




# SL-and-N construction blog

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**deemery**  
Senior Member

Join Date: Sep 2007  
Posts: 11493

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05-24-2024, 01:42 PM #1261

These are done. I like the Tichy chimney and chimney caps on this.



**Lessons Learned working with CMR's Acrylic**

Acrylic is similar to styrene, but has some different working characteristics.

Cutting the 1/16 thick acrylic, if you want to do scribe-and-snap, you have to scribe very deeply, then use something like a sheet metal bender to make sure you get pressure along the entire break line. It was easier for me to use my Proxxon/Micro-Mark table saw. I cut with the blade in the normal position, and by putting tape over the location to be cut, didn't have any problems with chipping. But the acrylic sawdust did like to spray around the shop.

For assembly, I tried both MEK and Methelyne Chloride. The latter worked better, but that is an instantaneous bond. MEK gave me a bit more working time, but wasn't as strong. However, the resulting joint was quite strong, probably stronger than an equivalent styrene joint. MC is going to be banned soon, so it's probably worth looking for and stocking a bottle or two of an acrylic solvent cement that uses that stuff.

The acrylic took paints pretty much the same way as styrene. Cleaning the parts first was a good idea. I used Vallejo and Badger primers.

The peel and stick brick (styrene?) sheets stuck well to the acrylic. And the peel-and-stick styrene parts (lintels) stuck well to the brick. I actually used the front subwalls reversed, and then the brick sheeting from the rear of the building, because I wanted the door to the right (the kit is designed with the front door to the left.) That worked OK, but I had to splice in a bit of .020 x .080 to make the cornice align properly. And I had to trim the rear wall brick sheets to accommodate the cornice.

The windows for this kit are a sheet of styrene that you glue to the back of the acrylic subwalls. This is peel-and-stick, and you cut and stick the window glazing to the back of the window piece. Then you can cut out and apply the curtains from the kit to the glazing material. I used Testors canopy cement to glue the glazing to the styrene, and the curtains to the glazing. For gluing the styrene window underlay to the acrylic, I used Deluxe Materials Super Phatic. That's a glue that gives good adhesion and good tack.

The instructions call for assembling the box, then laminating the brick sheet, then doing the windows, etc. That's how I did it, I sprayed the box + brick sheeting before doing the windows my brick color. I also sprayed the window styrene pieces white (primer). I sprayed the lintels, sills, cornice, etc Badger grey primer while they were on the sheet. Then I touched up the paint when I removed the sills before gluing them in place.

The kit comes with porches for the front. I omitted those. So I needed to dress up the door, which I did with .020 x .020 strip styrene, and .015 x .080 styrene for the door sill. Those were glued with Super Phatic, although MEK would have worked. I also added a piece of .015 x .125 strip over the top of the acrylic pieces, but that's no big deal to add.

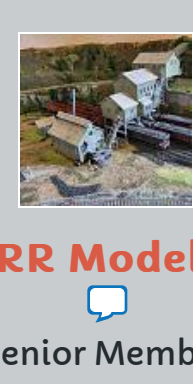
The kit comes with cast metal chimneys with flue vents. There were 4 different vents, and I thought that would be a bit out of synch with my 1890s "these are relatively new" row houses. So I substituted Tichy chimneys and the associated chimney tops. Those worked well.

Overall, this project went smoothly. The CMR parts are precision-cut and fit well. It's best to experiment with a piece of acrylic (they include 1 or 2 scraps to let you do this) to figure out what cement works best for you.

dave

Modeling 1890s (because the voices in my head told me to)

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**Seabee\_Terry**  
Senior Member


Join Date: Oct 2017  
Posts: 363

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05-24-2024, 01:48 PM #1262

S lot of interesting info in your narrative, thanks terry

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**PRR Modeller**  
Senior Member

Join Date: May 2022  
Posts: 2114

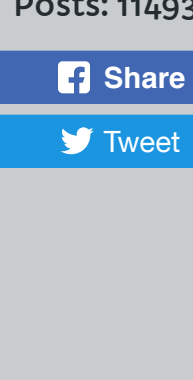
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05-24-2024, 03:58 PM #1263

That looks great Dave. Thanks for the step by step.

Curt Webb  
Freelanced PRR Bellevue Sub

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**deemery**  
Senior Member

Join Date: Sep 2007  
Posts: 11493

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05-26-2024, 02:54 PM #1264

Well, I played with the contours along "Subduction Way" and decided I really can't set that road until I've built the rest of the houses that go up the hill. So by doing some more kitbashing, I'll get a second string of 4 row houses from the parts in the CMR kit. I'll do the brick sheeting from my stock of "The N Scale Architect" HO scale styrene brick sheet (I don't think that's the stuff CMR used, but it's close.) I'll have to do a different cornice, and I dug through my stock to find some Grandt "Wells Fargo Brick Cornice" parts. I'll need some more packages of those (1 package makes 2 building's worth), but I can start on the project now while waiting for the additional parts to come in. For this I'll be using the "back" sections from the CMR kit. The cornice will sit above the top of the acrylic pieces, but that's no big deal to add.



The Grandt pieces are sitting on .080 x .500 styrene strip. .500 is the right height to bring the new structures to the same height of the existing row houses. I'll putz with the cornice to get a design I like, probably won't have the corbels on the ends as on the right side structure. But that's what I'll play with tomorrow. (Once again, I'm reminded that the #1 best investment for scratchbuilders and kitbashers is a complete set of Evergreen styrene strips :-))

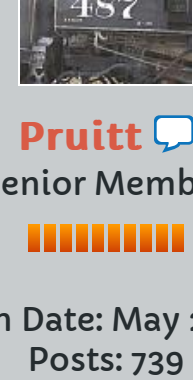
Since I'm not using the CMR brick sheeting, the dimensions are a bit less critical. I may do the sides in styrene rather than cutting down the acrylic. I'll just have to remember to cut the brick sheeting to the correct dimension to get the proper overhang of the front. So I think the assembly process will be: (a) cut out the cornice, (b) cut the brick sheeting to size for the front. (c) laminate to the CMR acrylic subwalls. (d) then cut out the door and window openings. (e) add/build up the cornice with strip styrene, etc and attach to the front subwalls. (f) cut the sides from styrene. Figure out how to do the window holes for the externally visible sides. (g) Laminate the brick sheeting. (h) paint the brick color. (i) assemble the front and side of the boxes. Then add the windows from the back. (j) add the back pieces. At least that's the current plan.

dave

Last edited by deemery; 05-26-2024, 05:36 PM. Reason: I can't count :-))

Modeling 1890s (because the voices in my head told me to)

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**Pruitt**  
Senior Member

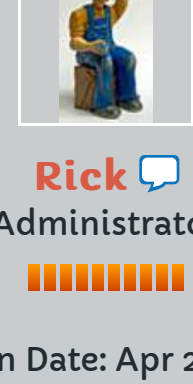
Join Date: May 2007  
Posts: 739

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05-26-2024, 09:17 PM #1265

Dave,  
That is really going to be an interesting spot on the layout when it's done. I'm enjoying your blow-by-blow description of work on these row houses.

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**Rick**  
Administrator

Join Date: Apr 2002  
Posts: 29972


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05-27-2024, 06:15 AM #1266

Those four row houses turned out very well. Good tips for working with the CMR's acrylic.

Follow along as my dog and I travel the country in our van.  
Facebook link: <https://www.facebook.com/A-Dog-A-Van-and-A-View-10834537976229> YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@Rick527>

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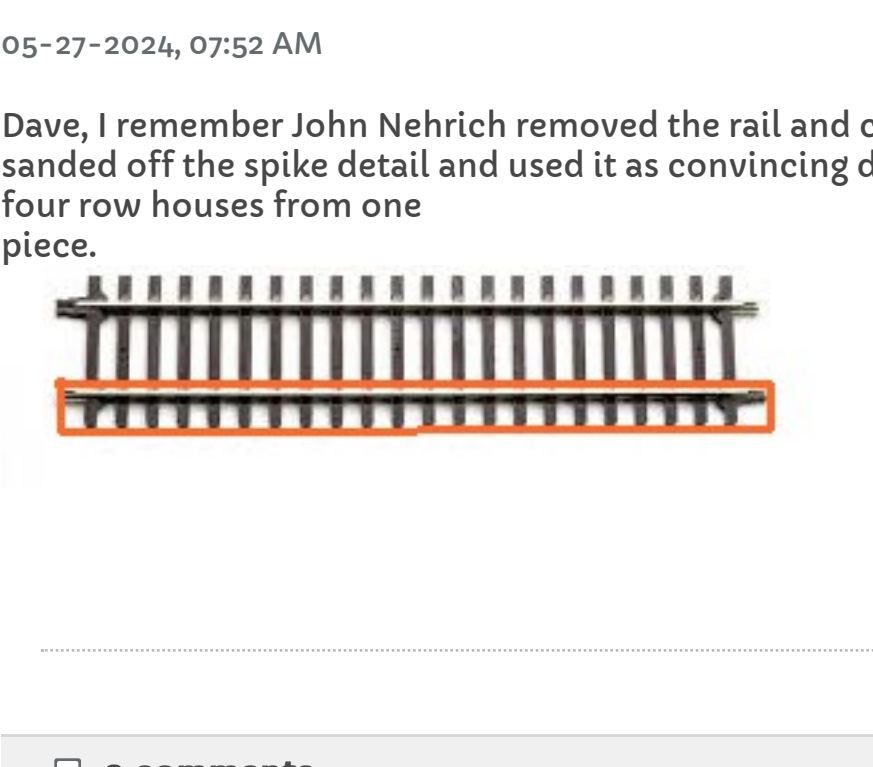
**Bill\_Gill**  
Senior Member

Join Date: Dec 2014  
Posts: 4253

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05-27-2024, 07:52 AM #1267

Dave, I remember John Nehrich removed the rail and cut a strip of tie ends (including the solid piece under the rail) from a straight piece of sectional track, sanded off the spike detail and used it as conjoining details on a cornice. Depending on what brand of track, you can probably get enough length to do all four row houses from one



2 comments

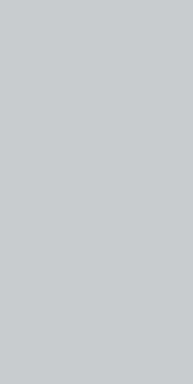
**deemery** commented  
05-27-2024, 09:10 AM #1267,1

N scale track would produce smaller "teeth" :-)) But I think it would look a little funky to have different size teeth. I looked a bunch of photos of row houses (image search is your friend) and then dove into the parts drawer. I think there's a Grandt (San Juan Details) dental molding casting, but I couldn't find it and I think it'd have the same size problem. Of course, if I was thinking ahead, I could have assembled the full cornice and then done resin casting, now that I know how to do that.

**deemery** commented  
05-27-2024, 10:14 AM #1267,2

By the way, Bill. Have you heard from John Nehrich? How is he doing? The mess with RPI was pretty appalling, looks like RPI generally was trying to self-destruct under that President.

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**Michael\_Hohn**  
Senior Member

Join Date: Sep 2012  
Posts: 12238

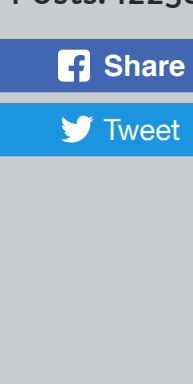
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05-27-2024, 08:39 AM #1268

Dave,  
That's going to be an impressive row of houses.  
I think I'll stick with styrene.  
Mike

I was so much older then, I'm younger than that now *Bob Dylan*

99 Quote Comment Flag Like (0)



**Bill\_Gill**  
Senior Member

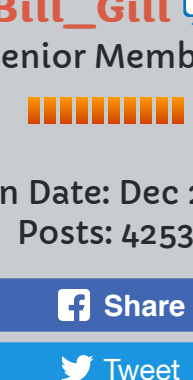
Join Date: Dec 2014  
Posts: 4253

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05-27-2024, 10:54 AM #1269

Dave, sent you a PM.  
Bill Gill

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**deemery**  
Senior Member

Join Date: Sep 2007  
Posts: 11493

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05-27-2024, 02:34 PM #1270

Some progress on the second block. Here's the cornice piece, a pair of Grandt "Wells Fargo" cornice pieces, glued to a styrene strip above, then squared off. Next I added a Tichy thin corbel on either side.



Next step is to add the height to the subwall for the cornice. There are 2 strips of Evergreen. One is .060 x .250, which is the same width as the front subwall (so the side subwall will overhang.) The other is a strip of .060 x .156, which is slightly wider. I needed to glue the first strip into position, and add the (black) styrene reinforcer to the -back- of the subwall, leaving the correct gap at top for the .156 strip later. Once the .250 and black piece were in place, I sanded flush with the side edges of the subwall. Finally, I added the longer .156 strip.



From left-to-right, completed front view, completed back view, work-in-progress. (But right after I took this photo, I realized that right-most piece was backwards, so I quickly removed the styrene pieces and reglued them the correct way. The acrylic is a bit more forgiving than styrene for disassembly, thankfully!)

Finally, a mock-up of showing the subwalls, 2 with cornice, at the approximate slope (1/4" rise)

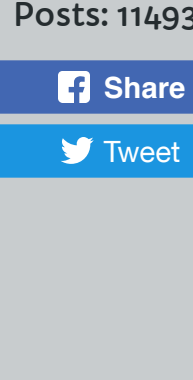


Tomorrow I'll add the brick sheeting which will go up to the top of the subwall. The cornice will be glued over top of the brick sheeting.

dave

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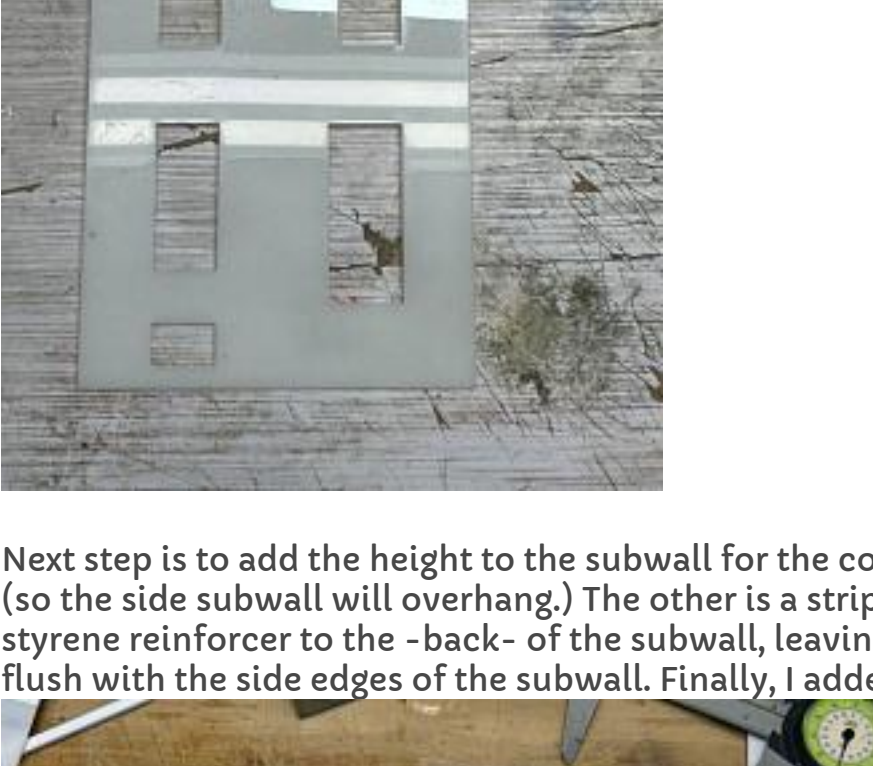
**deemery**  
Senior Member

Join Date: Sep 2007  
Posts: 11493

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05-28-2024, 10:27 AM #1271

Brick applied, cornice glued on the first of the 2nd block of houses. Here it's next to one of the first houses, to see how they look. The idea is to get a close family resemblance, but not be identical.

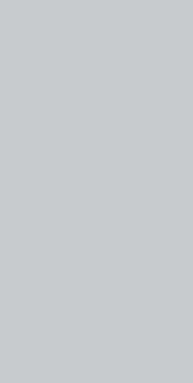


I'll do the second front, and then I'll have to wait for another package of cornice pieces to arrive. In the meantime, I can work on the side pieces.

dave

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**railman28**  
Senior Member

Join Date: Mar 2010  
Posts: 6713

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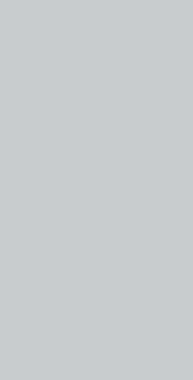
05-28-2024, 02:18 PM #1272

The row houses are progressing very nicely.

Bob

It's only make-believe

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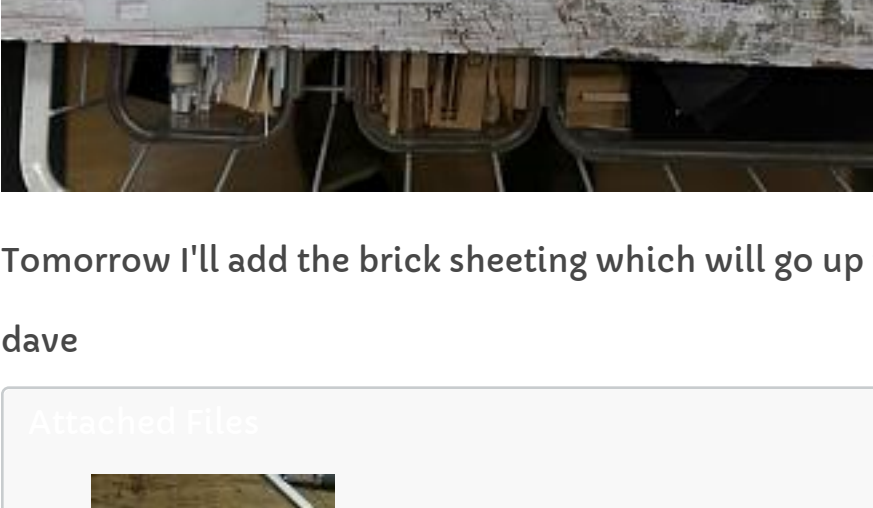
**deemery**  
Senior Member

Join Date: Sep 2007  
Posts: 11493

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05-28-2024, 03:36 PM #1273

2nd Block, front and sides. The left-most and right-most sides have windows (just in the first block)

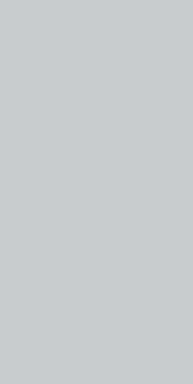


I have a bit more I can do before the cornice pieces arrive. In particular, I need to trim the brick sheets a bit to make sure they're plumb, etc. But overall this is coming along nicely.

dave

Modeling 1890s (because the voices in my head told me to)

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**PRR Modeller**  
Senior Member

Join Date: May 2022  
Posts: 2114

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05-29-2024, 06:55 AM #1274

Excellent modeling Dave.

Curt Webb  
Freelanced PRR Bellevue Sub

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**deemery**  
Senior Member

Join Date: Sep 2007  
Posts: 11493

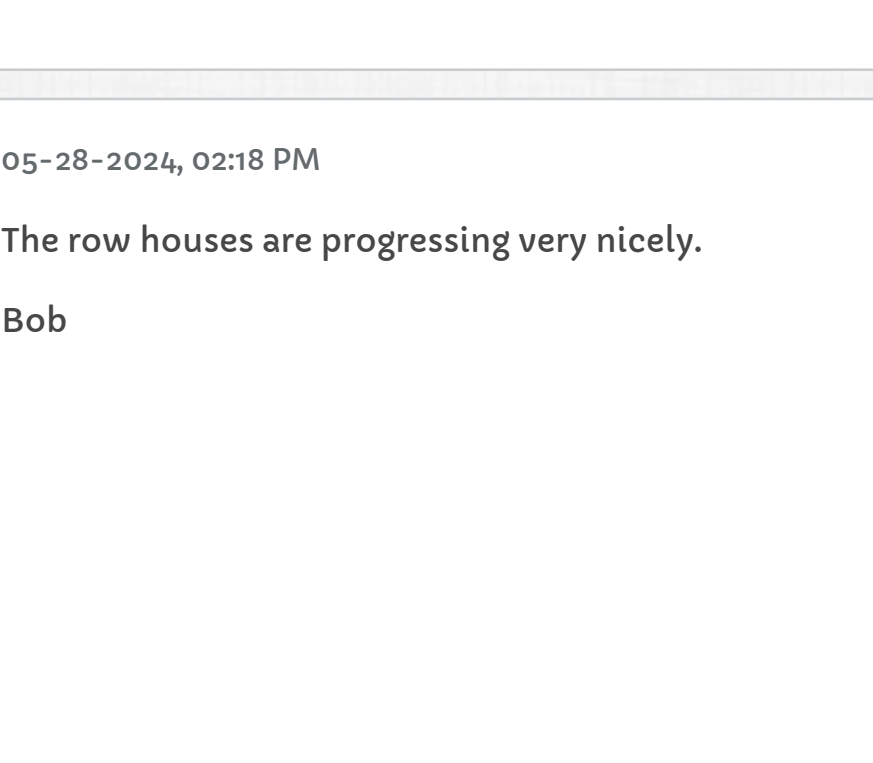
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05-29-2024, 02:36 PM #1275

I wanted the fronts to be plumb, so I braced the front against a 1-2-3 block and glued the floor into position:



And a mock-up of the two sets of row houses. That's 3/8" rise for the left set, but only 1/4" for the right set. I think that looks OK.



Once the right set is painted, I'll check it out again. And the backdrops should be installed before I make the final decision here, parts for that are due next week (along with the cornice pieces.)

dave

Last edited by deemery; 05-29-2024, 02:39 PM.

Modeling 1890s (because the voices in my head told me to)

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