



THE TAMR

"the Un-Magazine of Railroading"

no. 150

July-Aug. 1978



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in this issue . . .

Tips on Scenery

ABC's of Model Railroading

TAMR News

Of Prototypical Interest

and much more!!!

NEWS ABOUT A HOT-BOX

We realize that this HOTBOX is a bit late, but we have been having a few problems with the HOTBOX and its staff, mostly with the staff. As you know, Andy Dick quit with the May/June issue as he was going to college and we were without a publisher until Doug Johnson kindly offered to produce the last issue; however, Doug has to go back to college and thus will not be available for any more issues in the near future. This issue is being printed by your Associate Editor until a Publisher can be located. We've had a few inquiries, but if you think you can publish the HOTBOX and have a mimeograph machine or other methods of getting it done, please contact: Mark Kaszniak, TAMR Auditor, 4818 W George St, Chicago, IL 60641.

Gerry Dobey, TAMR Secretary, has consented to the job of Circulation Manager of official publications and this job will then become part of the Secretary's duties unless the Executive Board directs otherwise. No longer should we have the problem of printing up a HOTBOX and having no one to distribute it! Also membership renewals and membership cards will be included with the HOTBOX so this will save us 30¢ per member in postage alone, multiplying that figure by 140 is a big chunk of your dues money that can be directed elsewhere.

As you may have noticed there have been several improvements in the HOTBOX itself, first and foremost is pictures on the cover, we plan to continue this practice as long as we can without draining the TAMR Treasury. Another improvement is in switching to a two column HOTBOX instead of the usual one column, this allows more flexibility with the HOTBOX and uses the available space better and finally we have decided to include a table of contents in the HOTBOX so you can find the article you are looking for faster.

Our editor, Mark Tomlinson, has moved and while he is getting settled in this new place, we request that you send all articles, photos, etc. to the Associate editor whose name and address is listed on the back page. Deadline for the next issue is September 16, 1978. The HOTBOX needs articles on modeling, prototype, layout and cover features as well as

THE TAMR TIMETABLE

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WESTERN REGION

The Western Region of the TAMR is running smoothly thanks to the re-organizational efforts of our President John McGroovy. John has had the region's publication--the DAYLIGHT--out for some time now and if you are interested in joining the Western Region or getting a subscription to the DAYLIGHT or just want to see what's happening Write To: John McGroovy, [Address]

Front Cover: Now we know you haven't been seeing too much Norfolk & Western power due to the strike; therefore, we thought a photo in the HOTBOX might ease the withdrawal pains you've been having. Photo: Doug Johnson Cover Design: MK

HERE are the people to write, if you wish to join a region in the TAMR. All are regions are in need of your support and many have or are planning to have publications of their own. Come on, join your region, they were created to allow members to get together on a more local basis and occasionally they sponsor meets, conventions and railfanning trips. So write today and get involved, you don't know what you're missing!

ALLEGHENY REGION: Ted Bedell, 11 Hilltop Drive, Bayville, NY 11709.

CENTRAL REGION: Don Lesko, Assistant Organizer, 307 E Sixth Street, Pana, IL 62557.

NEW ENGLAND REGION: Ted Tait, NER Rep, 16 Evergreen Drive, Syosset, NY 11791.

SOUTHERN REGION: Glenn Vallantyne,

A NEW COLUMN

You say that you don't like the way the TAMR is being run? You say you don't like the kind of articles the HOTBOX has been printing? You say your region is not providing you with the services it should? Well then, the HOTBOX has a new column which just might interest you. We are introducing a column where you can write in and air your gripes, beefs and belly-aches.

We call this new column NIT/WIT as this will probably be the make up of it. If you want to expound your WIT or just pick some NITs with us, we now have a forum for you to respond to. So don't sit on those problems that have been getting your goat. Tell us. Tell everyone; it'll make you feel better and tell us where we have been slipping up. The policy for this column is simple: You send it in and if we can, we will print it. However, we request that no commercial advertising to appear in this column. Please send all your letters to the Associate Editor for prompt publication.

Of prototypical Interest:

WHO'S GOT A BIGGER PROBLEM

John McGreevy, TAMR President, had an article in a past HOTBOX about the trails and tribulations of moving his pike. If you didn't see the article, I'll tell you that things didn't work out like John figured and the result was what looked like a scale-sized earthquake ravaged his layout.

On August 14, 1978 an earthquake rocked Santa Barbara, CA and in the shaking process an SP locomotive and twenty cars were derailed. A spokesman for the railroad said that several of the cars were "stacked up like dominoes." The HOTBOX would not stoop so low as to comment on this two similar events, instead we simply want to ask two questions: (1) Was the earthquake in CA an aftershock from the one that ravaged John's pike? and (2) Who do you think has the bigger problem?

is the key to a better TAMR and all it takes is a little of your time. You can get involved by writing an article or offering your services to help us out.

OFFICE CAR

First, I wish to express my thanks to our membership for electing me to this position and I have a number of matters that I'd like to comment on. Our Constitutional Board members, Tim Vermande and John Huey, did an excellent job in conducting the last election and I believe they should be commended on it.

Secondly, upon communication with most of our regions, I have ascertained that the TAMR is improving on this level. All of our regions, with the exception of the Canadian Region, have someone that you can write to learn of what's happening. Three regions presently have publications and two others are hoping to have them in the near future.

Thirdly, great steps have been made in the promotion of the TAMR. Carstens Publications has agreed to place an ad in our behalf, free of charge, in Railroad Model Craftsman magazine on a space available basis. Along with our ad in Model Railroader, we should be getting more inquiries for information on the TAMR and the more inquiries we get, the better chance we have of getting more members which will allow us to expand our services to give you even more benefits than before. Our membership prospectus has been revamped and we are now including sample pages from the HOTBOX in with each inquiry; however, we have no extra copies of previous HOTBOXs available as these are just press run extras.

Finally, various means are being worked out to promote the TAMR on a more local basis. If you have any ideas or suggestions that you think we could use, please forward them either to me or the Secretary. This is all I have to say this time, but I will remind you that help is needed, particularly with the HOTBOX and in our regions. We are improving slowly, but we need your help and support! I think that perhaps Dale Madison, former Auditor, summed it up best: "We are only human and have ourselves only a limited amount of time and energy. But we are trying. But it's sometimes a lonely job and we wonder if anyone out there is listening and caring... We don't have a large bankroll, but we do have a lot of people. And people power can outdo money power. anytime--if they really want to. So stick around. It should prove to be interesting."

BACK TO SCHOOL — BACK TO BASICS

It is almost that time of year again to dust off those books and get back to some serious learning; for many of us that also means that we can finally get some work done on that darn layout that has been sitting all summer while we carelessly indulged in other pursuits. By now you are probably bored with watching trains run over your plywood empire and are seriously considering introducing some scenery to your trains. Then too, you might be one of the recent newcomers to our ranks and are wondering how to create realistic scenery. Some TAMR officers and occasionally a member of the HOTBOX staff get letters that read: "How do I go about making scenery? How do I make realistic roads for my pike? I am just starting in model railroading, can you give me a few pointers?" The TAMR aims to please these people and therefore we felt that over the next few issues we might give a general reviewing of some of the basic techniques in model railroading. However, we will also cover some of the newer techniques for the more experienced thus there will be something for everyone. We will also include as a reference, soft cover books and magazine articles which pertain to the topic being discussed just in case you want to pursue the subject in greater detail than the HOTBOX can provide you with in a few pages. To start off this series, we have an article by Gerry Dobey on scenery and one by Doug Johnson on the different scales and model railroad vocabulary. We welcome articles from more experienced modelers on techniques of model railroading that are not covered in these articles. Who knows your technique that has been hidden in your brain may be the answer that someone else is or has been looking for. What good is knowledge if you don't share it with others?

--HAK

NEW ENGLAND REGION

Ted Tait, NER Representative, announces that the New England Region is rolling again and that the NORTHERN is once again being published. If you want to know what is happening in the NER, get a subscription to the NORTHERN, it's only \$2 a year. Come on, show Ted your support!

CREATING REALISTIC SCENERY

by Gerry Dobey

Without the proper scenery on your model railroad, your trains will look just like small toys, or at best, a collection of models until you add a realistic environment for those models to run in. There's no doubt that scenery will scare off many modelers because they think it takes a great artist to create decent scenery. This is not so! Pound for pound scenery is perhaps the cheapest part of creating a model railroad and one of the easiest once you know how to go and do it. Hopefully, after reading this article you will be aware of the basic techniques used in creating scenery and will be able to apply them to your layout. How do you know you can't do it until you try!

GETTING PLASTERED

There are a number of ways to create scenery on a model railroad, but perhaps the best and certainly the most durable involves using plaster. In model railroading, basically two different types of plaster are used, one type to create a strong base and the other which is applied over it to allow the modeler to create the special effects he/she desires. The best type to use for the base is Hydrocal which is made by the U S Gypsum Co and can usually be bought from lime and cement dealers. The other type is molding plaster and it is available at most lumber yards and other places of that sort. If you have trouble locating Hydrocal, molding plaster can be used for the base also, but you might have to apply it a little thicker to obtain maximum support.

Over the years, two basic forms of using plaster to create scenery have emerged. The first involves the use of screen wire and plaster and the second is known as the "hard shell" method. Both give comparable results, so that leaves it up to a matter of personal preference or which techniques you are more comfortable with; however,

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I suggest you experiment with both methods before you decide to adopt ones to be exclusively used on your pike.

Method I: Screen Wire and Plaster

You will need a supply of screen wire, plaster, tacks or small nails and supporting posts. You begin by erecting a shell by nailing screen wire in the shape you desire (i.e. mountains, valleys, river beds, holling hilss, etc) being sure to leave enough slack in the screen wire so you will be able to form small ridges, hills and gulleys. Once this is down, you can mix the plaster until it forms a thick cream solution which will be used to create the base (Hint: By putting the water in first and then adding plaster, you can usually eliminate most of the lumps or bubbles that would occur from doing it the opposite way).

The plaster can then be applied to the screen and it should go on quite nicely; if you feel that the solution is too thick or thin, you can rectify the situation by adding more water or plaster, respectively. After the plaster dries (overnight or longer) you can add a second layer which will be used to create special effects in your scenery. These special features can be done while the plaster is still wet by carving small cracks and ridges with an X-acto or modeling knife. A stiffed hair paint brush is useful for creating the effects of blasted out rock, or crumbling rock slides, by gently brushing the plaster to create a stiffled effect.

METHOD II : Hard Shell Scenery

Plaster, masking tape and plenty of newspapers are the primary ingredients needed to construct this type of scenery, although a few support posts might be needed if you are planning an extensive mountain pike. First, you take some newspaper and crumple it up into wads. By using a number of these wads, either by stacking them or stuffing them between different elevations in your benchwork, you can form the basic shell. After you have the desired shape you want, construct a web of masking tape over the shell to hold it in place. Troublesome pieces of paper can be wetted with water to make then stay in place. Then you take some

more newspaper and cut it into strips about 2" wide and about a foot long. These strips are then dipped into your plaster which has been previously mixed into a soupy consistancy. The plaster should fully coat the paper, but it should not run off to the extent where you can see the paper through the plaster. Then you lay these strips over the shell you have made until it is covered completely. The whole area will look unstable, but after allowing the plaster to dry (5 hours or more) it will become quite hard; hence the name--hardshell. After allowing the first application to dry, you might wish to add a second layer give added strength to certain parts of your scenery or in places where you or visitors would tend to lean on (HINT: When appling a second layer of plaster, wet the first layer with water first so the two will bond together better).

You can now add some more plaster to create the special effects outlined earlier if you desire. If you wish to change an already completed section, a hammer chisel and saw will be needed; the plaster will usually break where you hit it. To create new effects, follow the procedures already outlined being sure to wet adjoining completed plaster before you start. Finally, all those paper wads that are underneath your shell can be removed as they are unnecessary for support and they take up extra space that can be used for other purposes, not to mention a possible fire hazard.

REAL ROCK EFFECTS USING MOLDS AND ROCKS

There are a number of techniques available for texturing scenery (making them look like the real McCoy) and this method uses the actual faces or real rocks to produce the surfaces on your layout. Kinda like photocopying the prototype only in three dimensions. To accomplish this, you must first get some latex mold fluid which will be used to create your own latex molds which will be applied to your pike. These molds can be used over and over again, so the technique can be accomplished with one or two rocks, if you wish. After getting the mold fluid, you must find a nice scale textured real rock. If you can't find one, sometimes coal can be used or manufactures sell rock faces which can be used. (cont'd on 6)

You simply brush the latex (which is in liquid form) onto the rock, being sure to get it in all those little cracks and crevices; to reinforce the latex, I suggest you get some surgical type gauze. After the latex cures, you will end up with a flexible rubber mold which can be peeled off the mold. The mold can be filled up with hardening plaster and pressed against some dry (but wetted down) plaster to create a rock face. After holding for a few minutes, remove it and admire your realistic rock face. The molds can be pressed in still wet plaster to create the same effect. Several different faces can be made by turning the mold at different angles.

Another method used to get almost the same effect is to take some aluminium foil and crumple it up into a loose ball. Then carefully uncrumple it and press it into still wet plaster, the foil will make a pattern of varied intentions in your mountain which will look like a rock face. Cork floats from fishing nets can be broken into chunks to make excellent scale replicas of rock strata and cork roadbed can even be utilized in some cases.

Various other materials, such as pine bark* and even small rocks can be used to create and enhance your mountain's appearance.

PUTTING IN SOME 'ZIP'

Over the years, many articles have appeared on the subject of coloring scenery, but probably the most famous was by Linn Westcott in the April 1965 issue of MODEL RAILROADER (out of print). This issue described Linn's way of "dressing up" that plain old white plaster scenery into a realistic one. His method is called "zip texturing" because it was invented around the time the post office began asking us to put zip codes on our mail and the technique works quite well. Basically zip texturing involves the use of plaster, dyes and dry pigment colors together to form the scenery.

To begin, make sure that the plaster is wetted first before applying dye and use a window spray bottle to cover the uncolored plaster with dye. Dye works better on rough surfaces than it does on smooth ones and it has a definite tendency

to bring to life all those seemingly hidden cracks and ridges. It is good to start with a black dye and tone it down to your liking. After the black has dried, you can use yellow, green and other types. As dye dries, it gets much lighter, so don't be afraid that the black dye will turn out too dark. Yet don't use it full strength either, experiment with different concentrations to see which gives the best effect.

After the dye has been applied and has dried, you are ready to add some type of earth covering. In places you wish to have earth or grass, take a spray bottle filled with a solution of half water, half white glue plus a drop or two of detergent and spray that area. You can use any type of ground cover, but the best known is LIFE-LIKE earth and grass in a box. Next take a small strainer and put some grass (or earth) in it and allow the material to fall from the strainer on the wetted area. A good method of doing this is to tap the strainer with a spoon or other convenient object and as a result a small amount of covering should fall down to the glued area. After it has dried, take a vacuum and get all the loose grass and earth. Some touchup might be necessary in spots, but it is easily accomplished. When you are finished some realistic scenery should result.

Another method of coloring plaster that has been devised is called "Water Soluble Scenery" and its techniques were outlined by Dave Frary and Bob Hayden in the March 1976 issue of RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN. Briefly, their technique involves using flat latex base paint instead of dye. Flat latex wall paint is matched to Folquill RR81 Earth or RR83 Mud and then it is mixed 1:1 with water. When your hardshell has begun to set (not wet, but cool and damp to the touch) the paint is brushed over it about a foot at a time and while the paint is still wet texture material is sprinkled over it; further variations of this technique are covered in the article which is available from RMC for 75¢.

ABOUT THEM ROADS AND HIGHWAYS

After getting the scenery built, many model railroaders want to add details such as roads, sidewalks, retaining walls and overpasses. There are a number of

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*Article by William R Koteles in the Oct 1976 issue of MODEL RAILROADER described the scenery effects pine bark can produce.

techniques available for making them and some depend on the type of road you are making. For instance, if you want a gravel road, ballast from other scales can be used. Plaster and hard shell techniques can be used to make that concrete highway that you want. On most modern highways, driving lanes are at least 12 feet wide and if you are modeling a business or residential section, remember to include sidewalks, curbs and street lights. In the business district or shopping district, sidewalks are at least 10 feet wide and often have trees in little cut out plots. Also remember to leave room on your street for vehicles to park. Those residential sidewalks can be three, four or five feet wide and most have expansion cracks in them.

Some people use furance cement to simulate asphalt roads and this procedure was outlined in the December 1975 issue of MODEL RAILROADER in an article by John Drechsler (if you are thinking of using this method, also see the letter on page 18, March 1976 MR warning against certain types of furance cement). The cement works quite well and if you spread it thin, it will look like a road in need of extensive repair like some country roads in central Indiana. If you don't want to rebuild this area, put a construction crew on the scene.

If you are going to have tunnels on your layout, you should look into the different types of portals that are available and consider the possibilities of putting retaining walls near the tunnel also. These two things can add to the overall appeal to your mountain.

TREES AND FOLIAGE

Many types of ready built trees and shrubs are available at your hobby shop, but if you plan to use a large amount of foliage on your layout, this can get expensive. Realistic trees can be made from lichen (pronounced LIKE-en) attached to nails with a little bit of plaster around them. Another method used is to take several strands of wire and twist them together to form the trunk and cover that with plaster and attach lichen for the leaves. Be sure to clump trees in natural looking groups; if you are using evergreens put them in groups of three, as this is how this type of tree grows. Lichen can also be attached to your pike directly to

represent small scrubs.

A popular techniques now being used is to buy trees for up front and easily viewable areas, make you own trees for the medium distance areas and use lichen supported underneath by screen or mesh in background areas where just the tree tops are visible.

This ~~then~~ brings to a close this article on scenery and I hope that you will try some of the methods outlined here and I hope the results look like realistic scenery. Finally, don't be afraid to scenik your pike because you don't think you don't have the talent or can't even draw a straight line. Remember, Mother Nature never heard of a straight line and anyone can produce acceptable looking scenery.

A good reference book on the subject of scenery is Scenery for Model Railroads by Bill McClanahan. This book covers in detail the Screen wire technique, the Hard Shell method, zip texturing, trees and shrubs, modeling water, those little details and backdrops. The book is available from Kalmbach Publishing, Department 3190, 1027 N Seventh Street, Milwaukee, WI 53233 The price is \$4.50.

Of Prototypical Interest:

N&W TRIES RUNNING TRAINS (Without crews)

An unattended locomotive traveled 40 miles around Melvindale, MI before N&W officials diverted it to a siding where it slammed into ten boxcars and promptly stopped. It seems someone slipped into N&W's Oakwood yard and started the diesel on its solo journey to Milan, a southwest suburb of Detroit. The incident may be related to the monthlong strike against the N&W according to investigators. I think the N&W was probably trying to see if the railroad would run better without employees and they found out that starting the engines was no trouble, but stopping them was a definite problem. Chalk up another cost saving idea for the railroad whose colors are black and white and are desperately trying to stay away from that most dreaded color of them all -- red!

Have any interesting prototype news?
Then send it in!

CHECKS AND BALANCES AN IMPORTANT MEMO

As it states in the TAMR Constitution: "A report on the finances should be made periodically in the official publication" and our Treasurer all too eager to operate according to the Constitution has supplied the following figures for your perusal.

TAMR TREASURY REPORT

June 16 to August 15

Previous Balance	+101 30
Income	+163 00
Expenses	-121 61
New Balance	+142 69

Then send it in!

SOUTHERN REGION

The HOTBOX has some good news for you members who live in the Southern Region, Glenn Vallantyne is now the re-organizer of your region and he is trying to get something going for you. Glenn says that plans are being made to start a regional publication, but much help is still needed. If you want to help your region get back on its feet again, I suggest you write to: Glenn Vallantyne, SR Representative, 817 Robison, Pasadena, TX 7506 and offer your services. Who knows, before you know it the SR could be out with a new publication, possibly with news of a future meet in your area!

CENTRAL REGION

It seems that almost all of our regions are coming back to life and the Central Region is no exception. Don Lesko has been appointed Assistant Organizer and is making plans to get the region back together once again. The last time the region had a publication was in 1974, but Don says that just might change in the near future. Presently the only active part of the Central Region is the Lake Shore Railfan Protection District (formerly the Chicago Division), but other segments of the region want to be active also. Don is trying to get all these segments together to revive the Central Region, if you wish to write him to offer your services or see how things are going, here is his address: Don Lesko, 307 E Sixth Street, Pana, IL 62557.

The TAMR Executive Board on September 1, 1978 unanimously approved an increase in the dues structure of the TAMR. The Changes are as follows: Regular Membership (under 21): \$5 00 per year Associate Membership (over 21): \$4 50 per year. All members are entitled to all rights and privileges as outlined in the TAMR Constitution. If you hold a valid membership in the TAMR, you will not be required to pay the increased rate until your renewal time. All those who join the TAMR after 9-1-78 will be required to pay the increased rate.

The TAMR Executive Board felt the increase will necessary for a number of reasons; first and foremost was that of inflation. Since our last increase two years ago, some materials have risen as much as 50% and since the postal increase, it now costs us more to send this HOTBOX to you. The new rate and the extra money it provides the TAMR will be used mostly in providing you with photo pages for the HOTBOX. We hope to provide a photo in every issue as well as some interesting articles also.

Ray Hakim says that the increase will mean that you will be paying an average of 17¢ more per HOTBOX and isn't 17¢ worth a photo page? We think it is! We will undoubtedly lose some members because of this increase, but we feel that we owe those who remain with us the best product we can provide with time, money, people and resources available to us. We feel that in the long run a better HOTBOX and TAMR will result from this increase.

ALLEGHENY REGION

With all this news of other regions riviving, we felt that the HOTBOX owed a little publicity to one that never folded. The Allegheny region is the one I am speaking of and their publication the DIPATCHER is going great guns. To find out more about the Allegheny Region and the DISPATCHER write to: Ted Feldman, 311 Balltop Drive, Bayville NY 11709.

INTRODUCTION TO MODEL RAILROADING

Having been in model railroading for almost eight years, I no longer consider myself a beginner; although it's hard to say exactly when I decided I had crossed the barrier between "beginner" and "advanced" status. Anyway, since the TAMR has been getting a large number of beginners, I hope this column will be useful.

One of the first things you have to decide in this hobby is what scale you will model. In many cases (such as mine), this will be decided for you when you receive that trainset or the equivalent for your birthday or at Christmas. You will probably be happy with this for some time, but you should also leave yourself open to the options that other scales provide. Don't be afraid to get rid of your equipment (though and ad in the HOTBOX?) and start over again in another scale if you feel that it suits your interests better. Of course, you may want to scratchbuild in one scale and build your layout in another.

The scales in use today are, in increasing order of size, Z, N, TT, OO, HO, S, O and live steam (many sizes--usually specified as a fraction of an inch per foot of the prototype, e.g. $\frac{1}{4}$ " live steam). Of these scales, Z ($1/220$) is the smallest and the newest of the scales. Equipment and supplies are limited in this scale and most materials come from the German firm, Märklin. As this is a new scale, you might want to wait until more material becomes available before deciding to model in it.

N scale, $1/160$, is the next biggest scale and it is currently the second most popular model scale. If you wish to create overall scenic effects and have long trains in a minimum amount of space--N scale is probably your bet bet; quite an empire can be built on that $4 \times 8'$ piece of plywood. In certain areas, such as craftsman kits and decals, selection is severely limited, but there is an excellent selection in most other areas, especially in ready to run equipment.

TT and OO are both older scales which are pretty much out of use now, although some track and a few ready to run cars can be found; however, you will probably have to scratchbuild everything else yourself.

HO scale ($1/87$) is presently the most popular model railroading scale and it is large enough to permit a fair amount of detail, but small enough to allow a fairly long mainline to fit into your average basement. There is a wealth of ready to run and craftsman kits in this scale and a good number of scratchbuilding and detail parts also. If you are undecided on a scale, pick HO as it will be the easiest to resell if you decide another scale suits your interests better.

S scale ($1/64$) has been nicknamed the scratchbuilder's scale because of its size and the lack of ready to run equipment. However, American Flyer trains can be converted into S and there has been a definite improvement in the amount of materials that can be had in this scale.

O scale ($1/48$) is perhaps the oldest scale in existence and if you like to superdetail your equipment then you might be interested in O scale. Its size limits the amount of track you can have, unless of course you have a really big basement at your disposal. Ready to run equipment is available, altho somewhat limited and expensive.

Live Steam and so-called garden size equipment would probably be fun, but you practically need a machine shop to build the equipment, not to mention money. Small amusement park railroads are probably the best example of what live steam can be turned into, but there are a number of places around the country which have extensive layouts outdoors where equipment can be run on.

In addition, there is also tinplate models which consists mostly of Lionel and other such equipment. Lionel is not considered scale because the models are not made in standard decreased size from the prototype and because the equipment operates from a third rail which is in between the two running rails.

In addition to the basic scales, there is also the narrow gauges such as On3, HO $n2\frac{1}{2}$ (or HO $n30$), Sn2, etc. The small 'n' in the term means narrow and the number after it means the width between the rail heads, so On3 would mean O gauge narrow with a spacing of three feet between the railheads (normal distance between the rails is $4' 8"$). cont'd on 10

The relative size of buildings, trees and people does not change in narrow gauge; just the size of the track and equipment. HO $\frac{1}{2}$ (HO $\frac{1}{2}$ 30) is an example of a narrow gauge which never had a prototype, but it is popular among modelers because it allows the use of N scale track and trucks in HO. Narrow gauge railroads were abandoned years ago so most narrow gauge modelers model old time equipment.

If you are a new modeler, you will probably find many of the terms in this hobby confusing at first; I will now explain some of the terms used in this article and some that weren't. Prototype refers to the real thing, what you are supposedly making a model of, it is also known as 12" to the foot scale. Scratchbuilding means "building from scratch" as opposed to putting together a kit. Actually, very few persons build completely from scratch. Commercially made plastic shapes, styrene, scribed wood, cast details, motors and trucks can be utilized for a model and it still can be considered scratchbuilt.

Kitbashing (sometimes called crosskitting) refers to taking two kits either the same or different and combining them in ways the manufacturer had not intended thus making a distinct model for your pike. Tinsplate refers to toy trains as opposed to scale models; generally this term now applies to older toy trains because the differences between the two in recent years has somewhat diminished.

The fraction after the different scales in this article refers to the scale's relationship to the prototype. For example, HO scale is 1/87 the size of the prototype or to put it a different way, it takes 87 HO boxcars placed end to end to equal the length of one prototype boxcar.

The terms layout and pike refer to the plan of a model railroad or the model railroad itself these terms are used frequently because they are shorter than the two words model railroad.

A craftsman Kit refers to a kit which contains all the necessary materials for you to construct the model, but you usually have to cut the materials to size and make openings for windows, doors, etc for your self.

Ready to Run means that you can take it out of the box and place it directly on your layout without putting together any materials at all.

Detail parts are parts you can buy which you can add to a kit to make it resemble the prototype more closely.

Cast detail parts refer to detail parts that were cast from some type of metal as opposed to those that are made from plastic.

Styrene is a plastic used in model railroading to build railroad cars and structures. It is usually bought in white sheets and comes in a variety of thicknesses.

Cardstock is a tough form of cardboard which is also used to create models and such; however, because it is very thin it is used to fashion very thin parts such as wooden stairways on the back of a building. Cardstock can not usually be bought from a supplier, but ordinary file cards and cardboard from store bought shirts are the two materials generally utilized when some is needed.

MEMBERSHIP FIGURES: Gerry Dobey, TAMR Secretary

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP (8-20-78): 140

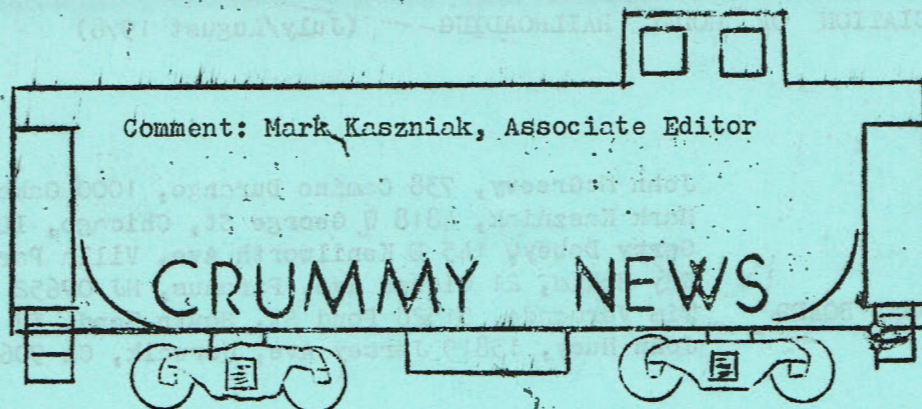
Breakdown as follows:

<u>Region</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Allegheny	31	22%
Canadian	9	6%
Central	54	38%
Overseas	1	.7%
Southern	14	10%
Western	19	13%

All renewal notices and membership cards will be sent along with your HOTBOX this procedure will not only save the TAMR time, but money also. Those who did not receive the Nov/Dec 1977 issue of the HOTBOX are to inform the Secretary when your renewal notice comes and your membership will be extended one issue. This offer does not apply to those who have joined the TAMR after Dec 1977.

Of Prototypical Interest:

Santa Fe has once again won the Harriman Award for being number one in employee safety among America's railroads. The award was established in 1913 by E H Harriman's widow and out of the last six awards given, the Santa Fe has won five. Our congratulations are extended to the Santa Fe and its employees!



STATE OF THE ART AND SWITCH MACHINES

"State of the art" is a term used to describe the advancements made in a particular profession or hobby over the years. Compared to earlier model railroaders, we have it pretty good in this hobby. Where they had to scratchbuild, we can buy ready made; where they devoted all their time to model building, we can develop all aspects of a railroad in miniature, right down to the fine details. Yet how far have things really advanced?

I will admit that great advances have been made in the area of control of our railroads because we have utilized the new advances in the electronics industry; transistors, diodes, integrated circuits and even computers can be used to better run our railroads. Yet Linn Westcott's book, How to Wire your Model Railroad, is still considered by many the bible of model railroad control and the last time it was updated was 1959.

This brings us to the subject at hand—switch machines. Why switch machines? Because they show us how little model railroading has really advanced over the years. Look in the model magazines, you will notice that every year someone comes up with a new idea on how to control track switches. Still the search continues for the perfectly designed and affordable switch machine. Now various model railroad track producing companies make excellent switch machines for their track switches, except for one problem—they are mounted on the switch in plain view. If you don't mind an ugly piece of plastic along side your track switches, you probably won't notice them after awhile, but wait until you have visitors over! This will be one of the first things they point out to you. Yet no matter what anyone says, you can pursue this hobby in whatever way you wish and that includes viewable switch machines.

However, many are quite conscience of their presence and have devised ways of hiding them. This not only includes camouflaging, but in extreme case even burial.

Perhaps the only reason why the perfect unsightly switch machine hasn't been invented is because you have too many varieties to choose from. If you look thru the various catalogs, you will undoubtedly find several brands available along with several different types of linkages. If these do not suit you, you can build your own from anything ranging from bits of wire to springs to electric motors to relays; all have been used. Of course, if you wish to be prototypical, the points have to move s-l-o-w-l-y, not at 100 mph.

In fact, sometimes the procedures for making your own machines can be as complicated as wiring a super sophisticated transistor throttle with momentum and braking features. Articles show how to build machines using surplus parts and the only trouble with that is—you can not find the parts the author used, rendering his excellent article worthless. Consequently, in my opinion, a switch machine/track switch lobby should be formed to make track producers come up with a machine that can be attached to the switch and placed in the roadbed. The procedure should be so simple that a child of four could do it, for some of our more experienced modelers, and it should work 100% of the time. Oh yes, one more thing, the cost should be easy on the pocketbook. I know these are strict standards, but we have to fight for quality these days. Now I ask you, how far has model railroading advanced, when we can't even come up with a universal switch machine for all scales? If we can do it for couplers, why not for switch machines?

OFFICERS:

PRESIDENT John McGreevy, 738 Camino Durango, 1000 Oaks, CA 91360
 AUDITOR Mark Kaszniak, 4818 W George St, Chicago, IL 60641
 SECRETARY Gerry Dobey, 145 E Kenilworth Ave, Villa Park, IL 60181
 TREASURER Ray Hakim, 21 Clauss Ave, Paramus, NJ 07652
 CONSTITUTIONAL BOARD Tim Vermande, 51528 Pond St, South Bend, IN 46637
 John Huey, 13819 Jersey Ave, Norwalk, CA 90650

HOTBOX STAFF:

EDITOR Mark Tomlinson, 1622 S Wabash, Wabash, IN 46992
 ASSOCIATE EDITOR Mark Kaszniak, 4818 W George St, Chicago, IL 60641
 PUBLISHER
 CIRCULATION Gerry Dobey, TAMR Secretary

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For further information on membership rates contact the Secretary.

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 145 E Kenilworth Ave
 Villa Park, IL 60181

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