I transferred the motor positions to the existing 16mm MDF and marked out bigger areas to give access to the turnout motors which will be attached to the bottom of the new, top layer of 16mm MDF. I will add a small piece of 3mm MDF to the underside of the 16mm MDF so that the extended pins will not need cutting, as they will sit flush with the top of the throw bar. In several instances I cut holes to access multiple motors. I drilled 10mm holes at the corners of these cutouts, and then used my jigsaw to cut out the 16mm MDF. I used the jigsaw at a slow speed to try to keep the dust to a minimum. A hand saw was used when I could not use the jigsaw because of obstructions. I then ripped 19x45mm pine down to the correct thickness (allowing for 3mm cork road bed) so that the finished height would be flush with the diorama bases. I marked their positions, cut to length, and cleaned of the glue residue from the sandwich before drilling and screwing into position. They have not yet been glued to allow for any changes that might prove necessary as I move forward with this project.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Figure 4 Photo showing the existing 16mm MDF with access holes cut for the Peco point motors and the ripped pine joists screwed in position. Through the second hole from the bottom you can see where it was necessary to cut through and remove a section of one of the existing joists.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

I marked the track that runs through the turntable and the turntable centre and drew a 10” circle on the new tabletop. I used my jigsaw to carefully cut out this circle. I glued together two pieces of 4.75MDF and a piece of 3mm MDF and left weighted overnight. I cut these into a 12” square and then marked and drilled a 9” circle in the centre. Again, I cut this out using my jigsaw.

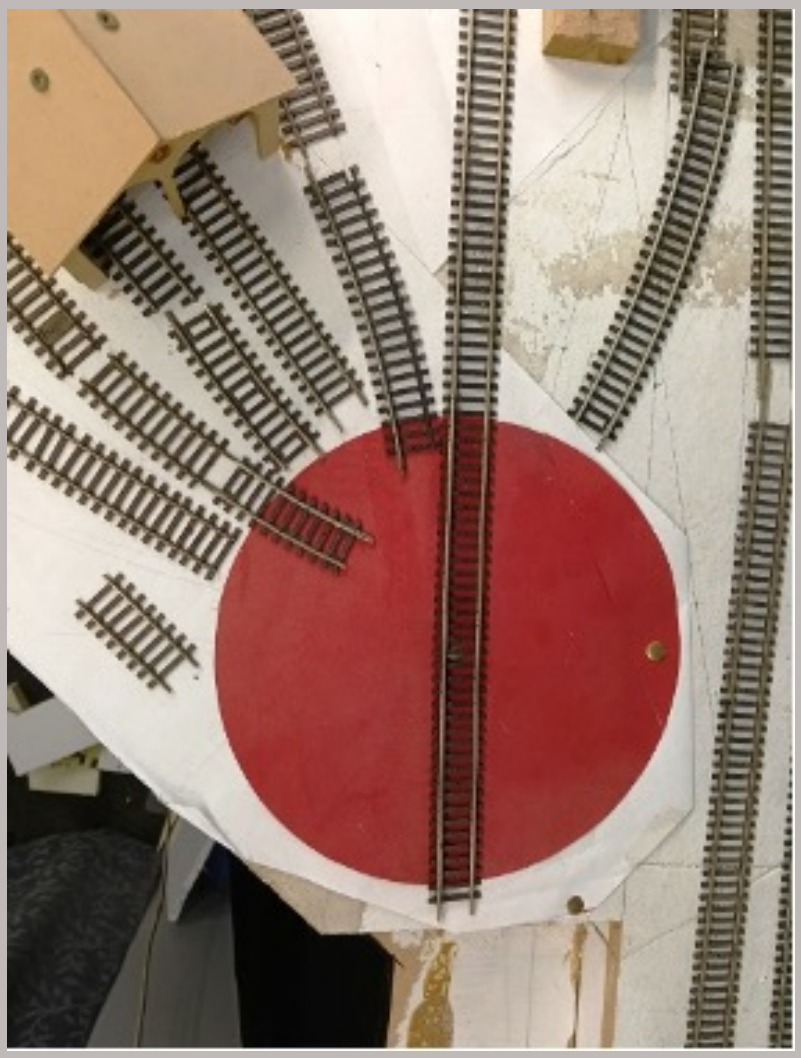


Figure 5 This photo shows my original mock-up of the turntable. The track running vertically through the turntable runs at a 12 degree angle to the backdrop.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Figure 6 Close inspection of this photo will show that the pine surrounding the turntable is lower than the other joists.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Figure 7 Here is the smaller circle in position with a 4.75mm MDF base.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Figure 8 And here is the tabletop back in position. It will remain to be seen whether the jigsawed circles are accurate enough. If not, I will make a jig for my router and redo. I will make a 12" square around the turntable removable to allow working on the turntable at my workbench possible. I'm thinking I would be wise to do this regardless.

Thanks for following along with my progress. It's a difficult and messy project, and it doesn't really get any easier from here as when I move to the next section to the left of this – in front of the corner diorama – I also will have a grade to contend with. There is a section of finished track that runs under my aerated water complex and in front of my J. H. Olson chemical factory that is very much set in position. I'm thinking I'll take the new 16mm MDF road bed to each end of this and splice together. There are no turnouts in this section. I know I will be far happier when this job is completed, and I already feel better for rolling up my sleeves, getting into it and making some good progress. Cheers, Mark.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

Building Cooper's Way, Part 3

George Nagle

Timothy Tubbs' Bar and Grill



With Cooper's Hardware Store completed, I eagerly moved on to building number two in the kit, Timothy Tubbs, a bar ala *Cheers*! In my world, it is a full scale bar and grill. Like the hardware store, this structure has its own instruction book, complete with color photographs, elevation plans of the structure, illustrations of parts sheets with all parts numbered, and lots and lots of diagrams. Everything is packed in three labeled bags. The main bag containing walls and sheets of parts is labeled "Timothy Tubbs" and additional parts are in "Brick Building" bags.

All of the parts are displayed above, with only the 3D printed windows and the 3D printed detail parts still in the bags. They are not used right away, so I kept them sealed to avoid losing anything.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

The kit is designed with all buildings butted up against each other, but each building has all walls, giving the option of building them as separately standing structures. As with the hardware store, the side walls of Tubbs are 100% inscribed with a nicely done brick pattern. The only portion of any walls not inscribed with a pattern are areas that will be covered by trim.

As with the hardware store, I read through the instructions several times in order to familiarize myself with all of the parts and procedures. There are fewer “sub-assemblies” to be completed, unlike the hardware store. I began with the interior bracing.



This is a four story brick building, so unlike the mostly wood hardware store, all walls are the thick, sturdy MDF material. Bracing is probably less critical here, as the MDF does not easily warp, but the vertical bracing on the side walls also serves as a gluing surface when the walls are finally joined, so positioning them accurately to the wall edges is critical.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Painting the Walls

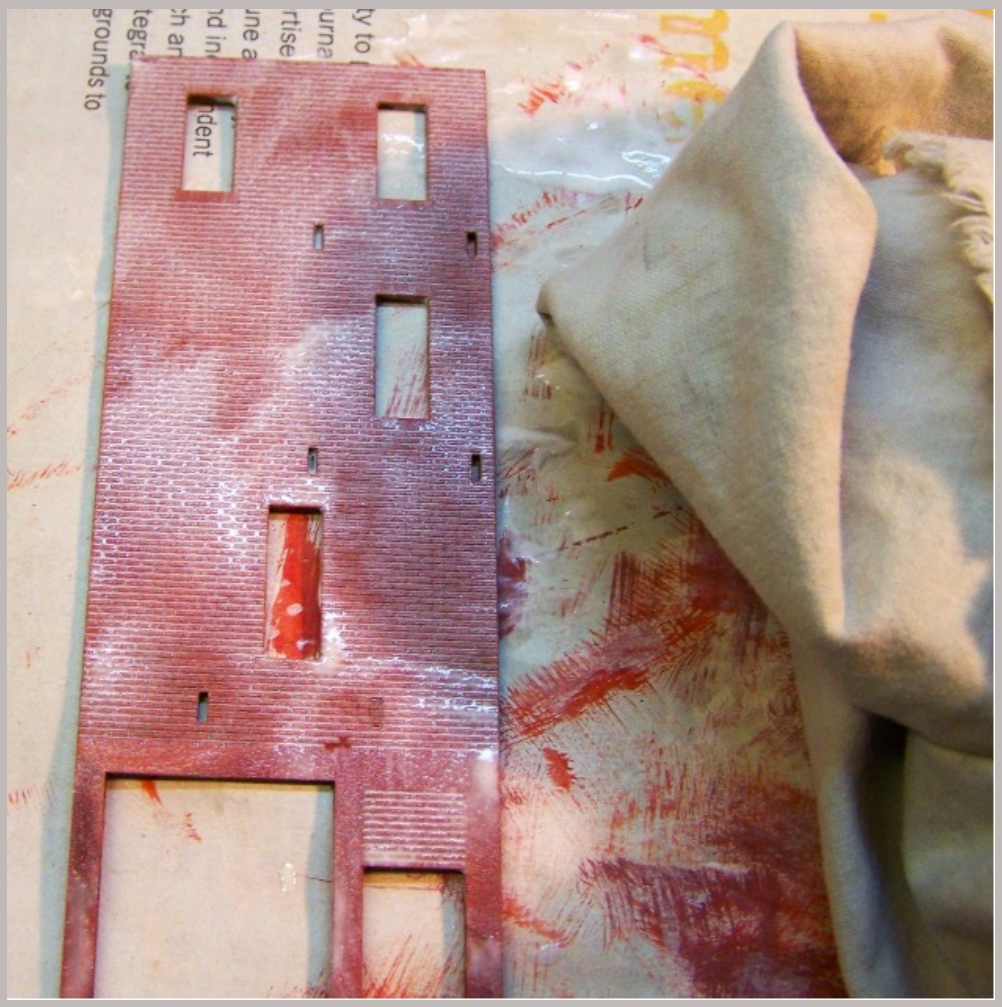
After the glued bracing was thoroughly dry, I primed all of the walls with standard red/brown spray primer (Rustoleum rattle can). It gave the light brown MDF a pseudo brick color, which I enhanced by dry-brushing two different shades of red.

Architects and builders typically called for a prettier and pricier brick to be used for the front wall of city buildings, while the side and rear walls were constructed of less attractive and cheaper brick. Structurally they were the same, so this was all for appearance. To model this, I used a rich, deep red acrylic, appropriately named “Brick Red,” for the front wall. The color for the side walls was achieved by blending bright red, orange and terra cotta colored paints, for an uneven orangish. My yellow plastic “palette” shows my resulting color(s).

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

The final effect is seen on the walls in the photo above. The front is a nice uniform deep red, while the side walls are lighter, more orangish, and, although difficult to detect from the photo, they are not uniform in color.

I actually made a mistake, visible in the photo above. The sheet of miscellaneous parts has a brick arch that I *thought* was trim for the front wall and therefore painted the matching darker shade. It actually is trim for the rear loading dock wall and should have been orangish. Oops.

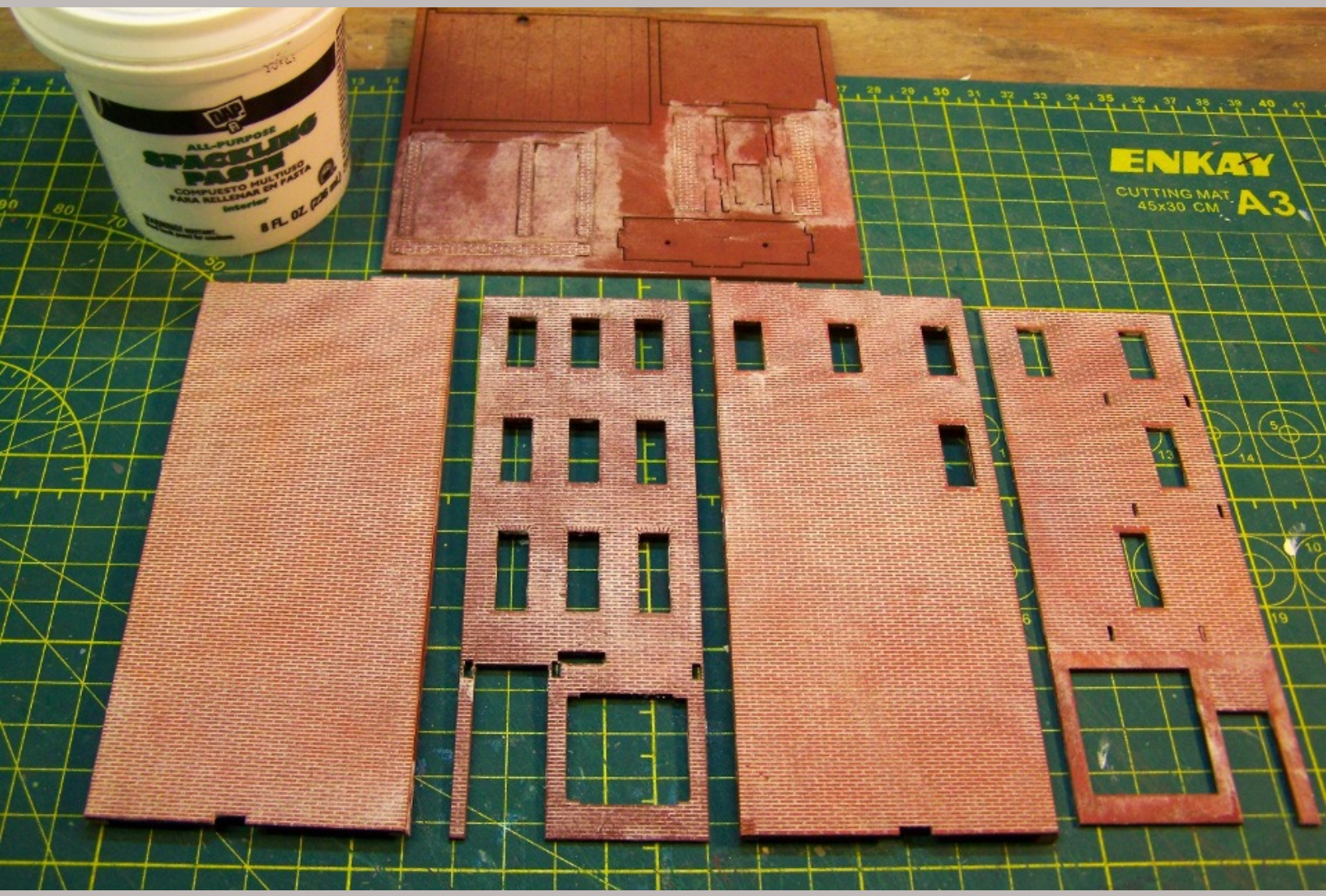


I'm modeling mortar between the bricks using a thinned spackle paste. I like this technique because the final effect is more easily controllable than with thinned white paint.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

Key to this is allowing the base brick paint job to thoroughly dry and cure, at least overnight if not longer.

I dip a wide soft bristle paintbrush directly into the spackle, then into a jar of water, and apply liberally. It is then wiped off with a fine weave cloth – here I used a cut scrap from an old bedsheet.



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

While the applied, thinned spackle is wet, gently wipe over the wall surface with the cloth. I prefer a light circular wiping pattern. Wiping either horizontally or vertically tends to remove too much of the spackle from in between the bricks. Wiping diagonally leaves distinctly unprototypical streaks. A circular motion with the cloth worked best for me.

The resulting walls show a nice brick texture. An advantage of using the spackle is that it can still be manipulated if you later wish, by additional wiping with a damp cloth.

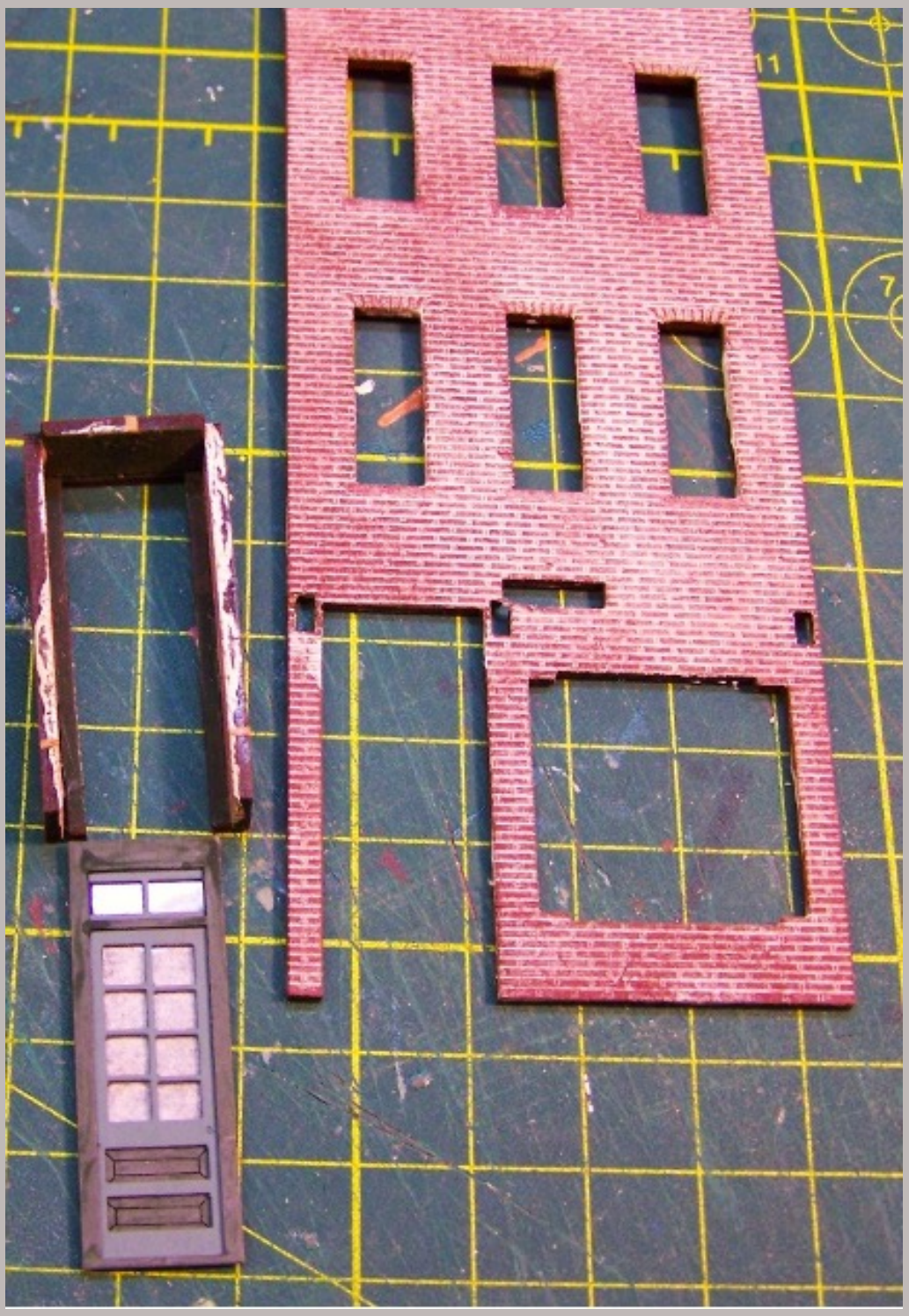
For contrasting trim, I chose two distinct shades of green: a deep forest like green called “Campground” and a light sage type of green called “Thicket.” See the photo below for the bottles and the painted trim pieces. All were primed with gray prior to painting.

Included in the trim are small strips representing exterior window sills and lintels, to give some additional depth to the 3D printed windows. Those were given a light brown coat of paint to represent cement.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



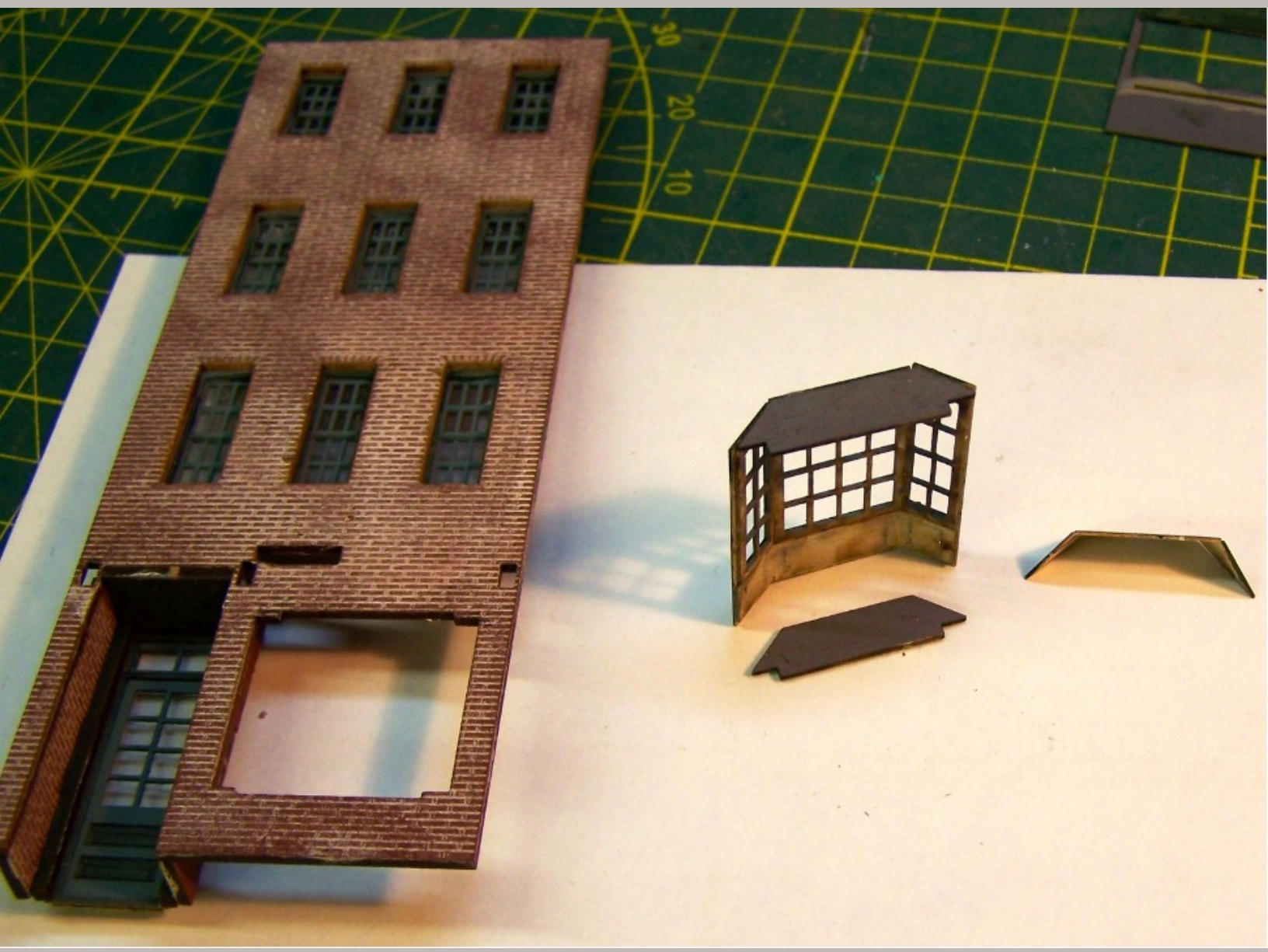
John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

The inset doorway sub-assembly has been painted red to match the brick. There is an inscribed brick pattern on the visible portions of the entryway walls. The white you see on the edge is excess spackling paste I neglected to completely remove. It won't be visible when the entranceway is installed behind the front wall doorway.

Below that is the completed front door, ready to be installed into the entranceway. It has been painted in the two-tones of trim green.



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

Above, the large front bar window goes together in a process similar to the inset doorway on the hardware store. Like that earlier operation, it is a delicate, quite fiddly process. The assembly above shows two parts that I'll add when I actually install it in the wall opening: the roof and a horizontal former that also serves as a tab-in-slot locating aid in the wall.

Upon installation, I found that the bottom former would not fit correctly. When installed in place it pushed the window away from the wall by a wide bit. I attribute this to my assembled window being slightly out of kilter. Fortunately, the window held its shape when glued to the wall and I found the bottom former to be unnecessary.

In the photo above, the front wall cement window sills have not yet been installed.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



The front door and entranceway and the large pub window are installed

Tiny roof “seams” were added to the large window.

I did have difficulties getting the 3D printed windows to fit into the provided openings in the wall. It took some dedicated sanding and filing.

Note also that the building windows are printed in three sizes, the tallest on the second floor, middle sized for the third floor, and the shortest windows on the fourth floor.

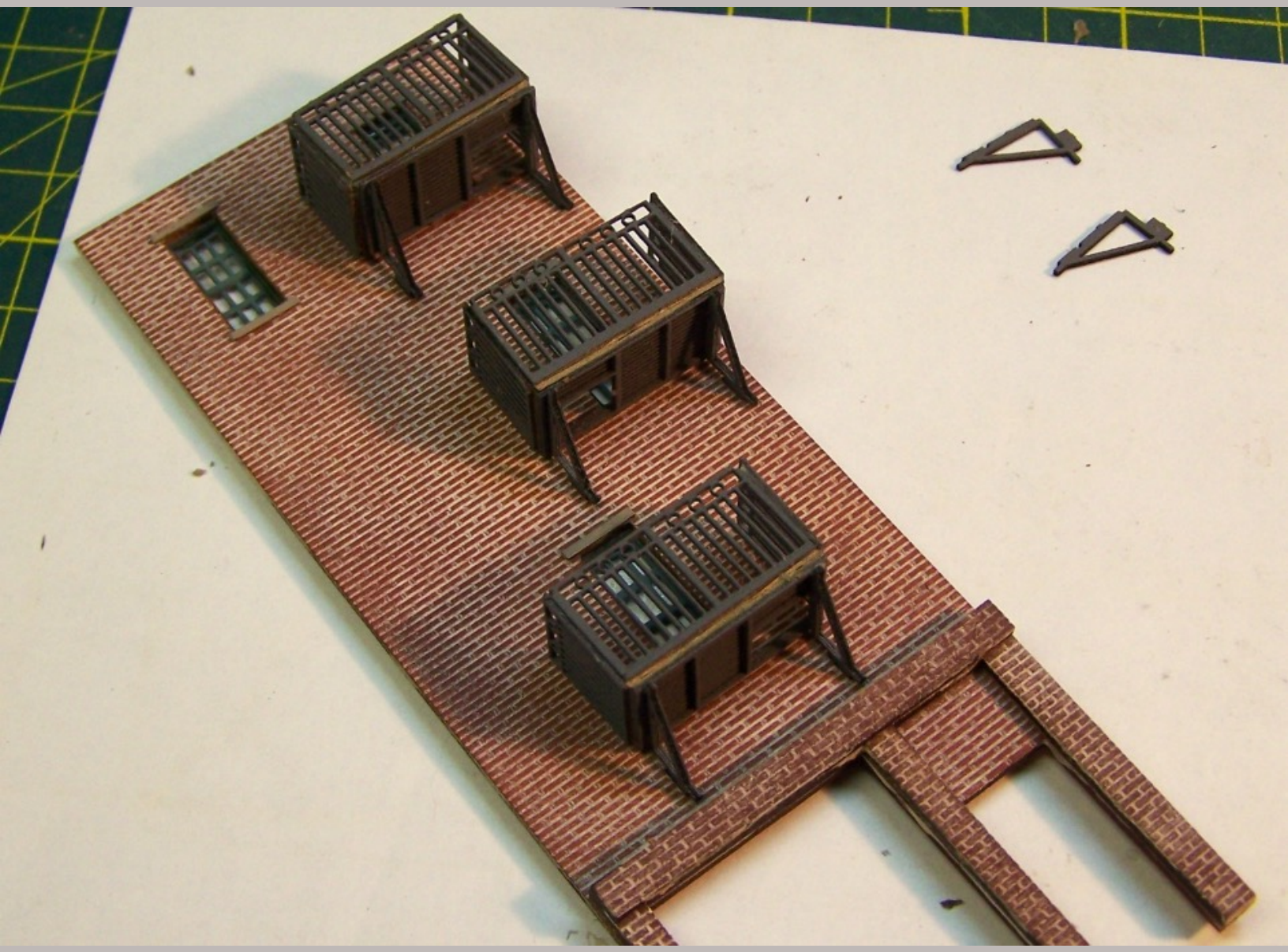
The remaining holes in the front wall are to accommodate the ornate 3D printed trim.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

Fire Escapes

Pictured below is the rear wall with the assembled fire escapes just setting in place to test fit. The ornate fire escapes are a nice touch and assembled fairly easily as a “fold up” structure once I scored the fold lines a bit deeper with a razor knife.

There are “right” and “left” fire escape platforms, designed to be installed so that the associated escape ladders line up correctly. Quite frankly, I could not get mine to come out exactly right due to the offset second floor. Some sort of logic puzzle that I failed.



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

The ladders themselves are laser cut on a thin carrier sheet, and the ladders themselves are also very thin. Mine were miscut slightly so that the vertical side rails, which are designed to be extremely thin and delicate, became wisps of material that did not come out of the carrier sheet. I was able to re-attach them with pin drops of super glue.

I had primed the fire escape platform's pieces and ladders while still on the carrier sheet with flat black and planned to finish them with a metallic "soft iron" shade from Rustoleum. You can still see the fold marks on the primed platforms above, but that disappeared once I sprayed them with the soft iron.

My test fit revealed an issue. The window cement lintels and sills are visible on the wall above, having been glued on in a previous step. I found it necessary to remove the sills from the three windows behind the fire escape platforms to allow each to install flush to the wall.

Ladders were then cut to fit and installed. These are visible on my finished photos, below.

You'll note two extra platform supports in the image above. Bar Mills supplies spare pieces for many of the small and delicate parts, as well as extra windows for some of the buildings. This is a thoughtful extra service, as many of us have experienced small parts launching unexpectedly from the tweezers, only to vanish mysteriously into the ether.



Moving on to the side walls, I planned a large painted “Owl Cigars Now 5c” sign, using the stencil provided in the kit.

The downtown buildings in Harrisburg still display many such signs, greatly worn and faded. Most, I note, are in large white block letters on black fields against a weathered brick wall.

I began by masking off an area matching the size of the stencil card and stippling with flat black. For this application, I use a stiff brush designed for stenciling.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

For stenciled signs, unless they represent a newly-painted sign, my mantra is “go lightly and stop BEFORE you think it looks right.” It is much too easy to overapply.

I allowed the black background to cure overnight, then taped the stencil exactly over the patch and stenciled the logo with white paint, again using my trusty stenciling brush, and again, stopping with a light application.



Easy does it! That’s probably good. Carefully remove the tape/stencil and it’s done!

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



The result, seen in this slightly fuzzy pic, was exactly what I was after. I would later go back and add a white border to the stenciled sign, in part to help hide the corner seam.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

To reinforce the Owl Cigars brand, I used a very striking spare paper sign supplied in an earlier Bar Mills kits.

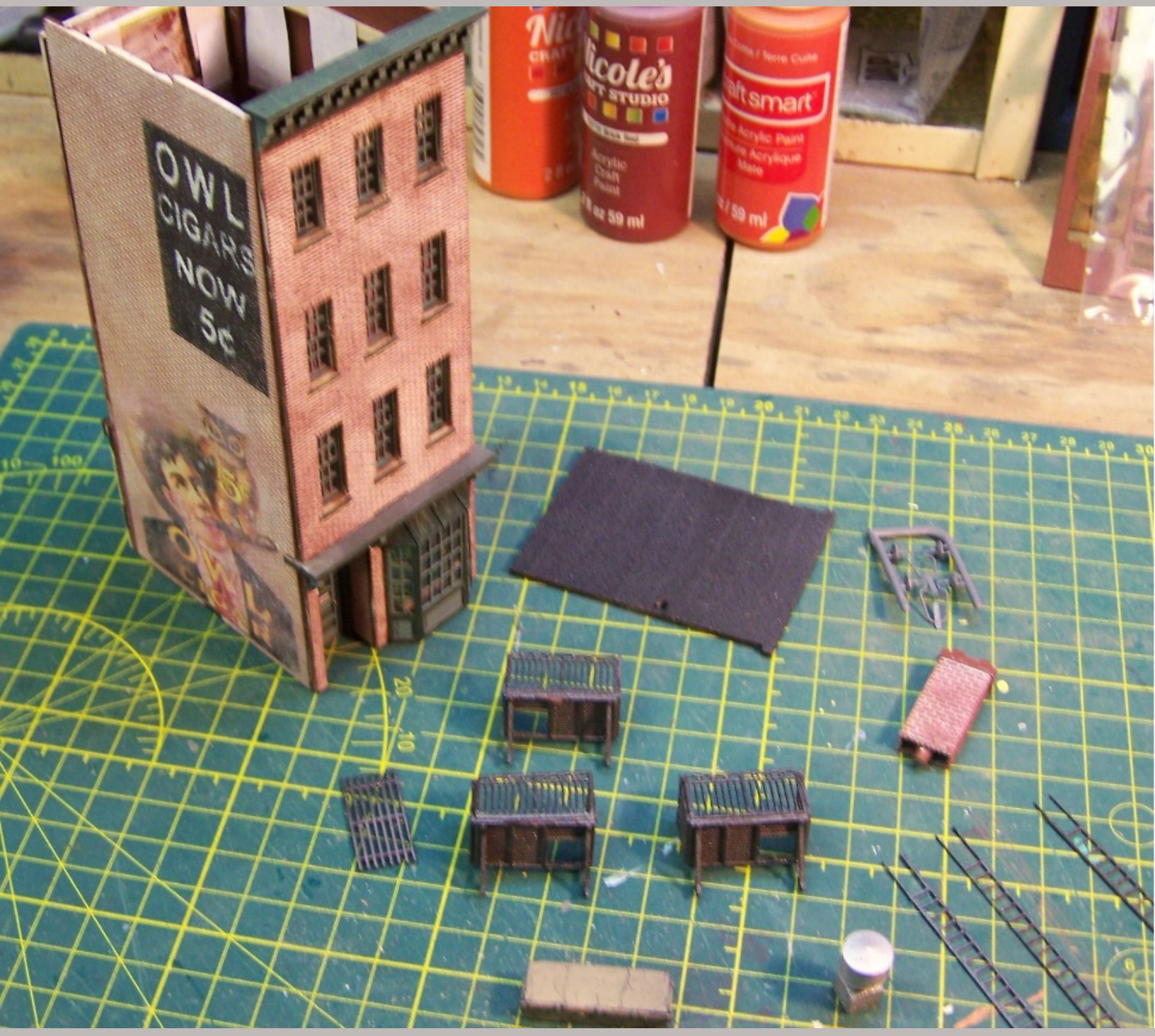
The sign was carefully cut out and sanded very thin. To apply it to the building (in the photo here, it is merely positioned in place), I turned it over and brushed it with water, then applied a liberal brushing of barely diluted white glue.

My technique is to start with a large glob of white glue on a palette, dip a wide brush in water, thoroughly soak the blank side of the sign, lying on newspapers, then reload the brush with water and dip directly into the glue and gently, so as not to move the sign, brush over the back of the sign.

The resulting sign will be soaked with diluted white glue and very fragile. Carefully pick it up with hands and/or tweezers and carefully position it on the wall surface. With an image such as this, I use the bottom straight edge as a guide to positioning. You pretty much get only one shot, so patience is key.

After it is in place, I gently blot (don't rub) with a soft cloth, such as my scraps of bedsheet, to remove excess moisture. Once blotted, go back with the cloth and press the sign firmly against the surface to force the wall surface pattern to show through.

Once it dries slightly (5 minutes or so) I vigorously pound at it with the stippling brush to further bring out the surface texture and weather the image somewhat. Start at the edges and work carefully. If it shows significant tearing, let it dry more. The tiny abrasions left by the stiff brush will give the appearance of timeworn weathering and fading.



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

Putting it all Together

In the image above, the walls have been squared up, joined and glued together. The first details I added were the primed and painted (dark green) cornices. It was at this point that I became aware of just how noticeable the unpatterned corners were. I suppose the intent is that they would be disguised/covered by being butted up tight against the building next door and therefore the small portion of exposed corner would be less noticeable, but of course I elected to build them as standalone structures separated by alleyways.

With regard to installing the first-floor cornice, which is a 3D printed wrap-around design, I found I needed significant sanding of the small side “arms” of the cornice.

All that remained was to finish up with the supplied detailing: rear loading dock, roof, etc.

Finishing the Roof

The roofing material supplied with the kit is the standard rolled roofing strips, here cut to size on adhesive sheets. The pre-cut design is convenient and the adhesive is quite strong. The roof base is laser cut from a thin cardboard carrier sheet, with ruled lines for the strips. How much more simple could it be? Just apply and paint. However, I finished it slightly differently.

After applying the roofing in strips per the guide lines on the laser-cut roof form, I spray painted (rattle can) with Rustoleum “Multicolor Textured” paint in “Desert Bisque.” This dried to a fine textured surface similar to fine grit sandpaper. I suppose the same effect could be achieved by cutting sandpaper to size and gluing it on, but this is cheaper and the paper is thinner.

After the roof was dry, I spray painted the surface flat black and dry-brushed with some grays and whites, highlighting the texture. The result, seen in the photo below and in the finished photos at the end of this article, was very realistic.

The chimney and rooftop vents are both supplied 3D printed details. I added two black lavatory vent pipes near the rear, made from craft store bead parts. For tar sealant and flashing I use Liquitex “Mars Black” “basic” artist acrylics from a tube, applied with a tiny brush or a toothpick. It retains about 50% of its body volume when dry and realistically disguises the joint between the part and the roof.

I fixed the structure to its base before applying additional details. My experience is that, as you add more and more delicate details, the structure becomes increasingly difficult to handle. The base therefore helps with stability.

The rest is just continued detailing. I added more signs, spare details from my parts boxes, weeds in the sidewalk cracks, and more.

“Finished” photos are below, *although I reserve the right to go back and add more*!

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

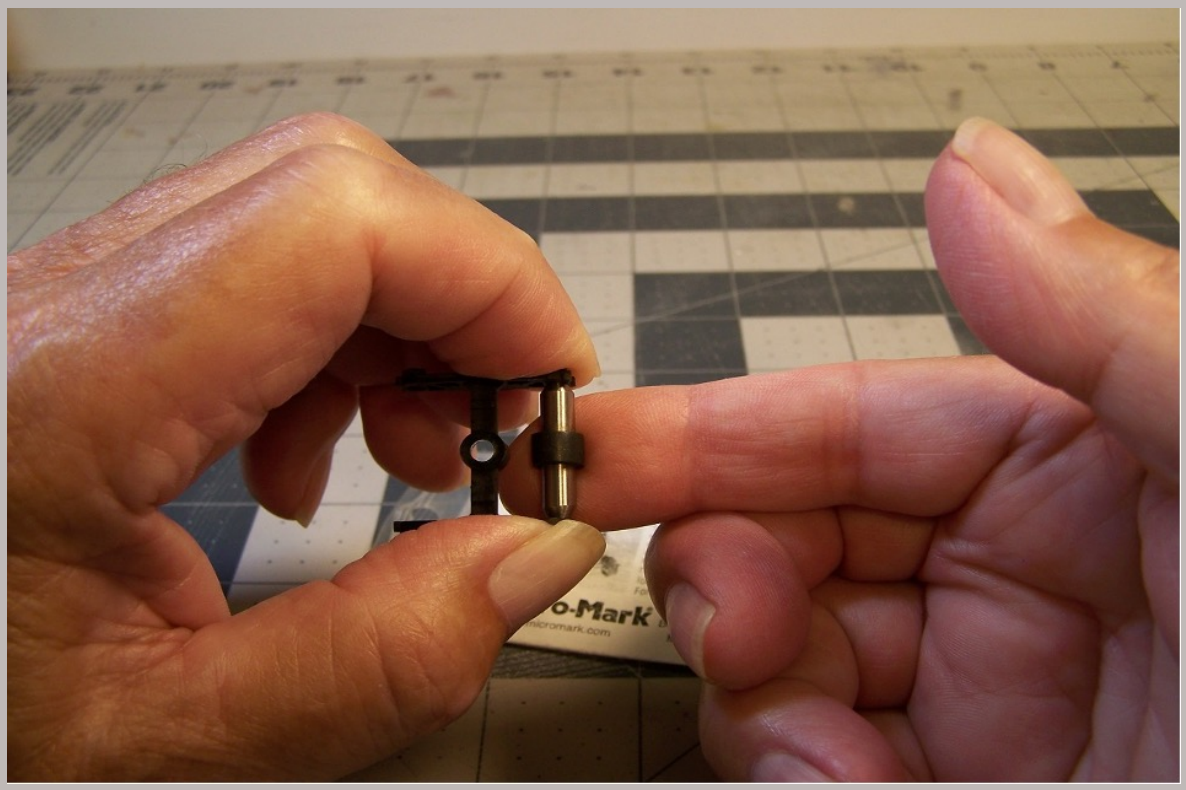


John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

TUNING PLASTIC FREIGHT and PASSENGER CAR TRUCKS
by Jerry Beach

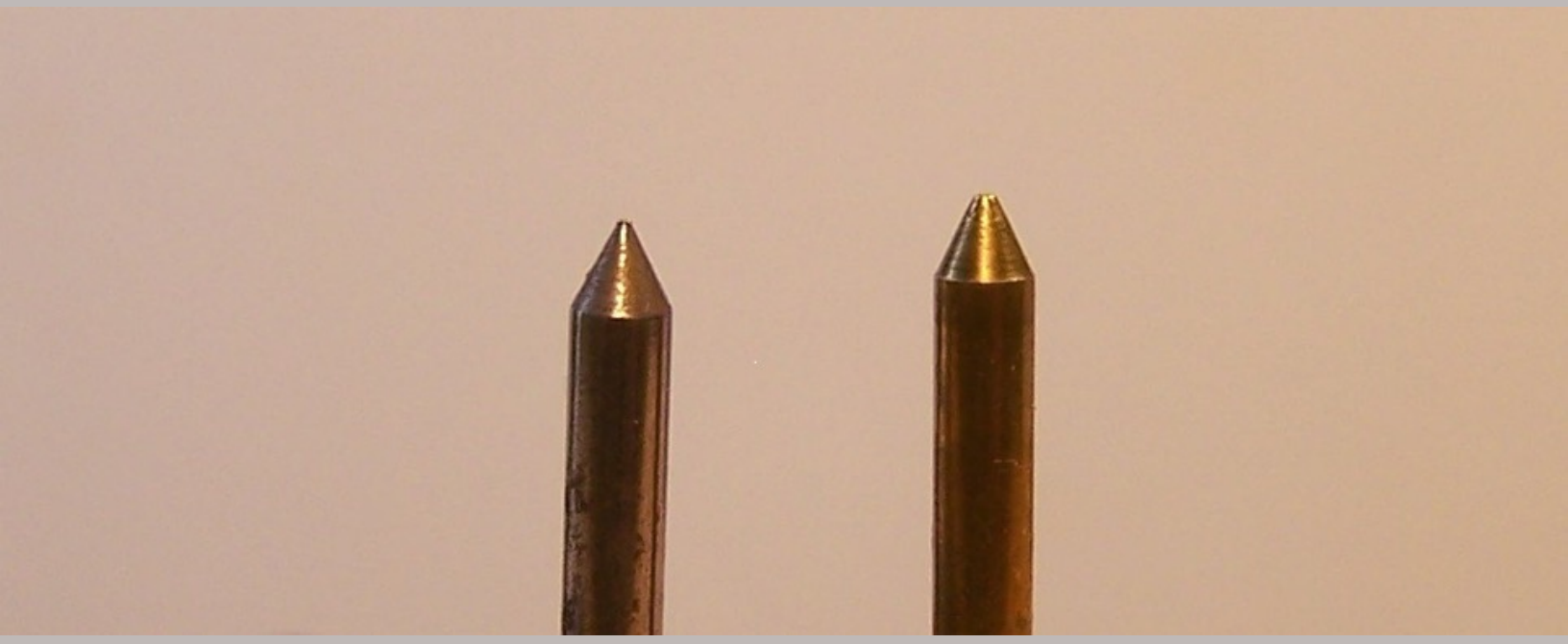
I operate a large number of plastic freight cars in addition to cars built from both wood and resin kits. I try to model on a budget, thus most of my plastic cars and some of my wood cars have plastic trucks. I save the more expensive metal trucks for the wood and resin cars. I also use metal trucks on open cars for the added weight compared to plastic trucks. With that background, let's get started.

The first thing I do is choose the exact trucks I plan to use with a particular car. This is based on a photo as often as possible. Once I have decided on the pair of trucks to use, look at them closely to ensure that all wheels touch when placed on a flat surface. (I use a piece of tempered glass.) If they look good I disassemble them and inspect them for any flash that might be present. If there is any I remove it with an Xacto blade. My next step is to use a Micromark truck tuner to clean out the sideframes where the end of the axle itself rides. I use slight pressure from my thumb and finger to ensure the truck tuner makes a clean cut and leaves me with a good surface for the pointed axle to ride in. Once that is done I set the sideframes aside.



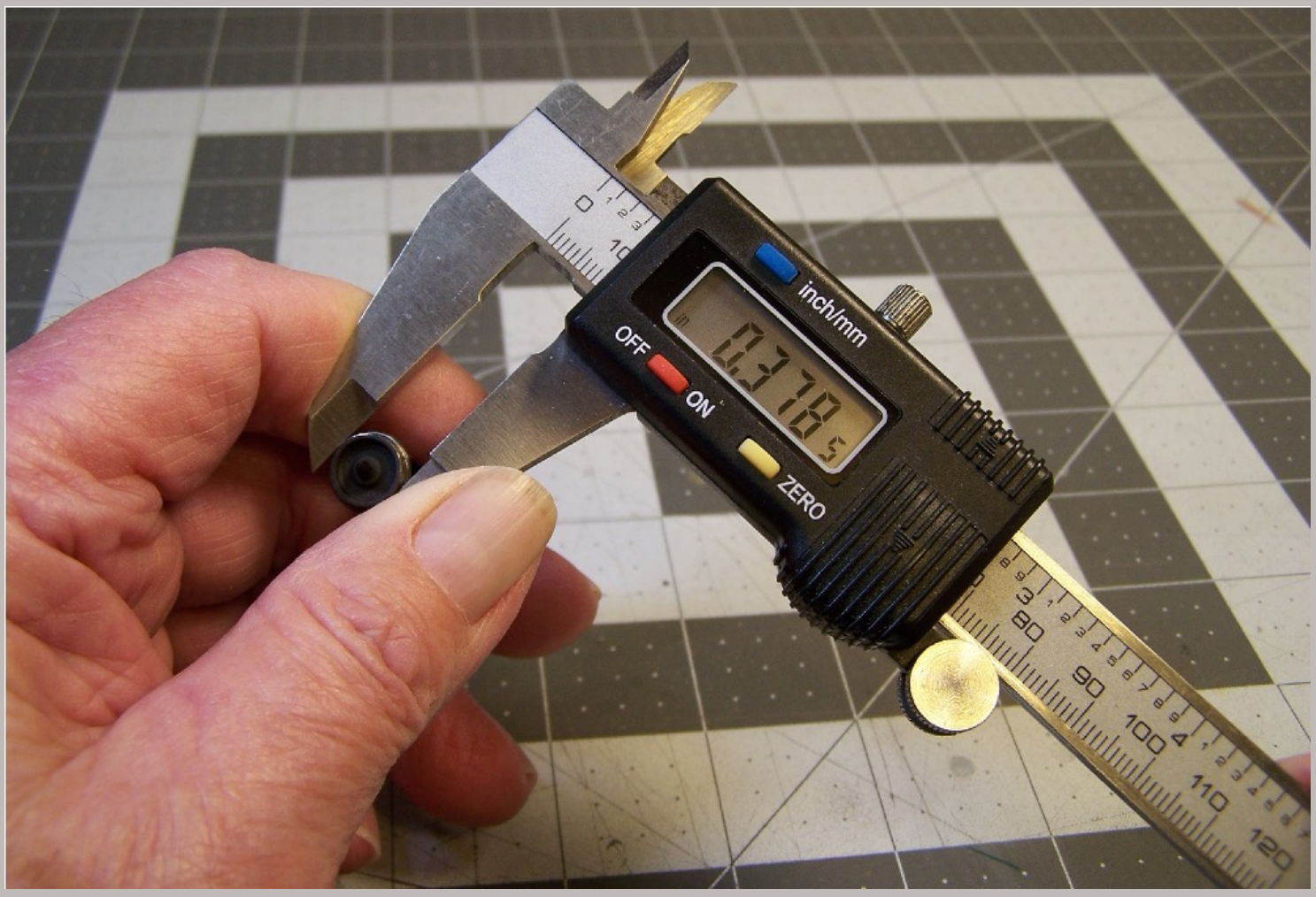
I have added the link to the Micromark truck tuner: https://www.micromark.com/HO-Truck-Tuner_2

I then transition to the wheels and axles. The first thing I do is examine the plastic wheels for any flash or leftover mold gates or other defects. I also check the ends of the axles to see if there are any burrs or if the axles lack a sharp point. I find either one or the other does happen with the mass produced trucks. If there is a burr, I use an Arksansas stone to remove it carefully without rounding the point. If an axle lacks a sharp point, I either replace that paired wheelset or the axle itself with another. It may be hard to see in the photo but the axle on the right has a blunt point.



Next I roll the wheelsets across a piece of glass on the top of my desk. I observe them closely to be sure the wheels themselves are round and not oval. I have not found this to be a common issue, but I have found a couple out of round wheels. Finding them now saves a lot of headaches later when the car does not operate reliably. I have found some manufacturers' wheels to be different diameter than others. This is a good time to use a caliper or micrometer to check that all wheels have the same or a reasonably close diameter. In my opinion a variation of two or three thousandths is not an issue. I consider anything greater could be a potential problem, and make sure all wheels on the truck fall within the above range. I do this because any difference in diameter is slightly more than tripled by the value of Pi when the circumference is calculated. This may be overkill, but following this step means the possibility of the truck trying to “crabwalk” because one wheel travels farther than the other on an axle or pair of axles is eliminated when troubleshooting derailment prone cars.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Once I am satisfied with all of these things I get out my NMRA template and use the slots in the side to check the wheelsets for being in gauge. I like it when the wheelsets are centered in the slots, i.e., there is a little side to side movement when holding the wheelset against the slots. If the wheels are out of gauge I look at the position of the wheels on the axles. I find that quite often the end of one axle sticks out farther from one wheel than the other wheel. I move one wheel using a twisting and pulling motion, checking it against the NMRA gauge as I work. I do this so that I can have close to the same length of axle sticking out past the side of each wheel. If the wheels are not centered on the axle it is possible for one of the wheels to lack enough clearance between the face of the wheel and rub against the truck sideframe.

I do find now that I am older it can sometimes be a challenge to move a plastic wheel on the axle. I am guessing this is mostly due to the arthritis in my hands having gotten worse as I have aged. Thus far I have only found one puller on the market that appears to have an indent in the shaft of the tool that would work to pull a wheel without damaging the end of the axle. I have added a link to the puller in the Micro-Mark online catalog. Unfortunately, it has been shown as "out of stock" for an extended period of time.

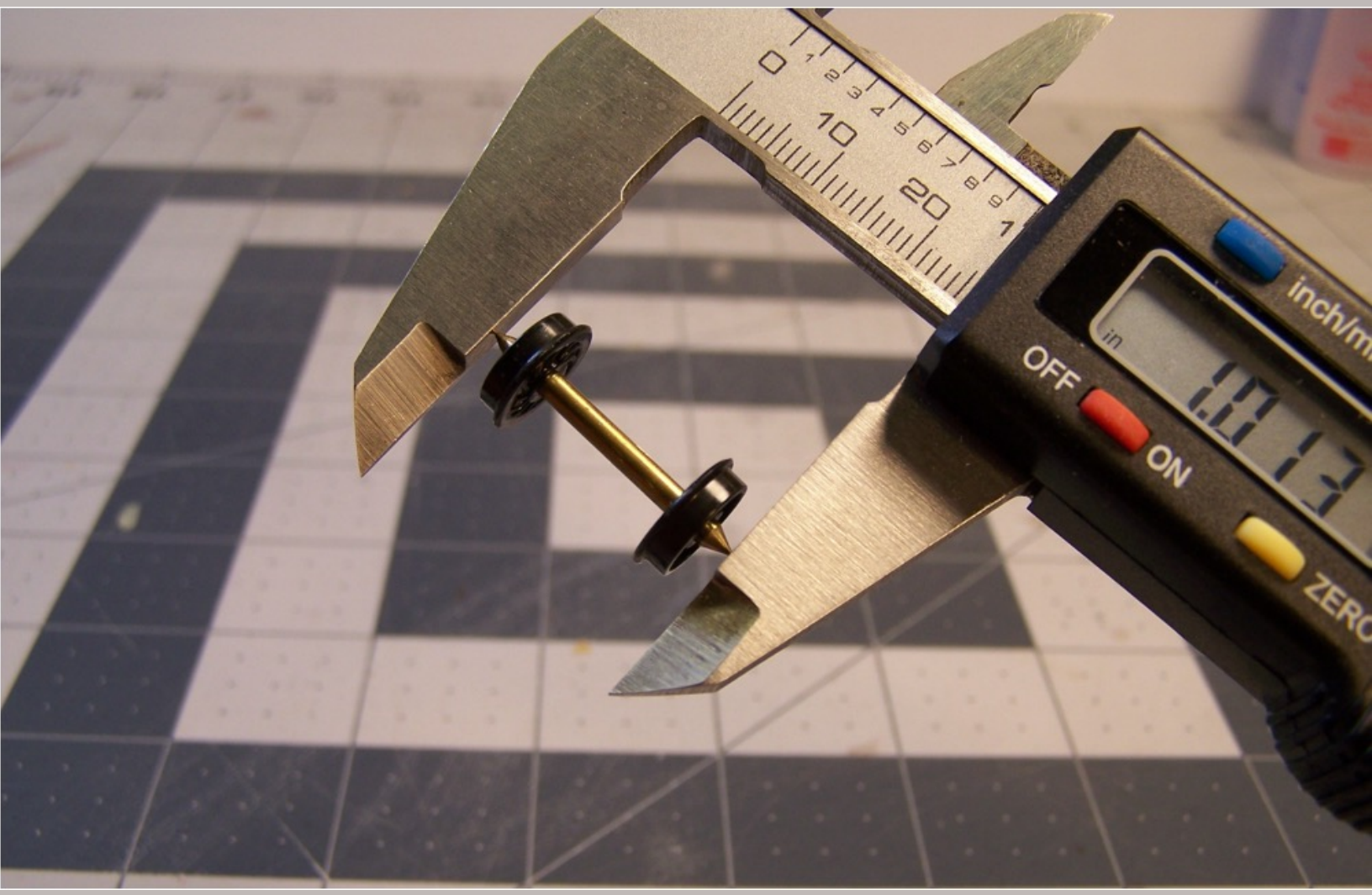
https://micromark.com/products/miniature-gear-puller?keyword=wheel%20puller

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



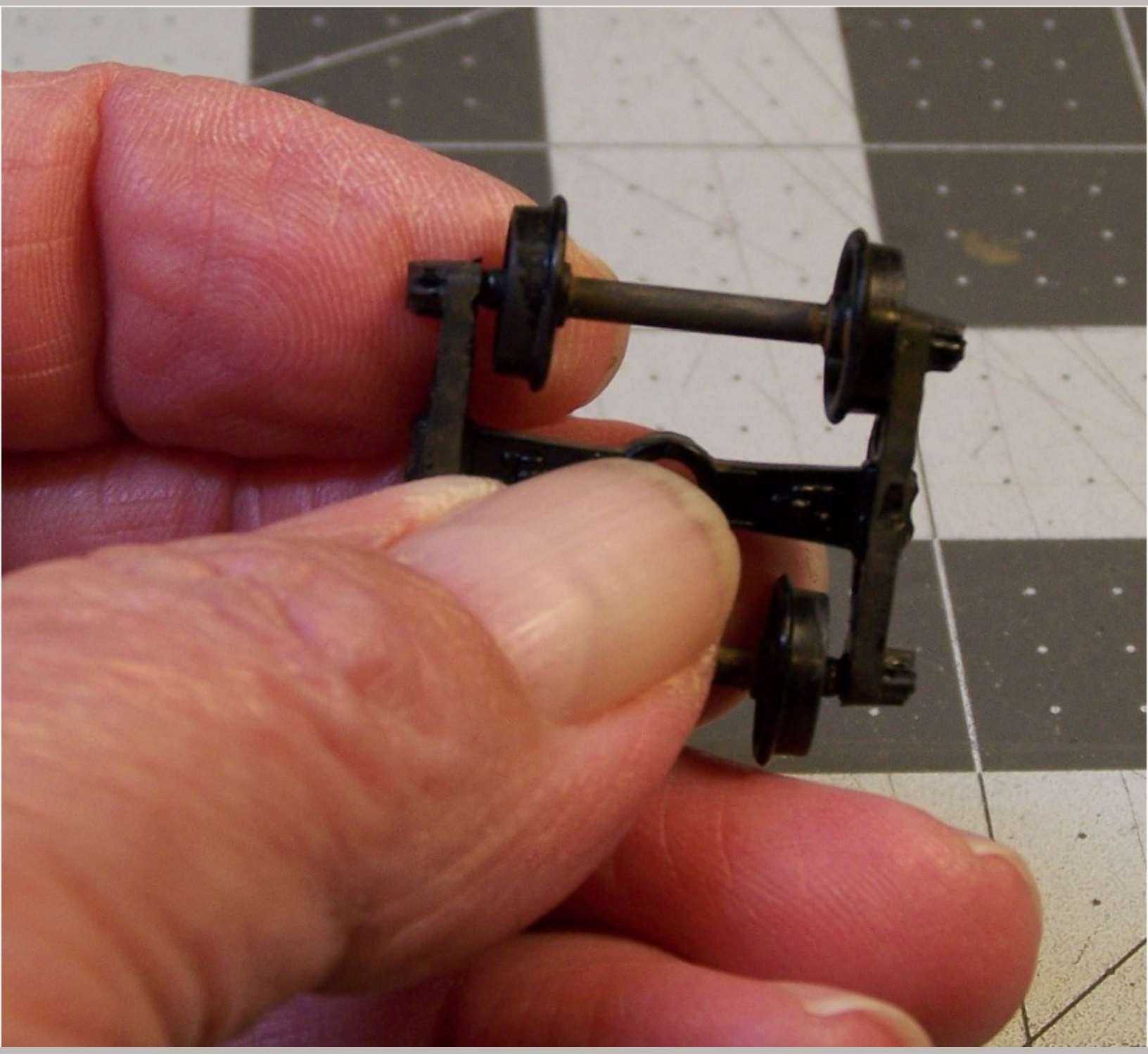
If I am going to use the wheelsets that came with the trucks I do not bother to measure the axle lengths. If I am substituting different wheelsets I use my digital caliper to measure the axle lengths on all the wheelsets. Thus far I have found a difference of up to fifteen thounsandths (.015) in axle lengths between different manufacturers' axles and wheelsets. Obviously, a couple thousandths is not an issue but an axle that is longer or shorter than the supplied axles is not going to roll freely within the truck sideframes.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Once I am satisfied that both the trucks and wheelsets have been “tuned”, I reassemble the trucks. I spin each wheelset as I replace it to be sure it spins freely. If it does not, I first trade wheelsets to see if that fixes the issue. If not, I do a cursory check of the axle point to see if there is something I missed. If that looks OK, I again use the Micromark truck tuner on the offending sideframe and truck bearing point. I find this usually does the trick once the axle is inserted back into the sideframe. If not, I try a wheelset I know spins freely when in a different truck bearing location to pinpoint the exact issue. This is a good time to make sure there is clearance between the face of the wheelset and the truck sideframe to see if an offset axle was overlooked at some point. The next photograph illustrates this.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

At this point in the process I am ready to reassemble the truck. With both trucks reassembled and the wheelsets spinning freely, it is time for a track test. I place each truck on the track and give it a gentle push with my finger. It should roll freely and evenly down the track with the gentlest push. Watch for any tendency to hug the rails on either side or to not roll freely. I have found that once in a great while the truck frame will be warped or twisted slightly and the truck will travel at a slight angle rather than rolling straight. I discard any truck that shows this type of inferior running quality. Once I have ensured the trucks roll smoothly and freely I move toward the painting process.

This step may be somewhat out of order, but I have included it here because it is not really part of the painting process. After the trucks and wheel sets have been painted I reassemble them and make sure they still roll freely. Once I am satisfied with this step I move on to a little extra insurance that the trucks will continue to roll freely. I add powdered teflon to the trucks where the ends of the axles ride. I have been unable to locate a source for powdered teflon and I have resorted to decanting the powdered teflon from a spray can by spraying it into a medicine cup. I then wait until it dries. I apply the dry powdered teflon with a microbrush. Some modelers like to use powdered graphite in the same way. I chose to use the teflon because I find it less messy than powdered graphite. Also powdered graphite is conductive. I cannot compose a scenario where so much powdered graphite can accumulate such to cause a short circuit. Still, better safe than sorry.



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

Once everything including painting is complete I put the trucks back onto the car and check the coupler height with a Kadee height gauge. After that I give the car a shove with my hand and roll it through various switches and around curves to make sure it operates reliably. If it operates flawlessly I will couple it to another car or two and again push it with coupled with the other cars through several switches and around some curve track.

While this may seem like a lot of probably unnecessary work, I have found it helps to eliminate one possible source of a derailment. Even though I have a small layout and run short trains, I find it annoying any time a car derails. Speaking for myself, reliable operation is key, so spending time tuning my trucks is definitely worth the time and effort as far as I am concerned.

Just as a side note, I have only ever found one metal truck that I needed to use the Micromark truck tuner to clean up the truck sideframe bearing. I refrain from using the truck tuner as a matter of course in any metal trucks, preferring to keep it as sharp as possible for use in plastic trucks.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

Prototype Structures that need to be Modeled

edited by John Siekirk

This section of the S&S RR & I Gazette was created at the request of George Sellios. George mentioned in one of our phone conversations that he really missed seeing prototype structure photographs in the modeling literature. “It just doesn’t seem to be done anymore”. Well George, the response was fantastic to my call for help. So lets see how long we can keep this section going with fresh prototype structure photographs and when available models inspired by those prototypes. I always have the camera ready when we travel and welcome a stop to photograph a structure that in the words of my wife Amy “that looks like a building from one of George’s kits”. Please add your structure photographs to this section.

If you find something in this section that inspires you, please consider a build article for the S&S RR & I Gazette. And kit manufactures, we hope you also find inspiration in these pages, too.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

Structures that cry out to be modelled.

Mark Dalrymple

Recently, my wife and I travelled to Oamaru for dog shows. While there, I took the opportunity to get a few shots of the great architecture. Although there is some very ornate structures in Oamaru, I took many shots of some of the more humble offerings.



Figure 1 Shows a roughcast cottage villa with corrugated iron roofing. I love the complex roof design over the large bay windows.



Figure 2 A close-up of one of the gables. Also notice here the three different types of cladding, vertical boards, horizontal shiplap and roughcast. Even the roughcast has two differing textures.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Figure 3 A view from the other side.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Figure 4 One from in front. As you can see, there would be a lot of work in roofing this house.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Figure 5 I found this show on our way home in Temuka.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Figure 6 I zoomed in here to show the large weed growing on the parapet wall. What a great detail!

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Figure 7 Here is another lovely detail from across the road. Note the cracked plaster, water weathering and scupper without downpipe.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Figure 8 This little cottage caught my eye. Great textures and stone colourings.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Figure 9 This factory is a lovely combination of old and new.



Figure 10 The changes in material and style and the quirk between the different facades really make it stand out. Wouldn't it make a great low relief structure?

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Figure 11 Here is a close up of the original facade.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Figure 12 And that cool door detail from in front.

Here is a link for anyone wanting a bit more information on this neat complex. https://www.heritage.org.nz/list-details/2288/J%20and%20T%20Meek's%20Grain%20Store%20(Former)

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Figure 13 A couple of the more ornate shop fronts.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Figure 14 In New Zealand, many of the parapet walls hide gable and hip roofs generally clad in wrinkly tin. Here is a good example.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Figure 15 The main tourist area of Oamaru. Oamaru stone is used throughout the country as a high-end cladding. The contrast between the façade and the side wall is striking.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Figure 16 A close-up of all the ornate details. Unfortunately, in our 2011 Christchurch earthquake, many of these sorts of ornate details and parapet walls came crashing down and several people were killed by them.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Figure 17 A humble affair just down the road from our dog shows.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Figure 18 This little corner shop would make a great modelling project. Art deco embellishments.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Figure 19 This side view gives away the otherwise hidden roof design - another corrugated iron hip roof.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Figure 20 This structure just cries out to be modelled! Sometimes the most run-down prototypes make the most interesting models. The old, rusted ironing board would make a great detail!

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Figure 21 I had to go back to get another shot of my favourite stack, this view from over the road. I intend to build this chimney one day soon. The Oamaru stone, brick and rusted angle iron create a unique look.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com



Figure 22 I took this shot over the high block wall, standing on the towbar of our station wagon. Just think how much interest you could create in very little depth, between a railway track against that block wall and the backdrop. So many colours and textures and shapes!

I'll leave my Oamaru photos there for this month. I have another instalment to come. I hope a look at a few of the humbler offerings from the beautiful town of Oamaru has given you some modelling fodder!

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

Building a Indoor Vented Waterfalls Paint Booth - Part 3

By Bernd Fanghanel

Picking up from where I left off from the last write up. A square hole was cut into the top of the table to allow the compressor to be placed on the roll around cart.



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

Fittings for plumbing in the water tank the booth sits on.



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

The bucket sits below next to the compressor.



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

A nozzle from another bucket was used for a drain opening in a plastic box.



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

Using a piece of brass tubing with the end sharpened I drill a series of holes in a ¾” id. tubing, plus the addition of a plug in the end for the drain line to the filter.



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

That part of the tube was then glued to a slot cut into the plastic part with silicone caulk and held down with wire ties till dry.



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

Inside view of the tubing and nozzle.



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

The plastic box with filters in place.



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

Lid open showing the filter placement.



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

Holes were cut into the lid for the electrical cord and hose.



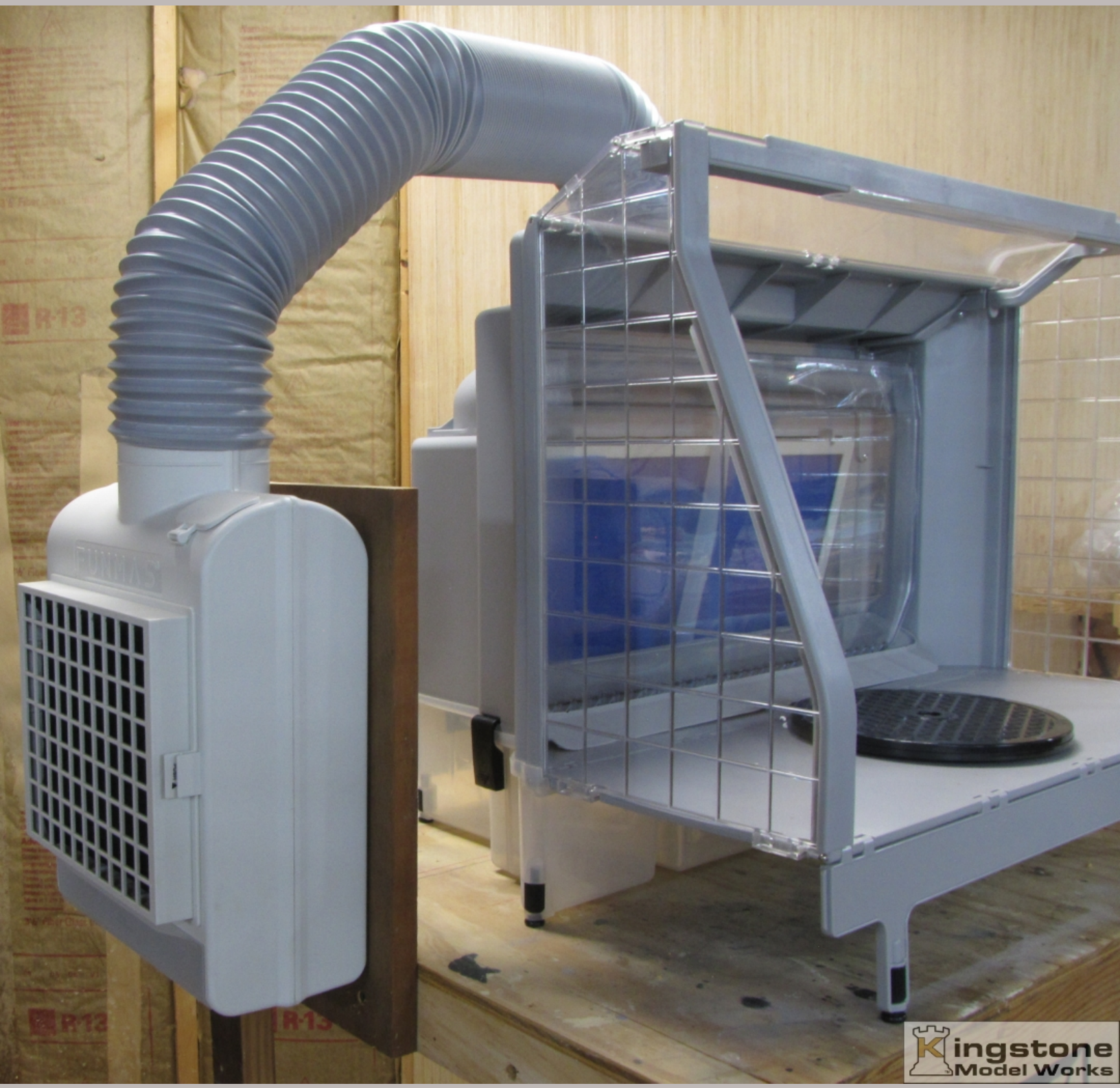
John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

All set for filling with water.



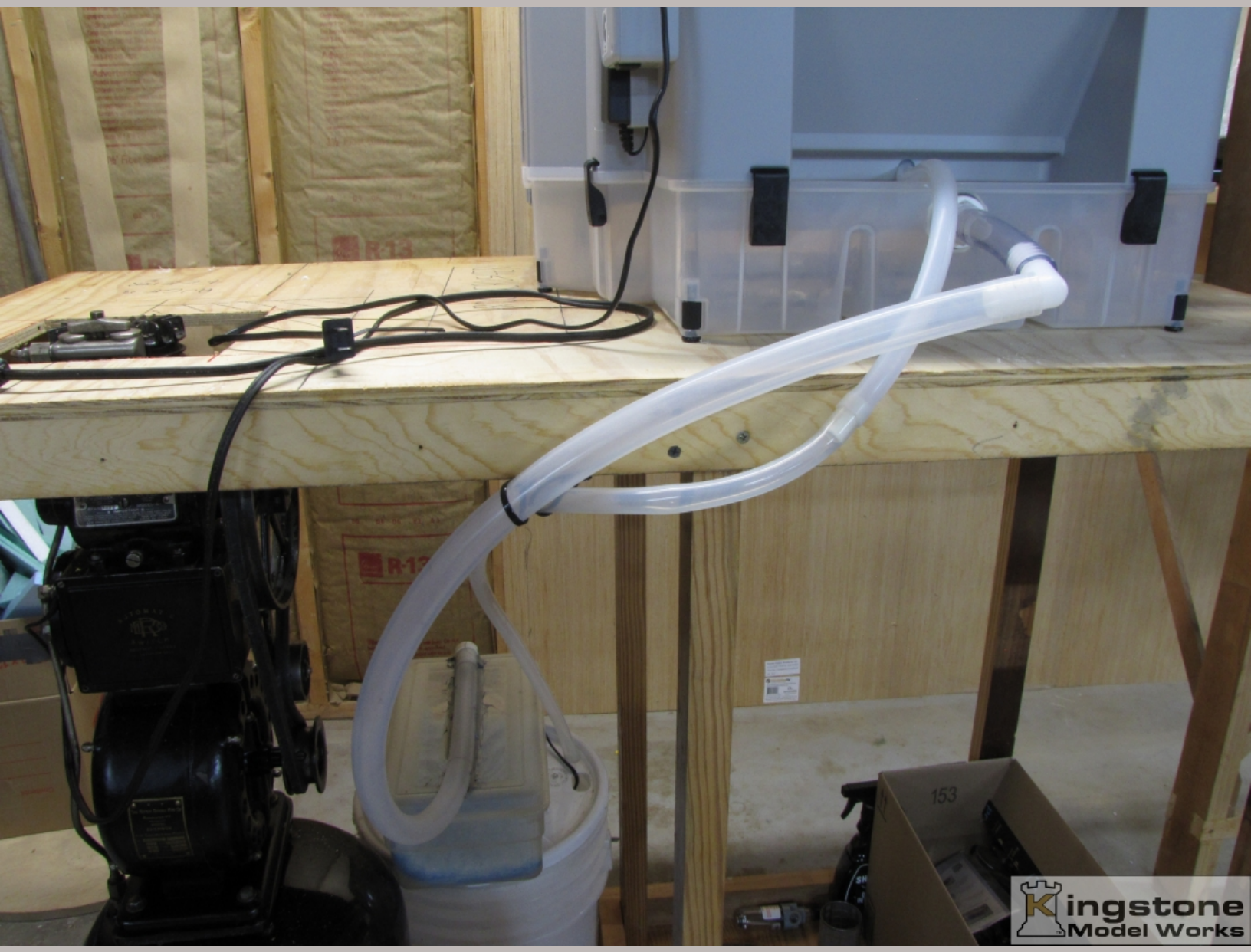
John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

The dryer vent filter was mounted to the side of the cart.



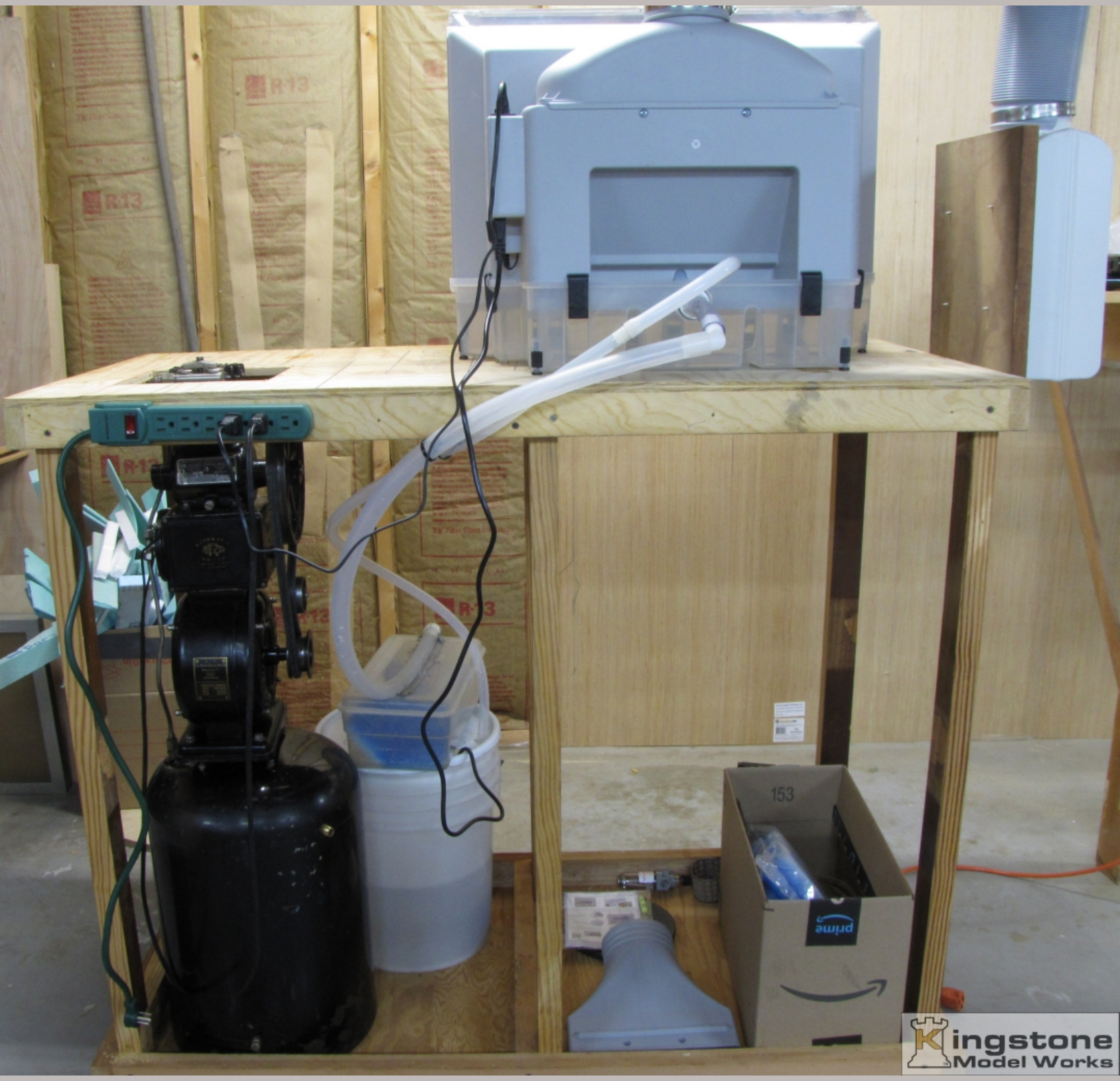
John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

The tubing was neatly tied together and fastened to the side with a wire tie.



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

Added a power strip for all the electrical needs of the booth.



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

I tried the booth out at this point and discovered that the pump was not strong enough to pump the water up to the filler tube in the spray booth. I ordered a more powerful pump from Amazon. After trying that out I still didn't have enough water for the water fall curtain. I remedied that by mounting the bucket up higher on the end of the cart. All worked fine then.



John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

I’m using a water sheeting liquid used in dishwashers for the water curtain. It makes the water flow over the whole plastic sheet better. The little jar is air eraser compound (aluminum oxide) and Arm & Hammer baking soda. Both baking soda and aluminum oxide will be used to remove paint from models. That’s one nice thing about the water fall curtain. It’ll catch the abrasive particles and flush them through the filters. That was the purpose of getting a water fall curtain paint booth.

That concludes this article on the spray booth. As of yet I have not used it as there are a few more things I need to add. I’m also looking into what kind of paint I want to use for model painting. Once I’ve determined that I’ll write a short finish up article on the spray booth use and how it worked out for me.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

Gazette Statistics

Please send me an email with your email address asking to be added to the readers list if you would like to be added to the Superior & Seattle Railroad & Interchanges Gazette distribution list **sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com** .

Volume 1 - 2022

Issue 1	16 Pages	May 1, 2022
Issue 2	40 Pages	May 10, 2022
Issue 3	35 Pages	May 28, 2022
Issue 4	120 Pages	June 22, 2022
Issue 5	159 Pages	August 1, 2022
Issue 6	204 Pages	September 1, 2022
Issue 7	128 Pages	October 1, 2022
Issue 8	119 Pages	November 1, 2022
Issue 9	166 Pages	December 1, 202
Total	987 Pages	Total 2022

Volume 2 - 2023

Issue 1	116 Pages	January 1, 2023
Issue 2	152 Pages	February 6, 2023
Issue 3	131 Pages	March 1, 2023
Issue 4	168 Pages	April 1, 2023
Issue 5	148 Pages	May 1, 2023 One year anniversary issue
Issue 6	127 Pages	June 1, 2023
Issue 7	191 Pages	July 1, 2023
Issue 8	181 Pages	August 1, 2023
Issue 9	146 Pages	September 1, 2023
Issue 10	252 Pages	October 1, 2023
Issue 11	249 Pages	November 1, 2023
Issue 12	241 Pages	December 1, 2023
Total	2102 Pages	To-Date 2023
Total	3089 Pages	To-Date Volume 1 and 2

Volume 3 - 2024

Issue 1	223 Pages	January 1, 2024
Issue 2	251 Pages	February 6, 2024
Issue 3	178 Pages	March 1, 2024
Issue 4	199 Pages	April 1, 2024
Issue 5	189 Pages	May 1, 2024 Two year anniversary issue
Issue 6	129 Pages	June 1, 2024
Issue 7	156 Pages	July 1, 2024
Issue 8	183 Pages	August 1, 2024
Issue 9	184 Pages	September 1, 2024
Issue 10	184 Pages	October 1, 2024
Issue 11	215 Pages	November 1, 2024
Issue 12	194 Pages	December 1, 2024

Total	2285 Pages	To-Date 2024
Total	5374 Pages	To-Date Volume 1 - 3

Volume 4 - 2025

Issue 1	189 Pages	January 1, 2025
Issue 2	215 Pages	February 1, 2025
Issue 3	221 Pages	March 1, 2025
Issue 4	260 Pages	April 1, 2025
Issue 5		May 1, 2025 Third Year anniversary issue
Issue 6		June 1, 2025
Issue 7		July 1, 2025
Issue 8		August 1, 2025
Issue 9		September 1, 2025
Issue 10		October 1, 2025
Issue 11		November 1, 2025
Issue 12		December 1, 2025

Total	664 Pages	To-Date 2025
Total	6259 Pages	To-Date Volume 1 - 4

Reader Contact List - Only if you ask to be on the list.

This section contains the email addresses of the readers and contributors to the Superior & Seattle Railroad & Interchanges Gazette. If you would like your name and email address listed send me an email asking me to add it to the page. This allows you to communicate directly with contributors to the Gazette. You can also send me any questions or comments and I will pass them on to the contributor. Please remember to share your correspondences with the gazette readers, when appropriate, by forwarding a copy to me, which will be cut and pasted into the next issue. We all might have the same question.

John Siekirk	sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com
Frank Baker	erieman73@gmail.com
Mark Dalrymple	mdalrymple1712@gmail.com
Terry Lukanic	terry@seabee-rvn.com
Bob Parish	bobparrish770@gmail.com
George Nagle	gnagle@live.com
Brian Marriott	natref@gvtc.com
Jack Dziadul	jackdziadul@gmail.com
Bernd Fanghanel	protolancer@kingstonemodelworks.com
Brian Kistenmacher	kistenmacher.brian@gmail.com
Jerry Beach	jerryrbeach@yahoo.com
Kris Blackmarr	krispb@fastmail.us
Rich Wolfanger	nonameron@hotmail.com

The Interchange Railroads of the Superior & Seattle

John Siekirk	Superior Lumber Railroad NG
John Allen	Gorre & Daphetid Railroad
George Sellios	Franklin & South Manchester Railroad
Bob Parrish	Boise, Nampa & Owyhee Railroad
Mark Dalrymple	Shadowlands and Tellynott Railroad
Frank Baker	Morristown & Erie Railroad / Western Division
Rich Murphy	Somerset & Mt. Vernon Railway
Neil Andrews	The Cape to Kairo RR
Steve Drees	Suphrin Pathetic Railroad
Tom Langford	Atlantic and Southern Railroad
Dick Elwell	Hoosac Valley Railroad
George Nagle	Twin Mountain Barge & Navigation Company
David Emery	Sandy Lake & Northern, and NG Sandy Lake and Rangely River
Barry Fitzgerald	The Havelock Pass Railroad
Jerry Beach	Delaware & Northern Railroad
Art VanDeWater	The Winona and Southwestern Railroad

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com

Back Issues

We now have a web address where you can download Back Issues of the Superior & Seattle Railroad & Interchanges Gazette and the F&SM Structure Encyclopedia. This is provided by one of our contributors David Emery. Thank you David.

This will save my mail drop email address usage limit for sending out the new issues.

Web Address for Back Issues of the Superior & Seattle Railroad & Interchanges Gazette.

http://www.earlyrail.org/sandsgazette/

*An Index to all issues of the Superior & seattle Railroad & Interchanges Gazette can also be found on this webpage.



Until our next Issue.

John F. Siekirk
email: sandsrailroad1214@gmail.com