



FINISHING AND DETAILING STRUCTURES

Dan Lewis, MMR

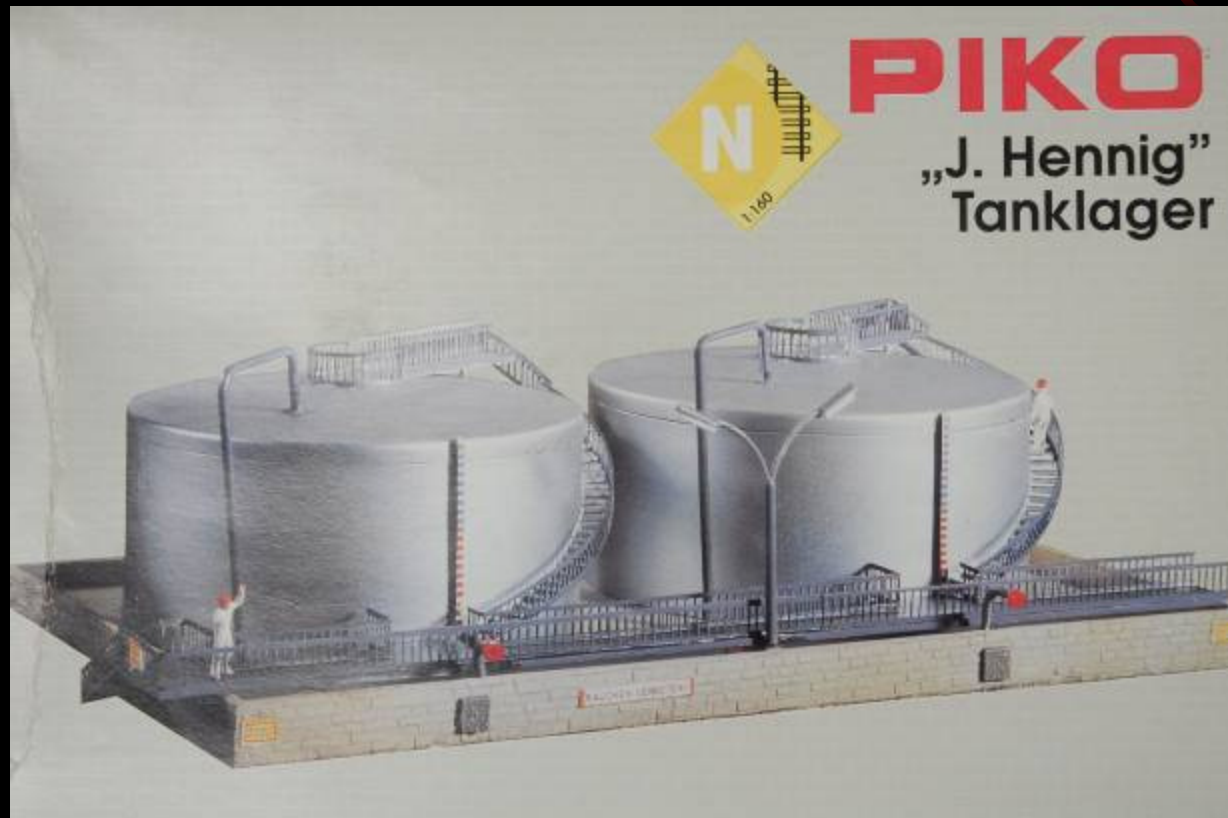
CHANGING THINGS



Many modelers prefer to change kits so that the final product is unique.

- *Kit-bashing or cross-kits*
- *Super-detailing*
- *Scratch-built additions*

European Tank Kit



Changing a Kit



American Kit (Walthers)



3-IN-1 BUILDING SET NOW AVAILABLE



Scratch-built Additions



DPM Additions



Additional Details (DPM)



BASIC PAINTING

- **Spray bombs**
- **Airbrush**
- **Brush painting**

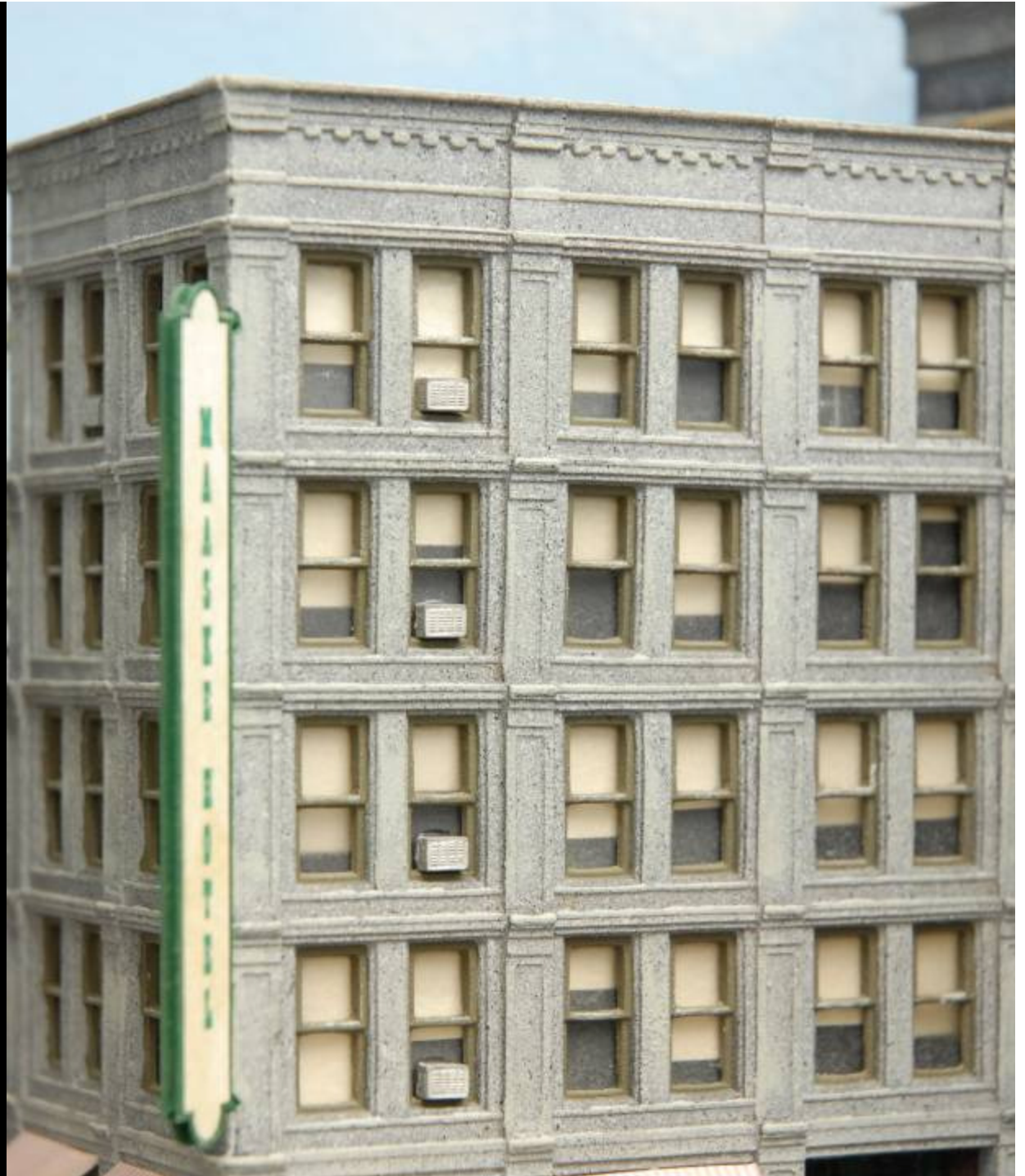
Keep in mind that you can use more than a single color, and especially with spray bombs, you can work “wet-in-wet”.



BASIC COLOR:
“wet-in-wet” orange and brown



**BASIC
COLOR:
“wet-in-wet”
gray with
white and
black
misted in**



BASIC COLOR: Orange with “dirty”
maroon as an overlay, then partially
sanded off



**BASIC COLOR: “Wet-in-wet”
orange and brown**



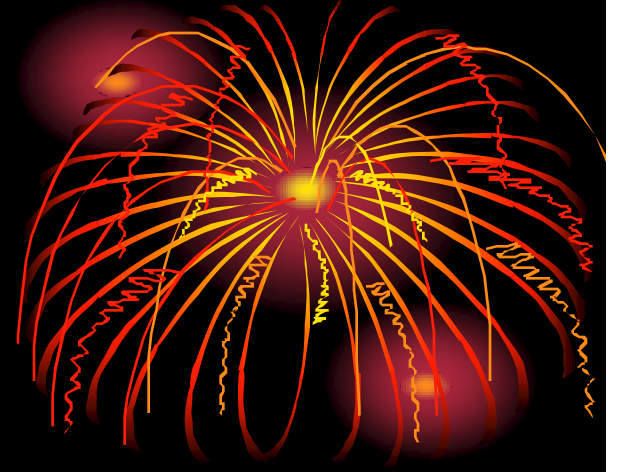
BASIC COLOR: Rust-oleum Texture Paint



This texture paint offers a textured surface as well as variegated color. It does not attack styrene.



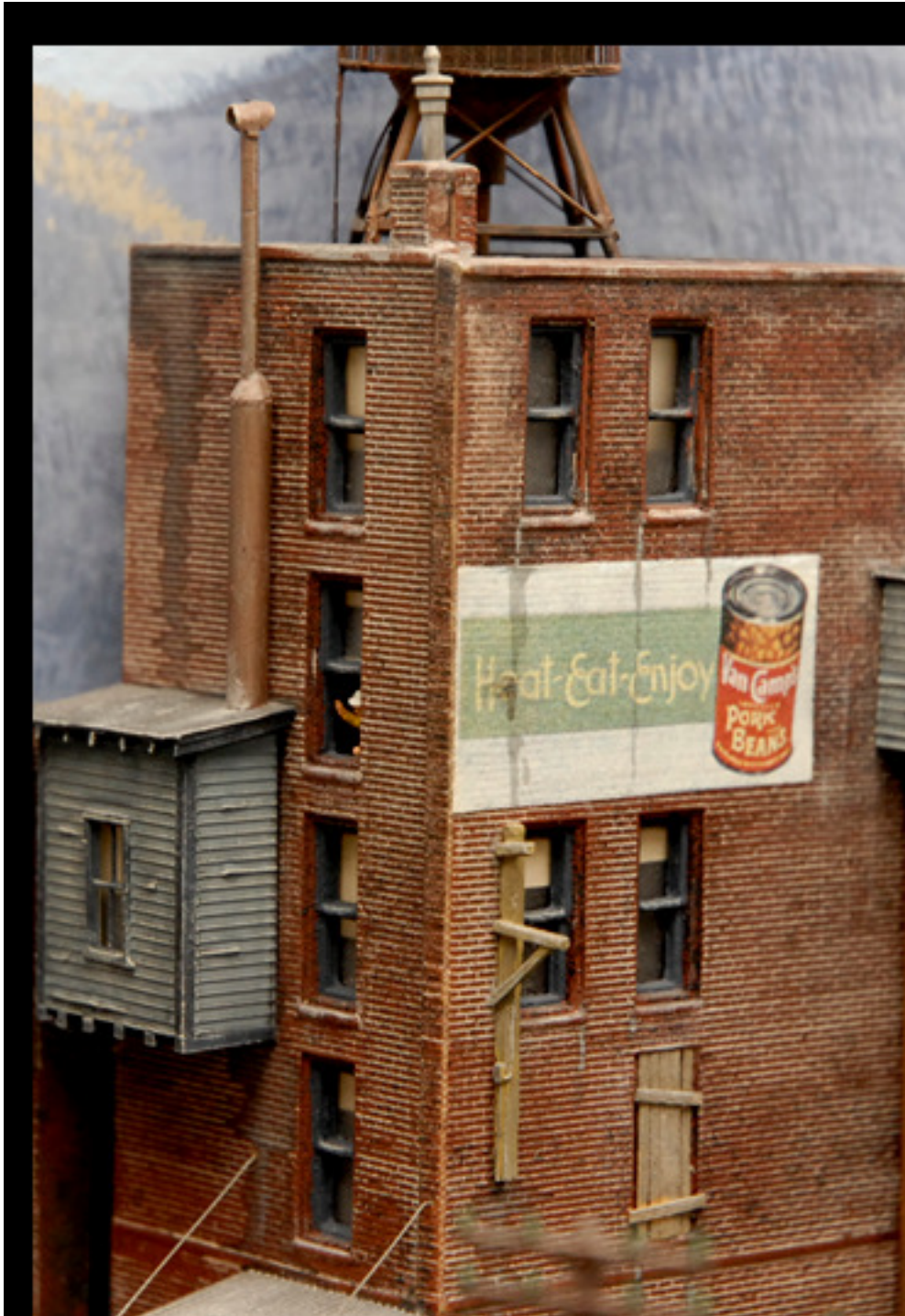
BRICK MORTAR



- **Slurry of *Polly S* gray and alcohol/ink mixture (two teaspoons to a pint of alcohol)**
- **Robert's Brick Mortar**
- **Two coats of different colors, one slightly sanded**
- **PaperCreek products**

Slurry of *Polly S* gray and alcohol/ink wash





ROBERTS' BRICK MORTAR

*Applied with a
brush.*

*Allowed to
dry.*

*Rubbed off
with a rag.*

BASIC COLOR *Boxcar red (solvent based)*

SECOND COLOR *Concrete (water based)*

Second color sanded lightly with 400-600 grit sandpaper



PaperCreek products



WOOD SURFACES

- **Pre-stained**
- **Post-stained**
- ***Prisma* markers**
- **Painted**
- **Solvent based applications**
- **Water based applications**



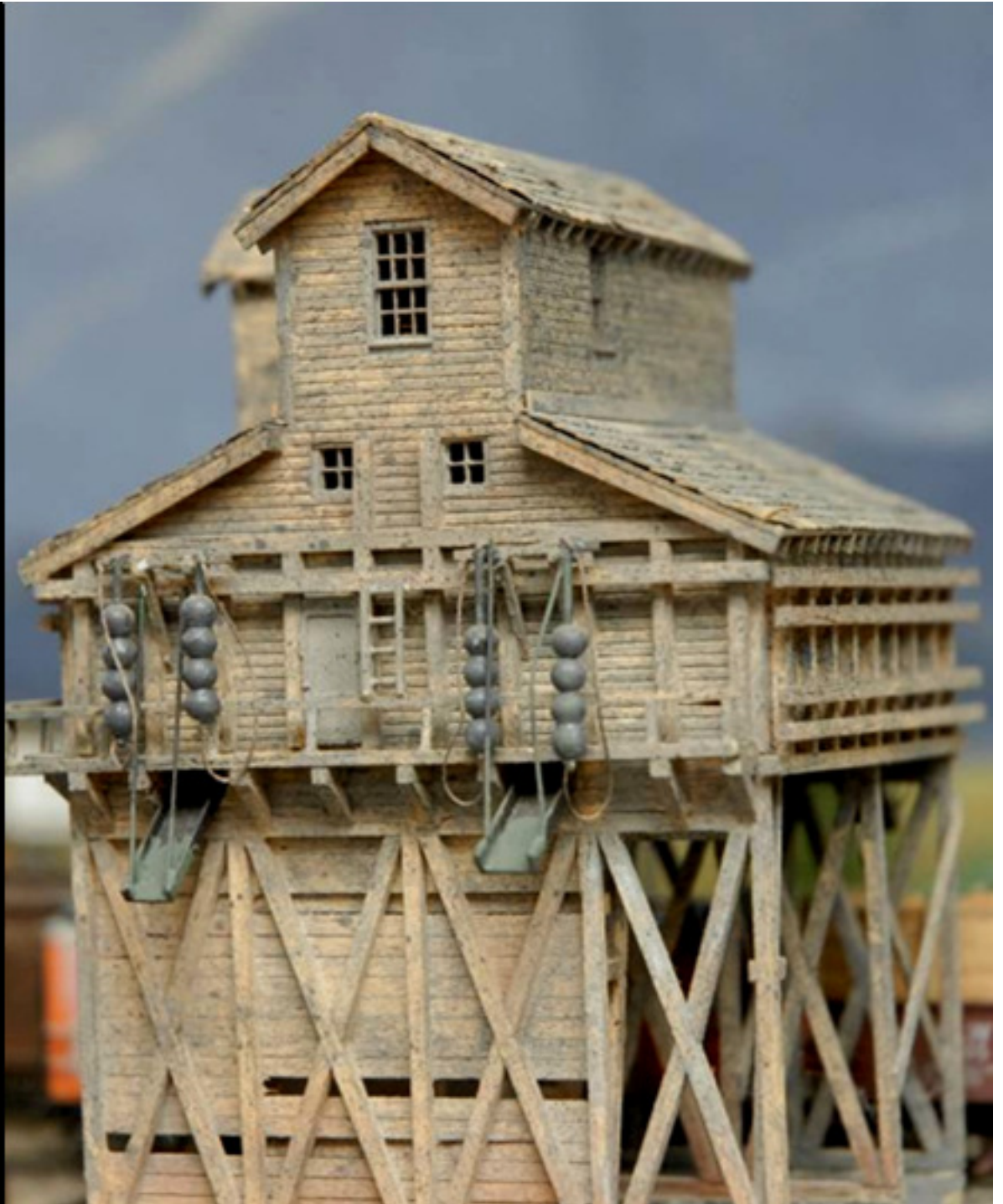
PRE-STAINED Use about three colors of stain to achieve variation



POST- STAINED

**Saturated
with a stain
of turpentine
and “dirty”
gray...**

**Misted while
wet with
spray bombs**



***PRISMA* MARKERS** These markers come in varying shades of gray and other colors demarcated by 50%, 60%, 70%, etc.



PAINTED WOOD Use alcohol/ink mixture as a wash after painting to help define the individual boards



SOLVENT BASED

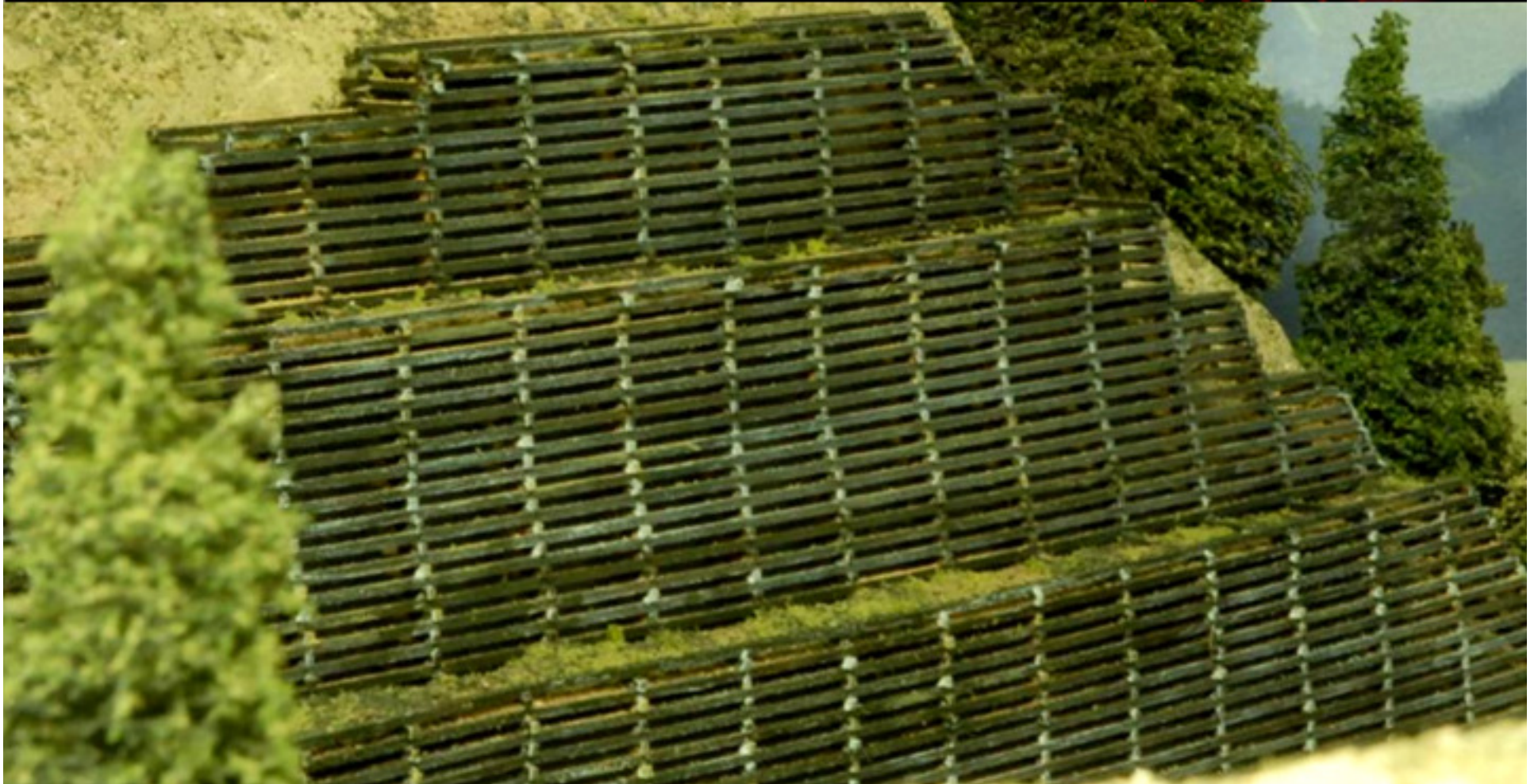
Post-stained with dirty *Dio-Sol*



WATER BASED Post-stained
with *Polly S* and alcohol as a solvent



WATER BASED Post-stained with
“Oily Black” *Polly S* and alcohol/ink mixture



LIGHTS

**Be sure to
paint the
insides of
lighted
buildings
black**

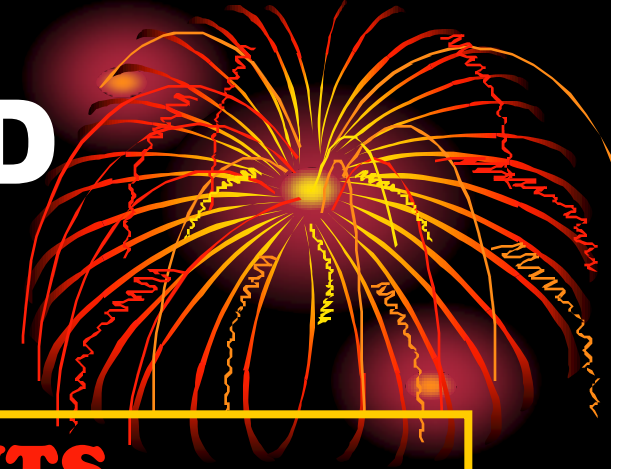


WEATHERING

- **Wash**
- **Wet-in-wet**
- **Dry-brush**
- **Chalk and powders**
- **Encrustation**
- **Etching**



BASIC TOOLS AND PIGMENTS



TOOLS

- *Brushes*
- *Sponge make-up applicators*
- *Blending stumps*
- *Half-pans*
- *Airbrush*
- *Solvents*

PIGMENTS

- *Paints*
- *Inks*
- *Chalks & powders*
- *Pastels*
- *Charcoal sticks*
- *Colored pencils*

WASH



- **Transparent or semi-transparent application of solvent and a minimum of pigment**
- **Solvents can be spirit-based or water based**
- **Amount of pigment can be varied depending upon the effect desired**

This structure was “washed” using alcohol/ink solvent and *Polly Scale* “Dirt” color. The underlying color, gray, easily shows through the transparent wash.



WASH



WET-IN-WET



Sometimes called a “bleed”, the wet-in-wet technique is the mixing of two wet colors (or more) on the model itself.

- ***After the first color is applied and still wet, the second color is applied over or adjacent to the first one.***
- ***Since both are wet, the colors “bleed” into each other.***

WET-IN-WET

Here, solvent (alcohol) has been “floated” over the whole sign. Then, Polly Scale “Rust” has been added while the solvent is still wet and allowed to “bleed” to create the water stain.



WET-IN-WET

Alcohol solvent was “floated” over the entire cement area (plaster), and Polly Scale “Rust” was added to create the vertical staining.



DRY-BRUSH



Dry-brush is the use of opaque paint applied so that it adheres lightly to only the highest contact points on the surface.

- *Requires a DRY brush.*
- *Thicker paint is preferable.*
- *Dip the brush in the paint and scrub off most of the paint on a paint rag.*
- *Then drag the brush across the surface of the model.*



DRY-BRUSH *Here, the eaves under the roof line have been dry-brushed with gray Polly Scale to simulate residual paint that has not completely deteriorated over many years.*

DRY-BRUSH *Here, the clapboards and brick have been dry-brushed with Polly Scale gray to add weathering texture to the structure.*



DRY-BRUSH *Dry-brushing simulates light that bounces from raised surfaces, such as, the trim around the windows. Use white or light gray.*



DRY PIGMENT

Powdered chalk, pastels, charcoal

Dry pigments can be purchased in art stores & some hobby shops:

- *Carr's or Bragdon's Weathering Powders*
- *Tempera pigments*
- *Pastels*

Dry pigments can also be created by rubbing chalks or pastels onto medium grit sandpaper.

- *Dry pigments can be applied with a brush.*
- *Unless the model is to be handled frequently, dry pigments do not need a fixative.*

Pastel dust has been applied to the top and lower parts of this oil tank.



Rust colored chalk dust has been brushed on the through girder bridge (heavier at the bottom).



**Chalk dust at the bottom of structures
simulates the mud splatters that occur
during rain, etc.**



Chalk dust also can be used on plaster, such as this cement retaining wall.



ODDBALL STUFF



Testors Dull-cote chemically reacts with alcohol to produce a unique “clouded” weathering effect.

PC board etchant (Archer’s is a common brand) is great for etching the surface of corrugated metal sheets. (Be sure to use hand & eye protection—etchant is a corrosive!)



The whitish encrustation on this tank was created by spraying it with Dullcote, and then after the surface had dried (about 15 minutes), spraying it with alcohol.

Here, each individual sheet of corrugated metal was dipped into etchant until it began to bubble. When removed from the etchant and the reaction stopped with water, chalk dust can be applied.



WINDOWS

While windows are often taken for granted, they offer one of the most distinctive opportunities for individualizing structures.





Glazing

*Micro Krystal Klear
(above)*

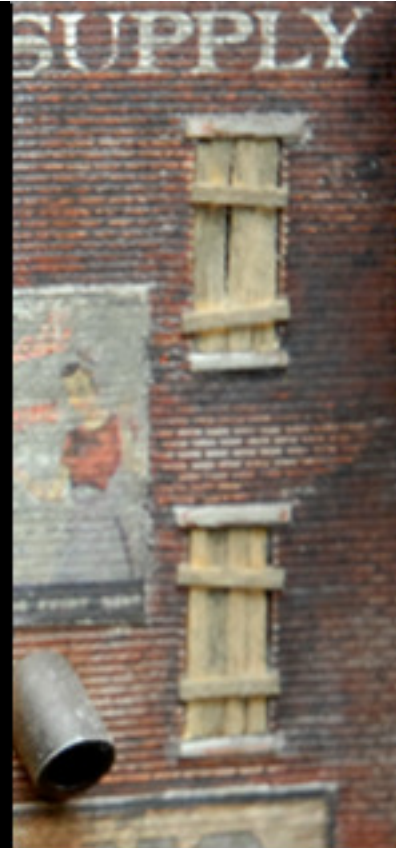
Acetate (right)



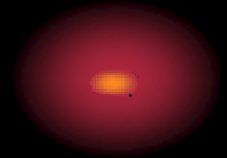
Open Windows



Boarded



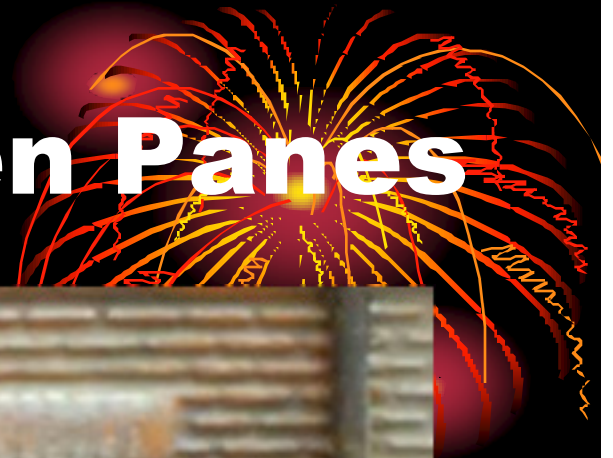
Bricked or Shuttered



Etched Mullions & Wood Frames



Broken Panes



Shades

Painted on the back of the glazing



Paper



Masking Tape



Colored Paper

Blinds, Curtains & Signs



DETAILS

Details are one of the best bets for making a structure look authentic.

- *Check old photographs in the public library for authenticity*
- *Take your own photos of period structures that still are standing*
- *Visit hobby shops around the country and even in other countries when traveling (you'll be surprised at what you might find available from small cottage industries)*

The Old Mill in Fenton, MI

Prototype Photo



Prototype

Milw station converted to a feed mill, Grass Range, MT



Finkbeiner Elevator

*Built from photos I took of the structure in Grass Range, Montana.
Colors, boarded windows, foundations, and doors would be hard to
“imagine” without photo reference.*



Period photos help direct attention to typical implements outside a structure.



Once again, actual photos offered the best resource for detailing this elevator from central Montana.

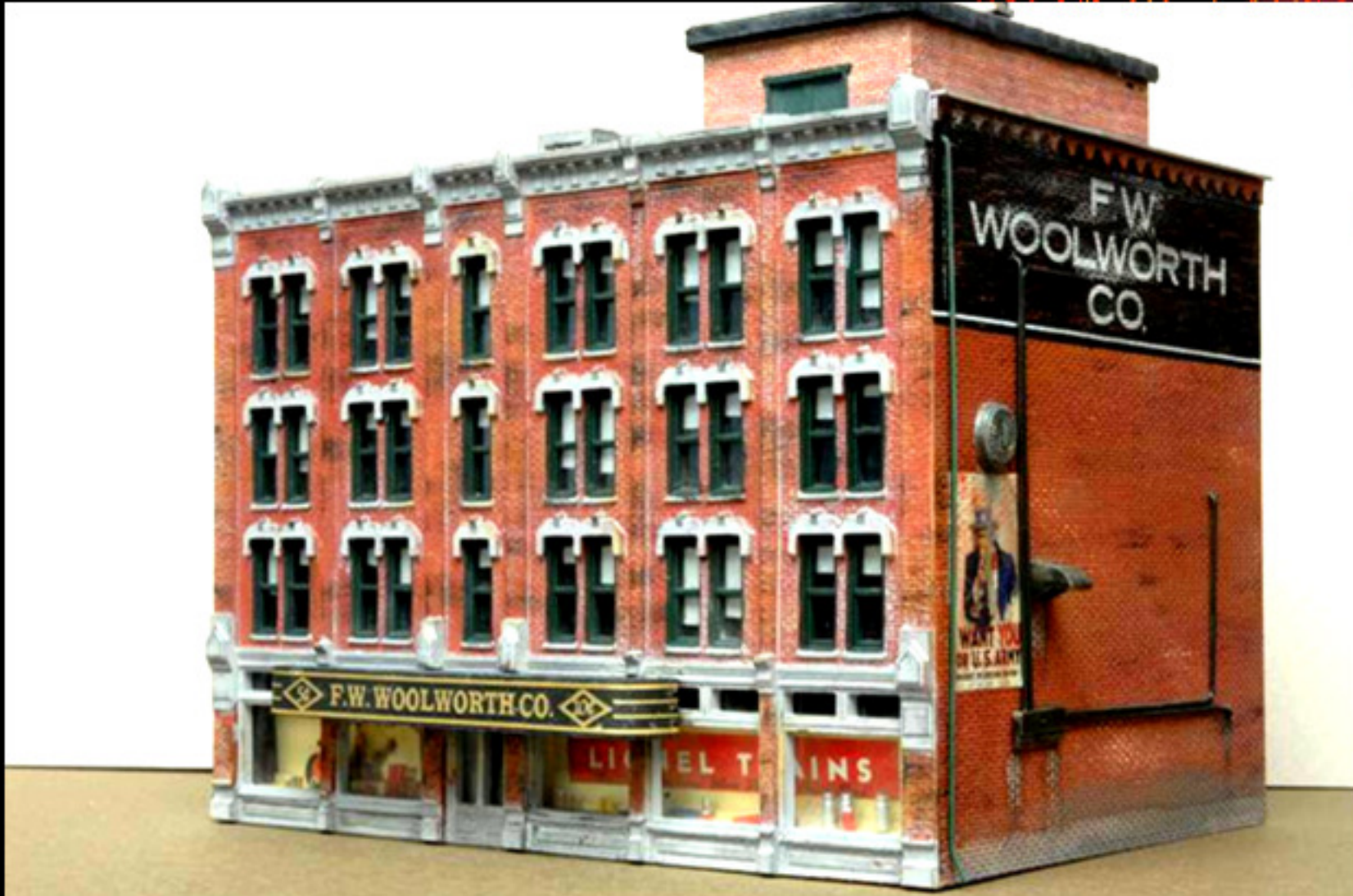


Prototype Feed Mill

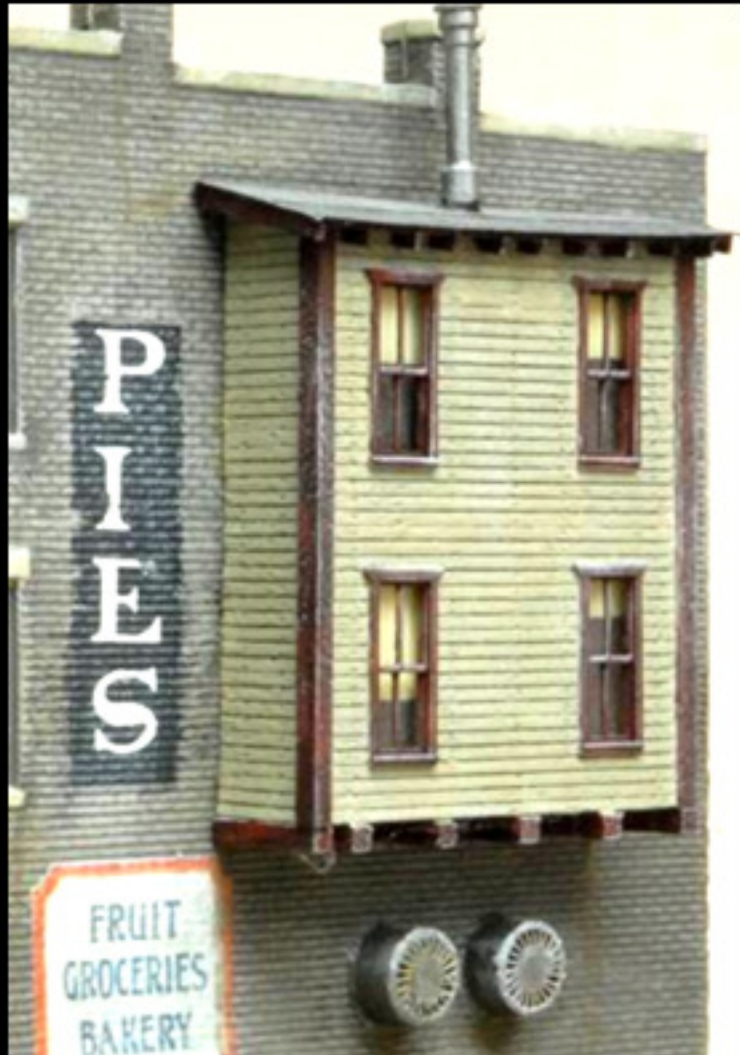
Grass Range, MT



Don't forget to detail the interiors, especially storefront windows. These details can be completed on a separate floor and inserted into the shell of the building.



Scratch-built bay-windows are easy to build and add character while changing the profile of kits.



Two different types of shingling suggest that the garage was an add-on at a later time.



This is a standard kit, but the roofs have been scratch-built and many outside details added. Don't forget to model some open doors!



City streets, especially, lend themselves to abundant details.



Phone booth

Street lights

Awnings

Street signs

Junk!



Tenements in the “run-down” section of town are also places begging to be super-detailed.



- Porches**
- Clothesline**
- Mailboxes**
- Tires**
- Cans, bottles, barrels & boxes**

The interiors of structures can be built on a separate base with the structure fitted over it like a shell.



If you model the West, snow fences are a common sight.



Detailing can be overdone, but most layouts could use more, not less.



Coffee grounds make admirable manure droppings! If you ship sheep or hogs as well as cattle, don't forget you need double-chutes.



**Mostly, detailing is a matter of logic
and observation as to what details to
add.**



Barrels
Acetylene
tanks
Tires
Pop
machine



The “Mack” old truck I found as a white metal kit in St. Helens, England, along with several other details.



**Antlers don't need to stay on the
Preiser deer!**



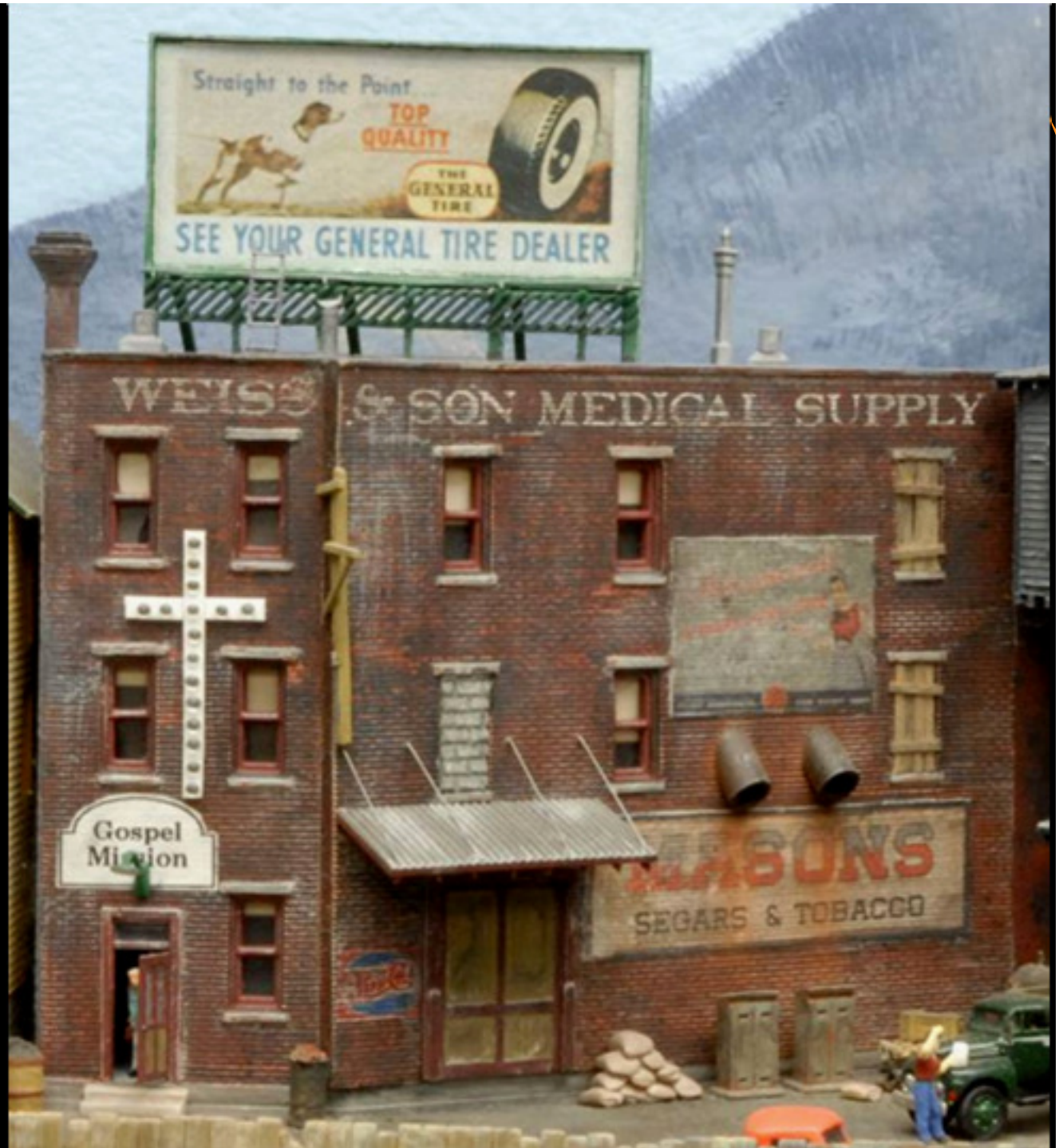
SIGNS

In additional to “filling out” scenes and structures, signs help establish era and locale.

**Good source of period signs:
<http://www.desperate.com>**



Older buildings, especially, often have signs for more than one former occupant.





Signs often show the era of your layout.

Signs can be “embossed” over siding and brick, which gives the effect that they are painted on.



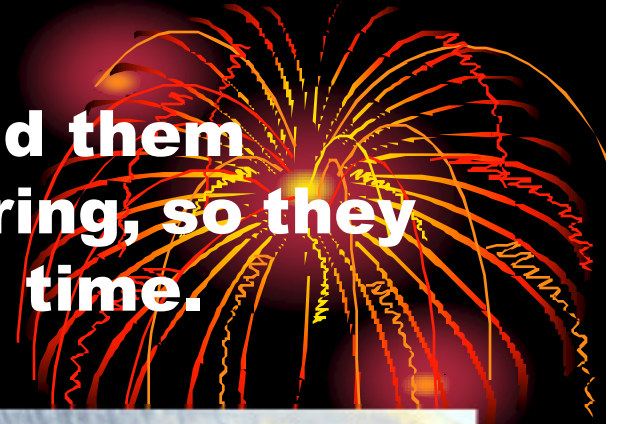
Many times, signs have no direct relationship to the building on which they appear.



**Not only do signs help establish era,
they also go a long way toward
establishing geographical location.**



When adding signs, be sure to add them before you complete the weathering, so they appear to have been there a long time.



Simple signs can be constructed on a computer.



Dry transfer lettered signs can be enhanced by shadow-lining the letters.




Model signage can be made from photos of actual signs.



Roof Access



Buildings in commercial districts often have access connections between them via crossovers or multi-levels.



**A roof
access
between
structures
becomes an
excellent
way to hide
the top edge
of a mirror.**

Multi-level structures can have street access to an upper story.



**Don't forget the visual appeal
of outside stairs and fire
escapes!**



Roof structures to hold mechanical elevator equipment offer a way to enhance larger structures.



ROOFS

**In ordinary life from street level,
one rarely sees much of roofs.**

**On layouts, they are very
prominent and call for more
attention.**



Wood Shingle Roofs:

Use registration lines on the sub-roof in order to keep the courses of shingles evenly space (or curved, if the roof is sagging).



Tile roofs can be constructed from Evergreen corrugated stock by scribing horizontal lines.



Composition shingles can be constructed from brown paper packaging tape.

Corrugated metal roofs can be painted; they also can be etched with PC board etchant, then weathered with chalks.



Tarpaper roofs can be simulated with paper. Dry-brushing brings out the highlights.



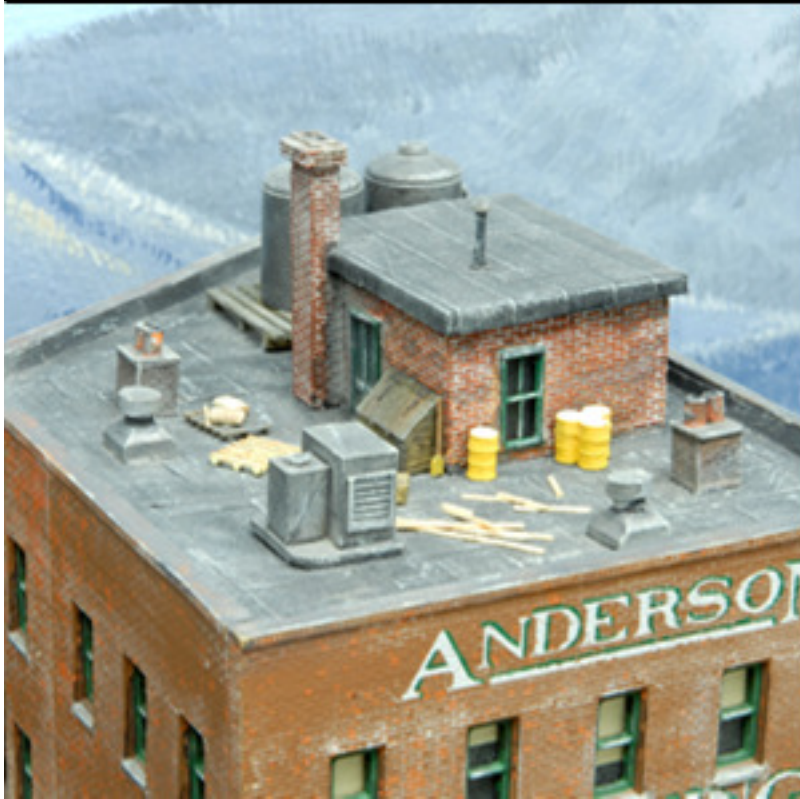
Use gloss black to simulate tar sealant.



Leaving some portions of the roof exposed allows viewers to see the “inside” stuff!

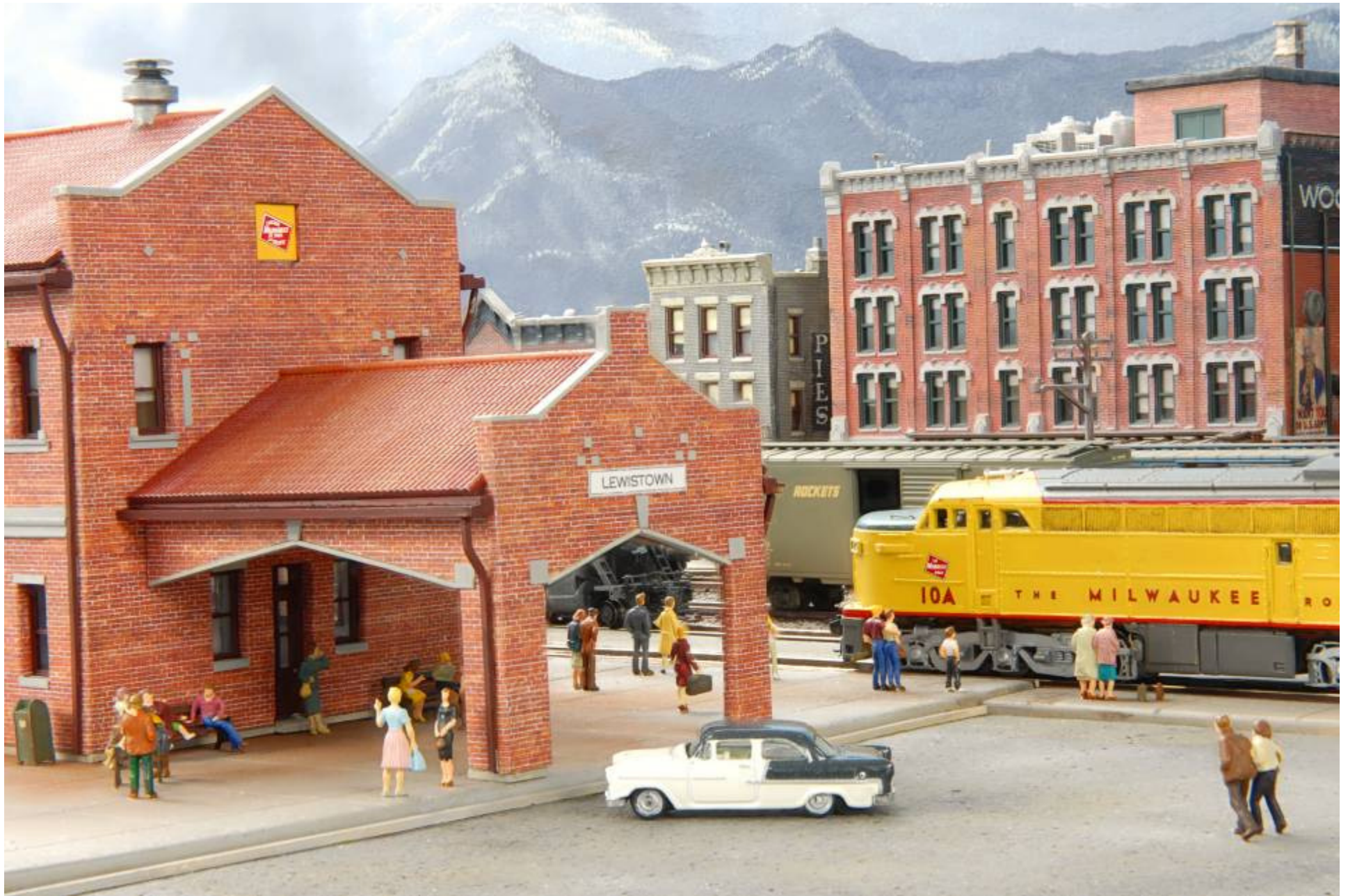


Especially on flat roofs, roof clutter makes an excellent opportunity for extra detailing!





Pulling It All Together...











**Thanks for your
hospitality!**



That's All Folks!