



**Three Lakes Model Railroad Club  
Volume 2, Number 10**

**1<sup>st</sup> 100% Club in Wisconsin  
Oct 2011**



### **The Three Lakes Model Railroad Club Kit-A-Long**

*By P. A. Wussow*

What, you may ask is a Kit-A-Long? Well, it goes back to my wife and her knitting group. It is a project that gets everyone involved in making something that is the same, but individually different, during the same time period.

We all start with the same kit and then each week or so we can compare our progress on line or at meetings. We all have different levels of skills in model building and sharing with each other is part of the fun that a club can bring to each modeler.

We will take each section as a small project and compare results and then move on to the next section. It is hoped that we will be ready to show the finished kits off around the first of the year and take them to the NMRA Winnebagoland Division meeting in the spring.

Today in mid September, as I write this we have club members all around the world. We have members in Three Lakes enjoying the fall weather and getting in the end of the season fishing and boating or in Tomahawk building ‘almost Free Mo’ modules with the Rhinelander club.

Some others have sought warmer locations for the winter while still others are in far reaching places like Singapore, Crete, Germany, and Australia. Our members get around and connect via the Internet. It is this connection that can make the sharing the



experience of building a common kit instructional and informational for all of us in the club and anyone else who wishes to join in building and sharing their work with us.

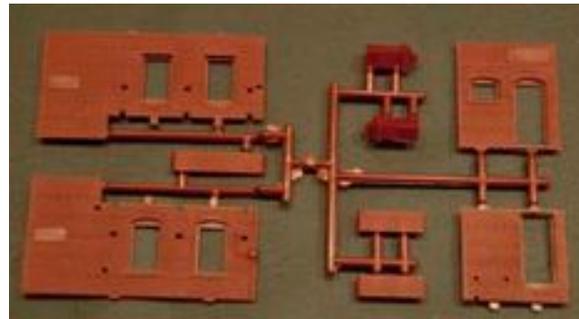
For our first Kit-A-Long project we have picked one of the fine old stand-by kits from the folks at Atlas.

The Atlas Signal Tower Kit has been around the HO community for about as far back as I can remember. This fine kit has a great deal of detail in its castings

and has been featured in articles and a book by John Olson.

The Building has a number of different building materials all cast in plastic that allow for customizing or detailing.

Here are some images of the parts of the Kit-A-Long project Atlas Signal Tower Kit parts in the box.



There is masonry construction to work with and both color and mortar lines to highlight.

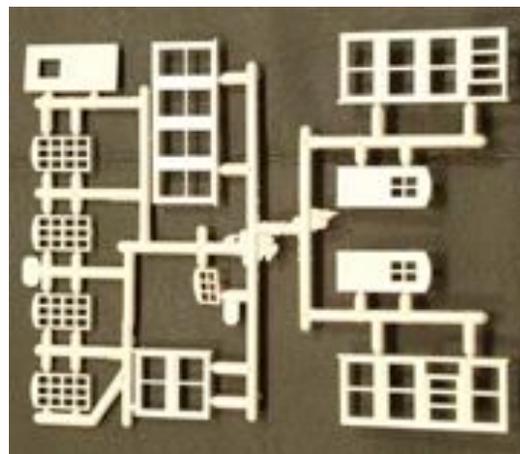


The second floor is lapped boards that may be built with many different styles of weathering and different maintenance levels of the supporting wood structure.

The windows need paint and glass and shades or maybe some could be boarded

up (mini blinds might be a bit much).

The roof is a fine detailed casting that may be worked on in many ways to bring out the detail (see next page).





Additional parts are available for the kit from the Series 2 Railroadania Realistic HO Scale Craftsman Kits and may be found at [www.vectorcut.com](http://www.vectorcut.com)

This is a sample of changes made with the Vectorcut parts from their web site.

So if you think you want to Kit-A-Long pickup an Atlas kit and look it over.

We will start in October.  
Contact me at [PaulWussow@WindyPines.net](mailto:PaulWussow@WindyPines.net) for additional information or to send photos and other ideas that may be included in this project.

This kit is Item #704 of the:  
Atlas Model Railroad Co., Inc.  
378 Florence Ave.  
Hillside NJ 07205



Neither The Three Lakes Model Railroad Club nor any of its members are affiliated with Atlas Model Railroad Co., Inc. Selection of this kit is because of its demonstrated quality and wide distribution among model railroaders.

Photos of Vectorcut models are by permission of Dave Krakow owner of : Vector Cut [www.Vectorcut.com](http://www.Vectorcut.com) who can be reached at [JKrakow@aol.com](mailto:JKrakow@aol.com) for comments.

## **I've Been Working on My Railroad..**

*by R.G. Blocks*

Paul Wussow taught me techniques spelled out in further detail by the good people at Fast Tracks. We don't own stock, nor are we affiliated with this firm. We simply like their products. Paul augmented my lessons with a few shortcuts that Fast Tracks does not necessarily condone. His belt sander artistry does speed the filing process for making a nest for switch points. Naturally my own capacity expanded after witnessing Paul's skillful techniques. Such accomplished behavior comes with practice as Paul illustrated in last month's issue of Three Lakes Turn. Now, with my more modest proficiency level we attempt to describe the making of three subsequent devices.

My second turnout was constructed in a shade over one hour. However, I did spend more than an hour on the business of making parts for even more turnouts. Mass production was in my feeble mind. I made enough subcomponent parts for a half dozen #6 turnouts



at one sitting. Then, I made one end of a gauntlet track and 30 degree crossing. Literally, I've been working on my railroad!

It seems that building your own track-work is all about patience and technique. After making a few of these you'll find your skills at putting solder in the right spot, in just about the right amount, is considerably better than when you started.

I found, and it is perhaps a reiteration, that 0.03 diameter 60/40 solder is much easier to use than 0.04 diameter. It has to do with the ratio of the two diameters and volume of solder per unit length. Heat the pieces and touch the solder to the pieces. They become one. Smaller diameter solder works better. Perhaps I found the penultimate best (or one that is simply good enough).

I should confess that I had to resort to solder wick on more than one occasion when using the heavier diameter solder. Solder wick is a product that I once used when repairing (hence de-soldering) electronic components. It is very fine braided copper product and sops up solder like a sponge. I no longer repair electronics. I had a couple of rolls of the stuff. Lucky boy. I've been relearning lost technique.



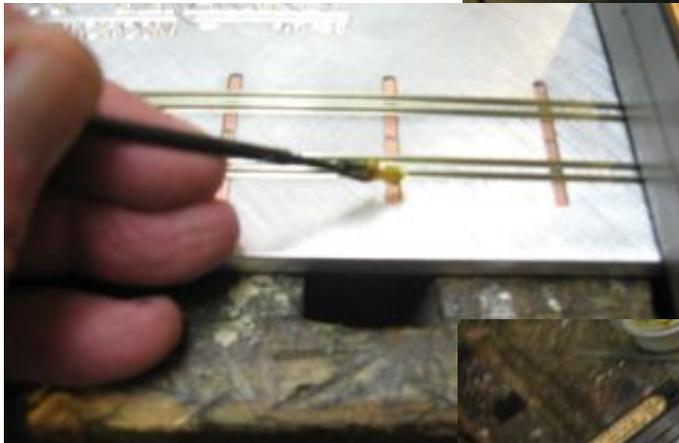
Making a gauntlet track is the simplest of the three types of trackage manufacturing I've tried. On the left I am using a triangular shape file and putting a shallow notch in a piece of copper clad fiberglass. The notch will prevent electrons to flow from one rail to another on the gauntlet. It's a simple chore and you'll find that one needs to cut three notches to provide electrical separation of the four gauntlet rails involved.

## Three Lakes Model Railroad Club – Turn

I did pass the copper clad tie strip over a 400 grit-sanding block to remove any superficial oxidation. The move also smoothed out any cladding irregularity (from filing).

On the right you note the tie strip just described is being placed in the gauntlet soldering jig.

Below, with the four rails in place, a bit of soldering flux is daubed onto the tie / rail interface area. Flux is the magic that helps insure the solder will bond to both rail and tiestrip.



The more distant photo shows that rails are held in place using point forming tools (a convenient heavy object with a flat bottom).



The bottom left photo shows how the gauntlet can be made to grow longer and longer. Hence a railroad builder can save bridge dollars and use a single bridge width and load arrangement for two tracks as long as his rail traffic is somewhat light and manageable.

Gauntlet track is rather easy to manufacture. It is easier than a turnout and on the order of perhaps half the skill level and patience needed to make a crossing.



I polished the rail top with a very fine emery cloth before going any further. Then, washed the product with a bit of borax in solution then rinsed the result in warm water. The idea is to reduce corrosion.

The last device attempted was a thirty-degree turnout. It doesn't seem to matter which angle you

attempt. Once you decide to make a crossing you've entered a world of small parts and will need considerable effort and patience. Below, are the initial angles and assemblies necessary for a thirty-degree crossing.

There, you have a photographic synopsis of my experience. Yep, I did have a few black moments doing the crossing.



I'm not done yet. I need to cut the rail isolation items with a jeweler's saw, wire and paint the units and install the wooden ties. I plan to use individual ties as opposed to tie strips.

The gauntlet will be mounted on a bridge and all three items will be in a operational scene for judging at one of the NMRA Division meets. Thus, there will be more stories. Meanwhile, "I'll be working on the railroad." Best to you. *by Roger G Blocks*

## **Railroad Happenings: or Semi-local events...**

September 18, 2011- WISE Division Meeting, 12:30 PM Best Western Airport, 5105 S Howell Avenue across from Mitchell Field. Three Clinics TBA

Sept. 24-25, 2011- Green County Model RR Show & Swap Meet- Monroe, WI  
Stateline Ice & Community Expo- 1632 4th Ave. W  
<http://www.gcmrrinc.org>

October 1, 2011- NMRA WinnebagoLand Division Fall Meet- Lakeshore Lanes- Sheboygan, WI Info at: [www.wld-nmra.com](http://www.wld-nmra.com)

## Three Lakes Model Railroad Club – Turn

October 1, 2011- 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Hope Train Club Show & Sale- Wesley Center  
199 E. Jefferson St. Waupun, WI (920) 324-2350

October 15-16, 2011- Layout Open House- Railroad Lodge- SSSMRE-  
Sheboygan, WI 1001 N. 10<sup>th</sup> St. Food, Refreshments & Fun 10:00-4:00

October 15, 16, 2011 Cisco Junction Train Show, Cisco Center, 325 Eldon St Cisco, IL  
Cisco in between Champaign & Decatur, IL: Tentative: Monticello RR Museum will  
operate 401 Steam Loco: contact [Don@ciscojunction.com](mailto:Don@ciscojunction.com) or 217-669-2261.

October 16, 2011 – WISE Division Meeting, 589 Milwaukee Ave, Veterans Terrace,  
Burlington, WI

October 23, 2011- Cedar Creek Central Model RR show & Swap Meet Circle B  
Recreation -6261 Hwy 60- Cedarburg Info at [www.lammscape.com/cedarcreek](http://www.lammscape.com/cedarcreek)

November 5, 2011- Winnebagoland Division Annual Operating Session- Waupaca, WI  
Info at: [www.wld-nmra.com](http://www.wld-nmra.com)

November 12-13, 2011 – Trainfest, State Fair Park Expo Bldg: West Allis, WI Note:  
Early Bird Tickets are \$8 at Milwaukee area hobby shops Greenfield News and Hobbies-  
Greenfield, Hiawatha Hobbies- Waukesha, Silver Spring Hobby & Games- Milwaukee,  
Sommerfeld's Trains- Butler, South Side Trains- Milwaukee, Walthers Terminal Hobby.  
Outside metro Milwaukee: EngineHouse Service- Green Bay, WI , J & D Whistle Stop-  
Sheboygan, WI, Lombard Hobbies- Lombard, IL, Madison Hobby Stop- Madison, WI  
(more later).

December 4, 2011 WISE Division Meet: Best Western Plus Midway Hotel, Brookfield,  
1005s Moorland Road, Brookfield, WI

January 15, 2012: WISE Division Meet: Best Western Plus Midway Hotel, Brookfield,  
1005s Moorland Road, Brookfield, WI

February 18, 2012 Mad City Train Show, Madison, WI.

February 19, 2012: WISE Division Meet: Best Western Plus Midway Hotel, Brookfield,  
1005s Moorland Road, Brookfield, WI

March 18, 2012: WISE Division Meet: Best Western Plus Midway Hotel, Brookfield,  
1005s Moorland Road, Brookfield, WI

April 28, 2012 Title Town Show in AM and Packer Hall of Fame or National Railway  
Museum in PM (a WISE Div'n Bus Trip). Contact [Sueoseland@aol.com](mailto:Sueoseland@aol.com) for more info.

## **A REMINDER**

## **TLMRC is a 100% NMRA club**

**A few members and newsletter readers while enjoying the benefits of our little troop have not paid their NMRA dues at National. We'd appreciate when you pay your dues that you send us a note stating your NMRA number and expiration date (as you see it). We ask a ten-dollar per year membership in TLMRC (please pay in the**

period for Oct - Dec for next year. If you join us mid year then there is no charge; however, we understand if you can't afford to pay currently (times are tough). Simply, send me a note saying something along the lines... "I enjoy model railroading, life and keep up the good work, and by the way.. I've paid my national NMRA dues and my number is #123.. You will not be pestered by TLMRC.

However, if you're flush, please send your TLMRC \$10 membership check to 1162 Medicine Lake Lodge Road, Three Lakes, WI 54562. If you live outside the USA, or are more than driving distance or will on occasion join us on Skype when we have a clinic then no membership charge! Keep sending material for articles. We enjoy most views of what life, modeling and railroading is like elsewhere.

Here is the best NMRA deal if you're a new potential member: fellow or gal:

## NMRA Membership:

*by R.G. Blocks*

This year we'll be working on a variety of tasks. Clinics to be sure, newsletter articles, joint meetings with other clubs, perhaps a trip or two to visit others. Topics we've heard need expression include: Free Mo, track laying, turnout (switch) construction, signals and their meanings, foam rock carving, Mountain building, Bridge building, kit construction and trips folks take involving rail. It will be a continuation of last year. Informal fun!

If you'd like the task of becoming editor of TLMRC or want to run our organization; please offer your views. We're doing our best to provide the best for mutual education.

The Three Lakes Model Railroad Club Website is up and running and improved at [www.tlmrc.org](http://www.tlmrc.org). Contact Paul A Wussow at: [PaulWussow@WindyPines.net](mailto:PaulWussow@WindyPines.net) if you'd like to have a link to your own personal rail empire on this educational railroad portal or if you have questions or comments. Thanks from Newsletter Editor Roger G Blocks.