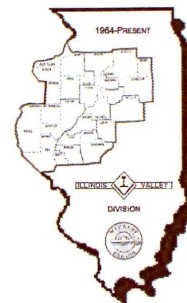




THE TIMETABLE

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
ILLINOIS VALLEY DIVISION
NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION



Volume 41, No.6, November 2022

WEBSITE: nmra-ivd.org

Hello IVD members,

Here it is once again, time for another gathering of IVD members to meet for fun, learning and most importantly FELLOWSHIP!

First off, as the weather didn't want to cooperate with us to get the cookout scheduled in July or August, it was decided to have the cookout during the September IVD Meet. We had great weather and a great turn out of about 20 members and their spouses. Everyone had a wonderful time and there were plenty of rail action all afternoon. I would personally like to thank everyone who attended and brought wonderful side dishes and desserts. I would also like to thank my wonderful wife Evelyn, as without her help I wouldn't be able to organize this event by myself. We didn't really have much of a Meet as it were, but we did have an impromptu clinic that Bruce Lauerman provided that covered using magnifying glasses when modeling, which he learned about at the NMRA convention in St. Louis a few weeks prior and was very informative. Also, I recognized those members who have helped with the portal layout rehab and help with its operations at the events the layout has made an appearance. Those individuals are Dave Hawkey, Russ Smith, Gary Baker, Jeremy Bubb, Ken Burr, Dale Fiste, Paul Heintz, Larry Nelson, Rod Price, Mike Shockley, and Randy Sommers. If there is anyone I missed, please know your help is greatly appreciated by the IVD.

We are looking for volunteers for the next layout event, which is at the ICC Train Show at ICC, East Peoria on November 20th, the day after our November IVD Meet. Reach out to either Dave Hawkey or Jeremy Bubb, if you can volunteer to help setup, teardown or operate the layout.

Speaking of our November Meet, remember this meet will be held at the Peoria Library Downtown branch. Details can be found later in this newsletter.

Also, as a reminder the IVD will be hosting the Midwest Regional Board Meeting in May on the same day as our IVD Meet. The Board meeting will be held in the same location prior to our IVD meet. More details to come the closer we get to that event.

Highball!!!

Jim Tatum
IVD Superintendent

**MAILED NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTION
FEE DUE IN JANUARY. See page 5**

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS AND PARTICIPANTS

MASK MANDATE FOR INDOOR MEETINGS

With the relaxing of the mandate for wearing masks while indoors by the State of Illinois, the Illinois Valley Division will follow the instructions on mask use by the facility being used for our meetings.

Information compiled herein is presented to the membership on an "as submitted by the authors" basis, and is assumed complete and accurate by the Editor as of the "Deadline For Submissions" date for inclusion in this edition of the newsletter, as posted in the previous, most recent edition of the TIMETABLE. Statements contained in this document are strictly the beliefs and/or opinions of the writer presenting them and not necessarily those of, or endorsed by, the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) of Soddy Daisy, TN, USA, its Midwest Region, or its Illinois Valley Division of the NMRA or their officers, agents and designates thereof. Information presented as factual is assumed true and accurate to the best knowledge and intent of the presenter of that information, and are believed to be such in good faith when accepted for inclusion in this newsletter.

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superintendent@nmra-ivd.org



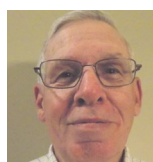
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Year listed with title indicates the end of present term.

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Upcoming 2022 IVD Meetings

Membership Meetings:

Division in-person meetings have resumed with the September 2021 meeting. Membership meetings are held on the third Saturday of January, March, May, September and November at the Peoria Public Library, North Branch, 3001 West Grand Avenue, Peoria at 1:00 pm unless otherwise announced. See below. Doors open at 12 noon.

DIVISION MEET

Saturday, November 19, 2022
1:00 to 4:00 PM, Doors open at 12 noon
Conference Room, Lower Level
Peoria Public Library, Downtown Branch
107 NE Monroe Street
Peoria, Illinois

The meeting room is available at 12 noon for meeting and greeting. It is also a time for AP judging for certificates. Those members who have items to be judged must contact Minton Dings, AP Chair, prior to the meeting. A limit two items per member due to the limit of time for evaluation.

At 1 pm there will be the membership meeting followed by clinics. Clinics include a review of mountain climbing cog railways in the United States and Europe by Dave Hawkey and Minton Dings.

The popular vote contests for this meeting are (1) Steam Locomotives and (2) Offline Dioramas.

Parking is free on weekends. No need to feed the meters.

Board of Directors Meetings:

The next Board of Directors Meeting, will be Sunday, December 11, 2022, 6:00 pm by Zoom. Members who wish to attend need to contact Jim Tatum, Superintendent, at the email address listed to the left on this page to receive the Zoom invitation.

2023 DIVISION MEETING POPULAR VOTE CONTEST SCHEDULE

January 21, 2023. (1) Scratchbuilt Locomotives and Cars and (2) Kitbashed Locomotives and Cars

March 15, 2023. (1) Diesel Locomotives and (2) Photos of Models

May 20, 2023. (1) Offline Buildings and (2) MOW Cars, Vehicles and Equipment

September 16, 2023. (1) Photos of Layouts and (2) Specialty Railroad Cars—Non MOW

Prepping for Operations

by Gary Baker

From working in and around medium to large Steel Mills all of my life I was always fascinated by the number and different types of cars that needed to be moved around the plant every day to keep things running smoothly. So when I set out to design the C&W HO railroad 20 years ago it was a no-brainer that it would focus on Steel Mill operations. But I also wanted to include complimentary industries that would supply materials to the mill and consume products from the mill in the course of daily business. Fortunately I had a 14 x 32 foot room to work which was large enough to incorporate these ideas and in turn offer lots of interesting operations for four or five operators.

The first step on the road to operations was to ensure that the rolling stock and electrical and mechanical components of the layout were robust enough to provide a smooth and reliable experience for the operators because nothing is more distracting than having to fight frequent car derailments or loss of communications with the motive power. After working through these problems one at a time I felt pretty good about this part of the project. But unfortunately for us, there are not 12 inches to the scale foot in model railroading so even the best laid plans are no match for fumbling fingers.

The second step was to decide what method of operation to use. There are several operating schemes out there. To name a few, there is full blown dispatching, the venerable four-way card system, paper switch lists, and very simple schemes that call for moving a few cars from point A to point B and bringing a few different cars back. On the C&W, I started with the four-way card system using packs of cards and sorting them out as cars were dropped and picked up at locations around the layout. As an engineer I really liked the discipline and orderliness of it and it worked well up until the aging process caught up with me and reading the reporting marks on the cars became increasingly difficult, especially on weathered cars in less than perfect lighting conditions. So I decided to look for other options and found an article Andy Sperandeo wrote about how he originally met John Allen and eventually attained the job of yardmaster on the legendary Gorre & Daphetid RR. He explained that the system used for freight car forwarding on the G&D was a tab system. Instead of a pack of cards containing weigh bills for each car, there was a color coded tab that traveled with the car. Each destination on the layout was assigned a color and each siding within that destination was given a letter code that was written on the colored tab. There

was no paperwork or squinting to read reporting marks. All you had to do was move the car to the next color coded destination where the tab was subsequently turned over to reveal the next destination for that car. I decided to use metal washers with color coded self-stick paper reinforcements on each side for the tabs. Once I got past the unusual look of the cars rolling around with a colored washer on top, it was very easy to operate and had all the virtues I was looking for and none of the vices. It met my objective of simplifying things so both inexperienced and/or older operators could spend more time running trains and less time keeping up with paperwork.

The third step was to run each part of the operating session over and over again looking for problem areas. The first one I ran into was the method to use for uncoupling cars. Manual uncoupling obviously works in most situations and there are multiple good tools available but I had remote switching areas that required leaning over delicate scenery to manually uncouple cars so I had to figure out something else for those areas. I decided to try the in-between-the-rails delayed uncoupler by Kadee. Delayed uncoupling works by stopping the car to be uncoupled with the knuckle couplers over the uncoupler magnet and then creating a slack condition which causes the magnets on each side of the uncoupler to pull the knuckles apart, offsetting them. Then the uncoupled car is pushed to its final destination by the loco and when the engine pulls away, the knuckles reset to the center position for automatic recoupling. Since almost all of my cars had Kadee couplers anyway and every car on my layout had the coupler height and trip pin clearance checked before it went on the layout (vital for reliable remote uncoupling), I was set up pretty good right off the bat and the uncouplers worked so well in the remote areas I decided to use them in other areas too.

That's when I ran into unexpected issues. These days trucks are more free-rolling than ever and I quickly discovered that if the track isn't level where the uncoupler is located, a free-rolling car will either roll away after uncoupling, preventing the ability to push it to its final location and remotely drop it there, or it will roll toward the loco, defeating the uncouple action. On a real train the brakeman would just tighten the brake wheel a couple of turns but it isn't that easy to add a little friction to the wheels on our cars !! After lots of trial and error my solution was to remove one axle and add a combination of Kadee .010 and .015 fiber washers over the pointed end of the axle until there was just enough friction between the wheel and the side frame to stop the drift. The washers are small and a quick touch up with a black sharpie pen makes them almost invisible against the body of the wheel.

The next problem I ran into was not all of the knuckles moved freely enough in their gearboxes, preventing the magnets from pulling them far enough apart to disconnect the car and offset the couplers for pushing. This is why the trip pin height is important. If it's too high above the magnet, the magnetic attraction isn't strong enough and if it's too low it drags on the magnet surface. After tweaking the trip pin height as necessary, putting a few puffs of Grease 'em graphite lubricant in the gearboxes, and working the knuckles back and forth a few times the problem was solved on most of the cars. But there were still a few cars that continued to be problematic. On these cars, the #5 couplers with the metal centering spring were replaced with the #148 whisker coupler that has the same coupler head as the #5 but doesn't require the metal centering spring, creating more clearance in the gearbox. Problem solved.

After getting reliable uncoupling action, the next issue was where to put the uncoupling magnet. If you have a branch track with say, three stub tracks at the end, one magnet will theoretically serve them all by placing the uncoupler upstream of the stub tracks. But if you're pushing multiple cars of varying lengths down the line, placement of the uncoupler to avoid unexpected uncoupling between cars as the engine shuttles back and forth is a problem. After installing several magnets and then having to relocate them again because of nuisance disconnects, I found that putting an uncoupler on each stub track was the best solution.

In summary, getting the layout ready for operations was a lot easier said than done. It took a lot of planning to work out the blocking order of the cars on the main line freights and in the flat switching yards to minimize switching at the drop off points and many hours to get the operating procedures, written instructions, and diagrams for each location on the layout completed and printed out for each operator. And then came the surprises and obstacles along the way during the debugging process that resulted in multiple revisions to the original documents. But as with all aspects of model railroading, we learn how to do things better the more we do them, and my layout is all the better and more fun because of the decision to do what was necessary to operate it more like a real railroad.

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SIX ISSUES and a copy of each
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**Personal business sized layout ads are available to
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Business:

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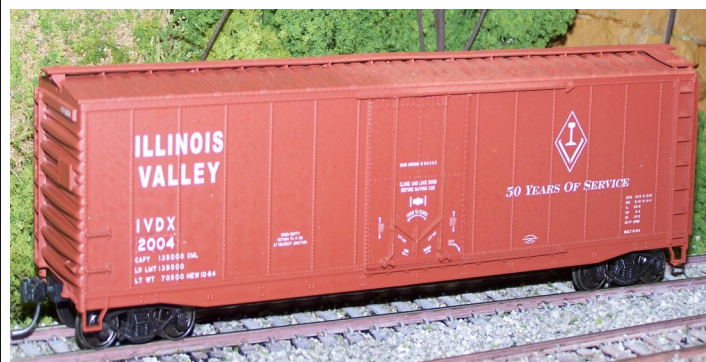
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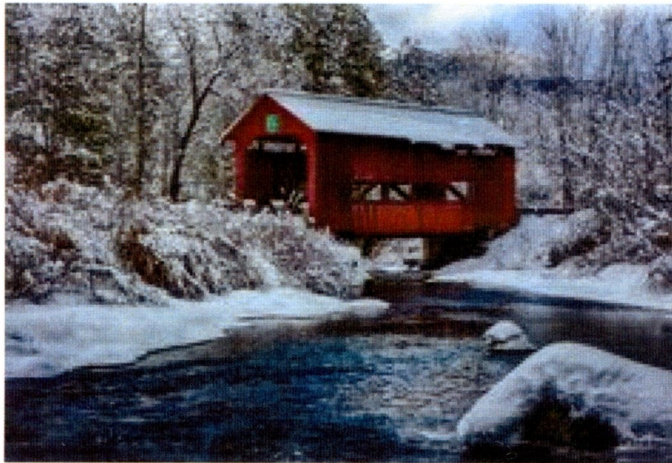
**50TH ANNIVERSARY
BOXCARS AVAILABLE AT
\$10 EACH**

The Fifty Year Anniversary cars are still available. There are now only 39 boxcars left. The cars are for sale at the division meetings and at train fairs. The cost is reduced to \$10.00 each plus shipping. The cost by mail is \$10.00 each plus \$7.50 shipping, or \$10.00 shipping for 2 cars or \$12.50 shipping for 3 or 4 cars. Free decals are available for multiple purchases. The cars are available through Minton Dings at 15548 State Route 78, Havana IL, 62644-6803; telephone 309-241-4504, e-mail greenriverbranch1957@gmail.com (Put IVD CARS in the subject line for easy recognition). **Make checks payable to Minton Dings.** The cost of the cars will be reimbursed to the Illinois Valley Division.



SCRATCHBUILDING A COVERED BRIDGE

by Minton Dings, MMR



Inspiration for a Project

I grew up in New Hampshire, a land of covered bridges. The covered bridge with the longest spans in the United States is located ten miles from my boyhood home between Cornish, NH and Windsor, VT, built in 1866. It is still in use today. It is a Town truss supported 449.5-foot roadway bridge in two spans. Ithiel Town (1784 – 1844) was the inventor and patent holder of this truss design. The Town truss construction is the plan for the bridge in this article, except my bridge is only 70 feet long for what might be obvious reasons. I also wanted it to be constructed in my magnetic squaring jib which limited its length. An exact copy of the prototype would be 5 feet, 3 inches in HO scale and very expensive using commercial scale lumber. Most of the materials for this bridge came from my wood supply.

Wherein the Cornish-Windsor bridge has small windows on the exterior, the bridge in this article has one open exterior window on each side, exposing the inner truss work for most of the length of the bridge. This exterior design is familiar to me as the bridge over the Saco River outside Conway, NH, near a swimming hole in which I often swam as a youth while visiting my great uncle and aunt in the summers. After all,

with the great amount of work which went into building the truss, there should be a means of exposing the truss walls to viewer.

The Conway bridge has an arch design which will be another project which I will figure out later.

List of Materials

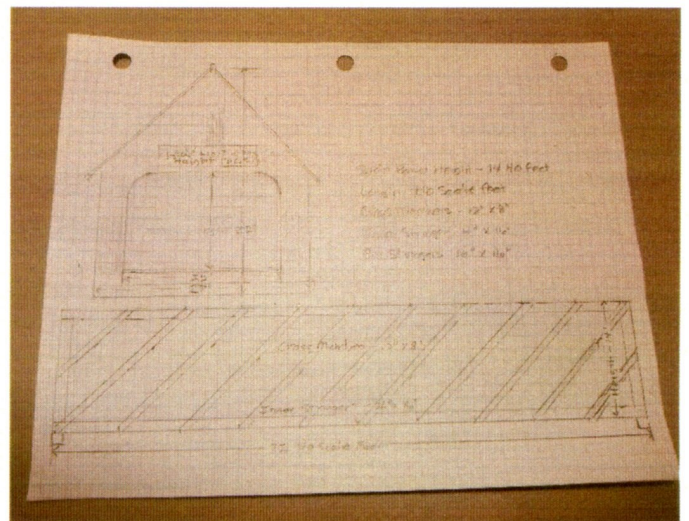
Scale lumber

- 16" x 16," (outer stringers, floor supports, wall frames, upper wall supports)
- 4" x 16," (inner stringers)
- 8" x 12," (cross members, upper wall supports)
- 8" x 16," (floorboards, roof trusses)
- 8" x 8," (roof trusses)
- 1/32 (or 1/16) scribed sheet lumber
- Roof shingles or simulated rolled roofing

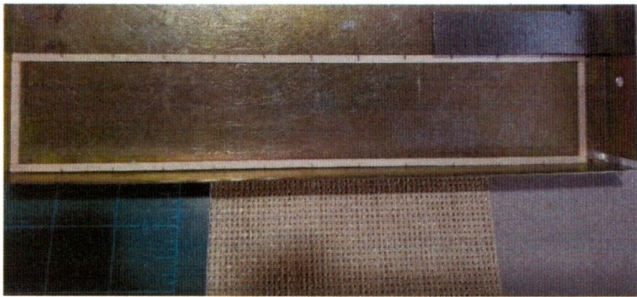
Paint and weathering powders, wood glue

Building the Side Walls

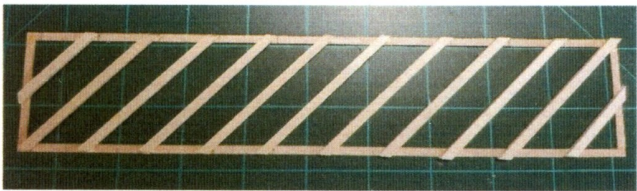
Since this was a scratchbuilding project, I needed to draw a design and pattern, in this case in HO scale. The drawing does not need to be commercial quality, but accurate enough to be reliable. This illustration works well because it will allow the modeler to be able to leave the project and be able to return knowing the plan. This is the simple drawing I used for this bridge.



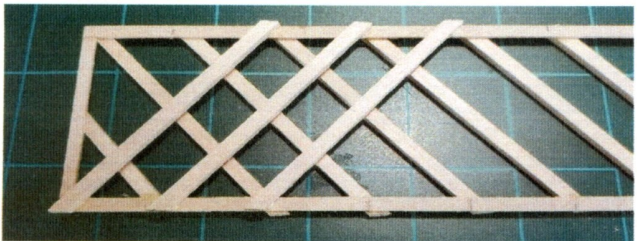
The core of the side walls is a frame of scale 4" x 16," 70' long by 14' high. Each center frame was assembled in my magnetic squaring jig.



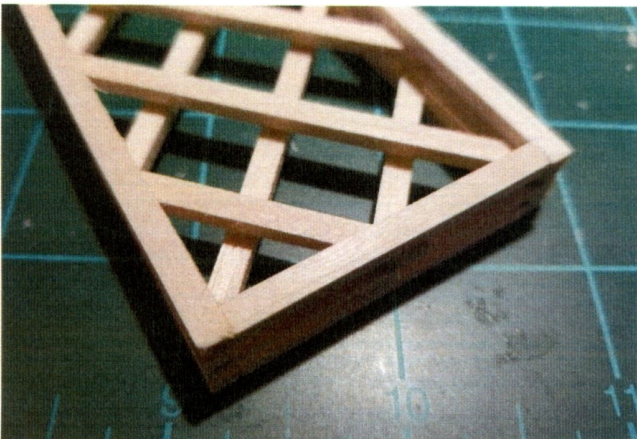
Mark every 7 scale feet along the stringers to location the cross members as shown below.



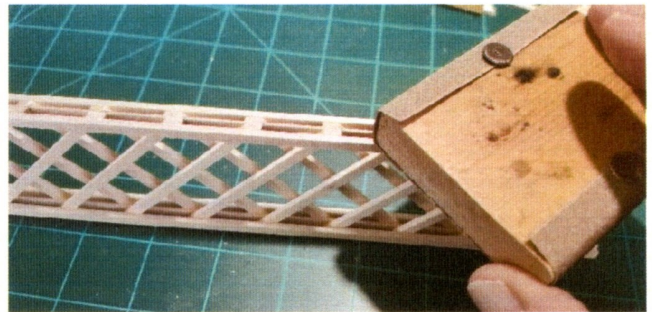
When complete, turn it over and repeat the process on both walls.



When cross members are installed, frame both sides of both walls with 16" x 16" scale lumber,

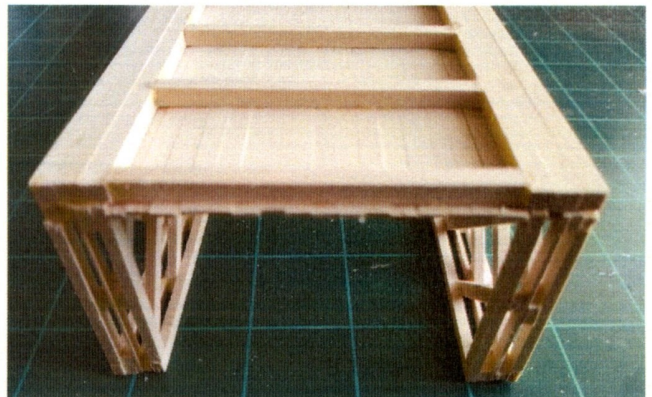
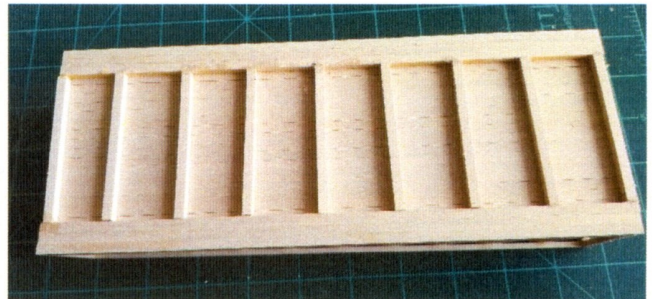


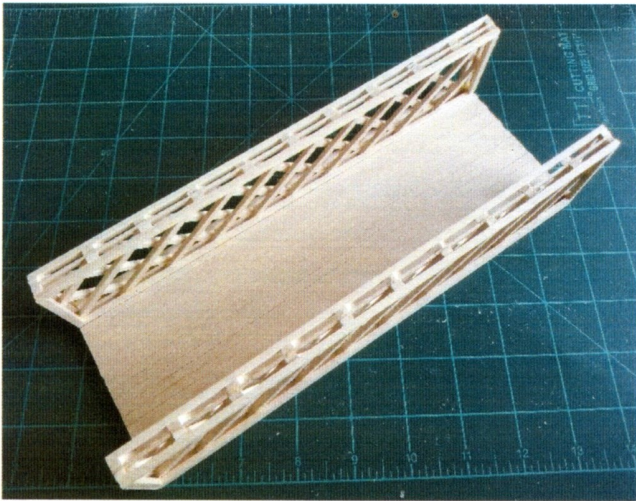
then sand both the bottom and top level. It is important to check it with a square.



Building the Floor

Cut six lengths of 16" x 16" scale lumber 70' long. Glue three together side by side into two sets. These are the support stringers for the walls and edge of the floor. Cut nine 16" x 16" support members 19" long as the floor supports. Glue them equidistant between the support stringers. Be sure all is square. Glue a set of support stringers against one edge of each wall at a 90-degree angle which will support the walls and the edge of the bridge floor. When dry, lay 70 feet of 8" x 16" floorboards. Check for squareness. The result will look as shown on the next page.

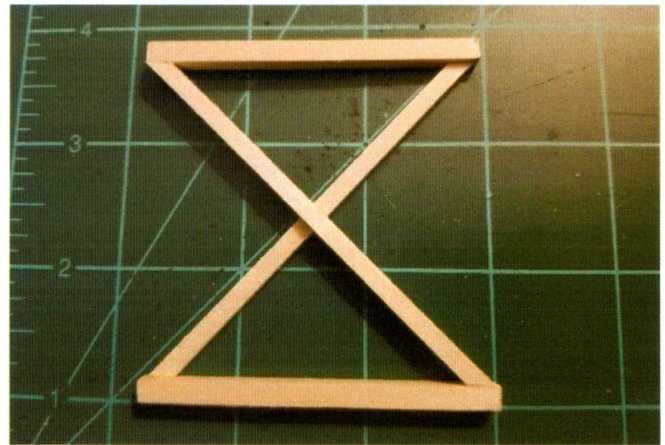




Thus far the work has been with unpainted, unweathered lumber for the sake of ease of following the instructions. The modeler might wish paint or weather the lumber in the process of assembly.

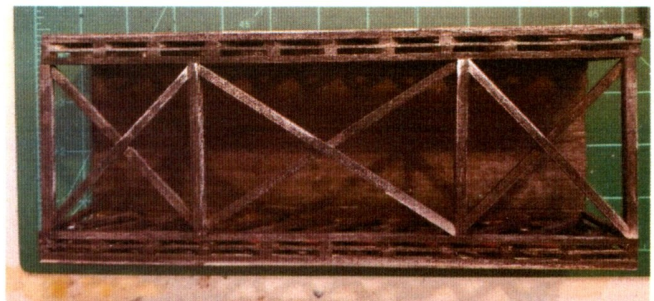
Upper Wall Support

To stabilize the wall structure to loads, the walls are supported by cross braces to prevent collapse inward or movement laterally. For this bridge, 8" x 12" scale lumber was measured slightly longer than the length necessary to cross the span of the inner edge of the bridge walls. The cross members were glued at the center, being sure they are square to each other. The lateral cross members are 16" x 16" scale lumber. Trim these cross pieces to size as shown in the illustration in the top next column.



The cross braces are shown installed below. The center brace was elongated to fit the need. I am not certain this was the right decision, but rather using another cross brace in the middle of the bridge like the end cross braces. I was not able to find information to confirm either choice.

At this point I decided to weather the bridge with India ink and 91% alcohol. Although the right thing to do, I regretted covering the nice clean looking wood.



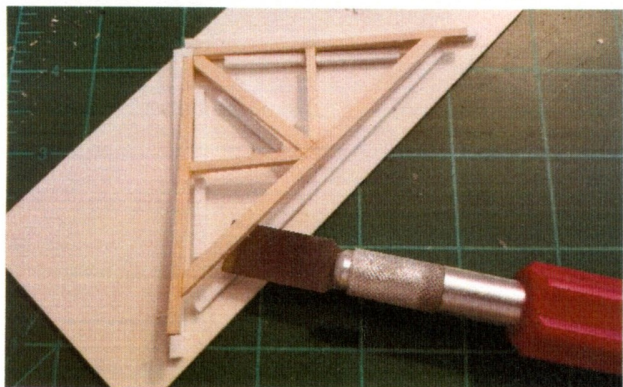
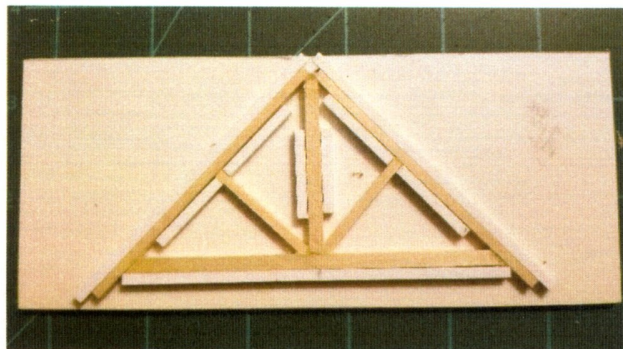
Roof Trusses

There are to be eleven roof trusses which will sit atop the meeting of the wall cross braces. The first truss was fabricated making sure it had equal measurements on both ends. The horizontal board was 8" x 16" as shown. All other parts of the truss were 8" x 8" stock. Once I was satisfied with the truss, I assembled a jig to build ten more identical trusses.

The jig was made from styrene. The idea here is that jigs for wood be made of styrene since wood glue does not make a permanent bond with styrene. Wood glue does slightly tack to the styrene, but the wood can easily be pried from the

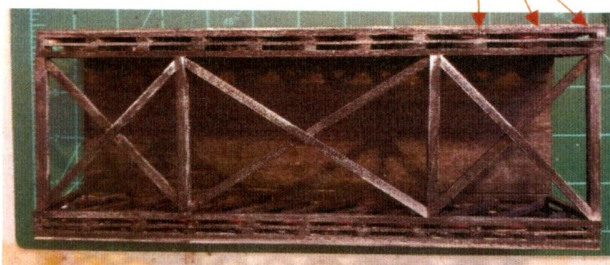
styrene. The opposite is true for making styrene parts. Plastic glues will not bond to wood, making wood a good choice for a jig for styrene. I used "plastic weld" cement to assemble the jig around the first truss. Ten additional trusses were built, allowing enough time for the wood glue to dry sufficient to hold the truss together when removed from the jig.

Notice that there is a notch built into the apex of the jig to allow for the center beam of the peak of the roof to be laid in later.



Carefully prying the completed dried truss from the jig.

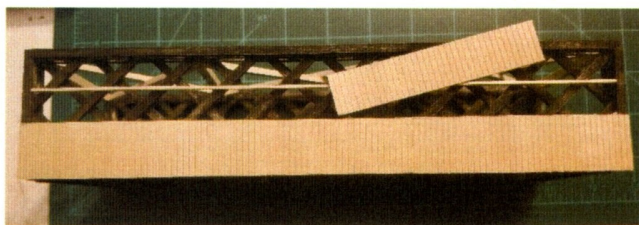
Since the tops of the walls were sanded square earlier the trusses can be set on the wall cross members to dry. There are eleven.



Exterior Side Walls

The exterior side walls of the bridge of which this model is based, the Cornish/Windsor bridge, had small square windows. Deviating from that example, I used the window pattern from the Conway bridge with the cross members exposed the length of the span except for the end five feet. After all, if the modeler has gone to all the work of building the cross members, shouldn't it be exposed for the viewers to see?

The exterior walls were cut from 1/32" scribed sheet basswood. A strip of 4" x 16" strip lumber was cut to attach to the cross members, giving the scribed wall pieces stability. There was no wall covering for the interior walls as is prototypical for most covered bridges.



The Roof

After the trusses were dried in place and the center beam placed, roof was attached. Be sure to cut the center beam so that it extends a bit beyond the end trusses.

I used 1/32 scribed sheet with the board scribing on the inside of the roof which was a mistake. Due to the water-based wood glue used for the simulated rolled roof material, the roof warped and became very evident when painted. I should have used 1/16 sheet.



The rolled roof was strips of 20# white typing paper, which normally works well. I was not happy with the result, but realized that removing the roof might destroy the model beyond repair. So, what to do??

It was obvious that the warped roof was a permanent part of the model. Best now was to hide it from the casual viewer. I applied Bar Mills Scale Models shake shingle roofing as shown below. It too also is applied with wood glues.



When applying strips of shingles, it is helpful to draw parallel lines across the roof surface to keep the strips of shingles aligned.



When aligning the rows of shingles, it is easy to keep the edge from which the strip is started aligned with the edge of the roof. The other edge will always be ragged. Once the strips are dry, the strips can be cut square with a #11 blade, nipping scissors or even rail nippers.

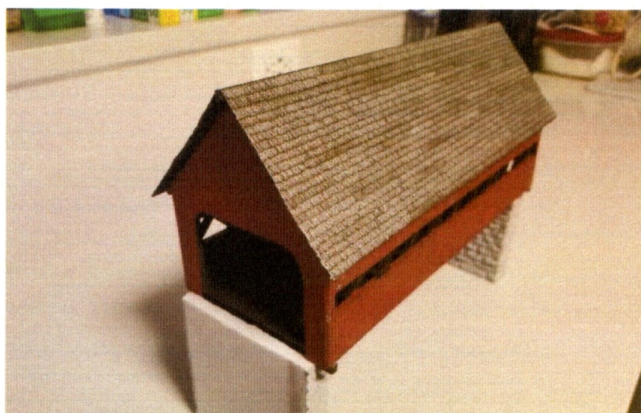
The warp in the roof is still visible to the person who knows the warp is there, but not so much so to the viewer's first look as shown in the following picture.

Considering how this highway bridge might be included in a scene on a model railroad, I purchased two bridge piers and cut them to the



The warp is still obvious to those of us who know it is there, but not so much to the unsuspecting viewer.

height needed. It became obvious to me to add an additional "16 x 16" timber to each end under the leading edges. These timbers might sit directly on the piers but might also sit on bridge shoes which would protect the timber from a more rapid deterioration.



Finished bridge mounted on its abutments and bridge shoes

I found this to be quite a learning experience. It has obvious flaws in the construction. I admit to this to encourage you, the reader, to not be shy about attempting to scratch build a project which interests you. We all are still learning.



As seen above, there is a limit to the use of a covered bridge

Now if there was only a way to show the interior.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MODEL RAILROADERS

Great Midwest Train Show reopened August 8, 2021 at the DuPage County Fair Grounds, Wheaton, Illinois. The show is now scheduled for, Nov. 13 and Dec. 4, 2022 and the first Sundays of 2023 except July. Their website did not list times or admission price. Free parking and handicapped accessible.

31st Annual Chicago Railroadiana and Model Train Show & Sale, Sunday, October 16, 2022, Kane County Fairgrounds, Front Building, 525 South Randall Road, St. Charles, IL, 10 am to 3 pm. Admission \$6.00 and children 12 and under free with an adult.

Trainfest, Saturday and Sunday, November 12 and 13, 2002, Wisconsin State Fair Park, 8200 West Greenville Avenue, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. 15,000 square feet of model railroading layouts, products, manufacturers, hands on activities and demonstrations. For more information, www.trainfest.com.

Model Train Show, Davenport, IA, Friday—Sunday, November 18-20, 2022. American Legion 702 West 35th Street, Davenport. Free Admission and Parking. Handicap Accessible.

North Central Illinois Train Fair & Farm Toy Show, Saturday, November 19, Route 6 West, (811 West Peru Street), Princeton, IL, 9 am to 3 pm. Admission \$5, children 10 and under free. Free parking and handicap accessible.

Peoria Train Fair, Sunday, November 20, 2022, 10 am to 3 pm. Illinois Central College, IL Rt. 24, 1 mile

east of IL Rt. 116, East Peoria, Illinois. Admission: adult donation of \$3.00, children under 12 free with an adult. Free parking and handicap accessible.

St. Charles Model Railroad Club Train Fair 2023, Saturday, January 7, 2023, 10 am to 3 pm, St. Charles West High School, 3601 Droste Road, St. Charles, MO. Admission \$5, children under 12 free.

La Crosse's 30th Annual Great Tri-State Rail Sale, Saturday, January 28, 2023, 9 am to 3 pm, La Crosse Center, 2nd and Pearl Streets, La Crosse, WI. Admission: \$5.00, Child under 12 free.

Mad City Model Railroad Show & Sale, February 18 and 19, 2023, Saturday, 9 am to 3 pm and Sunday, 9 am to 4 pm, Alliant Energy Center, Exhibition Hall, Madison, WI. Admission: Adults—\$14, Family Pack—\$36, Seniors—\$13, Children 5 to 15—\$6, Children under 5 free, Active military—\$11 There is a parking fee. Handicap Accessible.

Model Railroad Garage Sale, Saturday, March 4, 9 am to 2 pm, 4-H Building, Dubuque County Fairgrounds, 14569 Old Highway Road, Dubuque, IA. Admission \$3, children under 12 free. Free parking and handicap accessible.

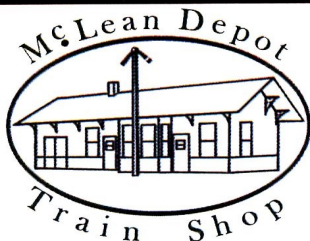
Springfield Railroad Society Train Fair, Sunday, March 12, 2023, 10 am to 4 pm, Orr Building, Illinois State Fairgrounds, Springfield, IL Admission: \$5, Early bird admission at 9 am—\$10. Children under 11 free. Free parking and handicap accessible.

Rockford River Valley Train Show, Saturday and Sunday, March 25 and 26, Harlem High School, 9229 North Alpine Road Machesney Park, IL. Admission: \$5 and free parking.

47th Annual Kane County Railroadiana and Model Train Show and Sale, Sunday, June 11, 2023, 10 am to 3 pm, Kane County Fairgrounds, 525 South Randall Road, St. Charles, IL. Admission \$6, children under 12 free. Free parking and handicap accessible.

Sherman Scale Train Show, Sunday, October 22, 2023, Sherman Athletic Club, 300 South First Street, Sherman, IL. Scale trains only, no toys or collectables. Admission \$5, children under 10 free. Early bird admission at 9 am, \$10 Free parking and handicap accessible.

Western Illinois Model Train Club has moved from Aledo to the former Viola Library located next to the Viola Community Center. The club is looking for new members.



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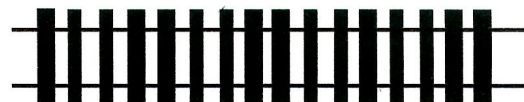
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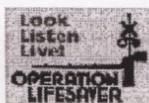
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