

Waybill

Mid West Region NMRA –
Summer 2020



The WAYBILL

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The WAYBILL

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CONTRIBUTIONS

Articles, photographs and artwork are encouraged in either hardcopy or electronic form. The editor uses Quark 4.1 as his publishing software on a Mac. Word documents are also acceptable, but please send the photographs as an attachment. Copy is due by the 10th of February, May, August and November and should be sent to the editor at the above address. Submitted material will be returned upon request.

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Editor's Column

I asked Walt Herrick if he had an article for the Waybill. Imagine my surprise when he sent a photo of his train room filled with boxes of stuff. I have to agree with Walt, Model Railroaders are packrats. I know, because we are in the



I hope the future of the hobby is not virtual. When our super, Mike Hirvela asked what brings people to meetings several years ago, the overall response was the camaraderie. I miss going to meeting and the DuPage. swap meet. I like to see what other people are doing and get new ideas and information, something that is lost in a virtual meeting. A group of us went to local bar every Tuesday for close to 25 years. We replaced it with a Zoom Meeting. Although it is nice to see everyone, it is not the same.

A photo in the living room of a portion of my books and magazines. The bankers boxes are filled with binders of photos and papers. Each box is HEAVY! This is about 1/2 of what I have left to pack.

process of moving. For more than a year I have been packing and dumping. I never considered myself as having a hobby shop in the basement, as many do. When we first made plans to move, many years ago it already, I started tacking my excess stuff to the DuPage Swap meet to get rid of it.



Above: Some of my layout modules stacked up.



Left: I bought these plastic totes at Menards. Each holds an empty copypaper box filled with buildings from the layout, surrounded by bubble wrap. It is then filled with cars and accessories. Each tote has a list of what is inside, in case I need to get at it.

The shelves on the right are filled with unsold books.

Front Cover: Midwest Rails display at Franklin Park Railroad Daze. see page 9.

Waybill

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President's Report

Steve Studley President, MWR

Pandemic

We are living in a very strange time in history. Non-essential businesses are closed; restaurants are open for carry-out or drive-through service only.

There are to be no gatherings of large groups of people, and even then, we need to worry about “social distancing”. I suspect many of our local hobby shops are also closed. We are told to stay at home and shelter-in-place. These restrictions started in March and are mostly still in effect. Indiana has begun the process to open up again, but the county in which I live still retains the restrictions.

The restrictions that were put in place for Illinois caused the Board to reconsider holding our Midwest Regional convention. We had already heard from some members who were not going to attend based on their personal health considerations. And let's face it; most of us are in the at-risk group whose age is greater than 60 yrs. In late March, with restrictions in place in Illinois, the Peoria Rocket 2020 convention committee and the MWR Executive Board decided to consider postponing the convention. After checking with the hotel for other possible dates and learning that our best choice would be just after Trainfest and just prior to Thanksgiving, we decided to cancel. At that time, NMRA was still planning to hold the National Convention and National Train Show in St. Louis. After running into countless difficulties trying to schedule planning meetings and having layout owners rethink having large numbers of people trekking through their houses, the Gateway 2020 committee and the NMRA decided to cancel the National Convention.

Unfortunately, by cancelling Peoria Rocket 2020 all the work that had been accomplished by the two host Divisions – Illinois Valley and Illinois

Terminal – has all been for naught. We appreciate their labors in planning for the MWR regional convention and are very sorry that it wasn't to be. Thanks also to all the clinicians, layout owners, and volunteers who were ready to help; and those who had already signed up to attend. Special thanks go to Mike Shockley and the convention committee for the countless hours spent getting ready for the Rocket.

We have seen that most (all?) division in-person meetings have been cancelled for the rest of the spring. We await a better situation for the fall modeling season. Hopefully, the health crisis will have calmed down by then and we can get back to what some health officials have named the “new normal”. In the meantime, we have learned to utilize video-conferencing applications to allow us to still have some semblance of getting together to discuss model railroading. The MWR Board will have their spring meeting via video-conferencing in late May. Notifications for the Board and the MWR members' annual meetings will be sent by email.

I was able to attend 17 of the 25 (have to get some sleep) hours of clinics of the first NMRA-X virtual convention. This was a Facebook, live video-conference that included 25 hours of internationally presented clinics. The second of these will be held on May 16. Check NMRA-X on Facebook to see if there will be other events. I think there will be another one in mid-June. For further information, check NMRA-X on Facebook or the NMRA website.

Since we are hoping for better conditions in the future, we can also start making plans to attend the 2021 MWR convention in the Rockford, IL area: Rockford Railroad Convention. The RRVD convention committee is in the early planning stages for the convention. As information becomes available, it will be posted on the MWR website. Click on the Conventions tab at the top of the page.

In the meantime – back to the layout!

Steve

Region News

The MWR will hold its Annual Membership meeting on Sunday May 31st at 10:00 am CDT via Zoom Video Conferencing. The MWR Spring BoD meeting will immediately follow the Member Meeting on the same conference call. Log-in details of the Zoom Video Conference will be emailed out no later than Tuesday May 26th. Members are encouraged to read the Virtual Meeting Logistics Section of the following MWR video conference guidelines PDF well in advance of the conference call in order to prepare for the call. Following these guidelines will help to insure a successful meeting.

<http://www.mwr-nmra.org/mwr2016/mwr-images/admin/mwrvirtualmeetingguidelines5-17-20.pdf>

Please address any questions to Jim Osborn,

MWR webmaster at : webmaster@mwr-nmra.org

AP Report by Jim Landwher

The following MWR members received AP awards:

Steve Miazga	Waukesha, WI	Dispatcher
Steve Miazga	Waukesha, WI	Author
Steve Miazga	Waukesha, WI	Volunteer
Danny Hinel	Westfield, IN	Civil
Robert Knobbe	Glendale Hts., IL	Civil
Robert Knobbe	Glendale Hts., IL	Dispatcher
Jon Zimmer	Elmhurst, IL	Dispatcher
Jon Zimmer	Elmhurst, IL	Civil

Congratulations on your good work, Jim

Frugal Modeler by David Nelson

Most of us are familiar with the tools, solvents, paints and methods (such as score-and-snap) that make working with styrene so rewarding. Relatively few of us these days work much with wood, which requires its own skills, tools, glues, paints, and stains. The oldest wood kits (often with matboard or card-stock parts) can look home-spun and even crude to today's modelers. Beginning with Fine Scale Miniatures, wood craftsman kits became polished and precise, but not priced to invite casual experimentation. This is where laser-cut kits fill a niche: the parts, often tab-and-slot, actually fit together, and the fineness of detail and ease of construction can make these wood kits feel more familiar to the modeler accustomed to working with plastic.

But laser precision, peel-and-stick parts, and the use of micro-plywoods, lessen but do not eliminate challenges that working with wood kits present. There are still learning curves. Styrene's "score-and-



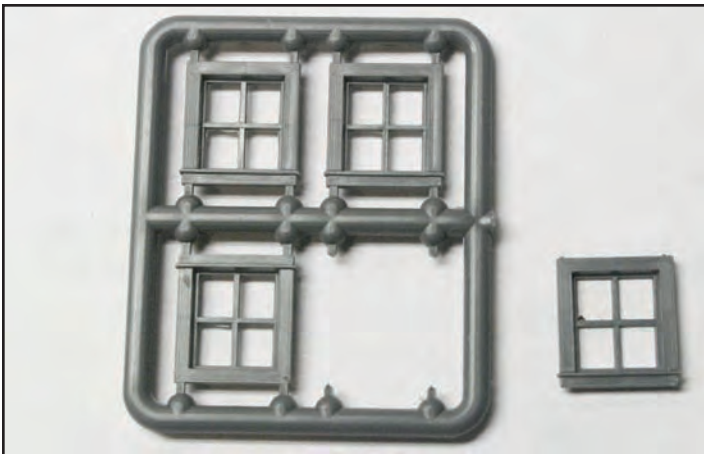
The garage built as per the instructions.

snap" technique doesn't work with wood. The glues don't meld/bond as solvents do with plastic; they adhere parts to each other, and slim mating surfaces can be too small to adhere well. Basswood can be marred, even crushed, and the risk of warped parts from room humidity or moisture from paints and glues has to be dealt with. On the plus side, if basswood pieces are broken in half a carefully done repair can be all but impossible to see.

One fair criticism is that by their nature laser-cut kits don't lend themselves to much modification or kitbashing. Micro-plywood is not so easy to cut with precision, and the very tabs and slots that make parts fit together so precisely resist swapping out parts or combining sides/ends from other kits to enlarge or change a structure. If tabs and slots are removed, then other parts need to be changed, and without the stability that tab-and-slot creates, it's often necessary to thicken or reinforce the slender joined surfaces to create a durable glued joint.



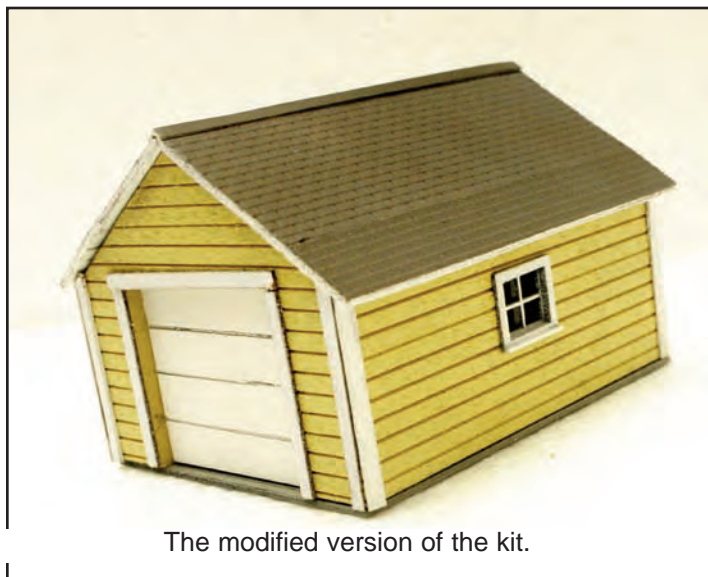
Added bracing and new door edges for the narrower door.



The Grandt Line windows needed to be inserted sideways.

My purpose here is to encourage giving laser-cut kits a try, and then to go a bit further and get the hang of making modest, and frugal, modifications, using a simple entry-level laser-cut kit as an example.

American Model Builders' Laserkit One Car Garage (No. 796) is small as laser cut kits go, yet it has nearly 50 pieces using micro-plywood, basswood, paper, card, and clear plastic for windows. The doors and windows demonstrate the minute detail the process allows. The kit goes together rapidly enough but time has to be set aside for painting both sides of wood parts (to prevent warping), plus the glues or cements take time. The clearly written and illustrated instructions cover each step, with one caveat: the floor will nest within the walls but only if the outer edges of the floor are cut away along shallow dark lines made by the laser. Otherwise, as is the floor sits under the sides and ends like a concrete



The modified version of the kit.

slab (so paint it gray or tan). Caution: note that the end and side corner trim pieces of peel-and-stick cardstock are different widths; the wide side trim is meant to overlap the narrow front trim at the corners. It's easy to overlook the instruction's brief mention of this. If you botch this (I did) then remember, the entire fret is peel-and-stick, so replacement trim pieces can be cut from the remaining fret. To me the trim pieces look rather bulky and maybe I should have substituted "L" shaped wood or styrene.

Paint while parts are still part of the fret but don't paint the "backs" of parts with peel-and-stick adhesive (tip: identify and mark which side of every piece has the adhesive backing). Use a fresh razor blade to separate parts from the frets and to peel away adhesive backing: the blade is thinner than a knife and less likely to pinch the basswood sides and ends (floor and roof underlay are micro-plywood). I've had mixed luck using AC to cement wood kit parts. Faller's "Expert - Lasercut" glue, No. 170494 works well for me and I like the fine tube applicator.

Be Frugal. I save all frets and parts left over from this and any laser-cut kit to supply raw materials for other projects. A fret in the photo of my laser scrap box obviously once held a staircase; it can provide a "free" staircase if carefully cut from the fret.

I built one version of this 1920s era garage as per the instructions: note the rather ornate swinging garage doors, the "metal" external side hinges (thick paper with peel-and-stick backing), the rolled "tar paper" roofing (thick peel-and-stick paper attached to a micro-plywood subroof), and the unusual three-pane side windows. I added my own 3M double-sided "transfer tape" to the subroof so that the painted peel-and-stick paper "rolled roof" would adhere even more securely.

While the garage looks a bit dated it isn't unprototypical for my late 1960s era, but I did wish it had offered some modernizing options, so I decided to build another and update it with an overhead garage door, more common windows, and a shingled roof. The side walls are seven feet high so I abandoned an idea of adding a side door. I also considered narrowing the garage a foot or two but that would have made the basswood front faces on either side of the door very flimsy, the sides would be the wrong height, and it would eliminate the tab-in-slot solidity of the kit's design. Adding a plastic roof meant slicing off four tabs on the ends that were there to hold the original subroof.

My box of laser kit scraps.



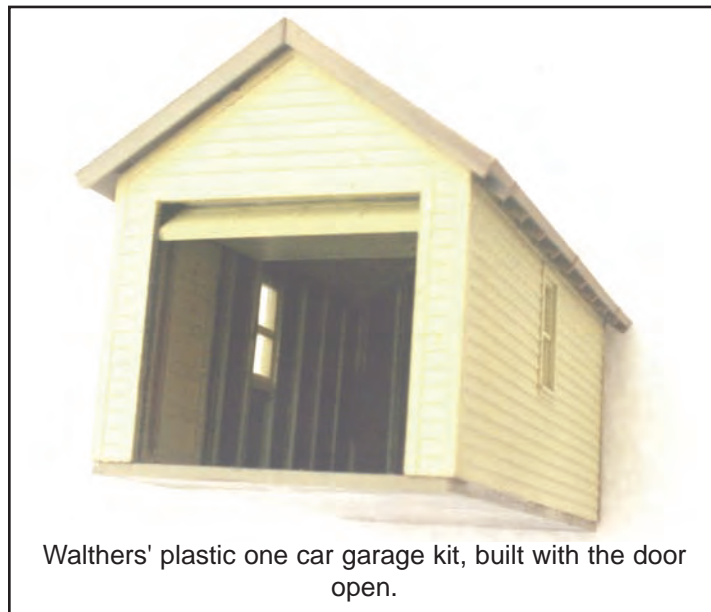
My plastic garage door is AM Models 202: cleverly, two styles of doors, front and back are on each of the four doors in the package. AM Models is one outfit that's kept prices reasonable. These doors are just slightly narrower than the original kit doors so after making gluing edges larger with interior pieces of scrap wood, I "thickened" both edges of the door opening with HO 2x10 Northeastern Scale lumber (cut to length after taking the photo of the back side) so the peel-and-stick door framing could be brought in that much closer. A piece of micro-plywood from my laser kit scrap box spanning those "2x10s" then provided the rear support for securing the new door. I used a sharp pencil to highlight the garage door seams.

The four-pane side windows are from a Grandt Line window and door "grab bag" No. 5192; not sure exactly what number they are, perhaps 5239 (the same as Tichy 8067?). I needed to rotate them 90 degrees to fit, so before painting I shaved off the protruding bottom "sills" and made new sills from small styrene strips. A scrap piece of micro-plywood



Compare the original version to the modified garage.

was needed to slightly narrow each pre-cut window opening. Plastic "glass" was affixed with Testors Clear Parts Cement ("canopy glue"). The shingled roofing is Pikestuff 541-1007. I don't like the rough look of my roof, pieced together from leftovers from a prior project: yes, folks, sometimes you can be too frugal. The two roof halves are held at the correct roof angle due to two styrene scraps that used the kit's empty fret as the template to capture that roof angle.



Walthers' plastic one car garage kit, built with the door open.

Having finished the project I now wish I'd modeled it with the garage door open, as I did with one of the two Walthers one-car garages in kit 933-3796. But the Walthers castings have excellent full interior wall stud (and side door) detail which I hope are just possible to make out in the photo; this would be laborious to add to the wood kit, and I would have to do my interior bracing differently. Still, I should have done it. Photos by Dave Nelson.

Model Railroad Pack Ratting Part 1 by Walt Herrick

A lot model railroaders are pack rats and I'm one of them. The time I've spent sheltered in place during this spring's Covid-19 pandemic has made me acutely aware of this. With all the time I am being forced to spend at home, I've had no excuses to keep me from doing what I know I need to do: clean up and organize my jam packed, pack ratted to the rafters, train room. This little project has enabled me



"Here is about half of Walt's model railroad 'collection'. This photo was taken after he completed 'Phase I' of his 'Train Room Cleaning & Reorganization Project' in April!"

to become quite intimate with all of my model railroad stuff.

The polite term for pack ratting is collecting. I've been collecting model railroading and model railroading related items for probably 35 years now, and I have accumulated a reasonably large collection. Not nearly as large as some collections I've seen, but certainly sizable given the amount of space I have and the budget to work with.

According to the final arbiter of things like this—

my wife—I have a LOT of stuff.

For example, right now in my 16 x 31 foot basement train room, you can find the following model railroad items in my collection:

- 4 boxes (boxes hereafter will refer to either large cardboard boxes or large plastic bins) of structure kits, structure parts, partially built or fully built structures
- 4 boxes of rolling stock kits or built ups
- 3 boxes of flex track, turn outs, and cork road bed
- 3 boxes of unsorted magazines, newsletters, calendars and other paper stuff
- 2 dozen binders of past Model Railroader, Craftsman, Gazette, Model Railroading, etc. magazines (which have, by the way, at one time or another, been sorted to yield only the issues I really liked!)
- 1 smaller box of HO vehicles
- 1 smaller box of HO figures and detail parts
- 2 medium bins of electronics, power packs, wire, etc.
- 1 large bin of 12 x 12 inch canopy tree sections from Pete Walton's old layout
- 4-5 dioramas, completed scenes, and half started

dioramas ranging in size from 12 x 12 inches to 16 x 24 inches

- 4-5 medium sized bins of ground foam, ballast, clump foliage, lichen, etc.
- 2 large garbage bags full of dry sedum plants to be used in tree making
- 2 half sized bins of American Flyer locos and rolling stock
- 1 bin of American Flyer track and transformers
- 2 bins of O/S Plasticville buildings

As mentioned, all of the above is in my train room. My small 8 x 9 foot model work shop is similarly pack rated with stuff, it's just in smaller boxes on shelves above the work bench or on the floor beneath the bench. The operative word describing the way things are put in my model shop is "crammed". In the next Waybill I'll give you a list of all my model railroad related materials such as plywood, homasote, etc. I collect that stuff, too. Can't wait, can you?

Photo by Walt Herrick

National News

An NMRA First! Introducing NMRA-X! NMRA-X is bringing clinics, layout tours, and more right to your home computer!

Some of you may have noticed a strange occurrence on Facebook between April 24th and April 25th and still might be wondering what happened to the NMRA. Well, the NMRA-X is what happened, and it is here to stay! The NMRA-X is the new virtual experience formed to bring some of the benefits of the organization live, right to your computer screens!

The very first NMRA-X Virtual Convention was held from 7pm EDT on April 24th to 7pm EDT on April 25th and consisted of 25 straight hours of clinics and tours from around the globe, featuring a new presentation every hour. Broadcasted through both the NMRA Facebook page and group, NMRA-X was a huge success with both members and non-members alike and it definitely broke the mold in the model railroading community.

Dean Mikalouski has provided the following information about the NMRA-X and future event schedules.

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tation every hour. They broadcast these presentations through both the NMRA Facebook page and group A. This new NMRA-X got a thumbs up from both members and non-members alike. It's a great new technological advance for the NMRA and the model railroading community.

If you missed out on any of the action, all the videos are saved in the NMRA Facebook group (you do need be a Facebook member to access): [facebook.com/pg/NMRA.org/videos/](https://www.facebook.com/pg/NMRA.org/videos/)

Don't worry if you're not a Facebook member, the NMRA will be splitting these videos out, re-editing them, and posting them on the NMRA YouTube channel as well. Eventually, the videos will be edited and added to the NMRA YouTube Channel: <http://www.youtube.com/c/NMRAORGMModelRailroading>

The next event was "Ask the Master Model Railroader" which they ran on Saturday, May 2nd at 5 p.m. EDT. Additionally, they're planning four, 12-hour NMRA-X Virtual Conventions for May 16th, May 30th, June 13th and June 27th.

Dean Mikalowski gave a clinic during the May 16th event. These can all be accessed from the

NMRA Facebook group A and the NMRA Facebook page. For those who just don't do Facebook, the NMRA understands your hesitation.

For now, this venue provides the level of streaming service needed that's both affordable to the NMRA and allows free attendees. The NMRA is also looking for some other venue outside of Facebook to do these online virtual events that is affordable, and provides for free access to modelers. If you know of any such online streaming service that meets this criteria, please pass that along to us.

Marketing and the Social Media Team have been pushing for this and plan on making NMRA-X the virtual model railroading destination by continuing to bring you more valuable content over the coming months.

A special "thank you" goes to Gordy Robinson, Martyn Jenkins, Gert "Speed" Muller, Brad Anderson, and Jordan Kramer for pulling together and running the entire event, the presenters for sharing their knowledge and time, and the group from the A Modeler's Life Podcast for wrapping up the event!
Christina Zambri
NMRA Marketing Consultant

My Winter

In between packing and writing, I managed to build a few resin kits this winter, I started on the GTW doubledoor car first, but the ladders need some extra work. The tool needed was packed away, so I went on to the Pennsy kits. I paint the underframe a grimy color, as they were always left unpainted. The tape on the couplers is to prevent from being painted. I am still using Floquil paint.

David



From left to right: Funaro & Camerlengo GTW single sheathed boxcar; Westerfield double sheathed DSS&A boxcar; F&C B&O M-53 wagontop boxcar; F&C Pennsylvania X-37B automobile car; Sunshine Pennsylvania X-29B boxcar.



Closer look at the automobile car.



I always include full underbody detail.



Photo Section

all photos by David Leider



I have been attending Railroad Daze for many years. For several years the Fox Valley Division had a booth, but in 2019 it was decided not to go as there was a good chance of rain. Fortunately it was sunny and bright and I was able to take some photos. No Railroad Daze this year.



The Canadian Pacific Bensenville yard is a little west and this unit came to join the fun and get its picture taken.



One of the stars of the show, Metra's F40PHM-2 number 405 painted in the Hiawatha Heritage Scheme



Lineup of some of the equipment on display



CSX sent along these units.



Weed Burners

by David Leider

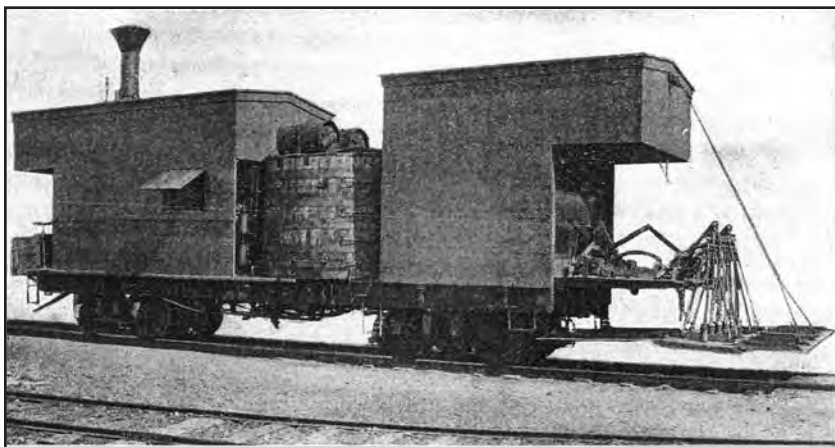


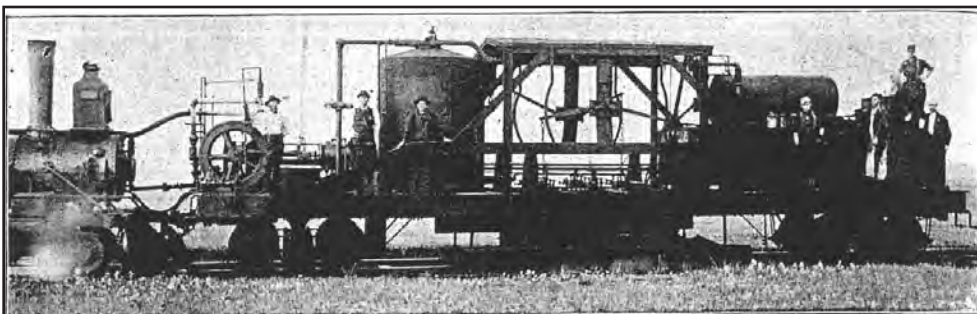
Photo from the Railway and Engineering Review of May 21, 1900 showing Soo Line Weed Burner number 1.

Weeds are always an unwelcome guest for the railroads, on mainlines as well as spur tracks. This was especially so on the western end of the Granger Roads in the 1900s. The tracks were dirt ballasted and weeds were common, leading to wheel slippage and obscuring defects in the rails. The traditional way for weed control was grubbing with a shovel, a never ending, and expensive solution. For many years the roads experimented with numerous methods of keeping vegetation down mechanically. One of the most effective was scorching the weeds by burning crude petroleum under a shield carried a few inches above the track.

One of earliest roads, if not the first, to devise a weed-burning machine was the Soo Line, where one was constructed and first used in the spring of 1894. The machine was built by Mr. E. A. Williams, mechanical superintendent of the road. Its success was widely copied by the other granger roads.

This excerpt is from an article I wrote for the SOO magazine.

I am looking for photos of weed spraying equipment for a possible book. David



The Milwaukee built a weed burner shortly after the Soo Line. This photo from the Railway and Engineering Review of June 27, 1903 shows their version. The "fire pit" was under the middle of the car.

THREE GOOD REASONS TO JOIN THE NMRA NOW:



Those are the discounts National Model Railroad Association members are getting right now from manufacturers and hobby shops who've joined our Partnership Program. Partners like Micro-Mark®, Model Reclifier Corporation®, Monster Modelworks®, RR-CirKits®, Unreal Details®, And quite a few more. It's savings that can actually pay for your annual membership!

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