The Crossbuck

THE OSWEGO VALLEY RAILROAD ASSOCIATION

Newsletter, October 2025, Volume 3, #4, Kent Dristle editor

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OVRRA at the Thousand Islands Train Show

For many years OVRRA has displayed its traveling layout at the Thousand Islands Train Show in Clayton, NY and this year was no exception. Set up day was Friday, September 5 and the show itself was held on the weekend of September 6 and 7 in the Cerow Arena. It was gratifying to hear from several of the shows patrons that they had looked forward to seeing our layout display again, having remembered from past years, and additionally we heard from some folks who having come to the train show for the first time had their expectations exceeded. Like last year, our two most popular modules were Shawn's animated carnival display and Kent's Onondaga Lake Parkway bridge accident scene. A surprising number of people knew exactly where the real Parkway bridge was located despite the fact that it is to be found 90 miles south of Clayton.

Many thanks to all who helped with the set up and take down of the layout. Having well labeled diagrams and transport carts has made this process much more efficient. Thanks to Steve's friend Keith for lending us the trailer we've used for transporting nearly all of the layout items (as many as we could fit). This year a special thanks goes to Shawn and Charlie for creating foam cradles within the storage bins for many of our layout structures. This is a big improvement over the old packing system and will help protect the buildings from damage during transport.■

Figure 1: The Empire Builder moves through a rural area on the OVRRA layout at the Clayton show.

Figure 2: Bumper posts have now been installed at the bottom of the ramp.

Update on Renovations at the Grange

We are very happy to report that all of the moldings have finally been installed in all of the upstairs rooms of the Grange, including the ceiling moldings in the entryway. This has been fussy, finish carpentry work that has required attention to detail. By painting the walls and staining & finishing the moldings separately before installation, we were able to get the kind of sharp clean lines where moldings meet wall that would not have been achievable simply by masking them off, had they already been in place. Kent did most of the molding installation with help from Bob, Charlie, and Steve. The staining and finishing of moldings was done primarily by Steve and Tina with some help from Kent. A new window shade has been hung in the south facing window of the office. Pam liked it well enough that she has ordered four more for the south windows in the big room. On the outside, Bill Dexter with help from Charlie have installed the two bumper posts which are located at the bottom end of the ramp. They are now painted bright yellow and are extra tall so they should stay visible above the high snowbanks in the winter.

What remains to be done: We still need to install insulation in the attic and the four additional window shades need to be mounted in the south windows of the big room. We have come a long way in the last 16 months. We have a wonderful location for our club's home activities and our presence seems to be well appreciated. Thanks to all who have helped make this possible.■

Update on the HO scale layout

Several minor improvements to our HO scale layouts (both the traveling layout and the Grange layout) have been made, and there also have been a couple of major ones, one is common to both layouts and the other to the Grange layout.

Beginning with the upgrades common to both: We have re-arranged some of the buildings in the "city" portion of the layout into a more realistic configuration. The Greyhound Bus station has been moved closer to the train station, the concrete street that follows the mainline tracks around the curve on the city module has been completed all the way to the brick street, and several city business structures have been shuffled into a more sensible arrangement. The wrought iron fence that separates the concrete street from the inside mainline track has been completed all the way over to the brick street as well.

Shawn has donated a set of high-voltage transmission line towers that can be used on the coal mine, logging, and tunnel modules, as well as at least one more adjacent module. A lumber warehouse and siding track to serve it have been added to the icing module.

Work has commenced on a new series of shorter connector tracks for the "bridge" module with the football field. The remaining track distance will be made up for with short track segment fixed to the surface of the bridge module on either side of the hatch cover. We hope this will reduce or even eliminate a troublesome source of derailments.

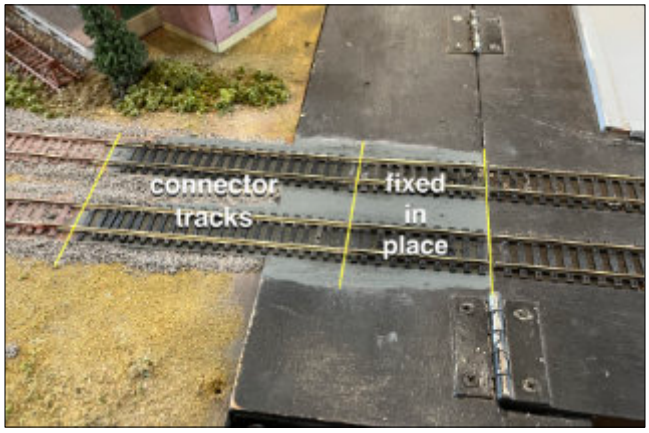


Figure 3: Re-worked track joints where "bridge" (football field) module joins a conner module.

The Grange layout now has a completely revamped module on its corner near the northern entrance door to the big room. That module now sports a diorama of the Grange neighborhood. (See the article on the next page for more details.) That module, formerly known as the "meat packing" module has been renamed the "Grange" module. The drill track on the Grange module has been extended on to the adjacent icing module where it connects to the aforementioned siding that serves the lumber warehouse. The Grange module along with the old yard sections do not travel and will continue to be permanent fixtures in the Grange building.■

Make a Donation to OVRRA

There are 2 ways:

Go to OVRRA.org and click the "Donate" button

Or Scan the QR code to the right

A Special Celebration

OVRRA helps commemorate the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Mt. Pleasant Grange

As the Mt. Pleasant Grange's 150th anniversary approached, OVRRA members pondered what we could do to help with the celebration. During the past winter, Kent had built an HO scale replica of the Grange building. It wasn't hard for us to imagine that this model of the Grange could become part of a larger diorama that showcased the Grange in its natural setting, and could also be blended into the HO scale train layout we have set up in the Grange's big room upstairs. That idea made a lot of sense because the land slopes back from the front of the Grange building so much so that ground level is actually below the floor of the kitchen at the rear of the Grange basement. The Grange model alone would never look quite right sitting on a flat shelf or even on the flat surface of a layout module. In order to place the Grange model in a realistic setting, we'd need to create a *contoured* ground surface for the Grange diorama. We would, in fact want to represent the neighborhood in which the Grange resides–essentially the hamlet of Mt. Pleasant. And so work on that began in June of this year.

Figure 4: the Grange neighborhood, including the church, the cemetery, houses, and the Grange building itself.

By mid-September, the work was complete and the diorama was fully integrated into the former "meat packing" module, now renamed the "Grange" module. On September 19, the completed Grange module was unveiled to Grange president Pam Mossotti and vice-president Wendell Howard for the first time.

Constructing the model of the Grange building

Kent started construction of the model of the Grange building in January of 2025. Using measurements taken within the building along with numerous photographs, Kent sketched out of paper the southern and eastern elevations of the building to HO scale (1:87). Kent determined that Tichy Train Group had high quality HO scale windows that almost perfectly matched the dimensions of the Grange's windows. With only a few modifications, Tichy doors would also be a good match for the prototype building. Kent placed the order with Tichy. For the walls and roofs, Kent used both Evergreen and Plastruct sheet styrene along with some special shapes for trim work. For the roof, Kent used Clever Model's gray shingle roof "texture" which is actually an image of gray architectural shingles which can be purchased at nominal cost and downloaded for printout. The nice part about it is that once you buy the pdf file, you can print as many copies of it as you may need. This came in handy later when Kent needed the same roof shingle pattern for the model of the Mt. Pleasant Methodist church. Kent also used Clever Models pdf patterns for the brick chimney and the foundation wall of the Grange.

Figure 5: The completed Grange building model sits on Kent's dining room table.

And finally, Kent wanted the model to have working external light fixtures. It was not possible to find an exact match in HO scale for the Grange's outdoor lights, but Evans Designs had a close approximation in their on-line

catalog, so Kent ordered and installed them. The actual Grange building has six dormers on its distinctive gambrel roof. Kent wanted them to all look exactly the same on the model, so he made a pattern and then had the styrene cut out on the Dristle's Cricut machine. (See the July 2024 issue of *The Crossbuck* for an article on using the Cricut machine in model railroading.) As a final touch, Kent installed a replica of the service entrance cable and electric meter on the front of the building.

Constructing the other buildings

The Grange neighborhood diorama also features two houses, a garage, and a church. Time constraints did not allow for the construction of exact replicas of the other houses, so we made use of existing house models that the club possessed. A small one car garage was constructed to go with one of them. The other major structure on the diorama was the church. Again, time did not allow for the construction of an exact replica and so, after consulting with other board members, it was decided to make some modifications to an existing church model for use on the diorama.

After looking over the church models the club already possessed, we decide to make use of the Woodland Scenics country church model. Like the Mt. Pleasant Methodist church, the Woodland Scenics church had an "L" addition, but it was facing in the wrong direction. Consequently, Kent swapped the two side walls around. We needed for the side walls of the "L" to be longer than those on the existing model, so new ones would be constructed from left over styrene from the Grange building model. The exiting roof section would no long fit, so again, sheet styrene was used to create new roof surfaces upon which the Clever Models gray shingle paper pattern would be used. The only original roof that was used on the finished model was on the top of the steeple. Kent painted it to match the other roofs. Again, the model church is not an exact replica, but it is close enough for our purposes. We wanted for the main focus to be on the model of the Grange, and that's what we put the most effort into.

Constructing the diorama base

The diorama would sit on the mostly blank area of the former "meat packing" module. Given the amount of time it would take to build it, it was determined that the diorama should be constructed off-site on a piece of plywood, and then brought to the Grange and fastened down shortly before the unveiling would occur. This would help preserve the element of surprise. Using left over floor-protection material, Kent, along with Charlie's help, made a template of the exact area the diorama would occupy. Then Kent cut that exact shape out of ¼" sheet of lauan plywood, which Charlie supplied. Kent downloaded a Google Earth photo of the actual Grange neighborhood to work from. The S-curve in County Route 45 through the hamlet of Mt. Pleasant would pretty closely fit into the area we had to work with, however we had to make a few compromises here and there but still preserve the elevations around the model of the Grange building and accurately show how the land sloped downward from the front of the building toward the back. The highest point on the actual road is in front of the church, but we couldn't represent it that way on the diorama and still have the model road cross the railroad tracks at grade, so we moved the highest point in the road back to the parking lot between the Grange and church. Kent created the contours of the landscape with a combination of foam board, wood, and plaster applied over the plywood base. Kent created the highway surface by troweling on some left over thin-set mortar from an old tile project. We wanted to show the cemetery across the road from the Grange and we did have enough room to do that, but our model of the cemetery would have to be "selectively compressed" a bit. The northeastern side of the cemetery is all forested. We didn't have enough room to fit both the cemetery and the trees between the highway and the railroad tracks, so we opted to place the trees on a berm in between the drill track and the mainline tracks. That worked out quite well. We had to terminate the Mt. Pleasant Road at a dead end because it was just not possible to have yet another railroad crossing on that road as well.

Finally, we agreed that we should cut down the hill side on the adjacent "icing" module to match the elevations behind the church. At Charlie's suggestion, a few more grave markers were placed on the cut-down hill behind the church. Kent cut some plexiglass panels and Charlie installed them on the front of the module. Finally, we were ready.

Unveiling the diorama

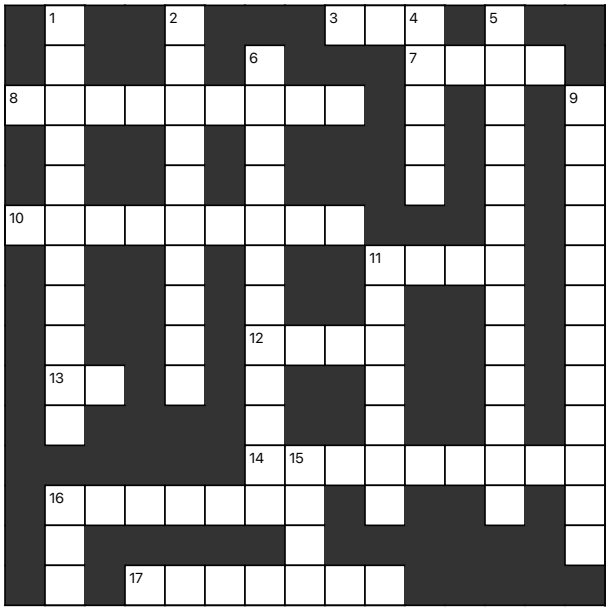
OVRRA club secretary Charlie Hewlett had arranged to meet with Pam at the Grange on Friday, September 19, the day before the Grange's September waffle breakfast, ostensibly to discuss how OVRRA could contribute to the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Grange. As Steve led Pam and Wendell upstairs , Kent, Charlie, and several other club members were waiting by the Grange module in the big room. Upon entering the room, Pam's and Wendell's attention was directed toward the new module. Both expressed surprise and amazement. After marveling over the details of the model, they both expressed to OVRRA members their thanks and gratitude. We all agreed to encourage patrons of the upcoming waffle breakfast to come upstairs to view the diorama, and indeed they did come.■

Figure 6: The completed diorama is revealed to Pam and Wendell.

A message from Pam Mossotti

"Thank you again for the wonderful module depicting Mt. Pleasant! It was truly a stunning and wonderful surprise."■

OVRRA Crossword Puzzle #2



Across

3. System that automatically manages train movements
7. Artificial mound in a marshaling yard used to move cars via gravity
8. Montreal-Chicago service on the CNR
10. Business that currently occupies the former New York Central passenger station in Oswego
11. A short, dead ended siding
12. 1904 inventor of a rail coach ride simulator which included rocking motions and projected images
13. Less than 4 feet, 8 ½ inches
14. Number of modules in OVRRA's HO scale Grange layout
16. Rail yard employee who is responsible for moving locomotives through engine servicing facilities
17. Flags or lamps attached to the front and rear of trains

Down

1. Former name of the "Grange" module on the OVRRA layout
2. Raised central section of a coach roof with vents & lights
4. European railway term meaning to switch cars
5. GN express train between Chicago and Seattle
6. Inventor of the railway air brake system
9. Merged with the New York Central Railroad in February of 1968
11. A light motorized inspection vehicle the can ride the rails
15. Merged with the DL&W in October of 1960
16. Slang for an incompetent railroad employee

Glues and Adhesives
by Kent Dristle

Without exception, all model railroaders have to open up a container of glue at some point either to repair something that is broken or to assemble kit parts into an organic whole. The big question is: which glue is best suited for a particular job? Based on my own experience and the wisdom of other modelers I've known, here are the guidelines for the glues I use when making that decision.

Glues for Styrene and other plastics: There are two forms of this glue, paste in a tube and liquid in a bottle. If you have well mating parts where the joint is thin and you can clamp or hold them in that position, then the liquid glue is your best bet. It will wick into the joint via capillary action and weld the two pieces of styrene together. If your need is for a gap filling glue, then go with the paste type from the tube. *Testors* sells the paste kind in the red tube or the blue tube. The stuff in the blue tube is more kid-friendly (I think the fumes are not as dangerous) but this kind of glue isn't as strong as what comes in the red tube. I find the paste type of glue better for laminating pieces of styrene together. Certain types of liquid glue for plastics also work well with ABS plastics. Check the label on the bottle to be sure. Just because it's plastic doesn't necessarily mean that styrene glue will work with it.

Fast-setting glues: Within this category you will find the cyanoacrylate or "super glues". Like liquid styrene glues, these can be used to bond well mating parts together but can be used on a wider range of materials than styrene glues. Cyanoacrylates come in different consistencies. The really low viscosity (runny) kind sets up very quickly, but watch out: You can all too easily glue your fingers together or glue your parts to the work surface with it. I always have a bottle of "unbonding" solution nearby just in case. You can also find "thicker" super glues with longer setting times. These will actually give you some time to adjust the parts for a good fit, whereas with the runny kind, you get only one chance to line up the parts before the glue sets up. I mostly avoid the really thin, instant setting superglues because the stuff runs all over the place and it's hard to control where it goes. If you must use it, get an applicator that lets you meter out one little drop at a time. The thicker super glues, which I prefer, are also better at gap filling.

Quick-grab glues: Here, we are talking about things like rubber cement and *Walther's Goo*. Typically you would apply a bit to both surfaces and than wait for the glue to become tacky, then stick the parts together. The quick grab glues are great for making emergency repairs to a model while you are setting up for a train show. Be careful though; getting the glue off from surfaces you don't want it on can be difficult, especially your fingers. I've had the misfortune of getting some on my fingers and then discovering that they want to stick to everything I touch. Another thing to beware of: *Walther's Goo* can attack plastics, specifically it can make them warp. Don't try to glue a thin styrene sign board on to a building with it. Another kind of quick grab glue would be a foam or ceiling tile adhesive like *Loktite PL300*. I've used it to glue down cork roadbed and foam board when constructing scenery.

White (PVA) glues: The most commonly available brand of white glue is *Elmer's GlueAll* and it's weaker cousin *Elmer's School Glue*. I like to use white glue when working with cardstock, paper, and matboard. I like to print out signs using my computer's office software. White glue is excellent for attaching the paper sign to buildings. If you want the painted on look, you can gently sand down the paper until it is very thin and then apply your white glue and burnish it into the structure, even if the structure's surface has a brick or clapboard texture. If you should damage the thin paper a bit as you do so, it will just make your sign look weathered and worn. White glue also works well when gluing together wood parts of craftsman style structures.

Just be sure to use lots of braces on the interior of the walls to help prevent warping. I particularly like a stronger, faster setting brand of white glue called *Weldbond*. Upon gluing parts together, instead of waiting overnight to continue, I can resume work on the model after only an hour or two. I do not use *Weldbond* for laminating pieces or otherwise gluing large flat surfaces together (like signboards) because it sets up too fast. For those I use Elmer's. White glues can be used with a variety of dissimilar materials. I've used it where I've needed to glue plastic or cast metal parts to wood, such as you might find in craftsman kits.

Epoxy glue: Epoxies are the strongest glues I would typically have use for. They are particularly good at gluing dissimilar materials together where strength is required. I've used them in bridge construction. For example: Epoxy has worked well for me when I've glued styrene bridge girders to aluminum U-channel in the Parkway Bridge model and within the vertical lift bridge model on my home layout. Epoxies come in two parts, a resin and a hardener that must be mixed just prior to use. The amount of working time can vary from about 5 minutes up to 6 hours. Just be aware that any left over epoxy you've already mixed can't be saved. You cannot stop it from hardening, even if you try to seal it up in an air tight container.

PSA glue: Liquid PSA glue is a good choice when you want to glue clear "window" material to the interior of a structure model. This adhesive looks like white glue right out of the bottle but after several minutes turns clear and tacky. At this point you can position and stick the two materials together. Note that PSA glue never really dries. It will remain tacky practically forever. Therefore, it should be used only in places where any ooze out will not be touched, such as structure interiors.

Spray adhesives: These contact adhesives such as *Krylon Spray Adhesive* are for craft and hobby work. They are quite flammable, so work outdoors, away from any ignition sources. I've used them for laminating paper images to cardstock and matboard. As with any contact adhesive, you need to carefully position your materials before pressing them together. Technically, *hairspray* would count as a spray adhesive. Some modelers have used hairspray to stick small pieces of colored scenic foam to tree armatures.

Other craft glues: In this category we find things like *matte medium* which I've used in diluted form to glue down scenery material such as "grass" and "ballast" along the tracks. (See the article about track ballasting in the April 2024 issue of *The Crossbuck*.) *Modge Podge* also works well for many kinds of scenic materials. *Glue sticks* may also be considered, and I have used them in the past for gluing paper patterns on to matboard or cardstock, but in my experience, I would opt only for the extra strength kind, which can be hard to find. I usually get better results with white glue as I have found that glue stick bonds will fail in time. Just be careful to not go crazy with the white glue. Too thick a layer will result in bumps and wrinkles.

When a glue joint fails: When previously glued pieces come apart, the first thing you need to do is assess as best you can why the joint failed. Maybe it was subjected to excessive shock and stress (for example, you dropped the model on the floor). If that's the case, you can probably re-glue using the same kind of glue as before. If the joint failed in normal use or after very little use, then maybe the wrong kind of glue was originally used. Another possibility is that the joint was contaminated with something like oil or grease. Maybe the parts did not mate well and there was too little contact surface at the joint. In any event, you should clean off what remains of the original glue before applying more adhesive. In these events, experience will be your best teacher.■

Find us on the web at OVRRA.org

OVRRA also has a facebook page

www.facebook.com/OVRRAinc

Upcoming Events

later this year

State Fair Train Show ……...……Nov. 1, 2

Holiday Express Train Show-Volney…Nov. 8, 9

Christmas in Mexico……..Dec. 6, 7

Membership Dues for 2026

Regular members	$24/year
Family membership	$48/year
Junior member	$12/year
Youth member	$12/year
Associate member	$12/year

If made in a single payment before the March 2026 meeting, you are eligible for a 30% discount.

Update on Waffle Breakfasts

The next Waffle Breakfast will be on Saturday, October 18. The theme will be "apples".

The Grange has added a waffle breakfast for November which will be held on Nov. 15th. The theme will be "sausage and gravy."

If you like this newsletter, let us know. If you would like to contribute to the newsletter (photos, articles, notices) please contact the editor, Kent Dristle at the email listed below.

Thank you.

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