

North Atlanta O-Gauge Railroad Club



The Monthly Newsletter of the North Atlanta O-Gauge Railroad Club

Issue #10- October 2009

Hobby Town Update

Follow the progress of the NAOGRRC layout at Hobby Town USA in Kennesaw, GA.

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Marty the repairman at Trainz gives us an inside look.

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Basics of Airbrush Weathering

Club member Eric S explains how to do weathering with an airbrush.

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Holiday Party Information

Reserve your spot at the NAOGRRC Holiday Party.

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Meeting Minutes

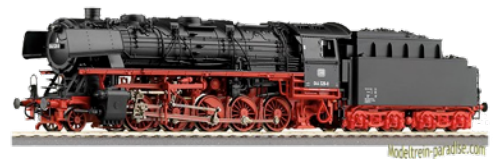
Just in case you missed the meeting, all of the minutes from the meeting are here.

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Calendar

Keep up to date on what the NAOGRRC is doing in the next few weeks.

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Benefits of Home Layout Visits

This past meeting, we met at a club member's home for the monthly business meeting. Curt and Max hosted the event and members had time to discuss their layouts as well as attend to club business.

Having the meeting at a club member's home allows the members to socially interact in a different manner, because the track, the trains and the scenery are right there. Some members brought their own engines to run on Max's layout.



October meeting hosted by Curt and Max

Members who are new to building layouts were able to ask specific questions about transformers, track plans, scenery and artificial water.

Max's and Curt's layouts are finished, but this still is a good way to see how your layout could look.

Unfinished or in progress layouts will also be helpful for members to see, as they will show the progression of construction from the basics to the completed look.

Lastly, the relaxed environment of a home meeting was a welcome change for all the members.

Future home meetings will occur in January and April. Our yearly Spring Tour of Layouts will be another opportunity for members to view several member layouts in a single day.



Hobby Town Layout Update

Thanks for all who have come regularly. Lots of progress. Within 2 sessions we almost have one side ready for grass and shrubs. Tremendous transformation on the layout. We have lots of goals before the Piedmont Pilgrimage next month. We still need lots of scenery work. This Saturday will be a work session and every Saturday until then. Tuesday before the Piedmont Pilgrimage will be dedicated to clean up and making sure every thing is in working order for the tour. If you want to run a train on the layout for the tour, come on that Tuesday to set up your train on the DCS or TMCC. With limited area inside the depot, the only people allowed inside will be those running trains (probably the electrical team). All other members will be able to answer questions from outside the depot. Track will be cleaned that night using the Club's track cleaning car without chemicals. Then Bill will follow up with his Bestine track cleaning car.

See the last page of this newsletter for a work calendar.



Dean's scenery work

Featured Columns

Wisdom, advice, ideas and history in monthly columns.

REPAIRS ARE SUCH FUN!

by Marty from Trainz

Several weeks ago I had the opportunity to meet with some of the key folks at the North Atlanta "O" Gauge Club here at Trainz in Buford, GA. We had met several years before at a Train Show and I was working at the time as a Sales Rep for Z-Stuff for Trains. I was invited to come in and do a presentation on switch machines, relays, signals, etc., had a great time and met some really nice people.

Shortly thereafter, I met Scott G. Scott gave me an order for a multitude of Z-Stuff and also sent me home with several ZW transformers and a few gantry cranes to repair. My dad ran my first layout when I was 7 years old and it was graced with a Lionel 2353 Super Chief set. This eventually led to more and more lights, signals, trains and accessories for the following 5 years. Then he passed away and I was left to figure out how to get them up and running on my own. I'd built a lot of airplane models as a kid and when I got out of the Marines I used the GI bill to enroll in a Bell & Howell electronic tech course. This was sponsored by 'Heathkit' - a company once famous for its short wave radios, stereos, etc., as kits. Well, I built their 25" solid state color TV - wow - worked the first time too! So, this meant I could follow directions, solder and tell the difference between a resistor, transistor and diodes. So when Scott gave me those things to fix, along with parts and a Repair Manual I was in Hog Heaven!

I've been doing repairs for him ever since which now include attending MTH & Lionel's (recent) tech schools. Over the past several years I've probably fixed hundreds of everything. Although to be honest, I kinda shy away from Prewar and "G" Gauge stuff. So, the guys asked me to write an article about life as a train repair service tech for the club monthly newsletter. I said fine but can I write anything I want. "Sure," they said. I said, "How about the 10 things I hate?" Blank stares!!! More blank stares. But then someone said, "We're sure if you do it, it'll be OK."

1) EVERYONE READS THE MANUAL - DON'T THEY?

I spend a considerable time on the phone speaking to customers and train buffs from all over the country looking for help. After all, if something weren't broken or didn't work out

of the box I wouldn't have a job. But let's face facts, sometime we just can't wait to put our new loco on the track and fly it now. Lionel, MTH, Atlas and many other manufacturers today put out a fantastic variety of units - old and new. Some use batteries; others must have batteries and some of them use different batteries. TMCC, Legacy, Protosound 1.0 and 2.0, Command Base, Cab 1, DCS, TIU and ZW transformers - if I sometime have an issue with one during a repair I can empathize with a customer calling me for help when they can't get it to run. The MTH Manual on PS1.0 units is typically 36 pages. When I try to imagine what a problem could be it becomes obvious when someone didn't take the time to read the manual. To their credit most manufacturers have done a great job to simplify things. But often it becomes obvious when a frustrated customer hasn't opened to page 2. When you ask someone if they got 2 dings on a PS1 startup, or, calibrated a new ZW with the command base disconnected and they go "Huh?" you know you have to be patient and gently, firmly, assertively coerce them to go back and please, pretty please read the manual and try again.

2) SO, YOU NEED TO ORDER A PART?

There's the phone - I say, "Hi, this is Marty." They want to order a part. OK. What's the part number? Hmmmmm, "I really don't know" it's the thing that looks like a thing that goes onto a thing. Rrrrrriiiight. I could go on here but won't. Sometime when talking with Lionel and I need a part and there's no parts breakout on their website, I say the same thing. Having said this, everyone should know that the majority of parts for Lionel Postwar are available in the always famous repair manual. The same is true for many modern parts in the Modern version of the repair manual. Lionel's website also has many, but not all parts breakouts for current models. This also includes MTH's website as well. There are also several unique parts suppliers with similar websites including pictures and parts numbers. Trainz.com website has a parts section with a search engine that will pull up many parts by typing a word description into the search engine. On occasion, there's just no data. All I would ask is that when you order a part, please try to do as much research as possible so that you can help us to help you.

Tips 3-10 from Marty in the November and December Issue.

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Wisdom, advice, ideas and history in monthly columns.

The Basics of Airbrush Weathering

By: Eric Siegel

Part 1: Equipment

The key to successful weathering of any item in your train collection is LAYERING. Airbrush weathering is often used as the first step in this layering process. Using an airbrush, you can fade the brand-new look of a model (to duplicate the effects that the sun and the elements has on a prototypical piece of equipment) as well as add some general dirt and grime to the unit. Once you've airbrushed the model, the next steps involve using chalks and powders (as Bill D. has shown all of us), accurate application of rust and peeling paint (when appropriate) and then the model is usually finished off with a color wash. Keep in mind that this layering process does NOT have to be done all at once and that you can add the layers of weathering to your models as your skills improves and you master each weathering technique. In other words, you can airbrush weather your trains and they will look great, and then you can come back later and add more layers to enhance the look of the model. Airbrush weathering is a solid foundation for any weathering you may wish to do, and it doesn't take much practice to become adept at the skill. In this multi-segment article I will be covering the basics of airbrush weathering.

The two main components that are essential for airbrush weathering are an airbrush and an air compressor. When it comes to buying airbrush equipment for weathering your trains, you need to bite the bullet and buy quality gear. Trying to save a little money by buying cheaper equipment can be a disaster for your trains, not to mention the fact that you will only end up spending more money when you decide to trash to cheap stuff and go get the quality equipment you should have bought in the first place. I made this mistake myself, so I know what I'm talking about. Do it right from the start and spend the extra money on high quality airbrushing equipment. While the initial outlay of cash for good airbrushing equipment is a bit steep, the good side is that, if properly maintained, your airbrush gear will last many, many years with only minimal maintenance costs.

First, let's talk about the airbrush. Avoid the temptation to go out and buy a \$50 all-in-one airbrush starter kit. These kits are designed for more general airbrushing needs and are not capable of producing the finely detailed work needed to weather your trains. Plan to spend between \$100-200 on a quality airbrush. There are many great brands on the market, but my personal favorite is Iwata. I bought an Iwata Eclipse



BCS at Hobbytown and it set me back about \$120. It's perfect and I highly recommend it. If you can't find the Eclipse BCS, any other models in the Eclipse series are also excellent. Whatever brand you decide to go with, there are few suggestions I have for what to look for. Keep in mind that these suggestions are based on my personal opinions and you may very well get different advice from other people. First, make sure your airbrush is "double-action" and not "single-action". Second, try to get an airbrush that has a "gravity feed" and not one that has a "siphon feed". Lastly, make sure your airbrush has a fine tipped needle around 0.35mm in size. If the terms I just used have you confused, talk with the guy who works in the airbrush section at HobbyTown and will be able to explain what I'm talking about. Alternatively, if you attend one of my airbrush weathering classes I will be dissecting the airbrush and explaining everything.

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The Basics of Airbrush Weathering: continued

The second component in airbrush weathering is the air compressor. Some of you may already own a shop compressor. In that case, just make sure that you have a pressure regulator that can keep the pressure at about 35PSI and you should be fine. If you don't own an air compressor, there are many hobby compressors on the market. From my experience, the best brands for hobby compressors are either Iwata or Badger. I personally own an Iwata Silverjet series compressor that I bought at Hobbytown for around \$170. I like the the silverjet because it's compact, maintenance free and it also has a pressure regulator and pressure gauge built in. If you want my recommendation, I suggest the Silverjet. Just like the airbrush, spend the extra money on a quality compressor the first time around. One final and very critical point on compressors is that whatever compressor you buy, make sure that you equip yours with a moisture trap. A moisture trap helps to eliminate any water from the compressed air so that you end up with nice dry air coming out of your airbrush. In Georgia, where it's very humid, a moisture trap is a necessity and without one you will almost certainly get water in your line and therefore water coming out of the airbrush along with the paint. This can be a disaster, ruining an otherwise perfect weathering job...so do yourself a favor and make sure you've got a moisture trap attached to your air line.

In the next segment of this how-to, we'll go over the types of paint that can be used in an airbrush. Stay tuned! If there is enough interest, I will be holding a series of workshops on airbrush weathering. If you think you'd be interested in something like that, let me know at eric@ericstrains.com



We will be holding our Party on Saturday December 12th 2009 at Mountain View Community Center at 3400 Sandy Plains Rd in Marietta Ga. 30066 from 11am - 3pm

Adults (18 years old and over) \$15 each and Children will be FREE.

There will be Pizza, Chicken Parmigiana, Sausage and Peppers, Eggplant Parmigiana, BBQ Pork. Garden Salad, Soda, Sweet Tea, Coffee, Milk and Cake.

We will be serving food from 12:00 noon-1:00 pm. If you cannot be there for this time please let Les know and we will put food aside for you. We will be doing the prize raffling at 1:30 pm. Our Local Hobby Shops will be supplying some raffle prizes. Our Children's Travelling Layout will be there, so if you want to run a train feel free to bring it along.

Please Do The Following:

**E-Mail Les that you are
GOING or NOT GOING
by November 10th.**

A Commitment is needed to order the food.
Send a Check or Money Order. Pay to the
order of

Les L.

616 Pine Way

Dallas, Georgia 30157

Include \$15 for each Adult in your group

Also say how many Children
will be with you.

Please send check to Les by
November 22 2009

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

10/15/09 7:00 PM

Members attending: 12

Curt's Treasurer's report

HobbyTown update-page 2

Piedmont Pilgrimage- We should always wear our club shirts when we go see tour layouts or host our own layout so that we are promoting our club and so guests know whom to ask for information. This is the second year for the Hobbytown Layout on the day after Thanksgiving. Bill is suggesting that we change the date of the tour for next year. The area around the Mall is crazy with traffic on that day and HobbyTown doesn't really like it on that day. It might be a better draw for HT on a different day. We will display the digital picture frame showing the development of the layout on tour day.

Eric's- Oct 31 st, 12-5- he may need some help also. Contact Eric.

Rick and Cookie- Nov 8, 1-5

Bill- Nov 21st, 10-5, Bill could use a couple of people to help for a few hours each.

Club- Nov 27th, Friday after Thanksgiving 10-2. We will be able to get in at 9am. Please ask Bill and Ron about signing up to help.

Oct 31st- next Lionel Part order. Email Les if you need anything.

Thanks to Curt for hosting today. In addition to completed layouts, members would like to see layouts that are in progress, because they can ask questions about how to create things, the wiring, and see the substructure, etc. November and December meetings will be at HT, taking volunteers for the January meeting at a home.

Next meeting on 11/19/09 with ' Business Meeting' at 7:00 pm- don't forget.

Holiday Party

Dec 12th is the Holiday Party at Mt View CC- \$15 a person, no charge for children under 18. 11am-3pm. Will have a raffle. We will also have the Children's Layout running. Les needs to know how many are coming. Send the checks to Les for the dinner reservation and then also the raffle. If you have any ideas on items to raffle or have contacted someone for a donation, please contact Les.

Upcoming Shows

Nov 21-22- Norcross- GTE Expo- David will need people
Ask Dave if you need a T shirt.

Dec 5th- TCA- Southern Poly-Dave will need people to help

C A L E N D A R

18	19	20 6-9 PM Work @ at Hobby Town 	21	22 6-9 PM Work @ at Hobby Town 	23	24 10 AM-2 PM Work @ at Hobby Town 
25	26	27 6-9 PM Work @ at Hobby Town 	28	29 6-9 PM Work @ at Hobby Town 	30	31 Piedmont Pilgrimage  Eric Siegel 1PM - 5 PM

November 2009						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3 6-9 PM Work @ at Hobby Town 	4	5 6-9 PM Work @ at Hobby Town 	6	6 10 AM-2 PM Work @ at Hobby Town 
8 Piedmont Pilgrimage  Rick & Cookie Kneisel 1PM - 5 PM	9	10 6-9 PM Work @ at Hobby Town 	11	12 6-9 PM Work @ at Hobby Town 	13	14 10 AM-2 PM Work @ at Hobby Town 
15	16	17 6-9 PM Work @ at Hobby Town 	18	19 NAOGRRC Meeting Tonight! 	20	21 Piedmont Pilgrimage  Bill Dischinger 10AM - 5 PM