

FLIMZIE

***The Newsletter of the Rock River Valley Division
Midwest Region, National Model Railroad Association***



May 2023 Volume 56, Number 9

The Rock River Valley Division, RRVD, is a local division of the Midwest Region of the National Model Railroad Association, NMRA. The RRVD serves NMRA members in areas of Green and Rock Counties of Wisconsin, and Boone, Jo Davies, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson, Whiteside, Carol, DeKalb and Winnebago counties in Illinois. The RRVD holds monthly meets typically the first Sunday afternoon of each month, September through May, in Rockford at the at **YMCA** formally **The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, 1829 North Rockton Avenue, Rockford, IL**. They consist of various clinics on model railroading, model contests, drawings for door prizes for NMRA members. All are welcome. The meets start at 1:00 PM, and the doors open at 12:30 PM.

2023 BoD & Chairman Directory

Please use the following address to contact the RRVD organization or any of the following officers:

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Office Vacancies

Division Publicity Chairman. This person would be responsible for contacting organizations (newspapers, local ad flyers, TV stations public announcements, magazines, etc.) that would publicize our meets, train shows, and other activities. If you are interested in serving in this capacity, contact Marty Hendrickx, 815-978-7326, superintendent@rrvd-nmar.org.

Flimzie Deadlines

The Flimzie is published once per month on the first of the month. It will be placed on the RRVD website for anyone that wants to read it.

The content for the Flimzie comes from you, our readers. Please submit your articles, pictures and editorial comments to the Editor, Ken Peterson, poplarken53@gmail.com, no later than 10 days before the 1st of the month, i.e., Jan 21, 2022, for a Feb 1st 2023 publication.

From the Editor

By Ken Peterson

Friends of the Flimzie, I need to point out that this publication is for you and by you. All the articles that appear here are written by members of the RRVD. If you don't submit articles for publishing, there is no content. When I took over as the editor, I wanted to change the Flimzie from a quarterly publication to a monthly one. Without articles from you, I may have to switch the Flimzie back to quarterly, or even occasionally, based on when I get content. This will be completely up to you.

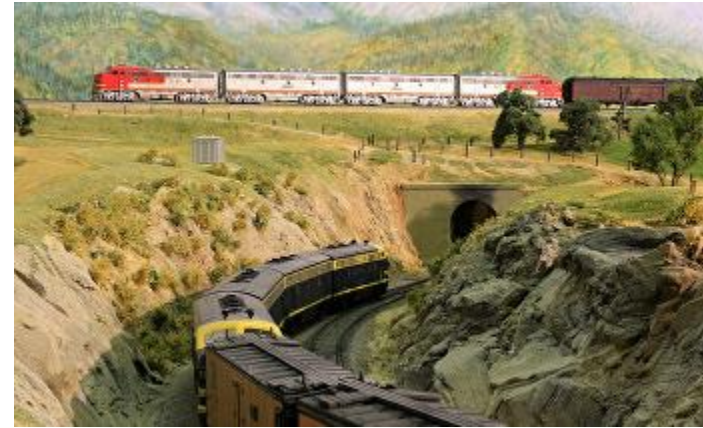
Message From the Superintendent

By Marty Hendrickx

Well it looks like spring will be finally arriving after teasing us with some seasonal weather to only be followed by some late winter weather? As I write this it is still windy and cool but we are being promised some warm seasonal weather soon. My wife and I did escape this weather by taking a trip to have a family get together in San Diego and Palm Springs. The weather was warm in San Diego and hot in Palm Springs which was what we were hoping for and certainly welcomed. Besides spending time with family, there is a lot to do in San Diego, Balboa Park, San Diego Zoo, USS Midway Museum, Cabrillo National Monument, harbor tour and numerous great places to eat, but for me the highlight of the trip was my visit to the San Diego Model Railroad Museum.

The San Diego Model Railroad Museum (<https://www.sdmrm.org/>) is located in Balboa Park in the basement of the Casa de Balboa building. The museum is fully accessible with an elevator and stairs and is open from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM from Tuesday through Sunday. The museum has five operating layouts in 27,000 square foot space. There is also a gift shop and library located in the space. There is an O scale layout, two HO layouts, an N scale layout and a three-rail layout. These are all large layouts. The two HO layouts and the N scale layout put a lot of effort into modeling locales and scenes as close to full scale as possible. The Le Mesa club models the Tehachapi loop and the San Diego Society of N Scale models the Carrizo Gorge Trestle in scale. I spent over two hours exploring all of these layouts and, if it wasn't for the fact my family was waiting for me, I could have spent more time there. There is a lot to see and the club members who are operating the trains and the docent in the museum can provide you with a lot of insight about the layouts and operation.

So if you are ever in San Diego, I would strongly recommend spending some time at the San Diego Railroad Museum. The cost to get in is modest and there is plenty to see.



Tehachapi Loop



Carrizo Gorge Trestle

Summer is fast approaching but RRVD does have a lot of activities planned. May is our joint meet with the South Central Wisconsin Division, NMRA, out of Madison at Paulson Museum. We have two clinics scheduled with Rich Mahaney and three layout tours.

June is our annual June Junket which will be at the IRM on June 3rd. RRVD will be paying for member's admission with guest and significant others getting in at the reduced group rate. This is a special event day with Railway Post Office events scheduled. Check the RRVD web site for details and sign-up information.

August will be our annual cookout and all members are invited to attend. RRVD will provide the grill meat and water and soda. Adult beverages are BYO.

So have a great summer and we look forward to seeing everyone at our different activities.



Photo of the Recipients of the Best Layout of the Show at the 2023 RRVD Sale and Show

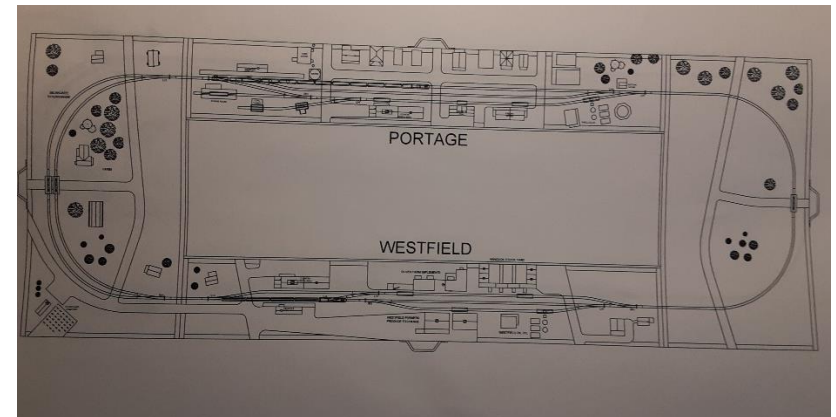
The Layout Design Column

By Ken Peterson

If you attended the RRVD Show and Sale on March 25 or 26, you noticed that I brought my portable N-scale **Beer Line** layout instead of the **Portage and Westfield** layout that I recently described here. I wasn't able to complete the **Portage and Westfield RR** in time for the show. As you all know, life sometimes gets in the way of plans and disrupts them. The **Beer Line** layout was built in 2020 for the show that year. Then Covid hit, and the show was cancelled. Since no one had seen that layout, I took it to this year's show instead. It was a great success. Many people stopped by to view it and ask questions about the construction methods, the history of the Beer Line, the building and weathering techniques I used, and its operations. The layout achieved one of my goals for it. It opened the door for me to talk with many modelers that don't have a layout "because they don't have enough space". They left thinking that they could fit a small shelf layout like the Beer Line into their living space. They could have a small switching layout to enjoy until the day comes when they have the "large" space for a basement filling layout.

Now that the Show is past, I can regroup, and take my time to finish and detail the **Portage and Westfield RR** layout and get it ready for next year's Show.

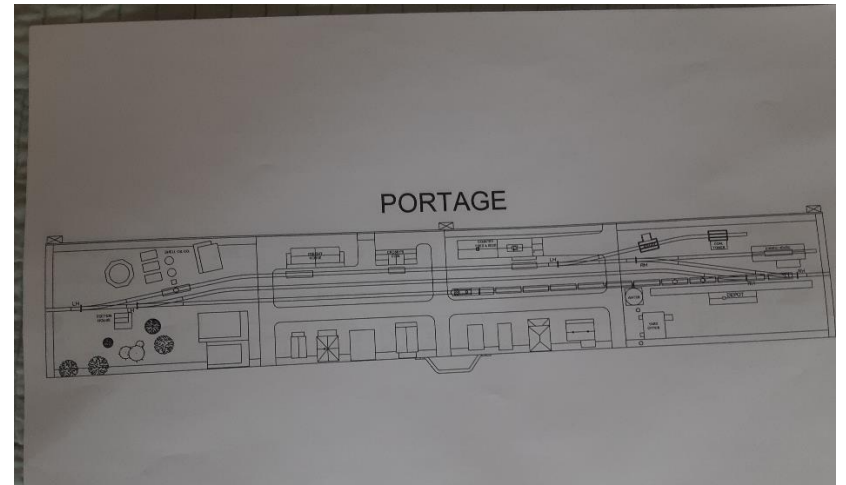
I have attached a few photos to show some of the building progress on the **Portage and Westfield RR**.



Map of Portable Portage and Westfield RR



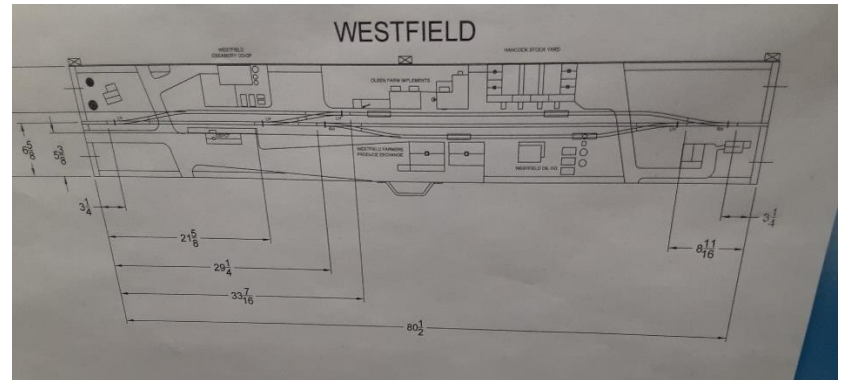
Staging Tracks Under Construction



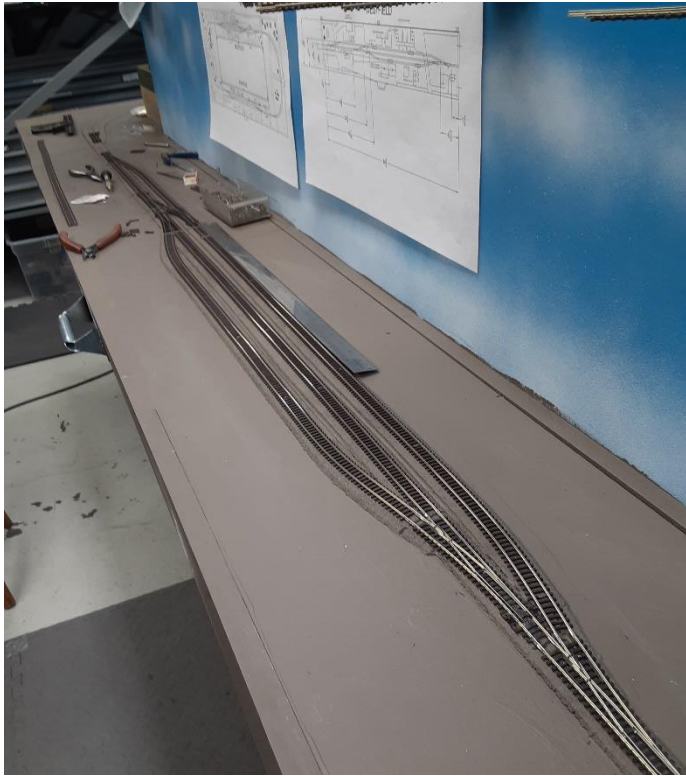
Map of Portage



Westfield Under Construction



Map of Westfield



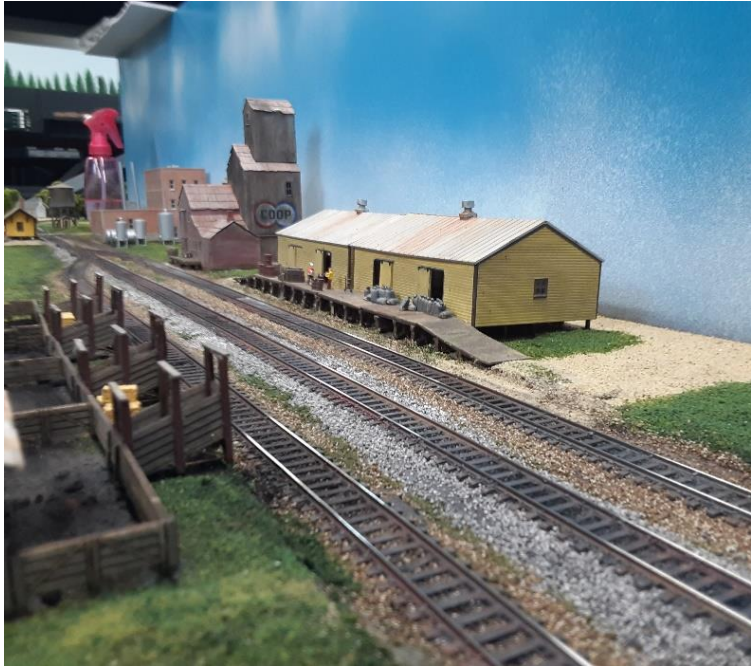
Westfield Track Completed



Typical Country Road Outside of Westfield



Westfield Condensed Milk Plant



Penney Potato Warehouse in Westfield



A Few Residences of Westfield



A Very Sad Day at The Westfield Cemetery



Westfield Farmers Co-op



Westfield Depot



Houses Along the Yard Tracks In Portage



Portage Yard Tracks Under Construction



RR Workers Boarding House Along Portage Yard Tracks



Portage Team Track with Lumber Drying Piles



Portage



Portage Feed and Seed

As you can see from the photos, I have a long way go before the layout is "finished". Good the thing next RRVD Show and Sale isn't until next March of 2024. The best thing about photos is that they show all the mistakes that You make and didn't notice. Now I have time to correct things like the smokestacks on the Westfield Condensed Milk Plant.

The latest time challenge impinging on the completing the layout is our subdivision May Rummage sale. I need to help my wife with some of her craft projects for the sale. The **Portage and Westfield RR** layout must be taken apart and reassembled in the only somewhat open space in my basement. This required cleaning, reorganizing, and getting rid of stuff to make room for the layout. Why did I build such a big "portable" layout? Next month I will show you photos of the layout in its new location and with more construction complete. Model Railroading is fun.

What To Do With An Empty Layout Space

By Ken Reinert

As I was working on a new addition to my layout, I found that for an upcoming open house tour that there were several empty spaces yet to be landscaped and those which awaited a future structure. I planned to build a diner across from my engine house to serve the train crews and nearby factory workers. I intended to buy a Walthers model Bettie's Diner kit. Since I knew what was going to be built in the empty space, I decided to mimic what is done in the real world and advertise what was going to be built there.

With the help of my wife, we Googled Walthers Bettie's Diner kit. A series of images of the diner came up showing various vendors selling the kit. My wife copied one of the images and pasted it into Power Point. We added a red colored header to the image announcing that the diner was to be built on this spot. My wife sized the image to fit an HO scale billboard and we printed two images on heavy photo stock paper. I cut the images from the paper. I then took the images and marked with a pencil a center post and two spots $\frac{1}{4}$ " shorter than the cut cards forming a triangle. For the post to support the sign, I used 6" wood skewers one for each post. Three holes were drilled at the marked spots the same diameter of the skewers. I inserted the skewers into holes without glue since I wanted to remove them once the building was in place. I cut the skewers so that there would be four scale feet from the bottom of the sign and the ground with the poles reaching the top of the sign. Tacky glue was used to glue the signs to the poles. Now visitors no longer ask what I am going to do with this empty space. The sign is temporary and will be knocked down just as in "real life".



What Are Friends For? Chapter 15

Gary D. Loiselle

One Thursday morning at our weekly "train guys" breakfast get-together, someone mentioned that Arntzen Steel was moving. This was the first time that I had heard about it so one day when I was in the area I stopped in. Sure enough, Arntzen is moving to Sharon, Wisconsin. A Google search for "Arntzen Steel" yielded an August 19, 2021 article by the Milwaukee 7 Regional Economic Development Organization that confirmed the plan to begin construction in the third quarter of 2021. A new rail spur will provide access to the facility and Alliant Energy will install a 25kv substation to support the large plate bending rolls and welding equipment.

I'm not a native of Rockford, but Arntzen Steel has been one of the few places I have been able to rail fan since I got into the hobby of model railroading. Our first house was only a few blocks north off Kilburn Ave. I still travel down Kilburn Ave past the dairy (the former Deans) and can look down the tracks to see if anything is there for Arntzen. I do remember a day when I thought I would do some rail fanning in downtown and south Rockford. It didn't take too long for me to become overwhelmed by the number of large brick buildings that at one time were part of a mecca of manufacturing. I went home.

In later years, I put together a "slide" clinic I titled "Switch List Rockford". I included industries that still had rail service. As an aside, unfortunately, there is not much rail yard operations left here. Canadian National brings freight to Rockford as a "local" from their yard in Freeport. Union Pacific comes from Belvidere to deliver tank cars to an oil company in Loves Park. I must say that places getting tank cars and or box cars are not as interesting as those getting "open loads". My list of those places include MGF Industries on 39th St., Gunitite Foundry on Peoples Ave, Liebovich Steel and Aluminum on Preston, St., Behr Scrap Metal on Seminary St., and Arntzen Steel on School St. I probably should say "included" (past tense). I will explain more later.

I was able to make a connection with Arntzen Steel through my part time job at Sears Hardware. I was able to get an invitation to come down for a visit. No need to ask me twice. I had the common industrial tour restriction of 'No Camera Inside'. Outside was okay. My host did supply me with some company brochures that took care of that **(Photo 1)** and **(Photo 2)**. Aerial Photo 2 also provided a basis for a diorama I built for a display at the downtown library promoting Model Railroad Month **(Photo 3)**. This was back in the mid 90's.

Arntzen is somewhat unique in the fact that they have shipments delivered by rail *but* they do not have a siding **(Photo 4)**. The railroad, **CP Rail**, formerly **SOO Line**, formerly **Milwaukee Road**, brings flatcars of steel up from Davis Jct. The loads are at the end of the train and are just spotted on

the mainline. Loads left on Monday are off-loaded by a talented Arntzen forklift operator **(Photo 5)**. The southbound train on Wednesday pushes the empties downtown for a run-around move and then continue to Davis Jct. The number of loads, I assume, is based on Arntzen's order. I've seen as little as one car to as many as nine **(Photo 6)**,

As you can see in **(Photo 4)**, overstock inventory is simply piled up on the ground on either side of the tracks. Some places may be concerned about inventory security, but as you can see in the close-up in **(Photo 7)**, a piece of steel 0.521 x 118.5 x 368.9 weighing 6459 lbs isn't something you are going to toss in your pickup and head off to the scrap yard. I have seen the finished product leaving Arntzen, unfortunately, not by rail but by truck **(Photo 8)**.

We do not see much of what Arntzen produces unless you are a contractor. What you may not know, every time you travel North Second St. just south of the Auburn St interchange you pass by a sculpture called 'Symbol'. Look at the round shapes of its' different elements **(Photo 9)**. An artist had the design concept, but Arntzen Steel had the ability to bring it to reality. As the brochure says "If its round, call Arntzen" **(Photo 10)**. I wouldn't really call, but I think of the local connection when I drive the 'Symbol' along the river. What are friends for?

Postscript: Bill of Materials (structures) Pikestuff Yard Office #0016, Pikestuff Warehouse #0004, Pikestuff Engine House #0008.

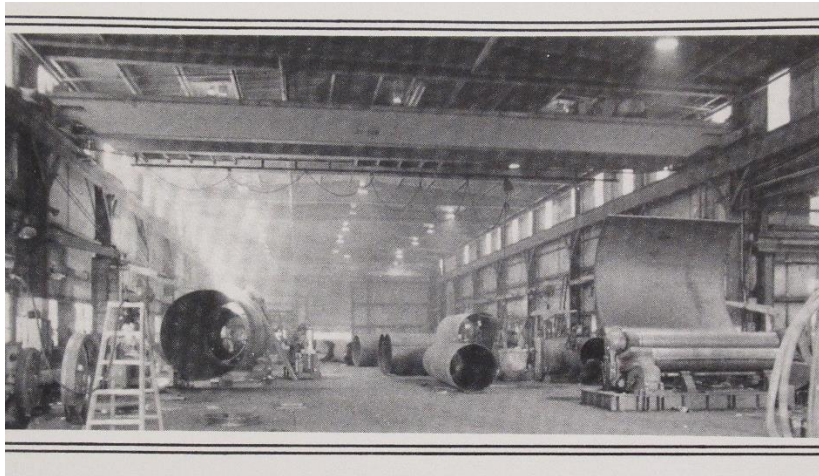


Photo 1

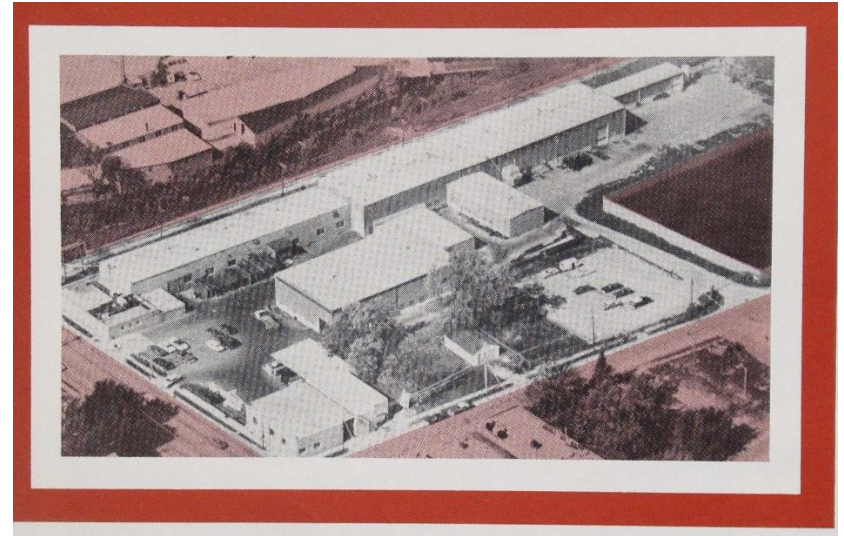


Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 6



Photo 5

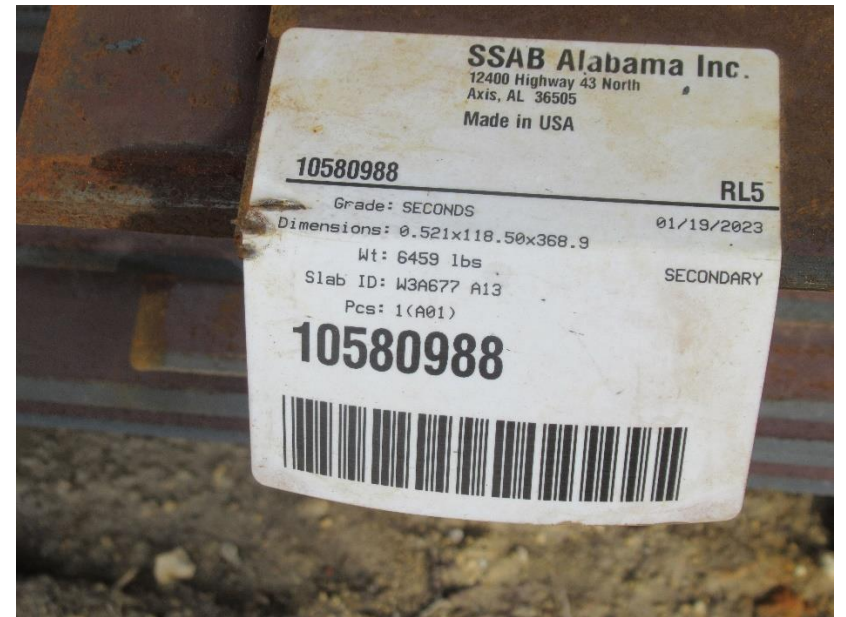


Photo 7



Photo 8

An advertisement for Arntzen Corporation. At the top, it says "IF IT'S ROUND, CALL ARNTZEN" with the phone number "800-821-3475" and fax number "FAX 815/964-0045". Below this are three diagrams: "CYLINDERS" (a simple cylinder), "REDUCING CYLINDERS" (a cylinder with a tapered end), and "SEGMENTS" (a curved metal strip with a "20 FT MAX LENGTH" label). To the right is a large diagram of a "20-FT. WIDE PLATE ROLL". Below the diagrams, it lists "ARNTZEN ROLLS" with properties: Structural Grade, Pressure Vessel Quality, High Strength, Abrasion Resistant, Stainless Steel, Nickel Alloy, and Aluminum. A slogan reads "We Roll Your Material or Our Material Stocking Plate Up To 150" Wide Up To 480" Long". At the bottom right is the Arntzen Corporation logo and address: "815-964-9413, 1025 School Street, Rockford, IL 61105-0898".

Photo 9

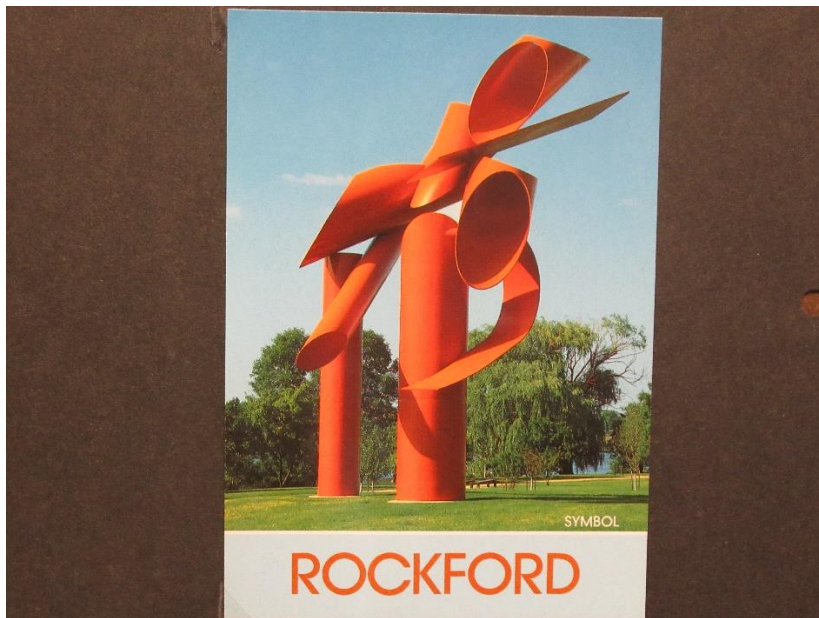


Photo 9

Modelling a Wood Shingle Roof

Ken Mosny

The material I used for this roof (**see Photo 1**) is cedar shingle sheet from Sierra Scale Models (sierrascalemodels.com). It comes in thicknesses of 0.011", 0.018" and 0.038". The thinnest, 0.011", would be best for HO scale even though this roof used 0.018" because the 0.011" was not available when I bought the material. Others have obtained cedar veneer from cigar stores for free. Some special items, besides common hobby tools, you will need for this project are:

- DAP Qwik Seal adhesive caulk, clear, commonly available in squeeze tubes where caulking is sold. White glue is not recommended to glue the shingles as it **will** cause the roof to warp
- Glue syringe with .020" to .025" tip (try a good hardware store like Nicholson's)
- Craft paints (black, white, brown), India ink, isopropyl alcohol and flat black or gray spray paint
- Staining trough of PVC pipe or shallow pan

- Rolling ruler and sprue nippers will make your life easier for cutting and trimming
- 2" wide blue painters tape and double stick tape (or glue runner)
- 4" x 6" file card and some way to draw lines on them such as a computer and printer

First, make the shingle strips: Using a rolling ruler, slit the cedar sheet into scale 5" to 12" random widths with the grain (**see Photo 2**). Stain the strips (**see Photo 3**) by dipping them in the gray stain and stand vertically to dry on a paper towel (**see Photo 4**). Stain again with the ink wash and stand vertically to dry. You can repeat the dipping and drying to a shade to your liking. These are my formulae for the colors:

Gray stain (a muddy gray color):

- 1 oz. white acrylic craft paint
- 30 drops of black craft paint
- 15 or so drops of brown craft paint
- Thin with water to 2 oz.

Ink wash:

- 1 oz. isopropyl alcohol
- 10 to 15 drops of India Ink

Next, create individual scale shingles attached to a tape backing strip (**see Photo 5**) that can be glued in rows to the roof. Using a computer and printer (font size 8.6, underscore character in Word), I printed cut guide lines about 11" scale apart onto 4" x 6" file cards (**see Photo 6**). You can draw lines or make them any way you wish, but the computer is quick and accurate. Use a minimal amount of double stick tape or a glue runner to attach 2" wide blue painter's tape sticky side out to the side of the card opposite the cut guide lines. Line up and stick the stained strips onto the painter's tape as shown (**see Photo 7**). Using sharp scissors, cut along the lines on the back of the card to form rows of shingles backed with the blue tape. Peel off the file card from each row of shingles.

Finally, glue the taped rows of shingles to the roof. Before gluing the shingles down, it is best to paint the roof a color like black, brown or gray so the gaps between the shingles won't show. I just use cheap rattle can flat black. The roof needs to be flat, so if you are using a plastic kit roof with molded shingles, sand it flat or make a new one from sheet styrene. Fill the glue syringe with the DAP Qwik Seal and lay a bead along the lower edge of the roof (**see Photo 8**). Press a taped row of shingles into the glue the length of the roof lining them up overhanging the edge about a scale inch (**see Photo 9**). Let the glue dry about 15 minutes and peel off the blue tape.

Store the tip of the glue syringe in a bottle of water (**see Photo 10**) or it will dry and plug in only a few minutes.

Since the glue will take a while to dry for each row, you may wish to start the roof early in the project and work on the walls or other parts while the glue dries. Also, do not skimp on the amount of glue. The gap under a row of shingles is large. I like to make the bead as large as I can without gaps and oozing out slightly along the upper edge of the row.

As you add rows, you may need a gauge to space the rows. Just eyeballing the spacing is not accurate enough for me. I have tried it and the finished rows turn out wavy. A simple gauge can be made by gluing two strips of styrene together to space the rows apart 5" to 6" scale (1/16" in HO) (**see Photo 11**). Butt the notch of the gauge against the lower row lining up the next row (**see Photo 12**). Be aware that as you near the ridge of the roof, you may have to adjust the spacing to avoid a wide or narrow row at the top. I carefully measure (**see Photo 13**) the distance to the top of the ridge the last five rows to keep parallel to the ridge and end up with the top edge of the last row flush at the ridge. Spacing the rows exactly a scale 6" makes this easy to measure on my scale rule. Rows not parallel to the ridge at the top are obvious where lower rows are not.

When you have all the field shingles on, it is time to add the hip and ridge shingles. For this you will need to cut individual shingles from the card. It is easy to fold the tape under and use the lines to cut off shingles not attached to the tape. Squeeze some glue along the ridge (**see Photo 14**), poke a shingle lightly with the tip of your hobby knife and place it with the grain of the shingle parallel to the ridge (**see Photo 14**). If you poke lightly, the glue will have enough tack to stick the shingle to the roof. I usually alternate placing the shingles on either side.

You can finish up by adding flashing and other roof details. I usually use pieces of 0.005" styrene to represent flashing. Sometimes, cedar boards were used as flashing since they could last as long as the shingles. Flashing can be painted gray to represent lead or galvanized steel, light green for weathered copper or universal rust. In **Photo 16**, I am drilling the hole for the smokejack after the shingles are on.

As you can see in **Photo 1**, this technique results in a very realistic wood shingle roof.



Photo 1

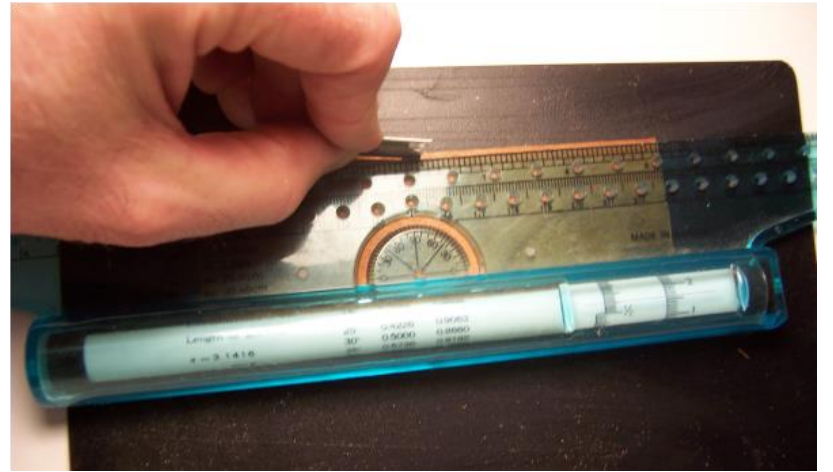


Photo 2



Photo 3

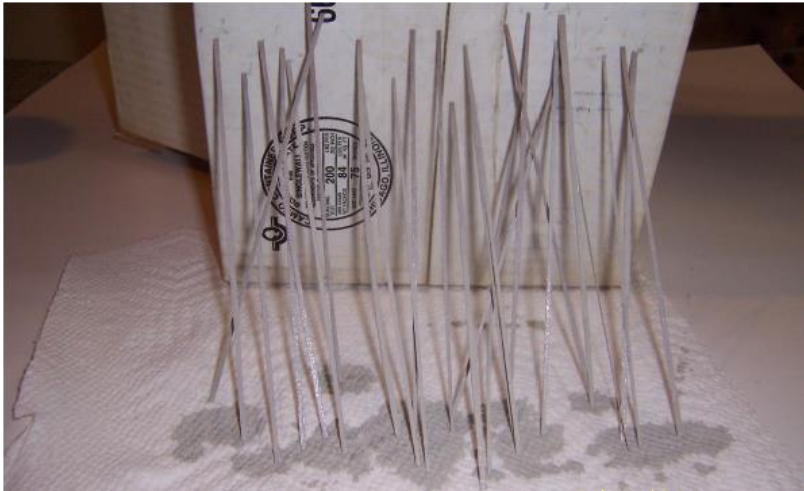


Photo 4

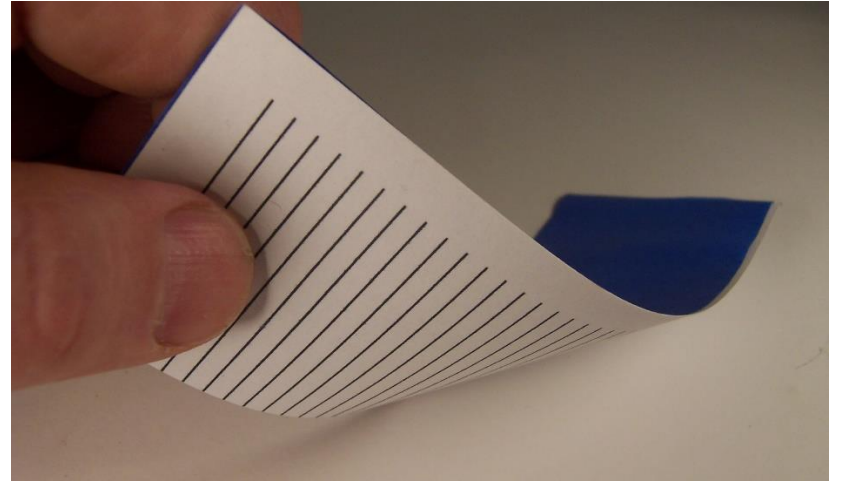


Photo 6



Photo 5

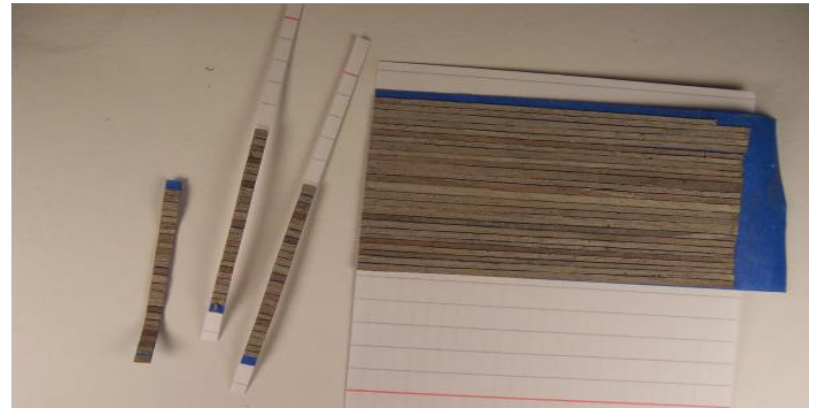


Photo 7

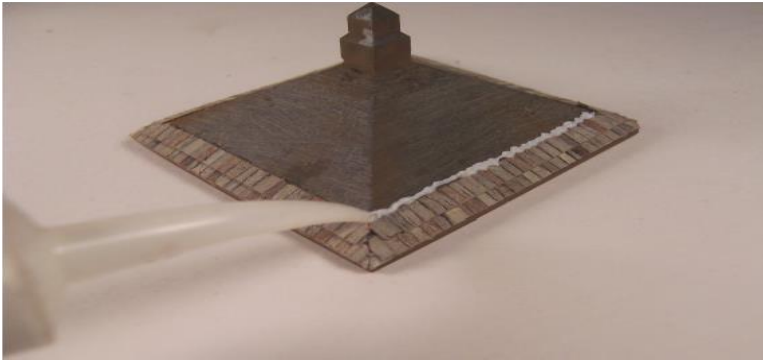


Photo 8



Photo 9



Photo 10

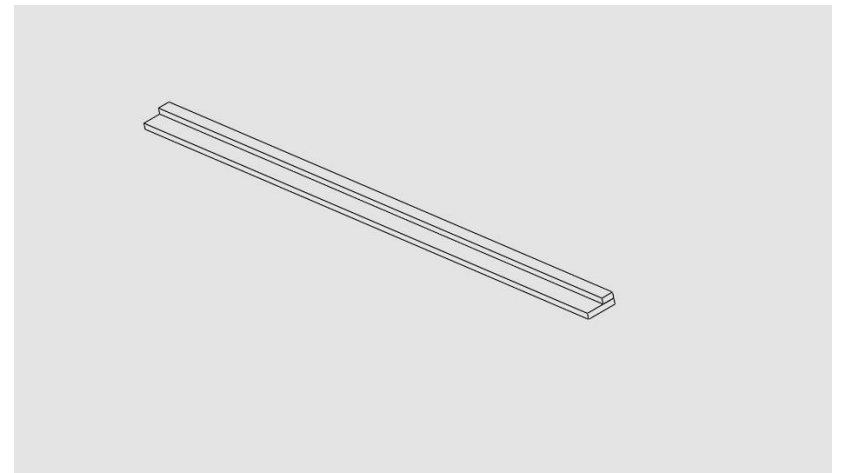


Photo 11

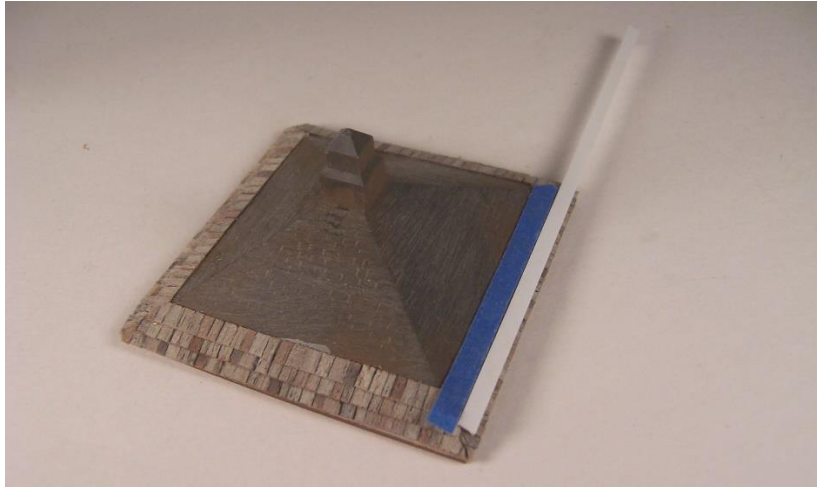


Photo 12



Photo 14

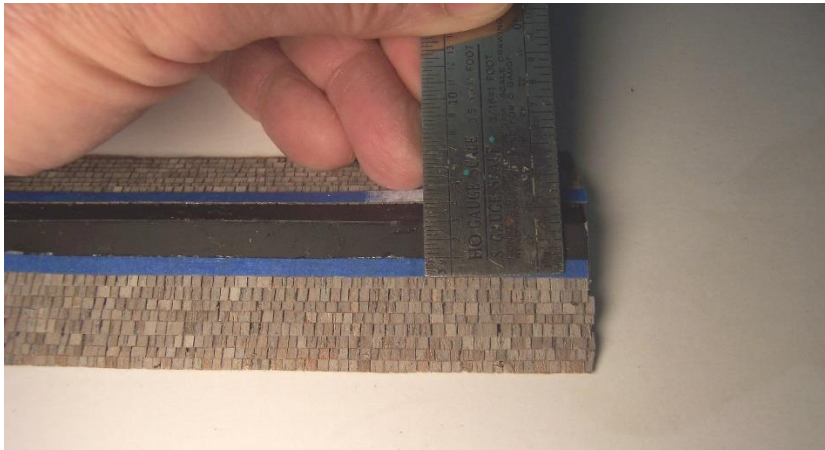


Photo 13

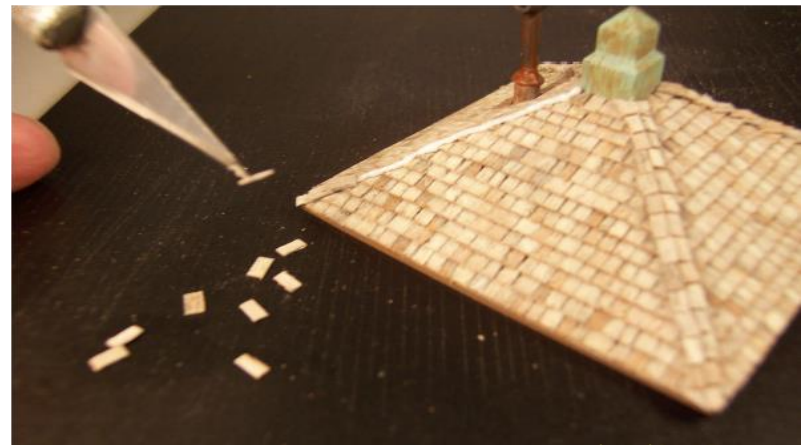


Photo 15



Photo 16
