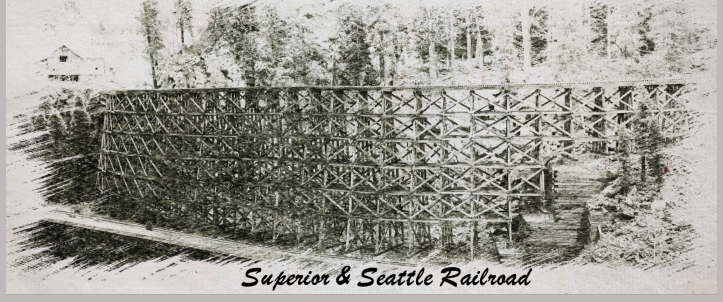
Volume 5 - 26 Number 2



February 1, 2026

The Superior & Seattle Railroad & Interchanges

Gazette



This winter I'm spending my modeling time completing the town of Isaacstown. I have 3 baseboard dioramas to complete, along with all the scenery and detailing. As I'm working on the detailing, Beach Farms is on the mountain side to my right. Across the aisle I have a large unfinished area that will be my next big project, a waterfront area that will be called Leah's Landing named for my Granddaughter.

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The design work for Leah's Landing has been underway for a few years, now. I ran an article in the November and December 2023 issues of the S&S RR & I Gazette describing how I started the process. I'm repeating some of that information here to get everyone up to speed with the past design work.

I have had the name picked out for this area for probably 7 years, since not long after Leah was born. I just like the sound of Leah's Landing. Isaac was about 3 years old when he was sitting on the benchwork for this area and I told him he was sitting where Leah's Landing was going to be. He pointed to the unfinished area directly across the aisle and said "then that should be Isaacstown". And so it is. Isaac also named the mountains behind Isaacstown, "John's Mountain Range", because Isaac and my youngest grandson Grayson have my first name as their middle name. So now you know the naming history of the area.

I call this "my design process" because it is the way I do it. It is my hope that describing my process will help you with finding the best process for you to design your layout. I will describe the tools that I use to visualize what it will look like in its final form.

To start, we need to review my layout build process. I started with the backdrops behind my old layout. I then added all of the new mountains on top of the benchwork from the original layout. So the photographic backdrops and the locations of the mountains are a given design criteria. The final location of the track work was determined after the mountains were in place. I had a rough idea where I was going to add the track as the mountains were created.

I also started the layout with the history or story that there was originally a narrow gauge railroad that serviced all the mines, ranches, and mills that were scattered throughout the area utilizing the natural water power coming down from the mountains. When the standard gauge mainline was cut through the mountains, the original narrow gauge railroad, called the Superior Lumber Company Railroad, became a branch line of the Superior & Seattle Railroad servicing the higher elevation customers.

I have been buying kits and thinking about scratch build ideas for this waterfront area for many years. I have pictures in my head and sketches in my iPad of what I want this area to look like, but it is constantly evolving as I visualize what I want and what I can fit into the area.

The first step in this process is to figure out how much space is available for structures and what will fit in that space. Below, I will describe the techniques I used to determine this.



The first step was to lay down paper and draw the outlines of the rock work, track, and key design criteria locations.

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This photograph shows the template that was created for the lower level of the area. This process was done for each level.

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The paper templates were then moved to my drafting board where the key features were transferred to the plan view drawing of the area. You will notice in this photograph that there are new SRMW kits opened up on the table. This requires some explanation.

After spending a couple days with Bob VanGelder this past May, I really wanted to find a way to add some old mills to the top level of Leah's Landing. Bob and I were standing on the bridge just up the street from the

prototype of the Baker's Store, from his Hilltop Entrepreneurs kit. Bob was describing how the river was diverted from one Mill to another and how so many of his kits were from prototypes that once stood along this section of the river. While standing there I was envisioning the river coming through the notch in the mountains above Leah's Landing and feeding not one but maybe two or more mills. I really like the look of Bob's mills at a higher elevation so that the view is of a scene above you when you are standing in the aisle. So this is how the design of a seaport town begins with mills along a mountain stream. First came the mountain stream. Then the mills along the mountain stream coming down from the mountains. Finally, at the base of the mountains, a harbor, with a wooden ship building facility that utilizes the products of the mills.

The picture I had created in my mind gave me the opportunity to utilize a few more SRMW kits that I did not own. The first step was to decide which mills might fit both for size and purpose, from the photographs of previous kits on Bob's VanGelder's SRMW website.

https://southrivermodelworks.com/

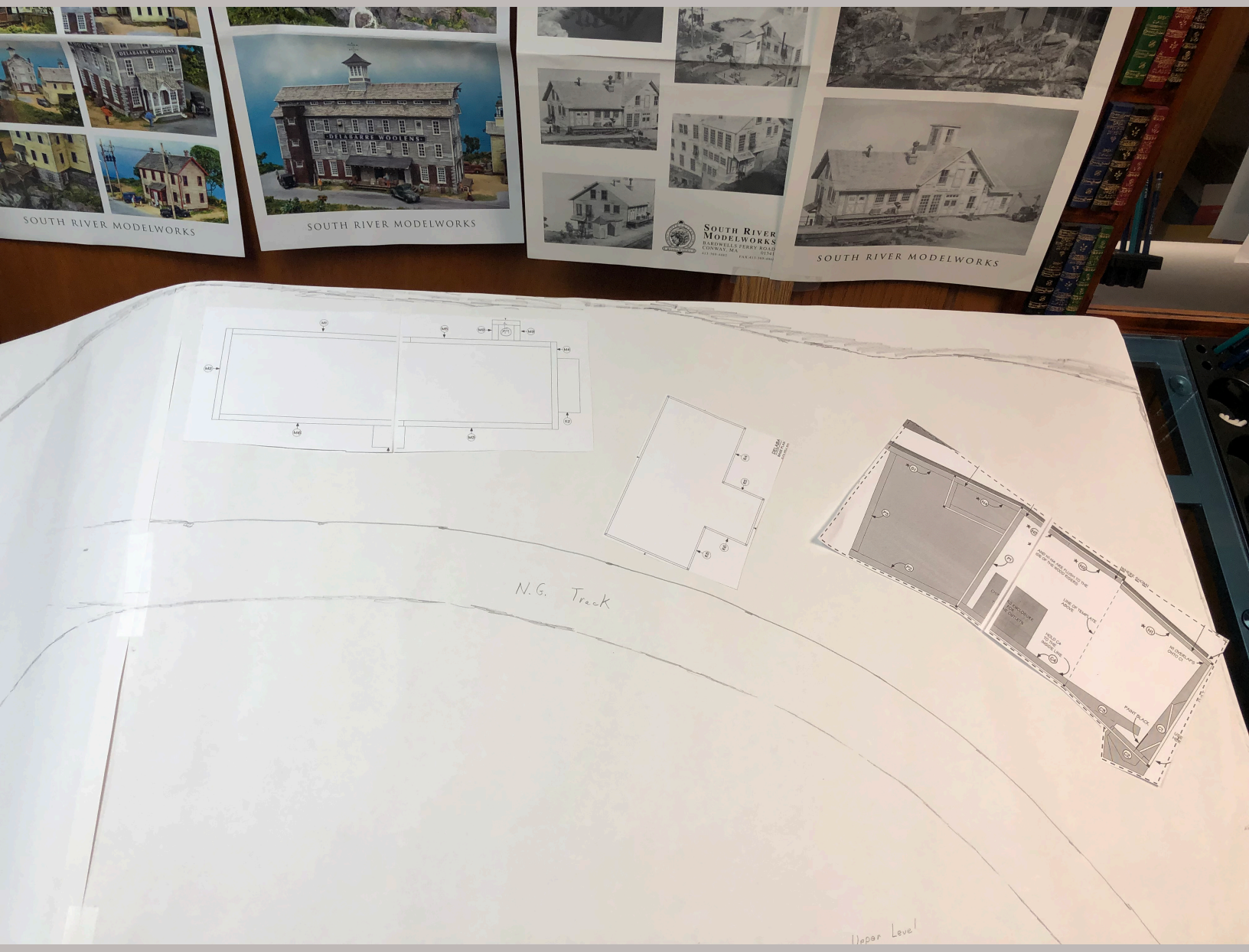
Once I had my prioritized list, I contacted John at FSMkits.

https://fsmkits.homestead.com/kitsforsale.html

Over the summer John found and I purchased three more red boxes. I was very happy with the prices given what I saw on eBay.

Kendall's Number 300
Delabarre Woolens Number 340
Martin Machine Co. Number 150

I have been asked how many SRMW kits are on the S&S RR? - when all have been built, the total number of SRMW kits on the S&S RR will be 14, 6 more to build. This is what I currently own, I'm not ruling out purchasing more if I find the room.



Once the plan view layout was created for the upper level, the full scale plan view drawings that Bob provides in his kits were used to establish how I wanted to orient the mills. In this drawing the Martin Machinery drawing is on the right, the power house for Delabarre Woolens is in the middle, and the Delabarre mill is on the left.

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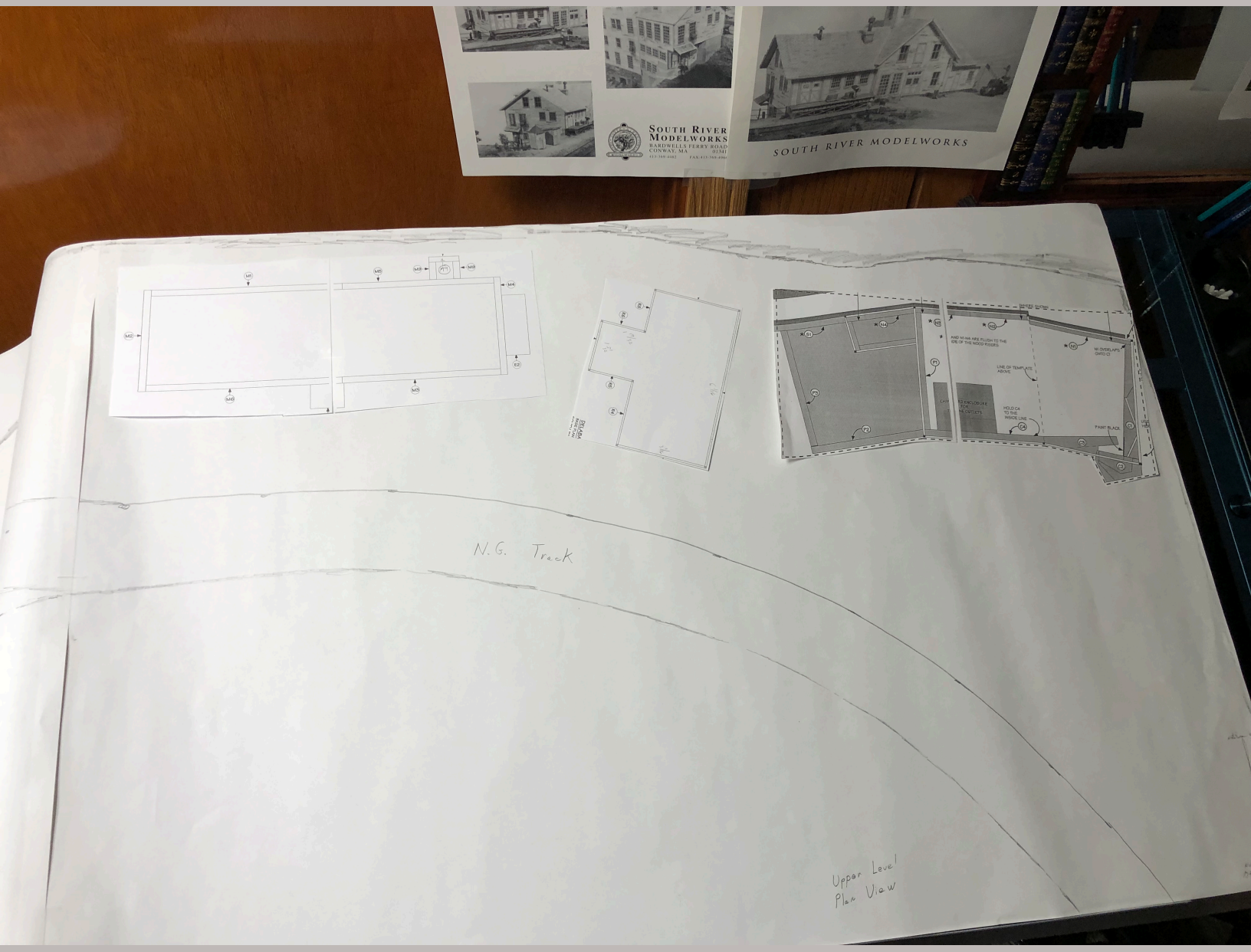

This is the orientation I finally decided to use for the clay model. In this photograph you can see where the Narrow Gauge RR line passes through the scene. I'm working on a design for the mechanisms that will move the product from the mills to the railroad.

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The next step was to make full scale templates for the plan view and side view or elevation view and see what they looked like in location on the layout. My scanner/copier comes in very handy in getting the scale correct for all of the template drawings.

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The next step in the design process was to move to the 1/4 scale clay model to start looking at the landforms and elevations that made sense with the established plan view locations. What is currently modeled is the configuration of the mountains and track work at the beginning of the design process.

This clay model was a great project that was constructed with my Grandkids on one of their visits. Leah requested that we start Leah's Landing. I probably have 8 hours invested in the construction and it makes a great visualization tool. We had a lot of fun and I think the kids learned something.

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In this photograph the clay model is on my rolling cart which allows me to move it anywhere I need it. Also helps when I want to get it out of the way.

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Templates were also made in 1/4 inch scale to aid in developing the clay model.

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Photographs can also be superimposed on each other to visualize the mill in place on the layout using my iPad photos application. I establish a reference dimension and then scale the photographs to get the size right. Once these photographs are stored in my iPad I can use them to make sketches and test out design ideas. When I find one of the kits I own, built up on someone's layout, I take reference photographs at various angles to help with this process. I believe this photograph is from Dick Elwell's layout.

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In this progress photograph, the mill and upper dam have been modeled along with additional rock work. The Martin Machine structure is also modeled in clay. It is amazing how quickly you can make a mockup of the structure by cutting a block of clay cut to the right dimensions. I bumped the roof while putting in the dam just before I took this picture. A quick reshape with a putty knife will fix it.

The next steps will be to establish the elevation of the Delabarre Power house and lower dam along with additional land forms. Access to the railroad line also has to be established.

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Each move on the clay model starts with a rough drawing/markup on a photograph of the current clay model to visualize the next steps. Again, I use my iPad to create the sketches. Here we have the beginnings of the shelf framework that will hold the structures from the top of the scene down to the waterfront. This will now be added to the clay model. The structures will look like a spot was carved or blasted out of the mountain side to make room for them. Also shown, is the upper and lower dam locations with a first guess at elevations. My sketches are very rough but they get me to the point where I can move the clay where on want it.

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In this photograph, the mill structures have been added in clay along with the landforms for the area. I really like making the structure mockups out of clay for visualization. I get the basic dimensions from the kit components and then make a clay model of the structure using the photographs provided.

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At this point, I will be dividing all of the area covered by the clay model into baseboards that will fit on my workbench. Now, that I have an idea of how much space is available for structures I will be starting the process of deciding what structure will go in each available space. There is a lot of elevation change to deal with so this is going to be a lot of fun. I find that I really enjoy working with the elevation change. It requires a lot of kit bashing and scratch building to make everything work. The design process is as much fun as the building for me.

I have already decided that the area on the right side of the harbor will be a shipyard. I have bought a few books on the ship building process and have some initial ideas on what I want to build. I bought Brett Gallant's Sierra West Scale Models Shipyard kit along with all of the Foss Landing kits that will serve as starting points for the scene. My original inspiration for this scene came from viewing and photographing waterfront structures in the contest room at the Narrow Gauge Conventions.



A few of the research books I'm reading to get ideas for the shipyard scene. I'm enjoying learning about a new industry, for me.

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At this point in the design process, I see all the kits I have purchased for this area of the layout as boxes full of parts. Some will end up fitting just like the original kit manufacturer intended, others will be heavily modified and kit bashed. The structures on the left side of the harbor will be built into the mountainside so there may be some kit structures where I can use both the front and the back of the kit structure with a false back up against the mountainside.

I also have a few scratch build structures that I hope to incorporate into the scene. Like most model railroad scenes, I have enough ideas to fill twice the space. I will share more information on these ideas as they develop.

One scratch build idea that is pretty firm is I want to build a car ferry. The story goes that the only way to get a vehicle to Leah's Landing is by train or boat. I want to build a model similar to the Point Ellis Canadian National Car Ferry Slip, to service Leah's Landing. You may remember that George Sellios has a green lift bridge on the Franklin & South Manchester that was inspired by this article in Bob Brown's Narrow Gauge Gazette.



Blue Ribbon Series

The Point Ellice Canadian National Car Ferry Slip

by Brian D. Pate, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada
Photos by the author

Building this HO scale model was a project that got out of hand. It grew out of my interest in rail-maritime operations in general, and ferry slips in particular. Also the Burrard, Delbrook and Pacific Railway in my basement needed a slip to service a car-ferry operation.

Then a friend, Al Lill, introduced me to the prototype, which was built in 1927 and still functions today, even though a little weather beaten and dilapidated. This Ferry Slip fits the short-line theme of the **Gazette** since currently it is the way into and out of the vestigial few miles of industrial trackage that the Canadian National retains in the harbour area of Victoria, B.C. This is on the other side of the 30-mile wide Georgia Straight from

42 GAZETTE



In this photograph we have a few of the kits (there are more) that I have collected over the years for this area of the layout. I'm slowly pulling the kits into one place to help with the design process. I currently have 6 red box kits yet to be built. Three of them are planned for the town of Superior on the S&S RR.

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So far, I have learned from the research on wooden ship building that I really want to model it. I find the level of skilled craftsmanship in the process fascinating. I'm also very impressed with the structural Engineering skills that went into keeping these boats in one piece under very difficult conditions. The number of workstation mini scene possibilities are amazing. I'm going to have a difficult time choosing which ones I want to model.

I have developed a story for Leah's Landing that, with a little creativity, will work for my layout timeframe of 1949. Leah's Landing has been in the wooden ship building business ever since the Narrow Gauge Railroad was built to support the mining and lumber businesses. The Mills and shipyard were located here because of the water power from the streams running down the mountain and the proximity to the Sea Coast for launching the ships.

During the war the shipyard was utilized to make wooden hulled ships for the war effort. Now that the war is over, the business model for the shipyard is to continue with wood ship making, mainly replicas, and wood ship repair and refurbishing. And begin to build steel hulled ships that are replacing the wood hulled ships. New service industries will be required as the move to steel hulled ships takes place.

The ship yard will be on the right side of the bay that makes up Leah's Landing. On the left side, up the mountain side there will be many mills and shops that service the ship yard and fishing industry. A few examples are: a mast turning mill, a sail making mill, a boiler shop, a rope making shop, a riggings shop, etc.

I have picked out a few names for the industries. The ship yard is going to be called Olson's Ship Yard, after my good friend Wayne Olson. Wayne likes to build model ships. The Sail Making Mill (Bob VanGelder's, Delabarre Woolens kit), overlooking Leah's Landing will be named VanSel Sails. The town of Isaacstown was originally going to be called VanSel, a name that George Sellios created during one of our many phone calls, by combining the first three letters of Bob VanGelder's last name with the first three letters of his last name. Isaac vetoed that naming, with George's blessing, so I finally get to use the name here. This brings us all up-to-date on the design and planning for Leah's Landing. I will have an update in the coming months, as the work progresses.

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What's new on the Superior & Seattle Railroad

I have been spending a lot of time in the workshop this month. I have three baseboards from Isaacstown on my workbenches in various stages of completion. I'm also working on the detailing of Isaacstown. I try to spend an hour or two each day with the detailing. Crawling under the layout to access the hatches is not as easy as it once was. There is also a lot of wiring that needs to be completed to get power to all of the LED's that have been installed in the structures of Isaacstown. This project is inspiring me to find ways to complete the rest of the layout without having to crawl under the benchwork. I have a plan to use baseboards that slide in from the aisle that will only have two wires that will need to be attached under the layout. The rest of the wiring, detailing and scenery will be completed on my workbench. Only the seams will have to be covered on the layout. We will see how well this works for Leah's Landing.

I'm also spending some time doing the research and design work for Leah's Landing, my next big project for the layout (see the first article in this issue). I'm really enjoying reading about the wood ship building process. I have a lot of modeling ideas from the research which will be developed over the coming months.

I want to thank all of the contributors to the Superior & Seattle Railroad & Interchanges Gazette over the last few months. It is really nice to see all of the Interchange traffic. It really inspires me to keep going with this project when I get to read about your modeling work as I put this eMagazine together. Please continue to send in articles on your modeling work. This past year we have had a number of authors that have not been able to model and write articles because of health issues. I want to wish them a speedy recovery and thank those that have stepped up to keep this eMagazine going.

News flash: John from FSMkits just sent me an email that he found another "red box kit" SRMW Thorndike Mills that was on my buy list. The list is getting very short but John came through again. The stonework on the main structure looks like the mills in Michigan's Copper Country - this will be used in Superior on the S&S RR. This will make SRMW kit number 14 on the S&S RR.

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Comments on our last Issue

Thanks, John!

Dan Lewis

John,

Thank you. And a Happy New Year to you and yours. Hope it is good for all of us.

Larry Smith

John,

Thank you for another exceptional issue of the S&S RR journal. As I move into scratchbuilding, the material in the journal has become invaluable as a source of inspiration. I can't say how much I appreciate the time and effort you spend sharing the journal.

Kurt Laidlaw

Thanks, John, for another excellent issue.
Mark Wellhausen

Hi John.

What's on my workbench - Lots of great progress, John. Your energy is unstoppable!
Karl Osolinski's workbench - The dilapidated barn is fabulous, Karl! Tremendously well weathered and distressed.
Imagineering Cooper's way - I enjoyed this article immensely, George. You certainly have the gift of the gab! Your humour and storytelling abilities are fabulous. I found myself chuckling away as I read. Your modelling skills are fantastic, but your gift with the pen really brings your modelling to life! Thank you!
As an aside, I'm really quite taken by the Berkshire Valley Models pawn brokers. Such a cool little structure with tons of character.
Cheers, Mark.

What's on my Workbench - The Building of Isaacstown - Part 37

John Siekirk

Structure Builds covered in this issue: **FSM kit JS- 4 Franklin Watch Works - Called Gallant's Tractor Sales on the S&S RR**
FSM kit JS- 18 Westside Auto called Allison's Tractor Repair on the S&S RR



We start out this month with adding the elevated office to the main structure of Gallant's Tractor Sales. The simple platform was built over the template provided in the kit. I then painted it with the same grey paint used for the trim on this structure.

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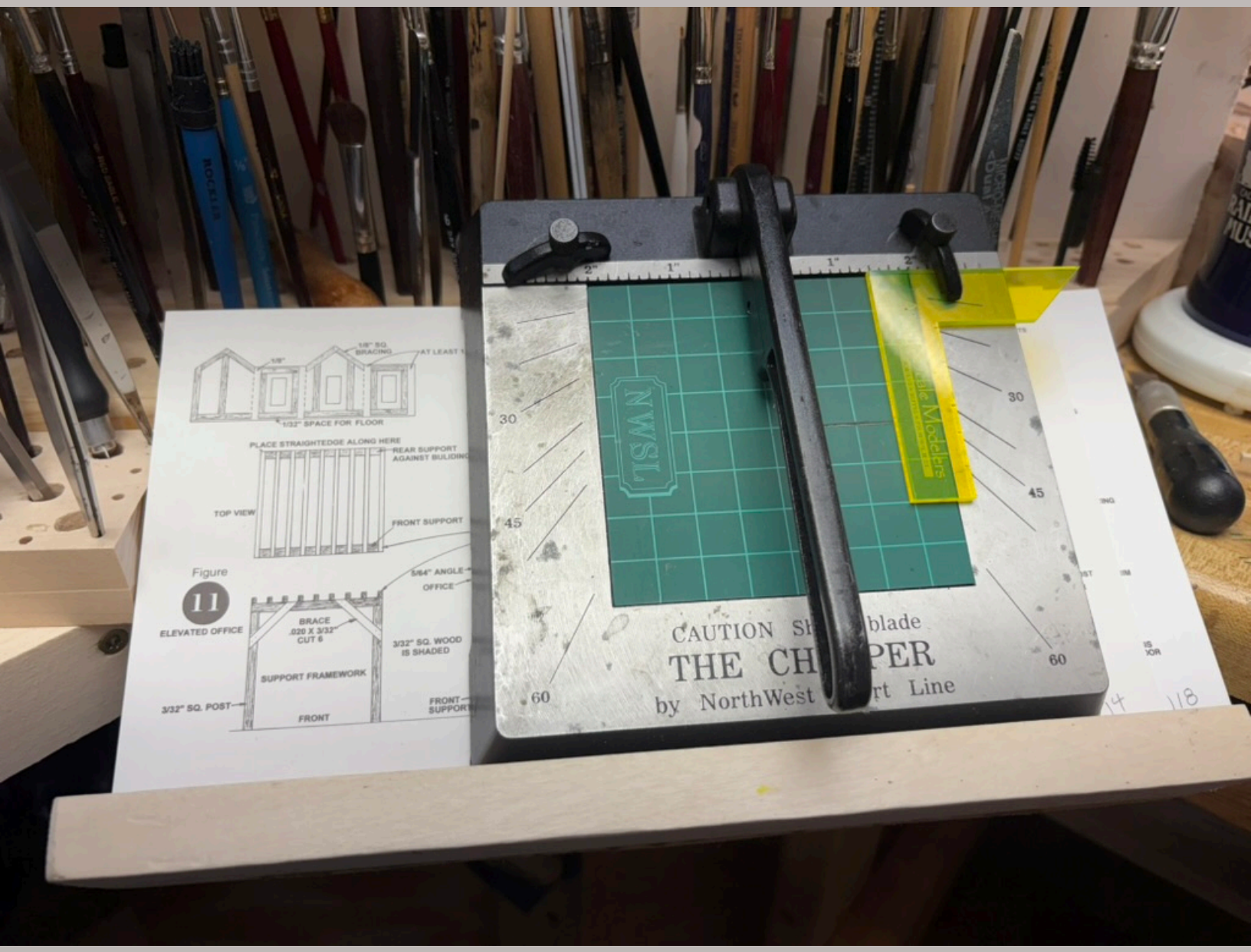

The template for the platform can be seen in the photograph underneath my Chopper.

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The office is a card stock structure that we showed going together in our last issue. The key to building these card stock structures is to add lots of interior bracing. I always add all the bracing that George recommends and usually add a few more just to be safe. This structure is to be sided with Campbell's cedar siding.

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In this photograph we see the first few rows of siding have been glued in place.

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In this photograph the elevated office has been placed on the platform for a test fit. You can also see where some trim pieces are being installed and held in place with weights.

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The siding for the office was stained the same way as the siding on the gable ends of the main structure. First, a coat of Hunterline Driftwood. Then, a coat of Hunterline Blue Grey stain. I think the combination of stains works well with the clapboard siding coloring.

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The final color for the elevated office can be seen in this photograph.

At this point all of the structures need to be fitted with bracing to hold the roof cards. The first step, after adding the cross bracing to Allison's, was a flat cardstock piece that serves as a base.

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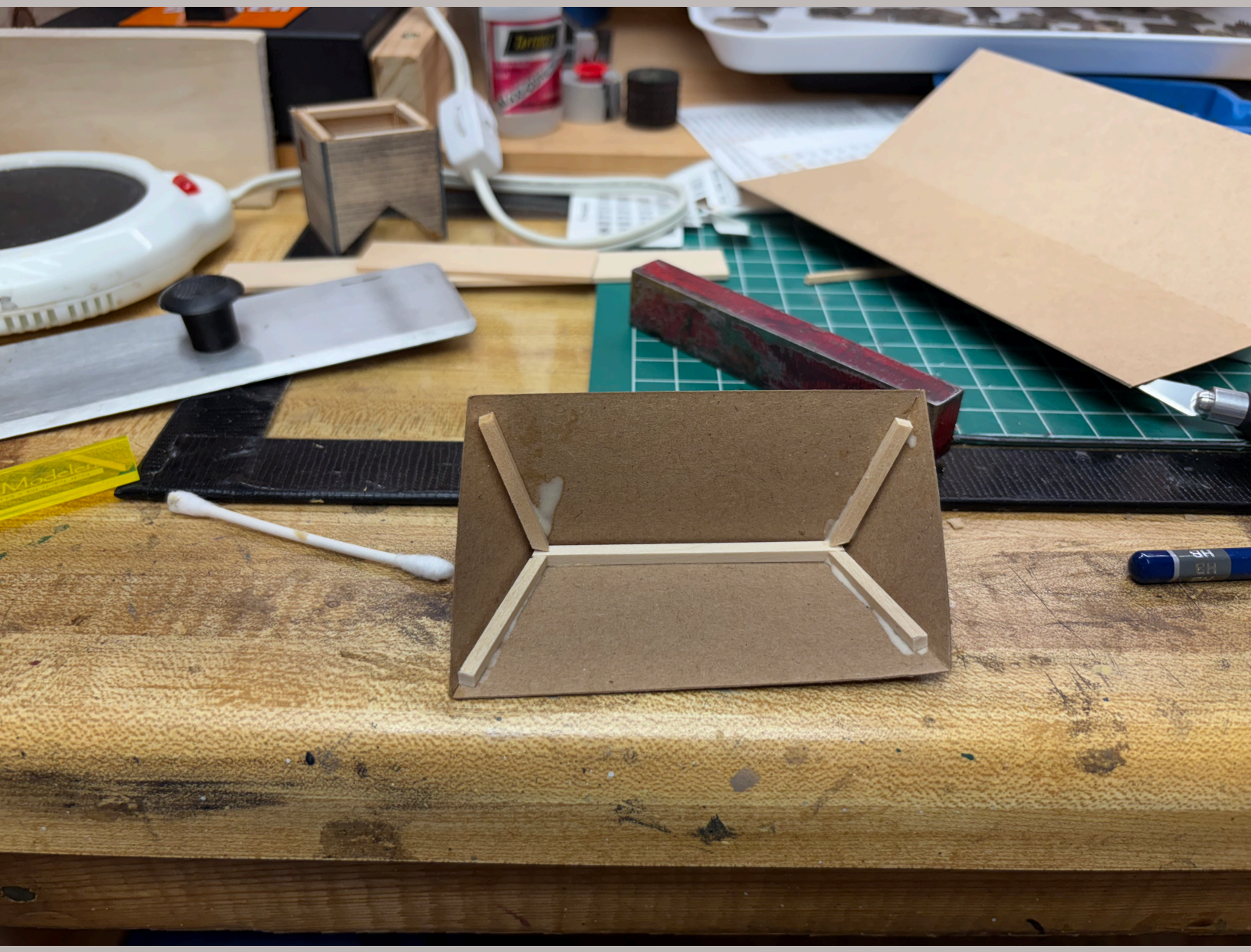

In this photograph we see the underside of the roof card for Allison's. Strip wood bracing is added to give the roof the required structure.

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After the original glue for the bracing had dried I gave the bracing and roof card a lot of extra glue to provide rigidity. This really stiffens the assembly and helps to hold its shape.

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In this photograph the strip wood bracing has been added to the main structure for Gallant's Tractor Sales.

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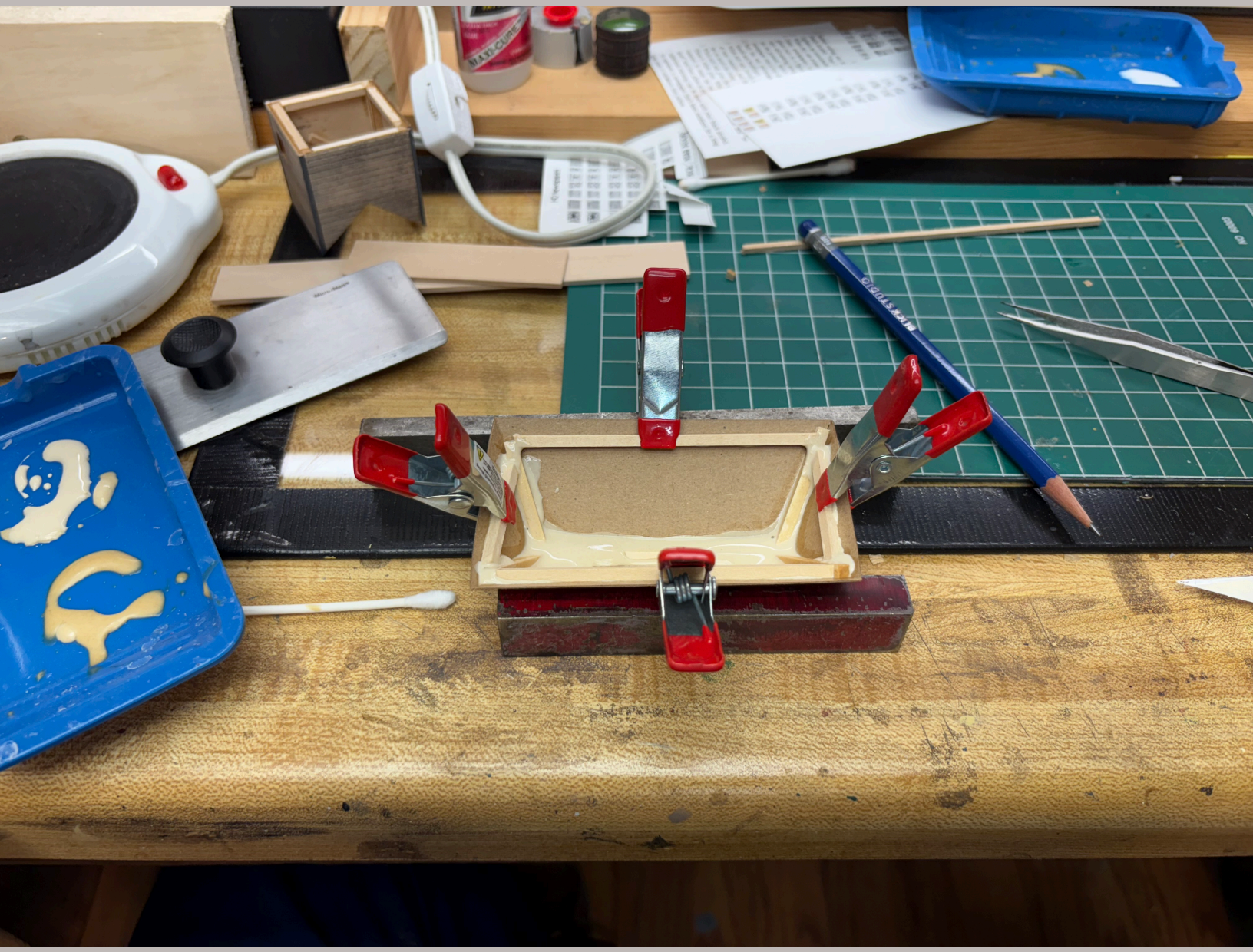

More bracing was added to the roof assembly for Alison's while I had it upside down on my workbench. One of the advantages of the Titebond III glue is that you can use a lot on a cardboard structure without it soaking into the cardboard and causing warpage. This assembly was very rigid after the glue dried. It is very important to make the roof rigid to hold the heavy roof castings for chimneys and roof vents that will be added later.

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After all of the glue dried on the inside of the roof assembly, it was flipped on top of the flat base card that was installed earlier. All that extra glue on the inside also helps when you add lots of weights to hold the roof in place as the glue dries.

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While the glue was drying for the roof bracing on the main structure for Gallant's Tractor Sales, I built the cardstock tar paper shed that fits behind Allison's.

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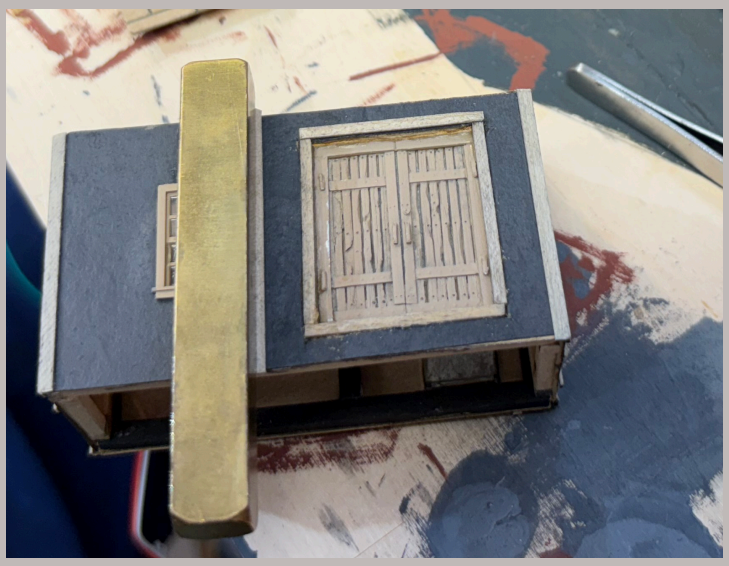



Above, you can see how I use my brass setup bars from my table saw to locate the wood strips that hold the tar paper on this structure. The brass setup bars get used for a lot of different tasks on my workbench.

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In this photograph you can see the tar paper shack fitted in place behind Allison's Tractor Repair.

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Here we can see the bracing on the main structure just before adding the roof card.

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The next step was to glue down the roof card for the main structure. After many years of use, one of my sand bags has a hole in it and was temporary fixed with some duck tape. You can see some sand on the baseboard. In this photograph the roof cards for the side wing of the structure are fitted and ready to be glued down.

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When we left off last month, I was adding detail castings to cardboard strips fitted with double sided duck tape. The paint booth was full so I fired up the air brush to paint them with primer. I remove all of the cardboard strips from the paint booth and paint them one strip at a time. I put latex gloves on my hands and hold the cardboard strip with one hand and the airbrush with the other.

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In this photograph we have a couple of the cardboard strips painted and drying in the paint booth. I used light gray primer on this batch of castings.

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This is an overview photograph of the paint booth area of my workshop showing the cardboard strips filled with detail castings. The paint booth is starting to look like it has been in production for 30 years. Every couple of years I scrap the old paint out of it with a putty knife. If I cleaned up the outer face of it with the belt sander it would look like new. As you can see, I test the airbrush on the board that frames in the bottom of the booth. I have two large fans venting the air to the outside. Two furnace filters catch any paint residue before it leaves the booth.

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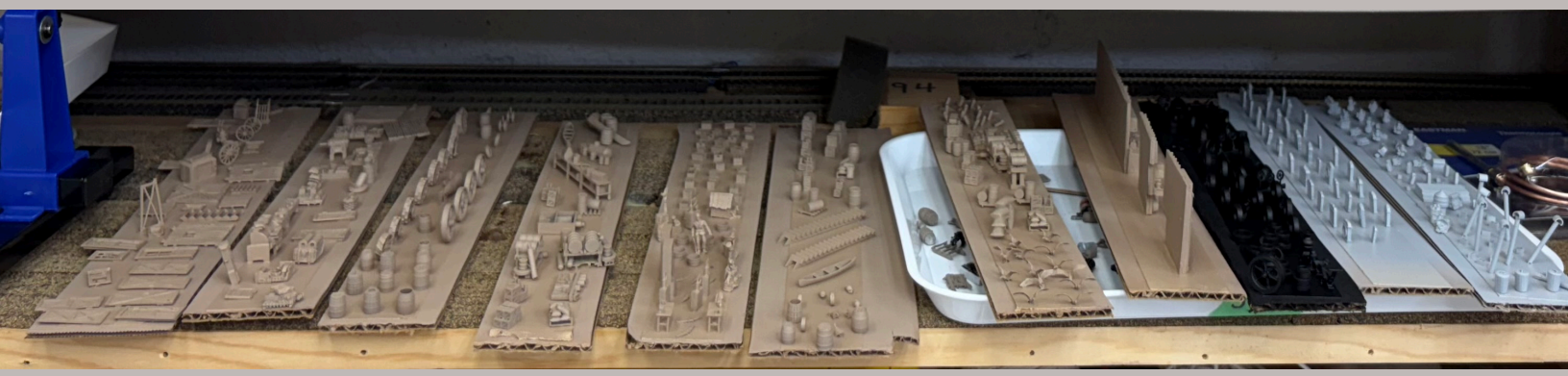

Every shelf and work surface in the area gets used for castings as the paint cures. With acrylic paint I move the cardboard strips to the shelves after a few minutes of drying time.

My workbenches also get used for 1:1 projects, so you can see the thermocouple on the far right, that needed to be installed in my water heater as soon as I was done with the painting.

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Before adding the roof bracing to the smaller buildings, I decided to add a prewired LED light to the office. I'm sure Brett, like all small businesses owners, stays up late to do the paperwork and there needs to be a light on in the office for those night photographs.

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In the next few photographs you can see the roof bracing that I added to the smaller structures before gluing on the roof cards. I use lots of 1/8 inch square strip wood for this. I don't want to see any roof cards warping years from now when the structures are on the layout. Card stock likes to absorb moisture and warp over time. I do this even though my basement is temperature and humidity controlled. I have been to basement layouts that were not. Enough said.

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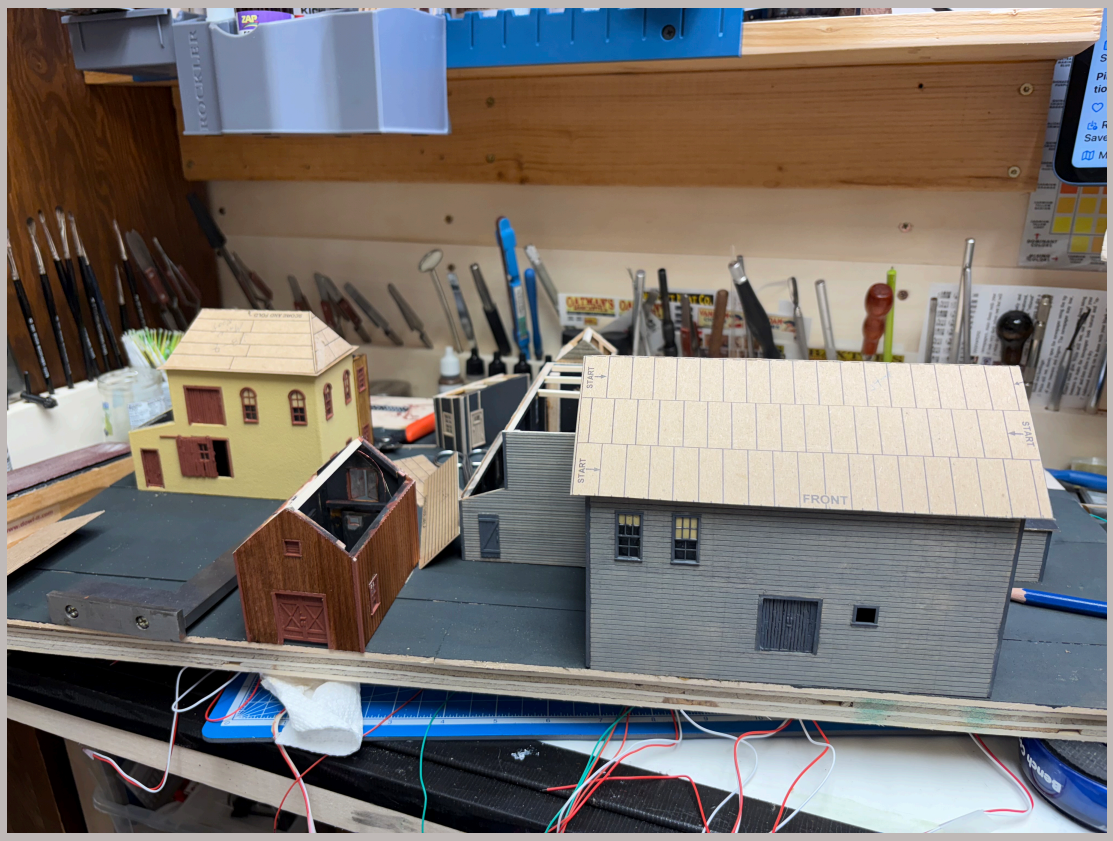



A couple more photographs of the roof cards going into place. The roof card on the main structure is one of the largest I have seen on a HO scale layout.

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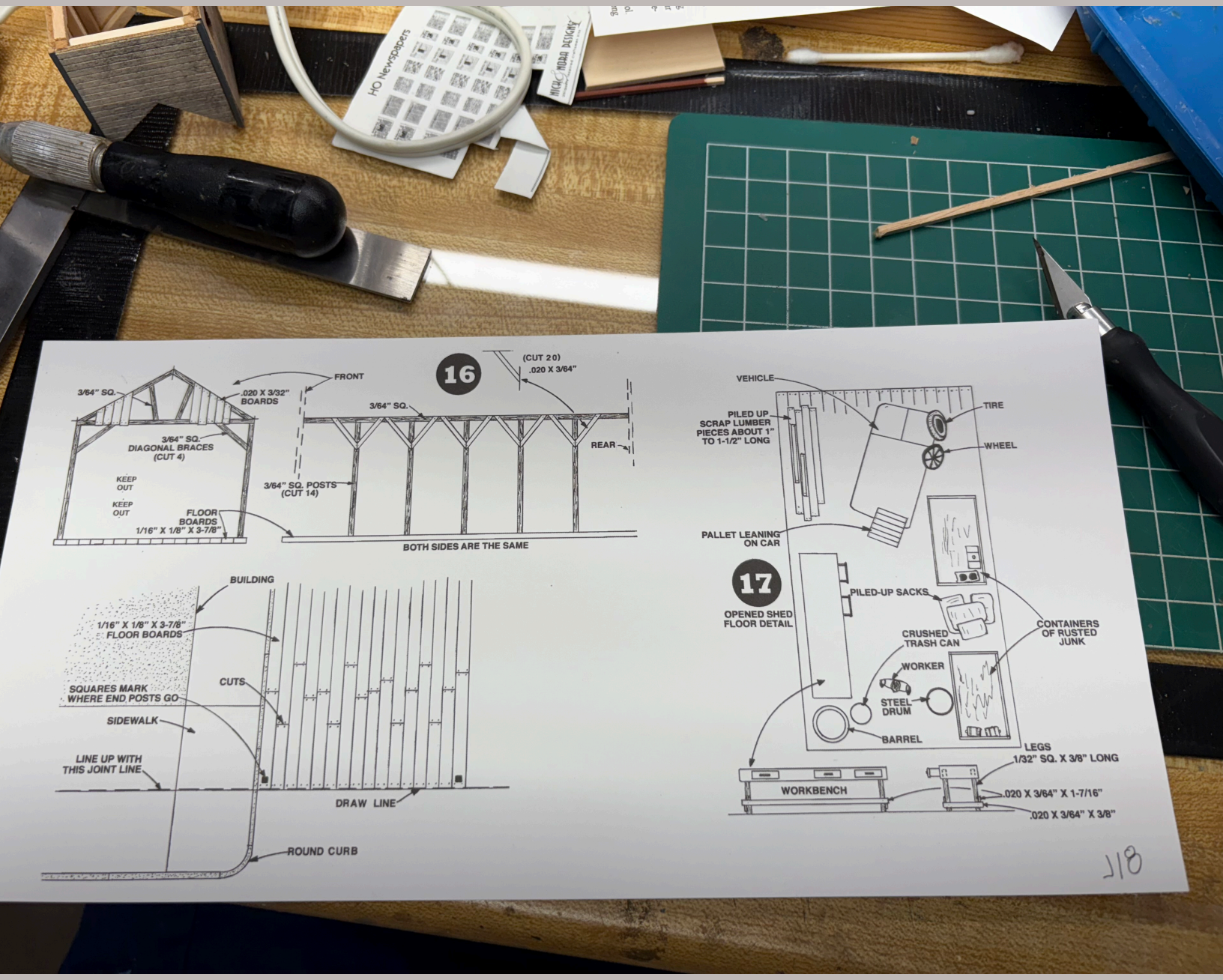

While I was waiting for the glue to dry on the roof bracing I started construction on the open shed that will be behind the main building for Allison's. This is the construction card from the FSM kit.

Notice that I have labeled the build cards with the kit number - this saves a lot of time when you have multiple kits on the workbench at one time. This is my first step when the kit box is opened. It is also very helpful when I'm looking for a card in my box of used construction cards. Kit and figure number is all you need.

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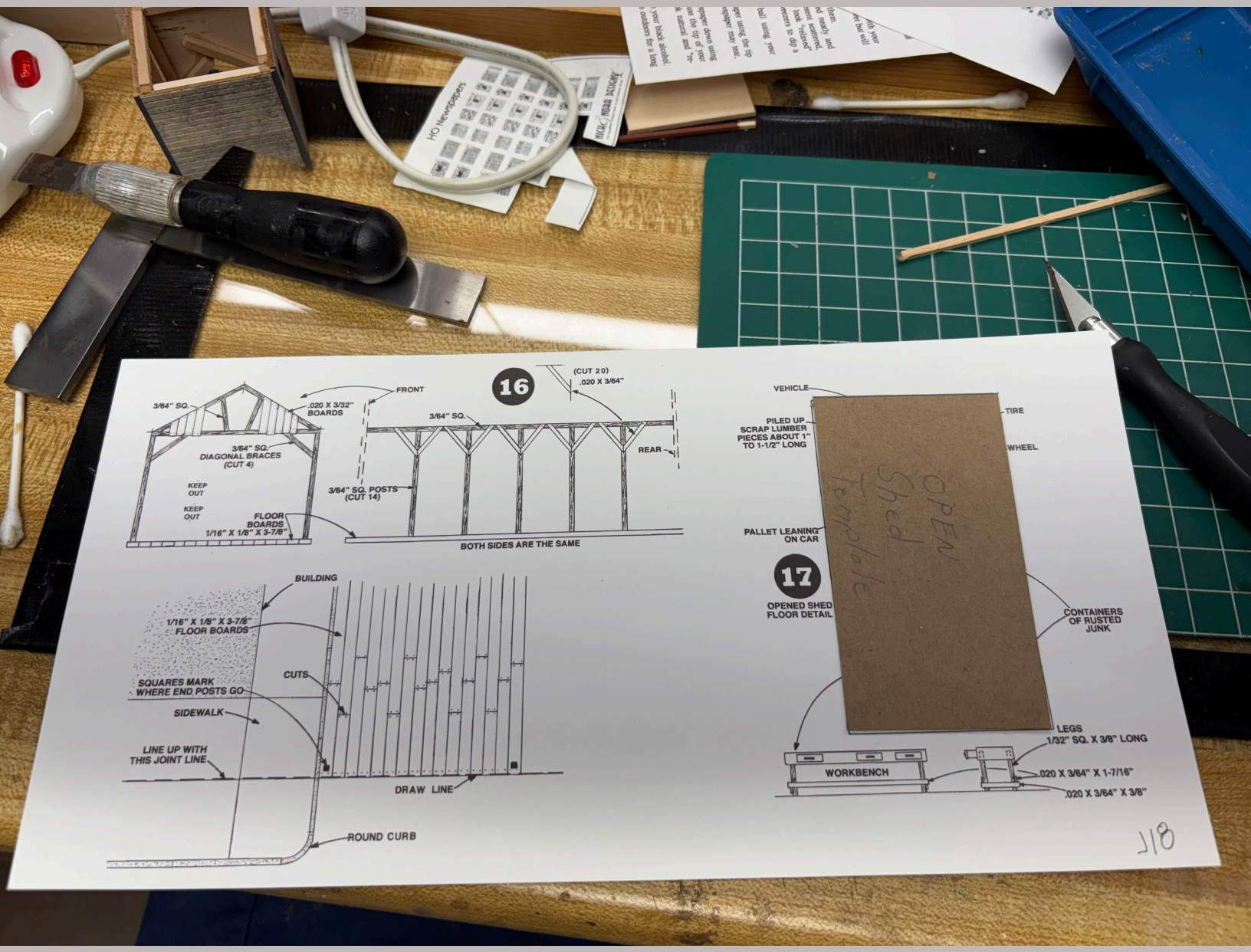

My first step was to make a card stock template from the construction card to test the size and orientation of the structure on my site plan.

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In these photographs you can see a couple of the orientations that I tried.

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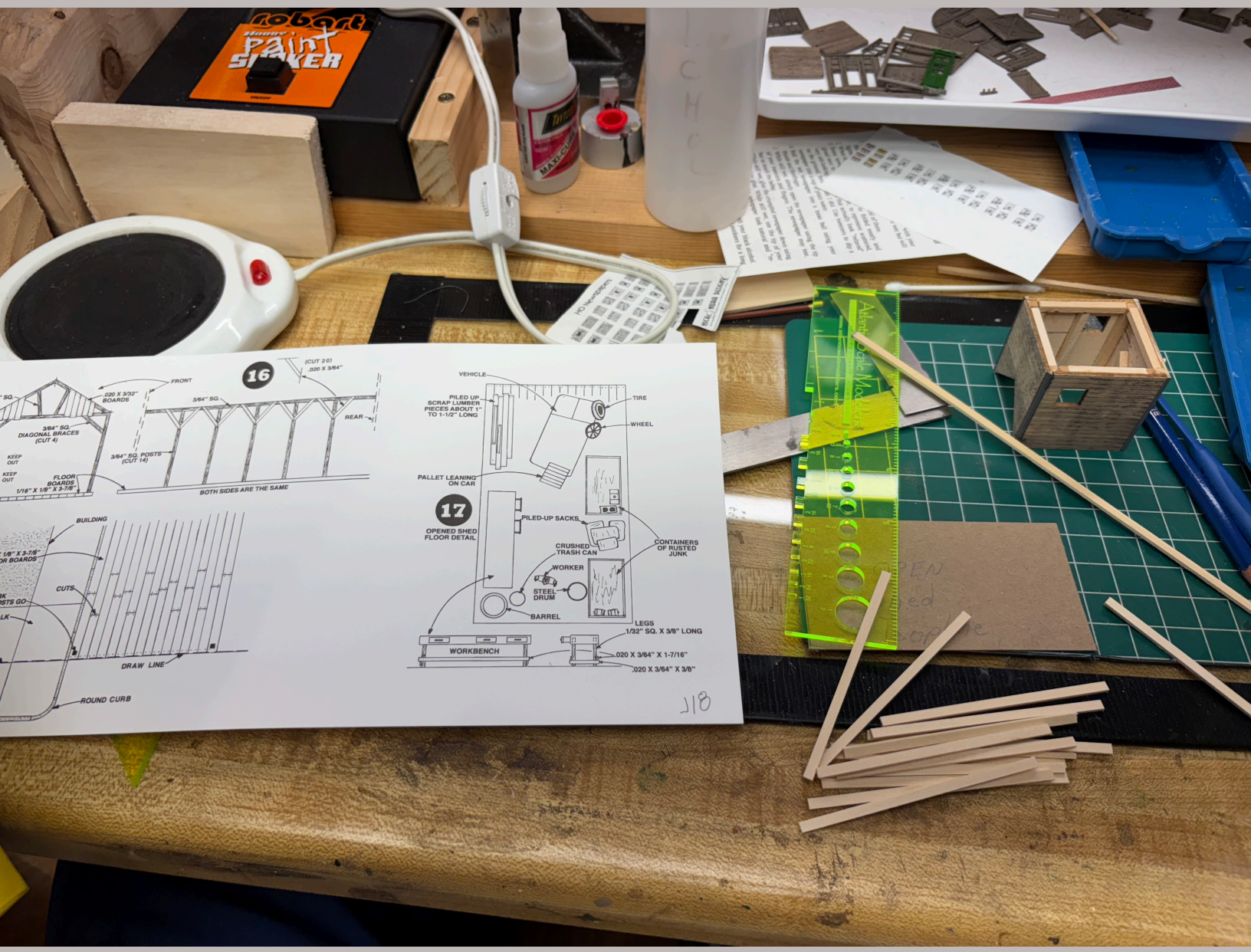

After deciding the location for the open shed I added the strip wood flooring to the card stock template that I made and it now serves as a foundation for the shed.

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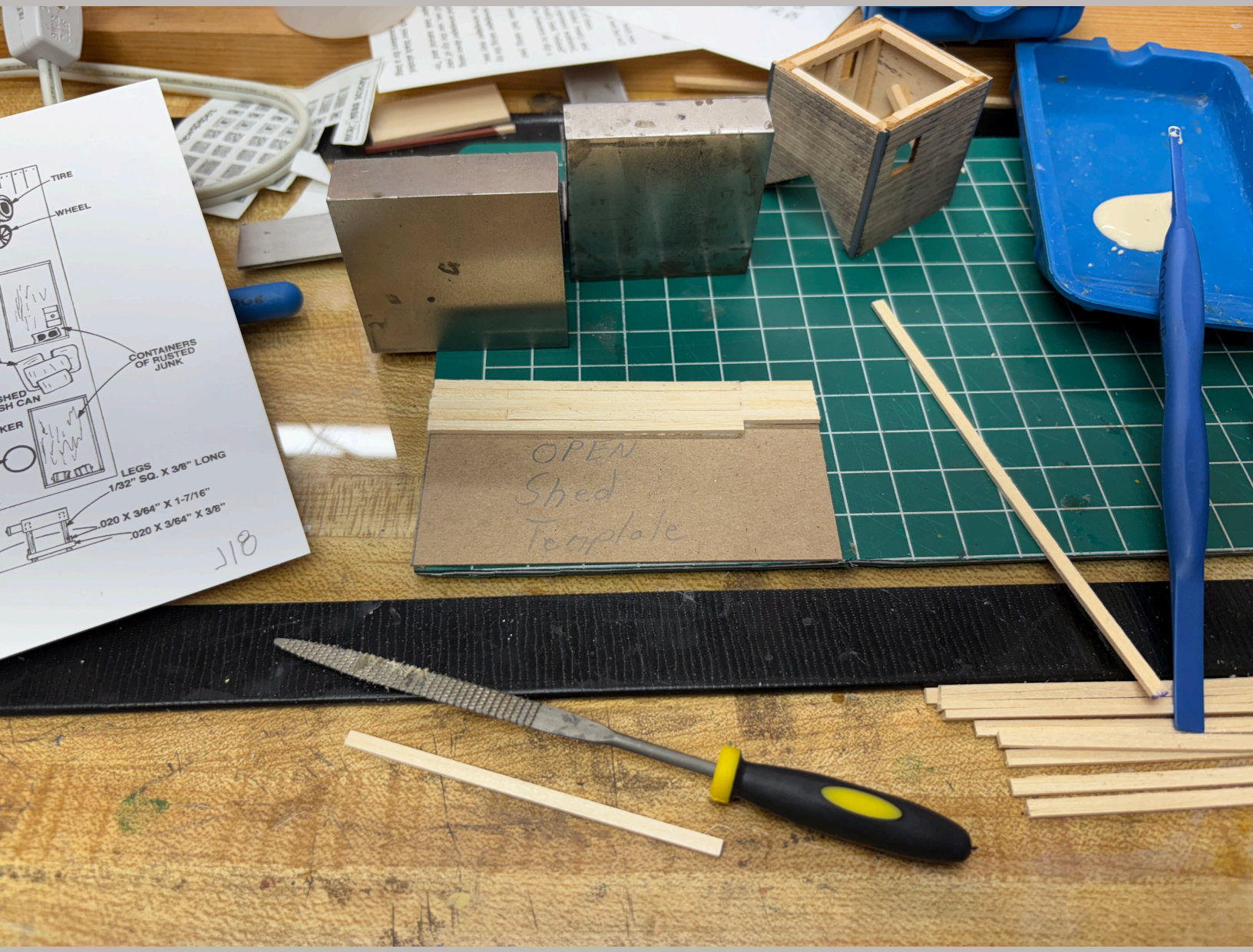

I cut my pieces of strip wood all the same length and positioned them so every other board had a splice. This was much faster but if I was putting this on the layout where the floor was going to be seen I would stagger the joints like the construction card. In this case there will probably be two or three joints visible because of all of the detail castings that go into this scene.

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I used my Monster Nailer (what a great tool) to add the nail heads. Thank you Jimmy - I wish I had bought a dozen of them when they were available.

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The shed floor was then given a stain of Hunterline Driftwood.

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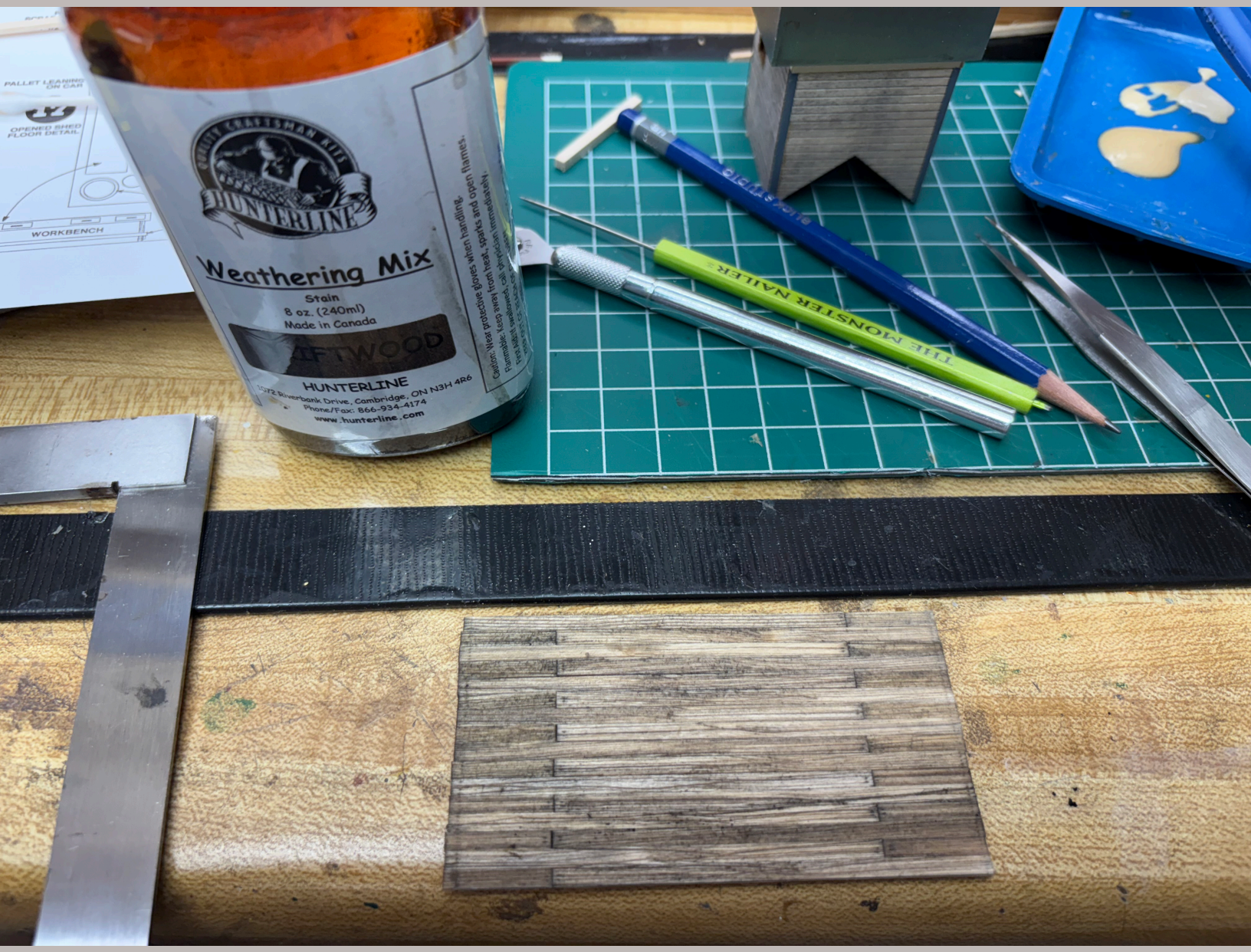

This is the floor just after applying the stain. It has not completely dried yet in this photograph.

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I decided to move the baseboard to its location on the layout to check one last time about the layout of the structures.

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I checked things like vehicle access to the different areas. Since I haven't built the tractors for this diorama yet, I used a truck and a car to test for access space.

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After all my checking, I decided that my location for the open shed was good and glued down the floor for the shed.

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The flat roof on the side building and the roof of the cupola called for gravel roofing. I took the roof cards to the paint booth and first spray painted them with the same rattle can sand texture paint that I use for stucco buildings.

After the sand paint dried I then spray painted the roofs flat black. I will take it from there with pastels.

You can see that George proposed cross bracing on the large flat roof which would work just fine. I chose to put in cross bracing that is tied to the sides of the structure.

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Here is another photograph of the cross bracing I used for the flat roof. This type of bracing keeps the walls of the structure from warping along with bracing the roof card.

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In this photograph we are adding the flat roof card. Lots of weights to hold it flat until it dries. I use a lot of glue and let the weight squeeze out the excess to get a tight bond between the materials.

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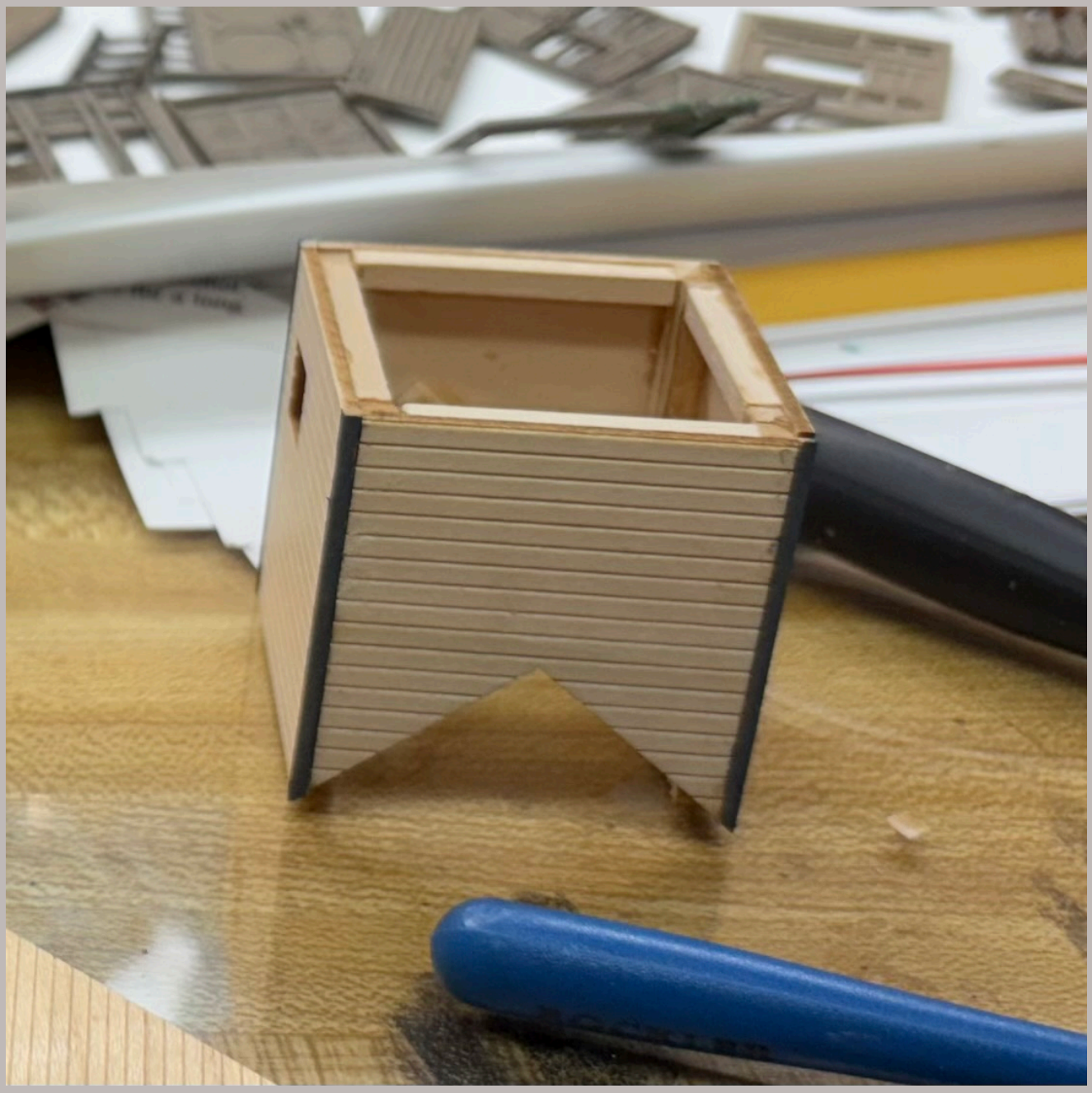

The construction card for this assembly called for an outer ring frame that allowed for the roof to be recessed. George provided a detail casting for the drain system in the kit. This will be added later with the rest of the detail castings.

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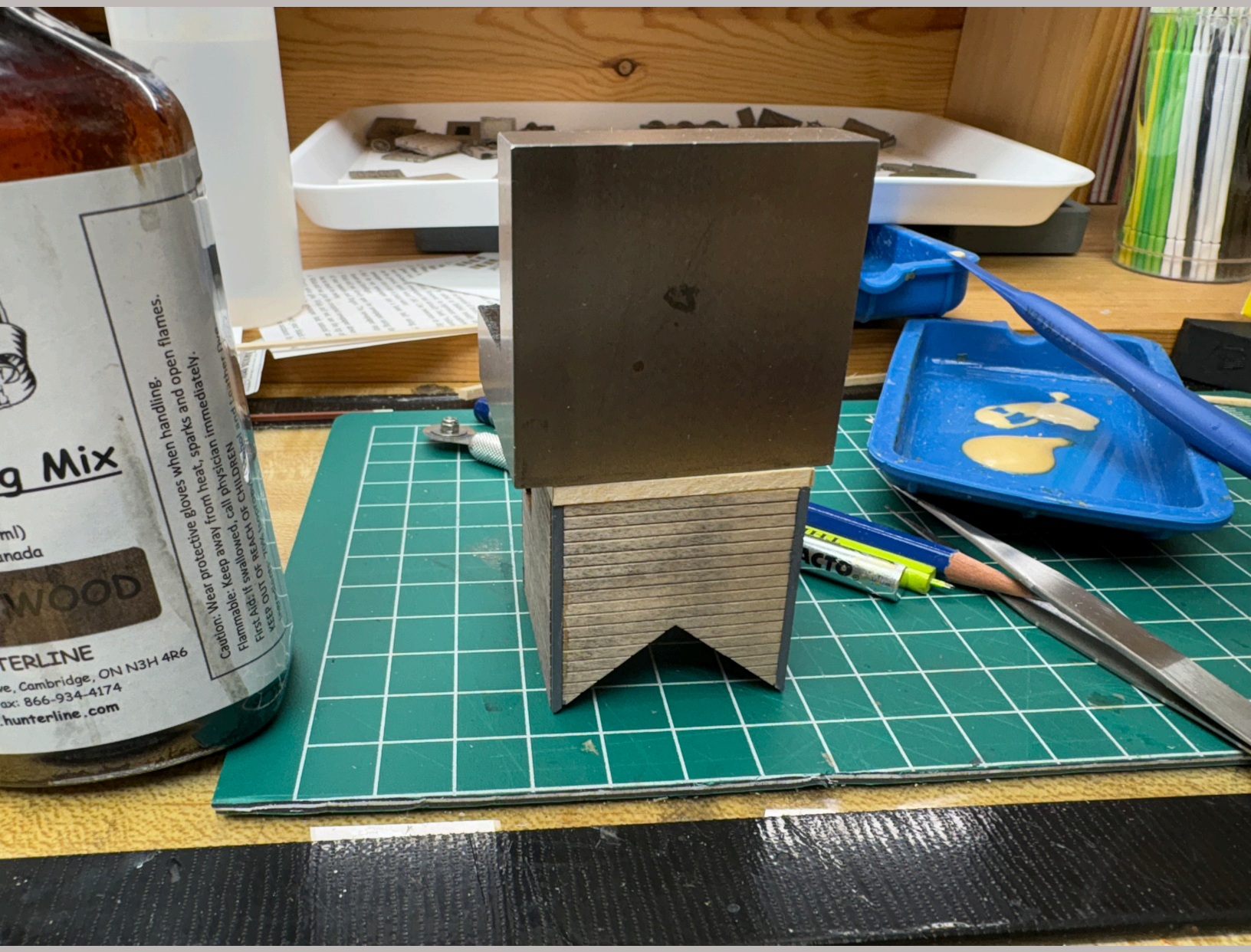

In this photograph the outer ring (that is constructed from 1/8 inch square strip wood) is held in place while the glue dries.

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This photograph shows the inner shelf that supports the roof card.

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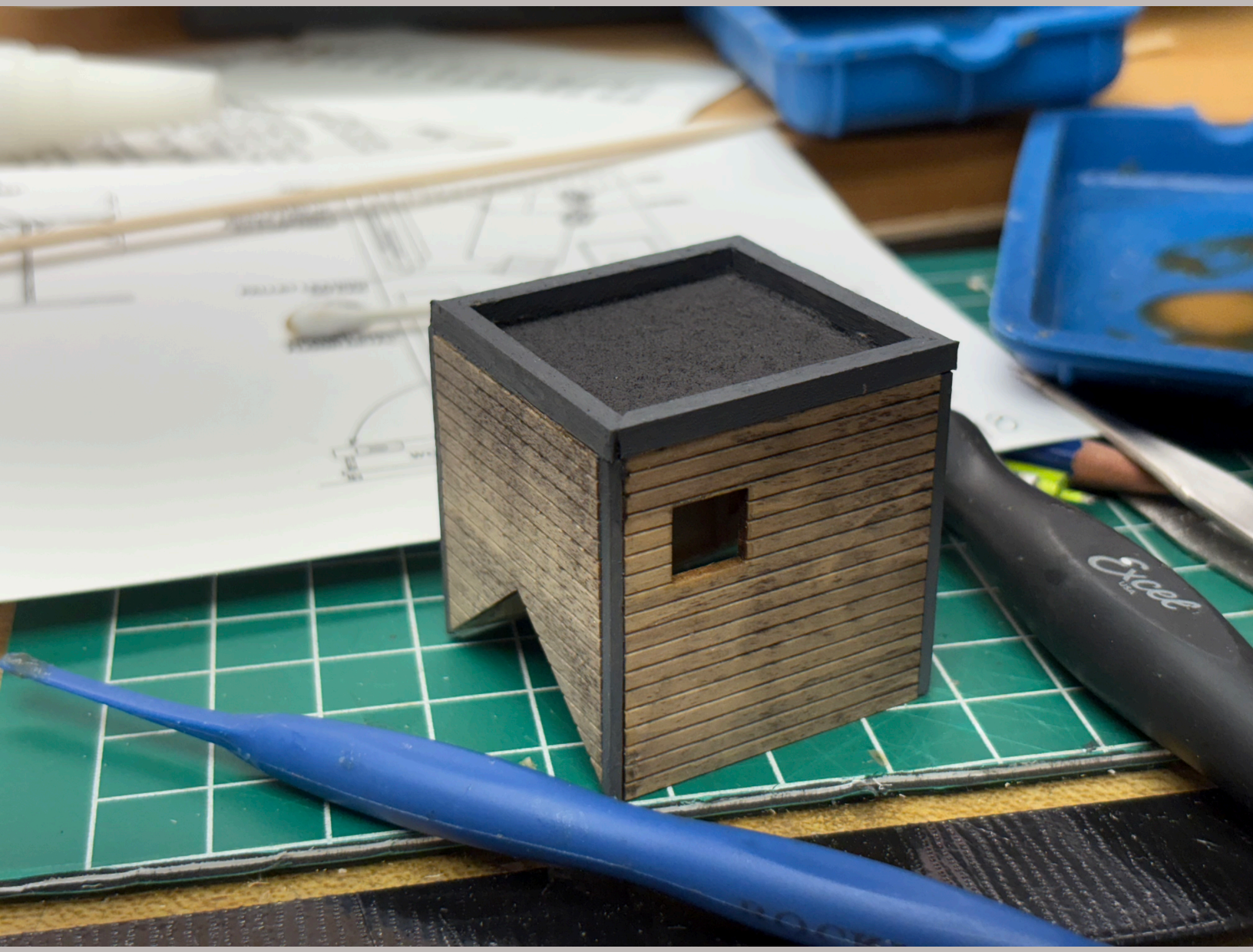

This photograph shows the completed Cupola ready to be installed on the roof of the main structure for Gallant's Tractor Sales.

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The Cupola was then glued to the roof using a nice heavy weight and a two way level to make sure it was on straight.

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Here we are making one last check to make sure everything is square and the blade of the square is the same width as the sidewalk so we know there is enough room.

You will also notice that the Hunterline Driftwood stain has lightened up as it dried.

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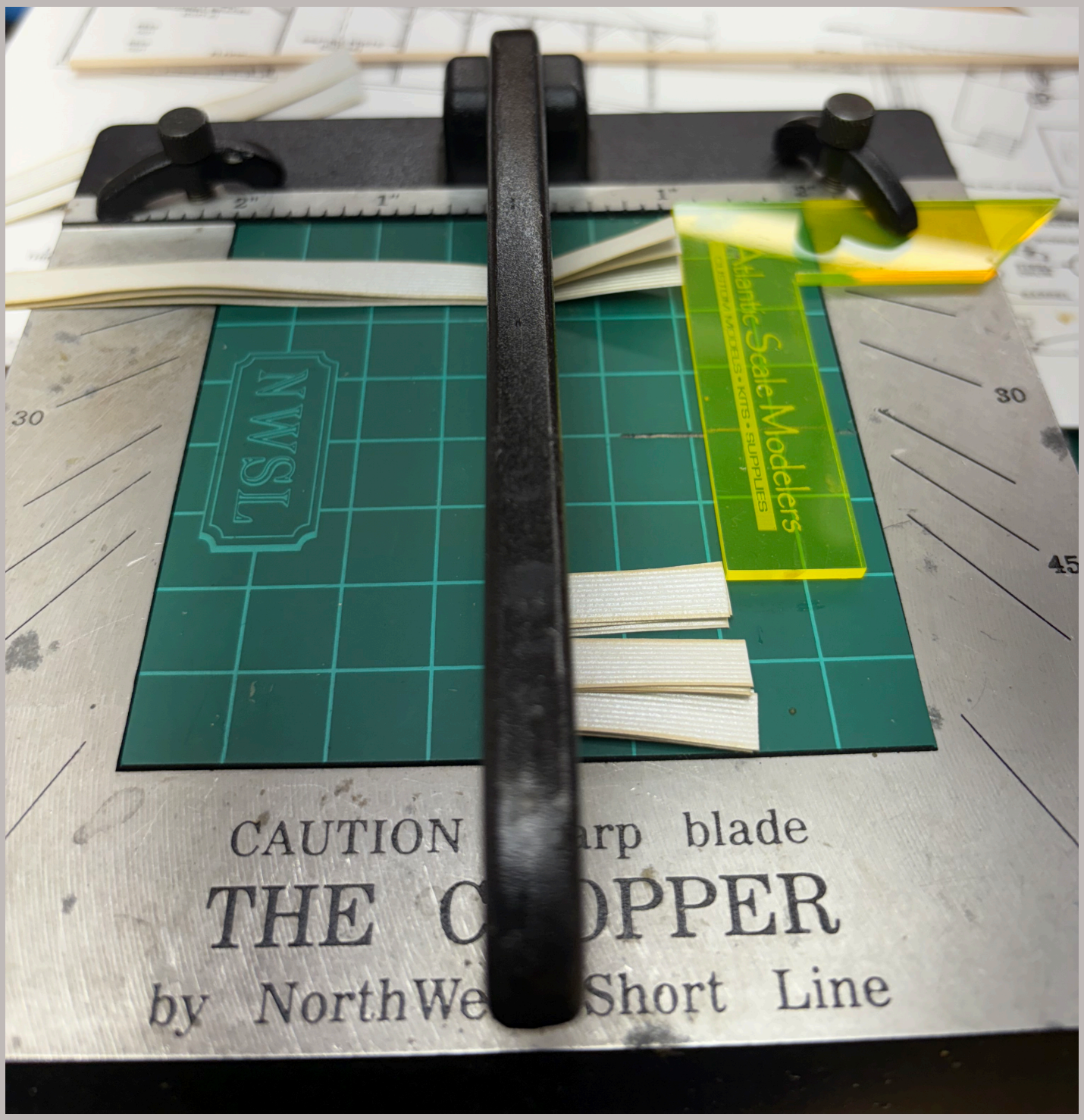

The next step in this build is the corrugated metal roofing for the main structure of Gallant's Tractor Sales. I use my chopper to cut the paper material to size. I used the paper corrugated metal roofing from Wild West Models for this build.

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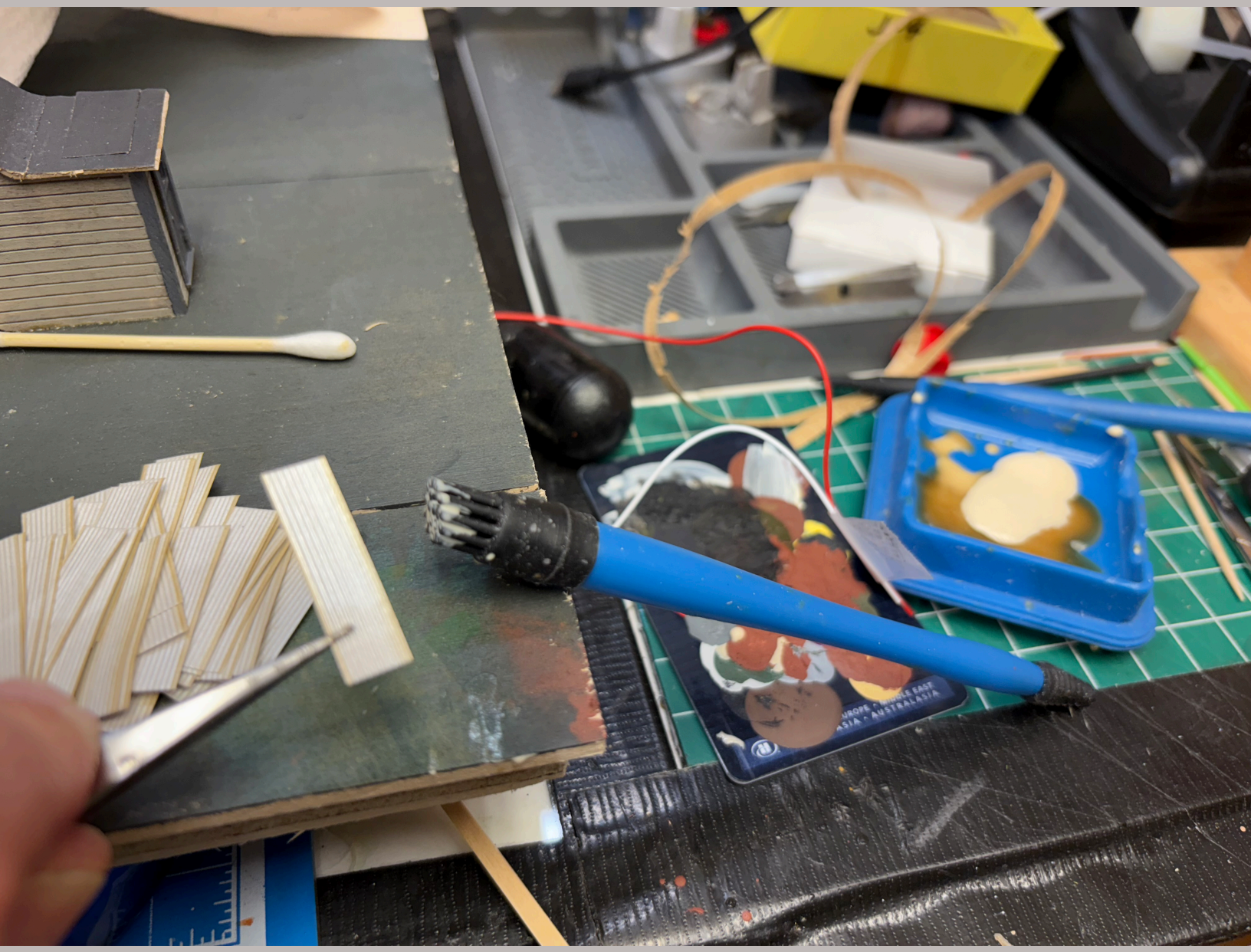

I used my trusted Titebond III glue to apply the roofing. I apply glue to one side of the roofing material and glue it in place.

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In this photograph I'm adding the first row of roofing. Notice that I purposely cut a strip of roofing material at a slightly different angle to give the roof some character.

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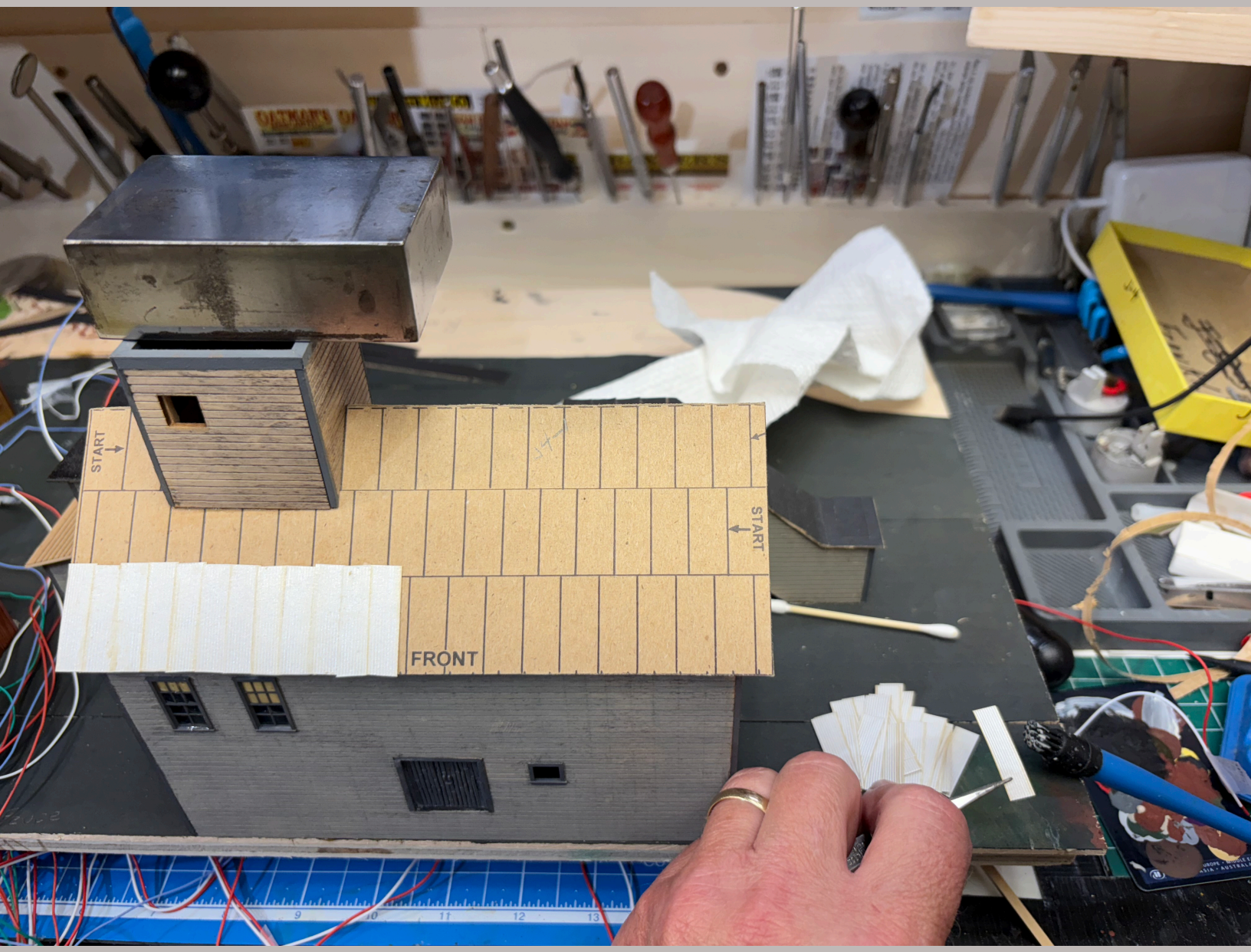

In this photograph I have zoomed out a little so you can see the process. Notice that the weight is still on the cupola - we keep moving while the glue dries.

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A roofing progress photograph row two.

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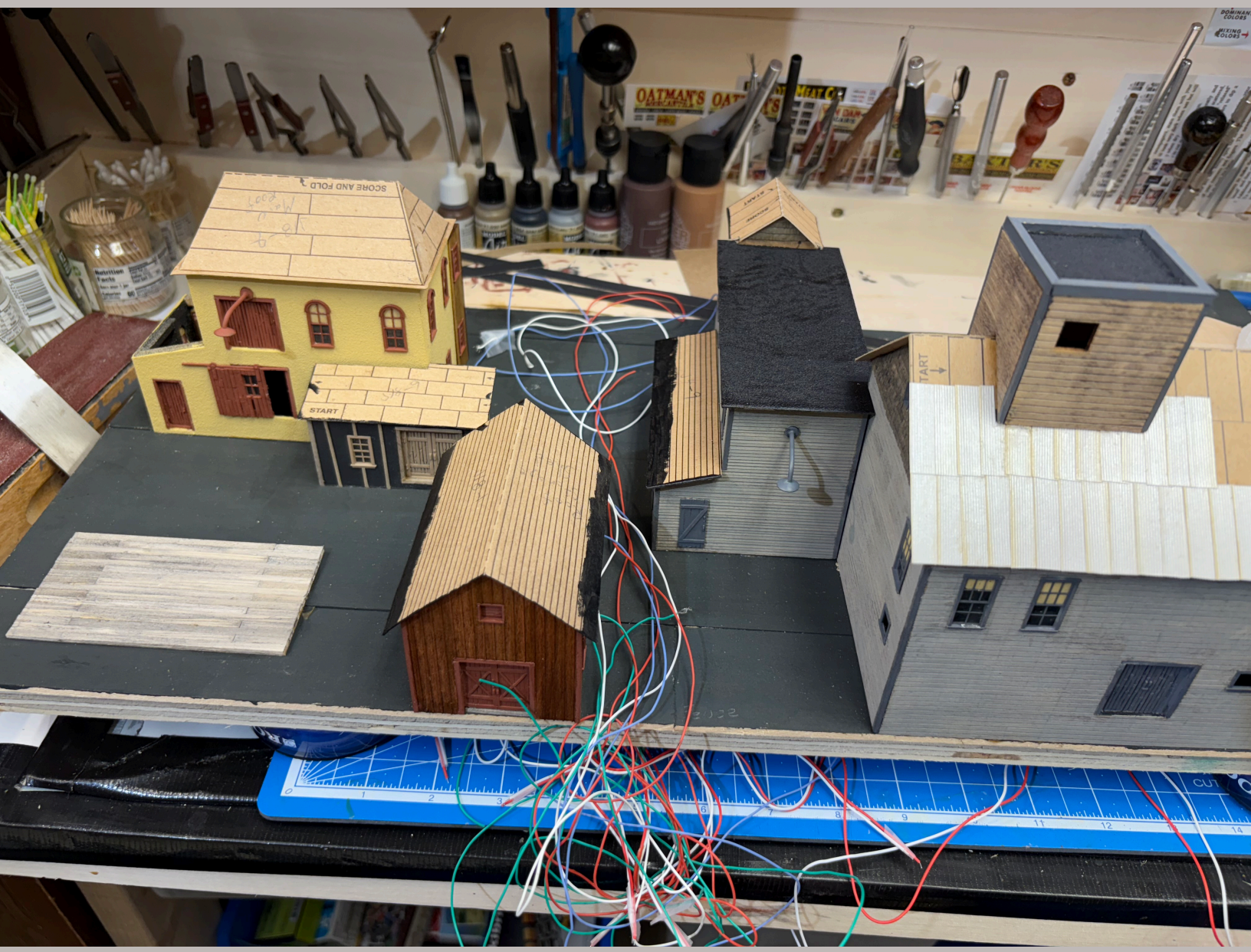

In this photograph, I have painted the roof cards black where the first row of shingles will be placed on the sheds that are to have shingle roofs. Prototypical roofing practice is to put a row of shingles backwards for the first row and then add a row of shingles directly on top of the backwards first row. This makes the shingle material show through the slots in the shingles. In HO scale, painting the roof card black or a similar color to the shingles works fine to accomplish this.

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Another progress photograph, row three of the metal roofing.

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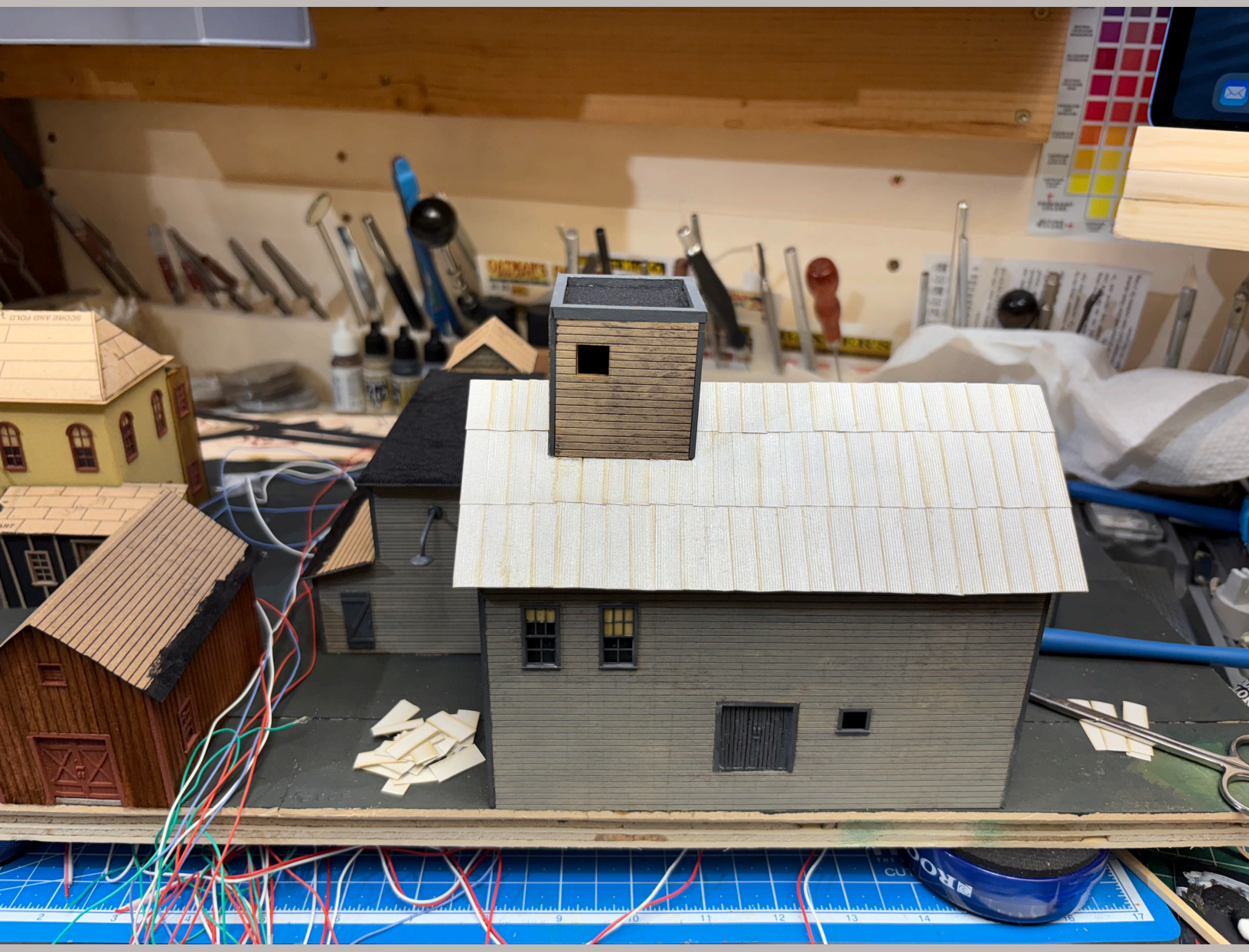

This photograph shows the metal roofing before the staining process. This is where we will leave off for this month. We will continue with the roofing on this build in our next issue.

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The Franklin & South Manchester Railroad - Part 46

John Siekirk for George Sellios



This month we are going to proceed deeper into Fillmore Yard on the Franklin & South Manchester Railroad.

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We are going to hold here, for this issue, while the passenger train clears in front of us.

In our next issue, we will go back and find the changes that George has made in some of the areas we have already covered in previous issues. We will also travel the rails on many of the sidings that will create viewing angles of the F&SM that have not been photographed before.

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Karl Osolinski's Workbench - Part 18





Karl's J.J. Hollender's Gymnasium diorama. All photographs by Karl Osolinski.

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New Baltimore & Fair Haven, Part 1

Gregory Rich, MMR

Editor's Note: This fall I had the pleasure of visiting and photographing Greg Rich's New Baltimore & Fair Haven Railroad. Greg's layout is a beautiful "Fine Scale" layout with fantastic detail. I took hundreds of photographs with both my DSLR and my iPhone. I'm going to let the photographs speak for themselves and start out with a series of focus stacked photographs where we will zoom in on the details. This article will run over many issues of the S&S RR & I Gazette, there is a lot to see. I'm sure you will find modeling inspiration in Greg's work. Please let me know if you have any questions.

The New Baltimore & Fair Haven appeared in the May 2025 issue of Railroad Model Craftsman.



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We will have more photographs of the New Baltimore & Fair Haven in the next issue of the S&S RR & I Gazette.

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Puffer Bridge Lines
Seth Puffer

Editors Note: Seth Puffer sent in these photographs of his layout that will be part of the layout tours for the 2026 Narrow Gauge Convention in Minnesota, this fall.

I visited Seth's layout in 2018, the last time the Narrow Gauge Convention was in Minnesota. The visit was one of the highlights of the convention. I took many photographs and will share some of them in next month's S&S RR & I Gazette.

Introduction

I hope many convention attendees will make the drive from the convention Center to visit my layout. I think it's worth the time it will take and I think these photos are just a teaser of all of the things to look at. Layout construction started in March 2001 and was "complete" in 2020.
Of course, I've added or rebuilt several structures over the years and that work continues. I hope you will come and see it in person.



This is a structure from Craig at “Keep it Rusty”. I liked this structure the minute I found it. I did depart from his build in that I added a stairway/walkway on the left end of the building. I also love all the angles, the rooftop signs and the great details that came with it.

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A general view in a town called McRae. It features an FSM kit (Bailey's Produce) and one I scratchbuilt called "Hillside Electric".

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This is a structure I built using an old Atlas signal tower from my younger days. It had been rattling around for a long time in a parts drawer. I think it turned out pretty nice.

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My FSM row. The structures are from a couple of different FSM kits. They fit together very nicely on my street. If you look very closely outside the front door of Stromboli & Sons you can see the Miniprints “George Sellios” figure.

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Probably one of my favorite structure sets on the layout are these three. They are all scratchbuilt and were designed to fit into this space. I think I mostly like them because they are kind of oddballs, but they sure look great.

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The engine terminal and roundhouse in my large yard Aurora. The roundhouse is scratchbuilt and features a detailed interior. The roofs are removable for easy interior viewing.

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These a relative newcomers to the layout built within the last couple of years. Rohlen Welding is a FOS kit (that guy does some really nice structures), Brodies Tavern (part of an FSM kit that I modified to fit the space) and “ALF storage”, a scratchbuild I did based on a structure from the Franklin and South Manchester.

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An overall view of a town I call Kirscht. All the structures are scratchbuilt except for “Getz Gas”.
The town name is a tribute to my maternal grandparents.

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Imagineering Cooper's Way: A Working Neighborhood in a Resort Town, Part 2

George Nagle

So Far

In the first installment I gave a quick history of how the Depression Era town of Old Head developed a beach resort area to rejuvenate its flagging economic situation. The neighborhood of Cooper's Way, last year's winter superkit from Bar Mills Models, represents a transition between the tourist part of town and the homes and businesses of the townies.

The neighborhood will fit into a triangular piece of real estate on my layout that hitherto has been undefined and held a few cheap plastic structures. I ended the first part of this series with a complete clearing of the area and painting of the surface gray to match the connecting roads.



Trial and Error – Mostly Error

In my professional life I was a great planner; a vital job skill necessary for the running of a school. I still utilize my planning skills when I substitute teach and also in my historical research, writing, and website management. But otherwise, in the hobbies that fill my retirement spare time, I spurn detailed planning and seldom have more than an idea of what I want a project to look like.

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The pictures above and following represent that trial and error placement of the structures I intend to fit into the space to make up the neighborhood.



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This first trial was pleasing but left no room for the garage or pharmacy. The shot below shows the bus terminal and market to the right, and the steakhouse in the far back, both areas I don't plan to move or adjust if I can help it. The new area is to the left.



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The street is too narrow, even for an old neighborhood. But I like the spacing below.

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The garage and pharmacy are worked in here, but it squeezes out the wresting arena. Also, not sure I like the resulting streets and alleys. The facings are not quite right.

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The bar is next to the market and the resulting lines of sight just don’t work.

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Another configuration, but the dime museum and the pharmacy are not placed. Also, too much open area being wasted.

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Above, pleasing streetside lines of sight. We’re getting there. Some good ideas.



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Klinger’s drug store is not placed, and I’d like to have the Dime Museum facing the wrestling rink. Seems to me there should be a way.



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This is where I left off for the day. Lots of good ideas and I'm seeing what works and what does not. It appears the garage will only logically fit in the small point of the triangle and the wrestling rink pretty much needs to sit next to the bus terminal and market. Everything else can shift around.

Above all I'm looking to:

1. Place the most interesting side of the main structures toward the viewer.
2. Create one or two streets wide enough for a vehicle
3. Create several alleys wide enough to hold good detail
4. Avoid odd angles and open space

Things I cannot change:

1. Size of the available area
2. Cannot move the bus terminal and market
3. Cannot move the steakhouse (or at least I really don't want to…)

Things I can change:

1. Trim sidewalks to fit
2. I can accept that I might not fit *every* structure in

I do love a challenge!

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Modeling Dover NH's Historic Architecture, part 2

David Emery

In this part, we'll look at siding materials. The most common material here is clapboard siding over wood framing. Brick walls were used on many schools, churches, mill buildings, and expensive houses. Shiplap (horizontal siding with an overlapping dado), tight horizontal siding, and wood shingles were also used. Queen Anne styles, in particular, liked to use multiple siding textures, combining clapboard with shingles, shiplap or even fancy sawn trim boards.

Clapboard



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Horizontal Siding/Shiplap:



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Mixed siding, decorative siding



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Brick

Dover had thriving brickyards along the Cocheco River, making use of clay beds there. The first building likely dates to the 1700s, the bricks might have arrived as ship ballast. “Here is a video on the brick industry and brick structures in the adjacent town of Rochester NH: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M8a75hDjHm0



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The Modeling Photographs of Mario Rapinett

Presented here by Mark Dalrymple and John Siekirk in memory of our friend Mario. We think Mario would have liked the idea of his photographs inspiring modelers once again.



Mario Rapinett visiting Malcolm Furlow's layout, the San Juan Central.

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Introduction

This article is the result of an email exchange between Mark Dalrymple and myself in September of 2025. Mark informed me that Mario Rapinett had given him his modeling photographs and wanted to know if I would like to use them for an article in the S&S RR & I Gazette. Mark and Mario were good friends for many years and enjoyed sharing modeling ideas.

Mario was a world traveler and photographed many great model railroads all over the world. He shared his photographs with the world on his website until his death about four years ago (I have included the obituary published in the Narrow Gauge Downunder, below). It was a very sad day when his webpage was no longer available - I often used it for modeling inspiration.

In addition to modeling and photographs of models, Mario also took photographs of prototype structures and scenes. He also loved dancing, bowls (outdoor bowls, not 10 pin), drumming and stage productions. He did all of these at a high level.

I met Mario for the first time on one of my early visits to George Sellios' Franklin & South Manchester RR layout. I had communicated with him through the original RR Lines forum and we had a long conversation at that first meeting. Over the years we continued to communicate through emails and the forums. We also met for dinner and visited some layouts together at a few Narrow Gauge Conventions.

The last time that we met, Mario and I discussed adding my photographs of the F&SM RR to his website. This was just after the forum went away for the fourth time taking my photographs with it. We were exchanging emails after the convention discussing how we could add the photographs when my emails went unanswered. It was a few months later that I learned of Mario's illness.

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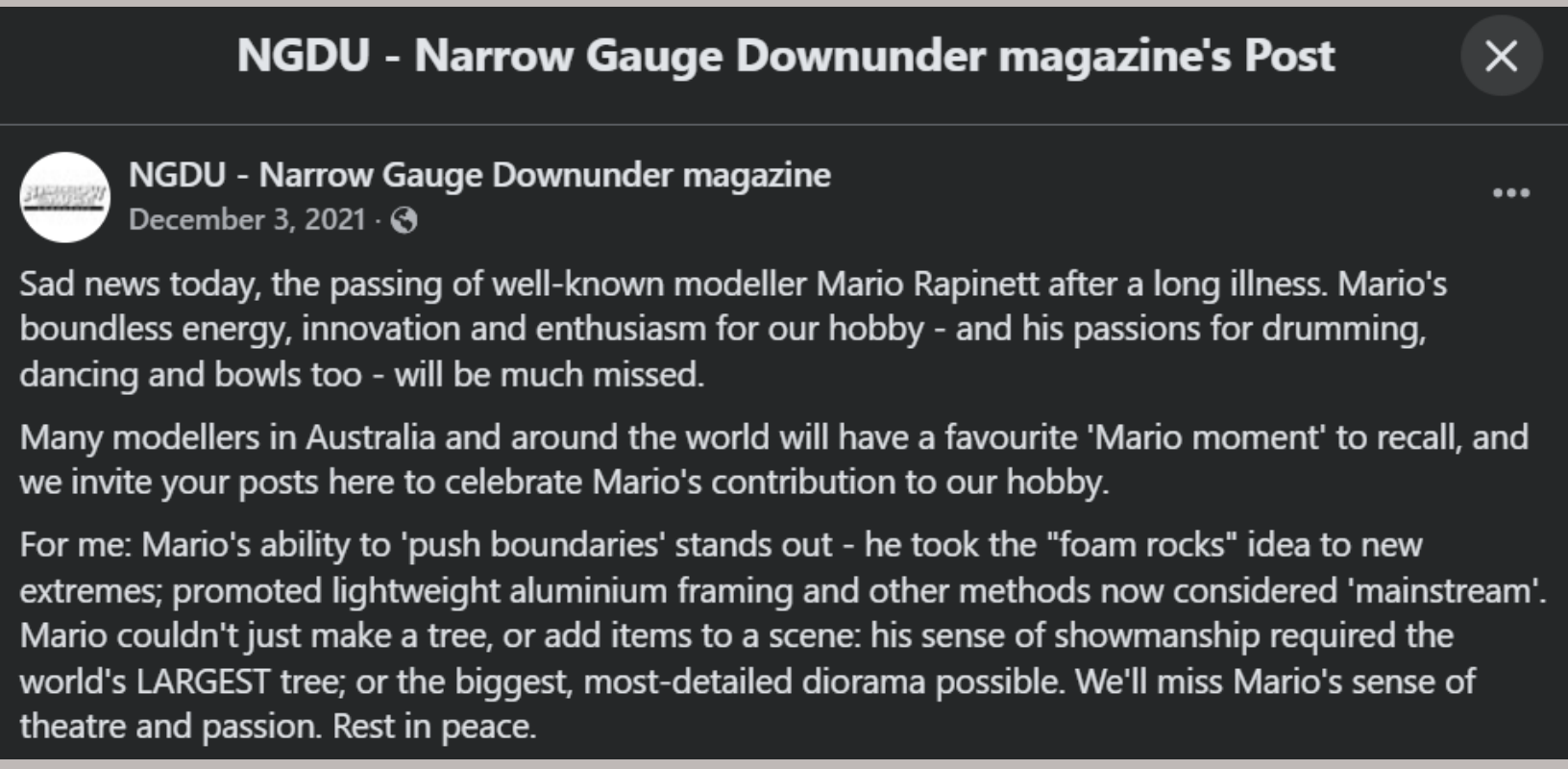
I started the S&S RR & I Gazette as a way of sharing my hobby with the modeling community without the problematic software of the forums and the noise of the internet. In a way, Mario planted the seed that created the S&S RR & I Gazette. I think Mario would like having his photographs enjoyed again, here. Please enjoy in memory of Mario Rapinett.

This article will continue over many issues of the S&S RR & I Gazette. Mario took many wonderful photographs.

Please note: It has been brought to my attention that a few of the photographs on Mario's website were not taken by Mario. If one of your photographs pops up in this article please let me know and I will post proper photo credits in the comments section.



NGDU - Narrow Gauge Downunder magazine's Post

NGDU - Narrow Gauge Downunder magazine
December 3, 2021 ·

Sad news today, the passing of well-known modeller Mario Rapinett after a long illness. Mario's boundless energy, innovation and enthusiasm for our hobby - and his passions for drumming, dancing and bowls too - will be much missed.

Many modellers in Australia and around the world will have a favourite 'Mario moment' to recall, and we invite your posts here to celebrate Mario's contribution to our hobby.

For me: Mario's ability to 'push boundaries' stands out - he took the "foam rocks" idea to new extremes; promoted lightweight aluminium framing and other methods now considered 'mainstream'. Mario couldn't just make a tree, or add items to a scene: his sense of showmanship required the world's LARGEST tree; or the biggest, most-detailed diorama possible. We'll miss Mario's sense of theatre and passion. Rest in peace.

Mark found this obituary in a Narrow Gauge Downunder Magazine's Post.

This month we have Mario's photographs of the wonderful modeling of Chuck Doan. You may have noticed that we are presenting the photographs from Mario's files in alphabetical order of the directory name.





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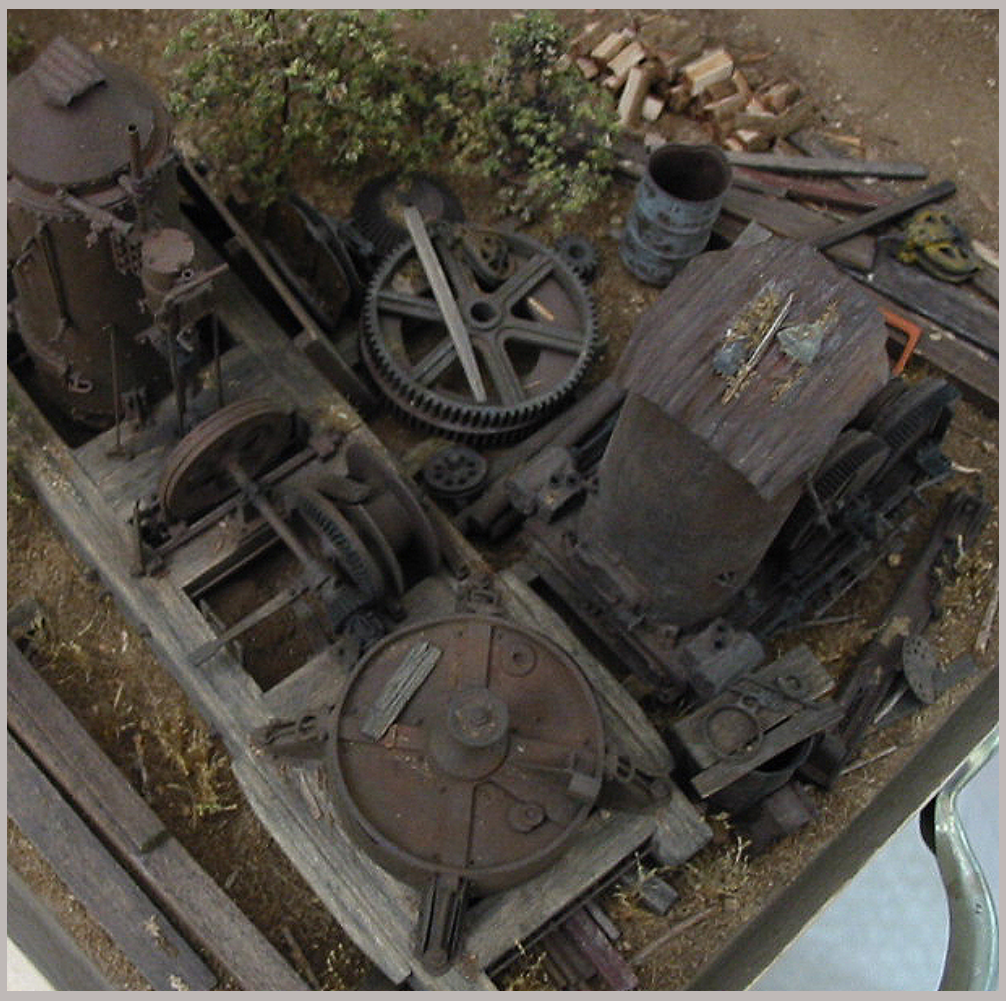

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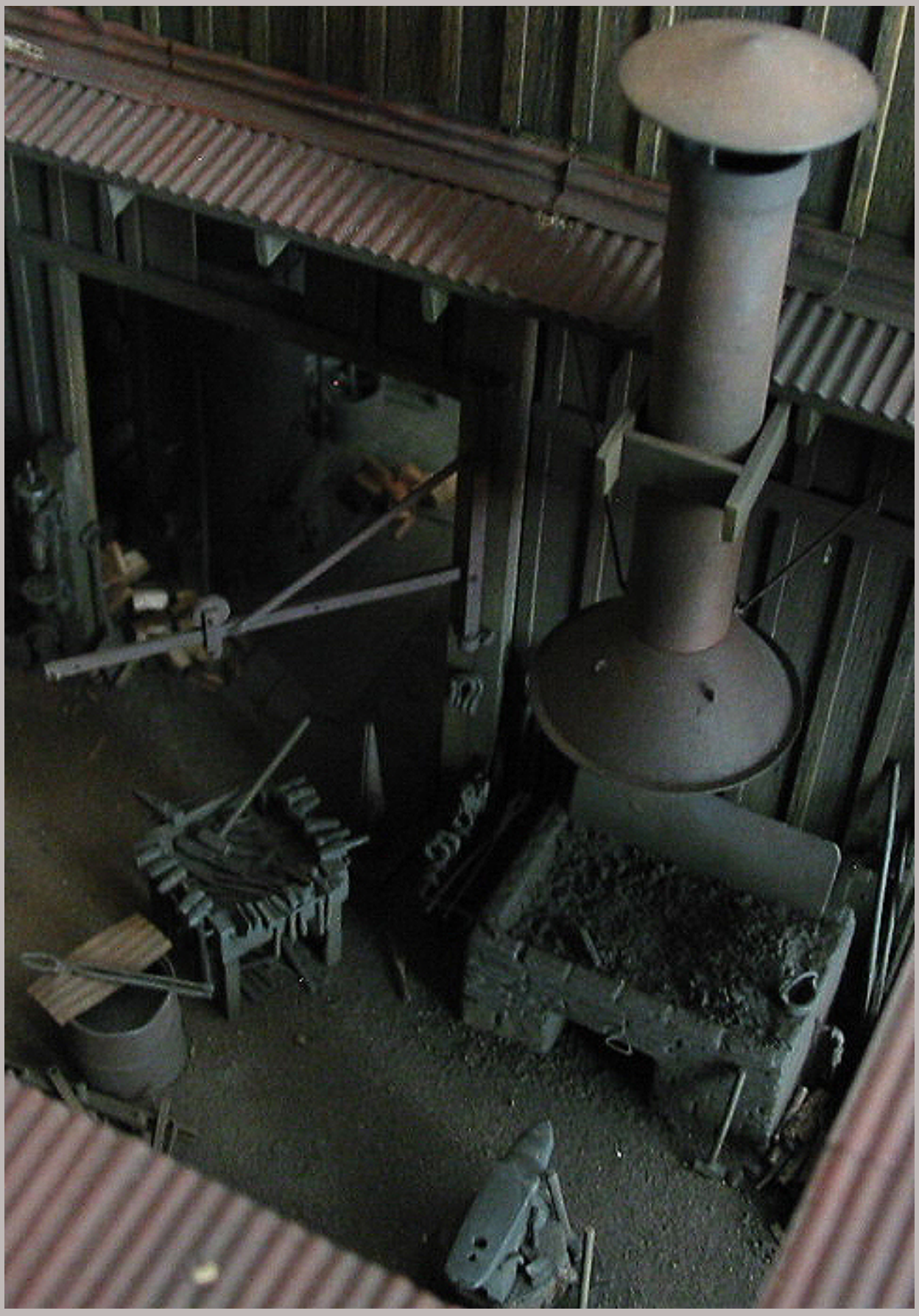

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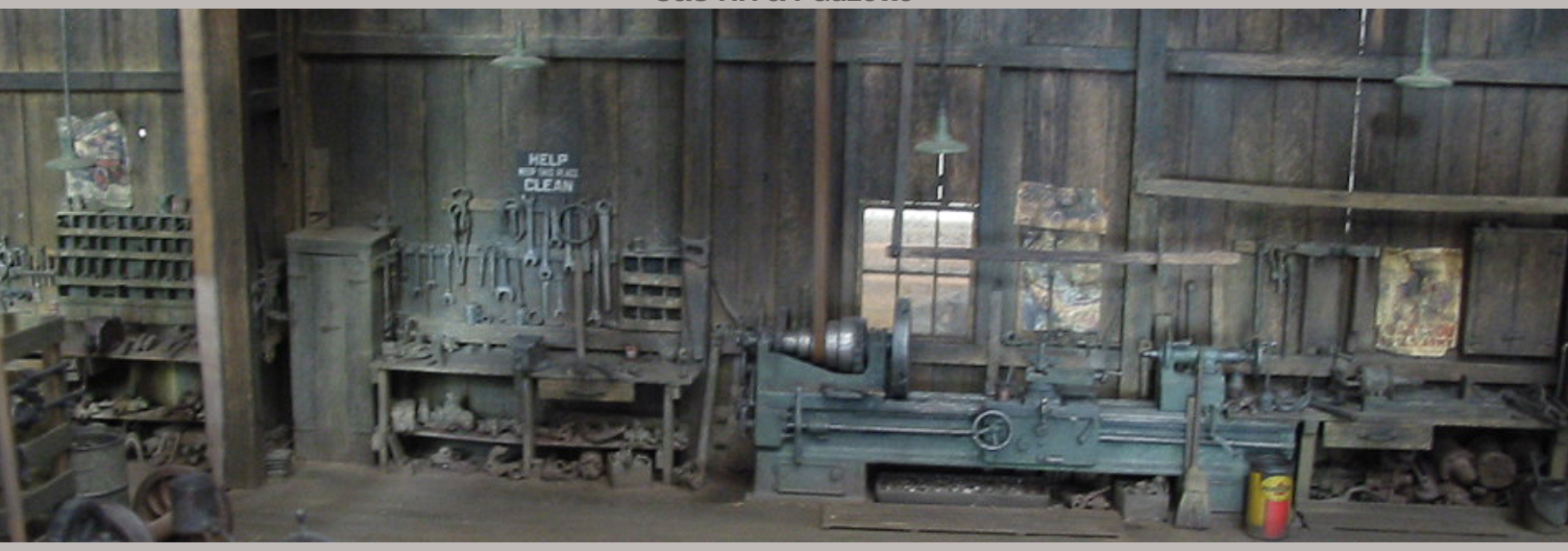

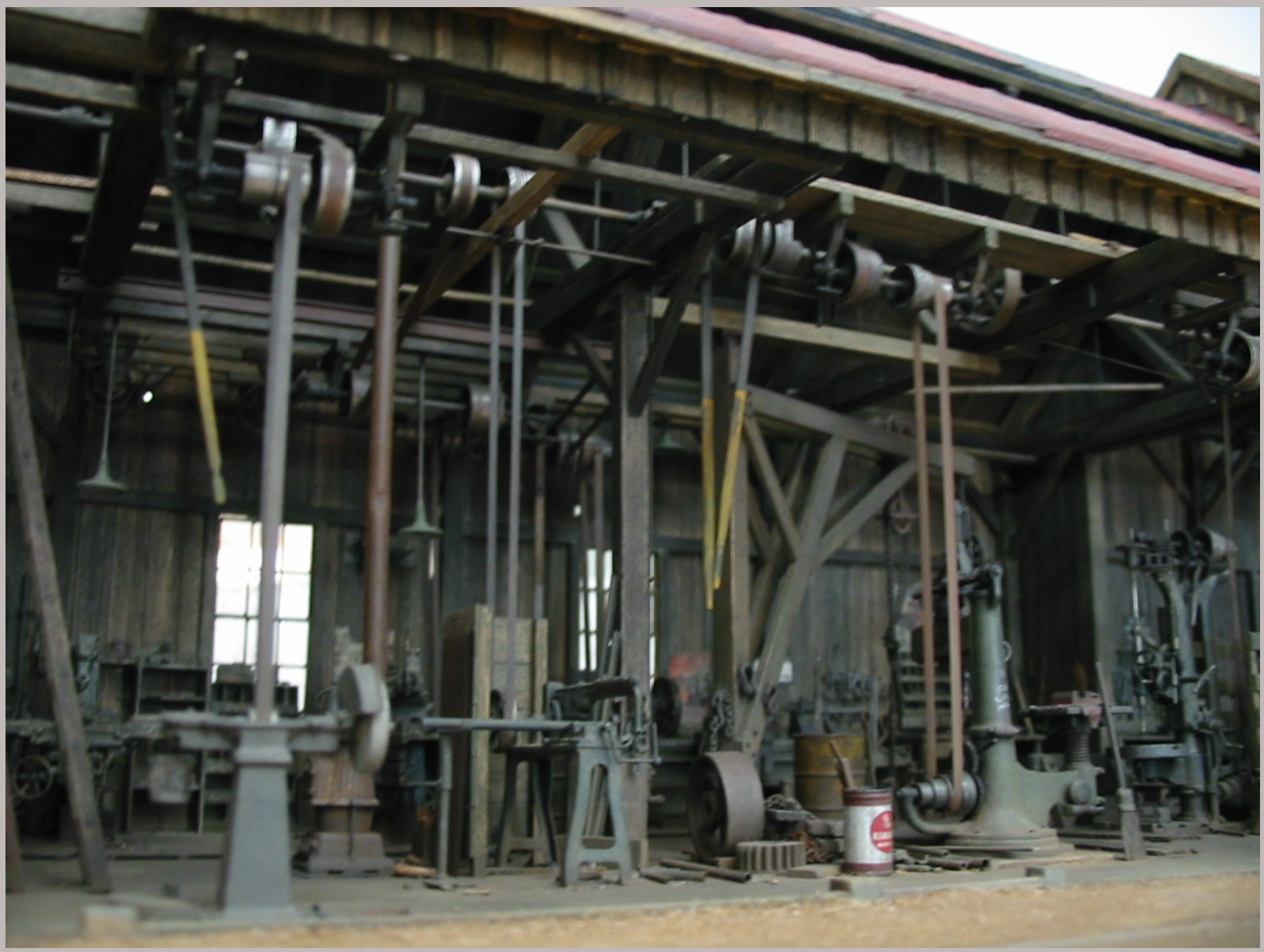

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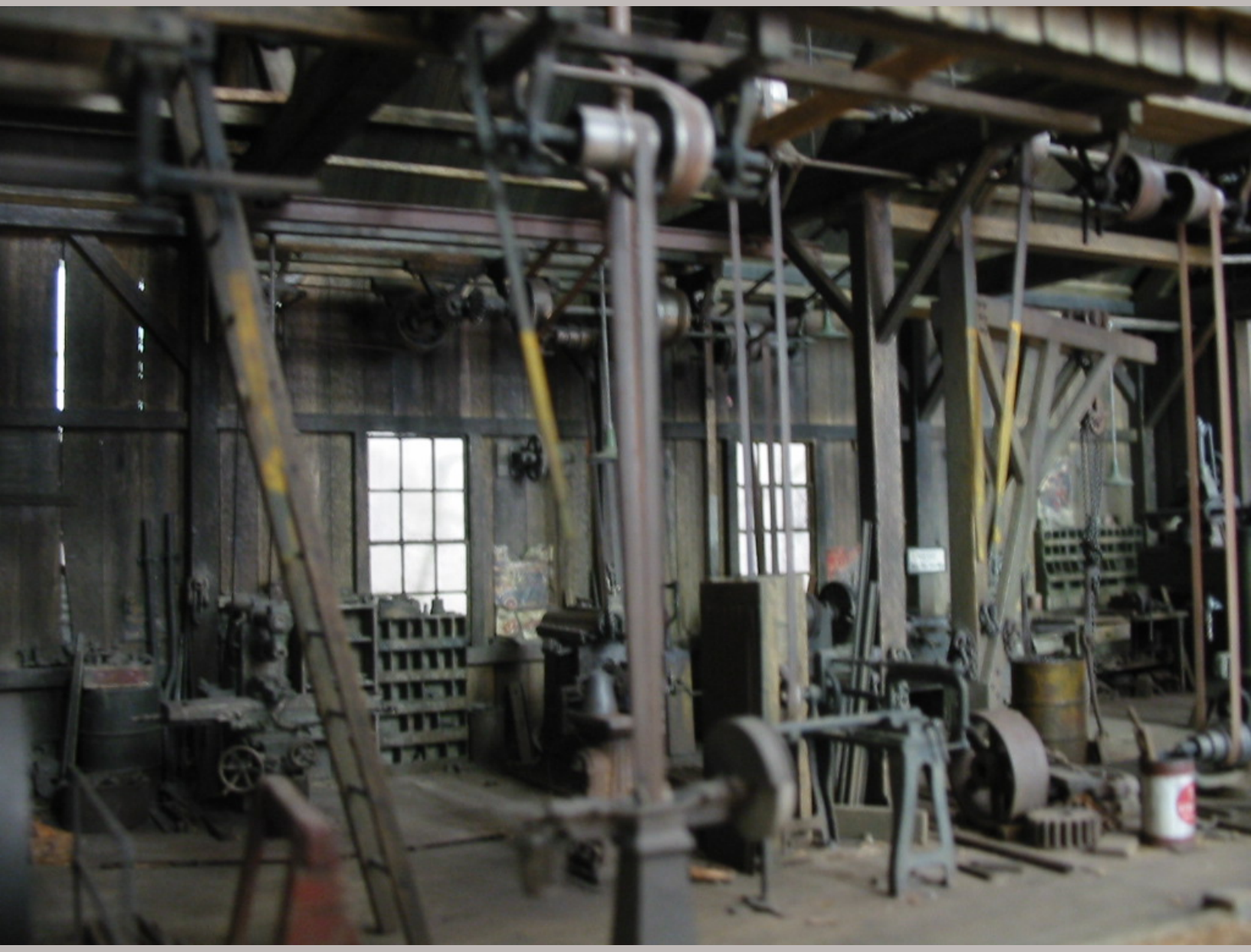

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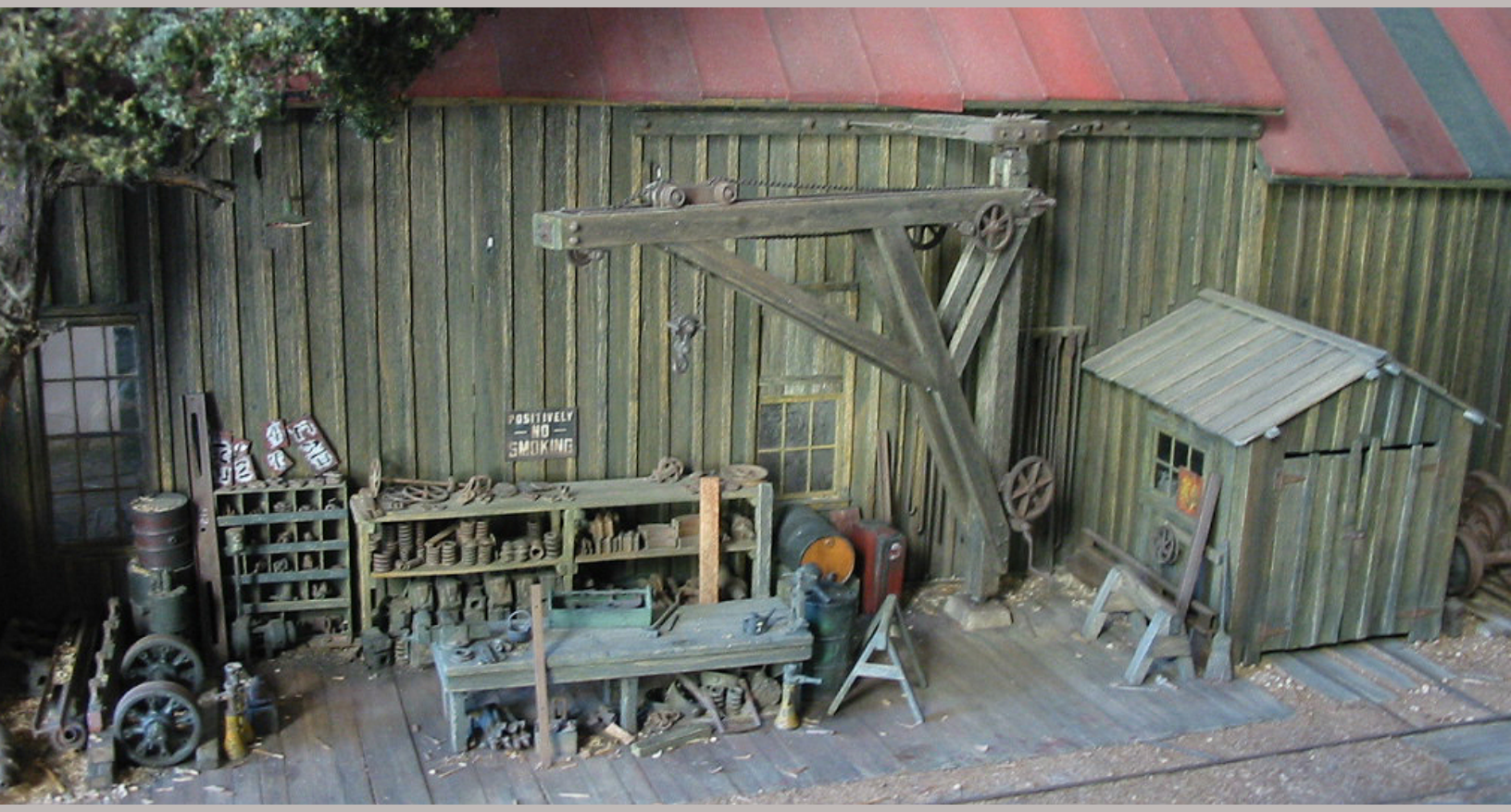



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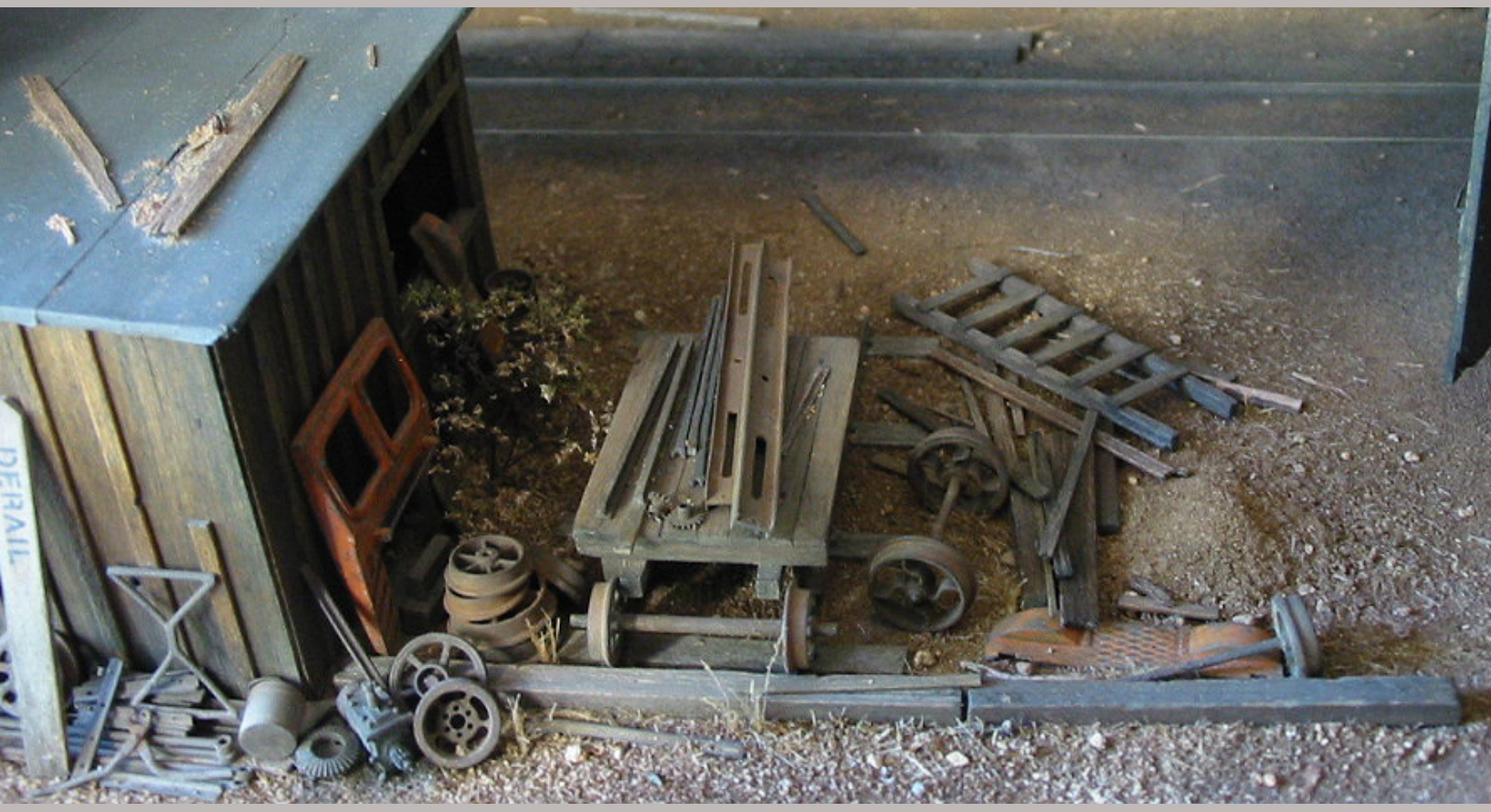



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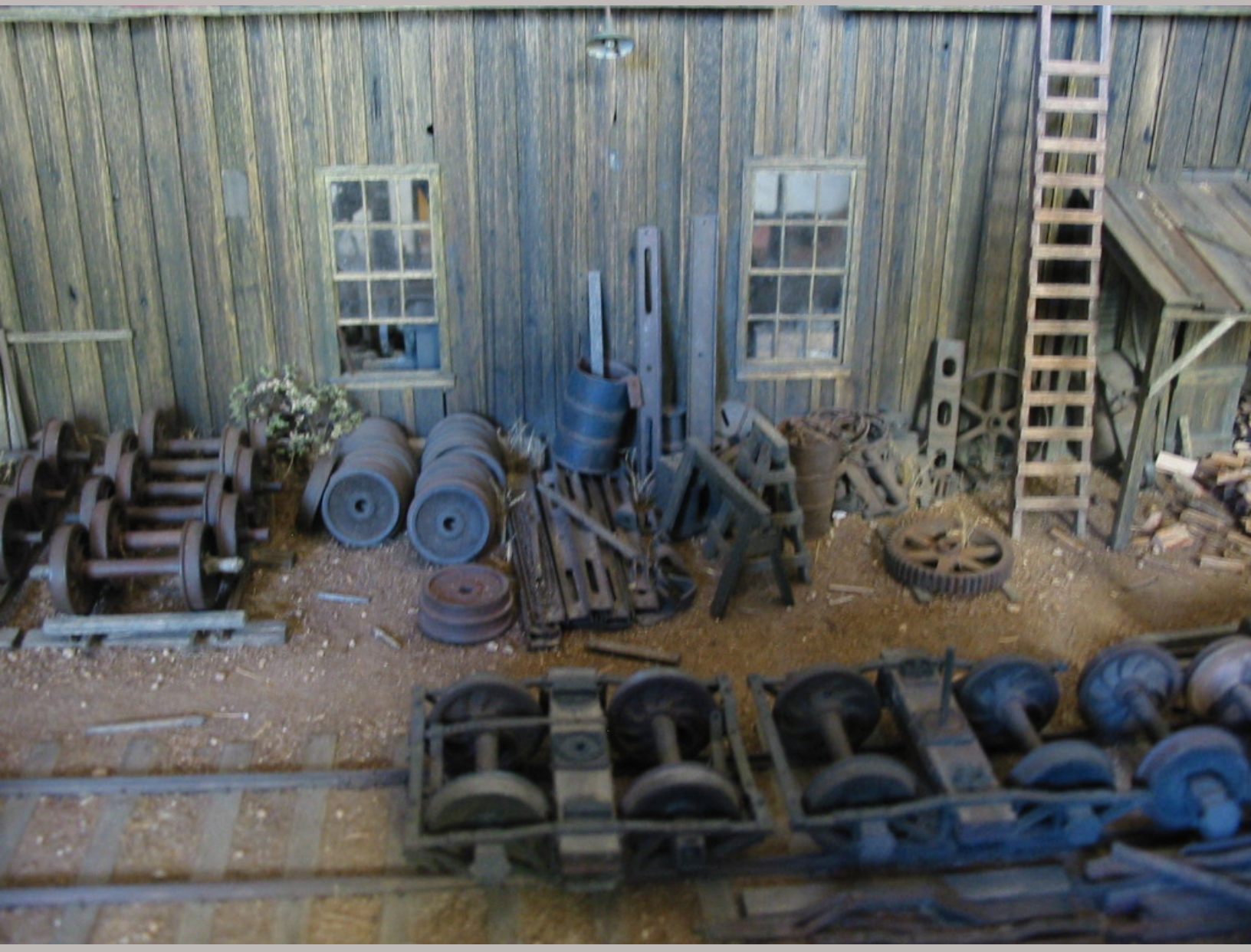

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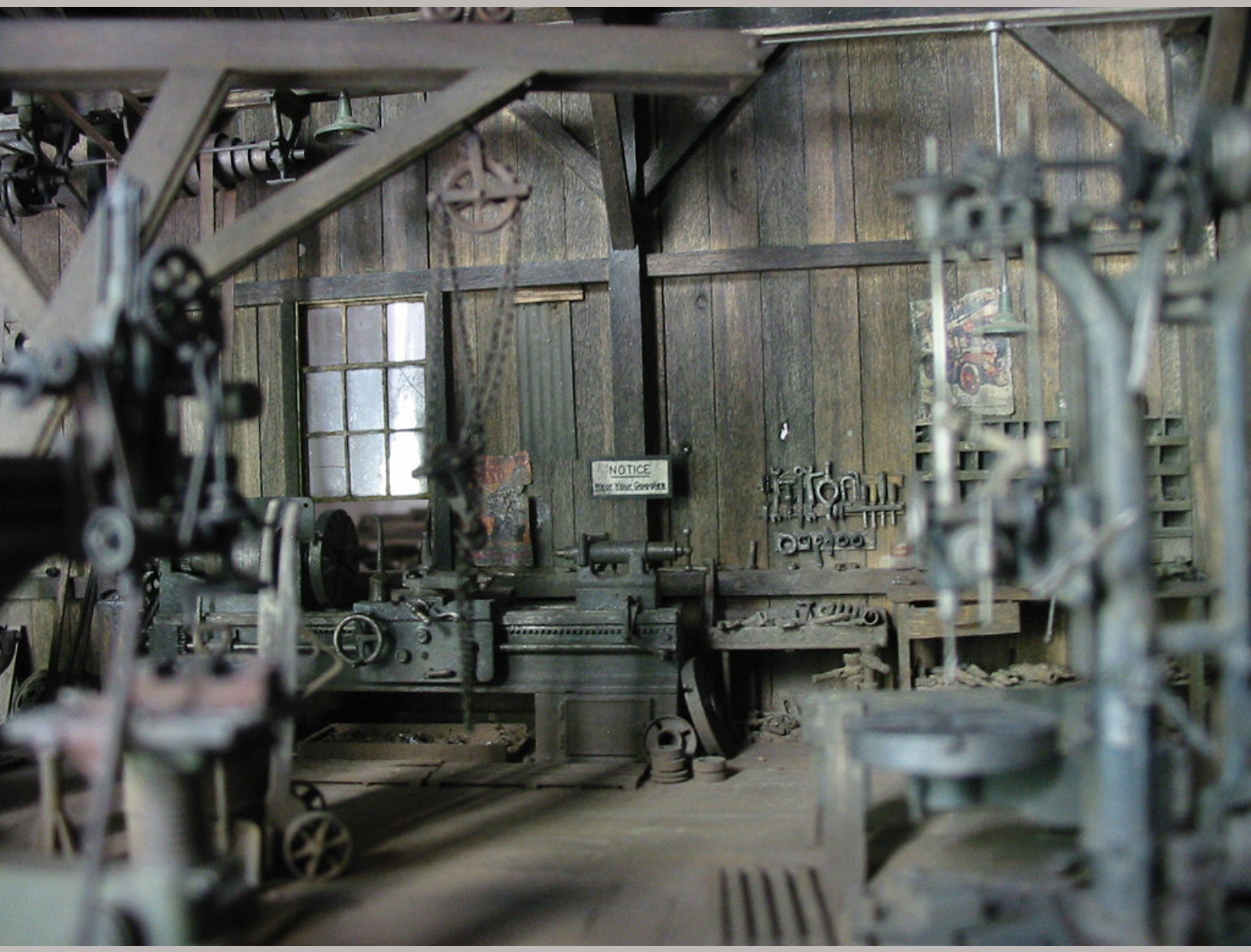

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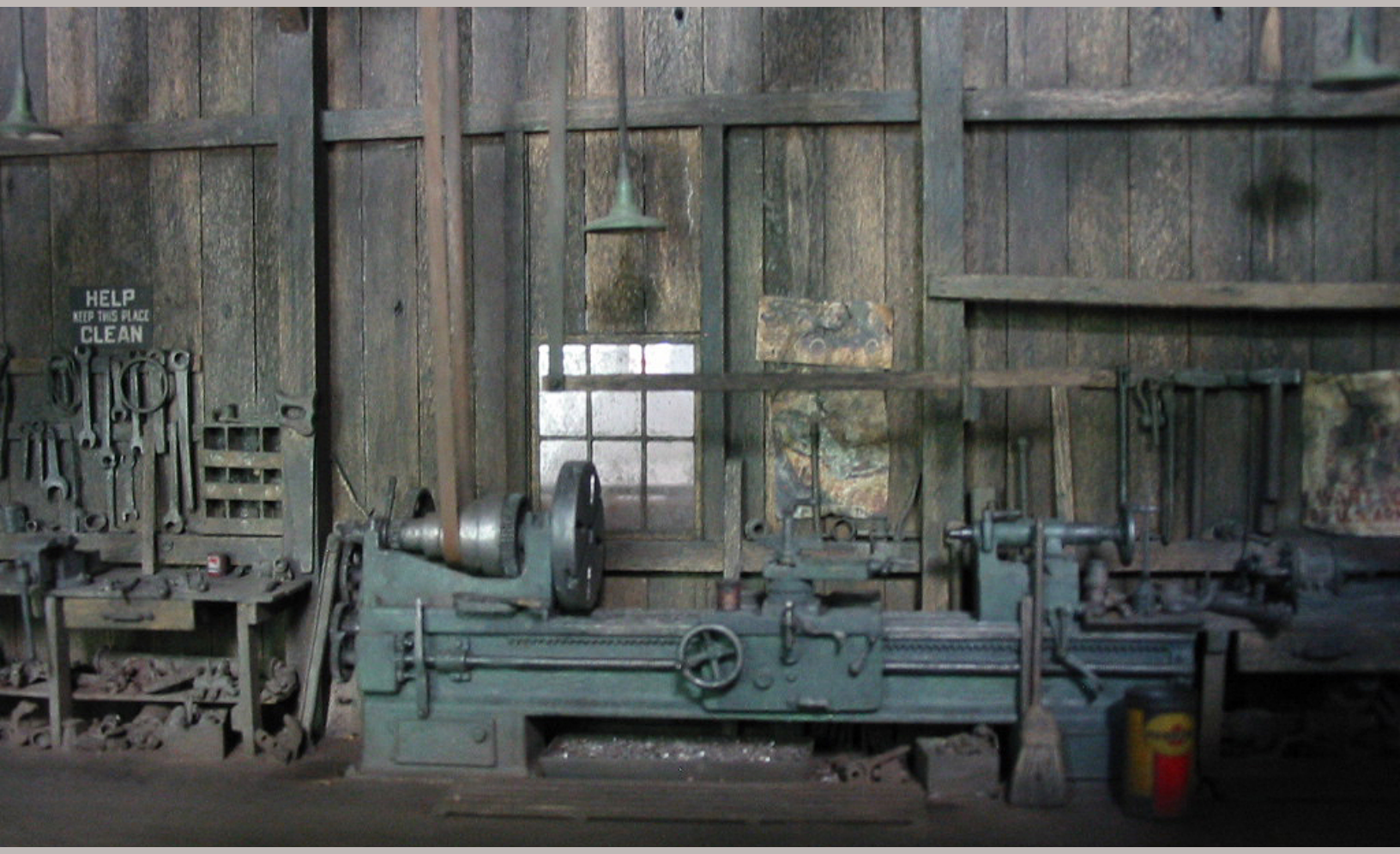

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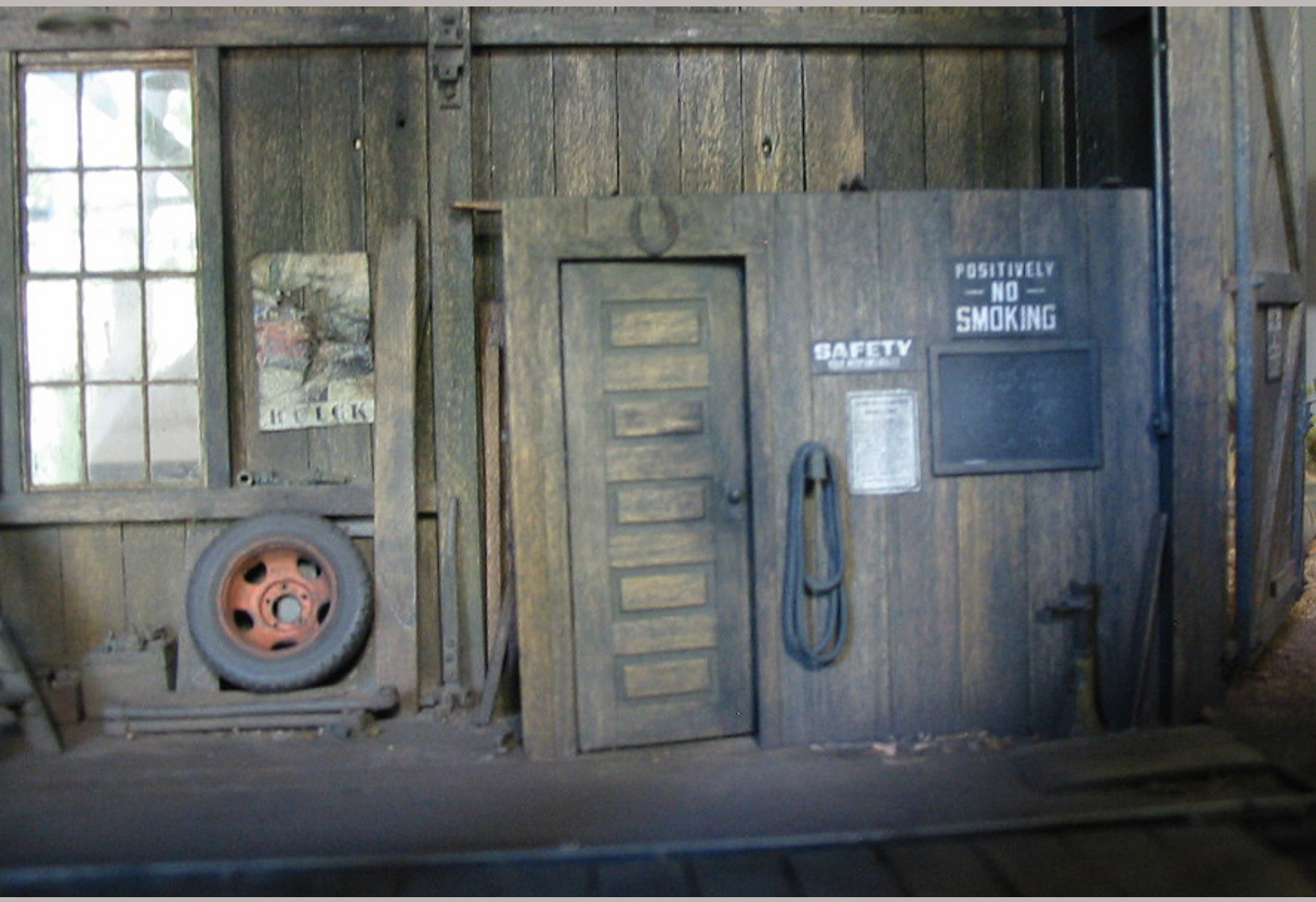

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Prototype Structures that need to be Modeled

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.

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This came in from Terry Lukanic.

Chapman's Mill (AKA Beverley Mill) is located along Interstate I-66 near Haymarket, Virginia in Price William County. Built in 1742 it is thought to be the tallest (5 ½ stories) stacked stone structure in the United States. The mill was the focus of the Battle of Thoroughfare Gap during the Civil War.

The Mill was gutted by fire (arson) in 1998 but has since had the stone walls stabilized by interior bracing.



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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	Total 2023
Total	3089 Pages	Total 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

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Total	5374 Pages	Total 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	256 Pages	May 1, 2025 Third Year anniversary issue
Issue 6	192 Pages	June 1, 2025
Issue 7	189 Pages	July 1, 2025
Issue 8	130 Pages	August 1, 2025
Issue 9	217 Pages	September 1, 2025
Issue 10	179 Pages	October 1, 2025
Issue 11	215 Pages	November 1, 2025
Issue 12	219 Pages	December 1, 2025

Total	2482 Pages	To-Date 2025
Total	7856 Pages	To-Date Volume 1 - 4

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Volume 5 - 2026

Issue 1	246 Pages	January 1, 2026
Issue 2	216 Pages	February 1, 2026
Issue 3	Pages	March 1, 2026
Issue 4	Pages	April 1, 2026
Issue 5	Pages	May 1, 2026
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Issue 9	Pages	September 1, 2026
Issue 10	Pages	October 1, 2026
Issue 11	Pages	November 1, 2026
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Total	8318 Pages	Total Volume 1 - 5

Volume 6 - 2027

Issue 1	Pages	January 1, 2026
Issue 2	Pages	February 1, 2026
Issue 3	Pages	March 1, 2026
Issue 4	Pages	April 1, 2026
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Issue 7	Pages	July 1, 2026
Issue 8	Pages	August 1, 2026
Issue 9	Pages	September 1, 2026
Issue 10	Pages	October 1, 2026
Issue 11	Pages	November 1, 2026
Issue 12	Pages	December 1, 2026

Total	Pages	Total 2027
Total	Pages	Total Volume 1 - 6

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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.

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