The Bedford Falls Gazette Gets a New Office

By Bruce Oberleitner

Sometimes a model railroad joke can go to far. This is the case with the Bedford Falls Gazette, the local newspaper for my Port Mackenzie Railroad. The gazette started as an April Fool's joke in 2008 to highlight some radical changes that were being done to my railroad. This lead me to thinking that it might be fun to model an office for the thing.

The story line is that the Gazette took over the premises of Dr. Wessco's Famous Snake Oil Company when Dr. Wessco left town rather suddenly one evening. The building is a Durango Press (i.e. now owned by J.L. Innovative Design) newspaper office kit. I started by adding 1/8" Sq. Basswood bracing to the insides of all the walls. The wood was then primed and the castings were sprayed with gray equipment primer spray paint. Once this dried, I lightly dry brushed on some Apple Barrel toffee paint. This allowed some of the gray primer paint to be seen under the toffee color creating a faded wall weathering effect.

Figure 1: It's time to deliver the news to the townsfolk of Bedford Falls as workers load the truck with the local ~~Fish Wrap~~ newspaper hot off the presses!

The castings (i.e. Windows and Doors) were painted with a coat of Apple Barrel sandstone paint. The windows and doors were installed on the laser cut walls while they were still flat on my workbench. Clear styrene was added to the inside of each of the four windows.

Aleene's tacky glue was used to assemble the building. A sheet of 1/4" graph paper was covered with wax paper and used to insure the walls were aligned properly while the glue dried. I assembled two sets of walls together and waited for the glue to dry before assembling the entire structure.

The tarpaper roof was done with masking tape. The tape was overlapped a scale 3' starting at the bottom of the roof. I then mixed the Apple Barrel Black and Sandstone paints together and painted the entire roof with that light gray blend of paint. Earth toned weathering chalks were brushed on with a soft brush. Some gray chalk coloring was added to the roof and the structure was sealed with Testor's Dullcoat.

Figure 2: Details make a difference! Here a local patron is buying the paper from the printer while his boss supervises the sale.

Details

The Truck is from Life Like (i.e. Now Walthers) and has been painted with Apple Barrel paints to give the wooden stake area a more realistic appearance.

I recently found a product at Michael's craft store called Sophisticated Finishes. They market a series of paints that add either Copper, Marble or Rust coloring to a model. I used the rust product and it is applied in two parts. The first part adds some metallic paint to the model. The second part then rusts the metallic paint. As you can see in figure 1, the results are quite good.

Figure 3: An overall view of the gazette's new office.

Bill of Materials

J.L. Innovative Design /Durango Press
      Kit #56 - Newspaper Office
Life-Like / Walthers
      433-1618 Stake Trucks
Wal-Mart
      #20010 Colorplace Equip. Gray primer
         Colorplace Latex paint - River Road
      #5502 Kelly's Craft Sand - Beige
      #5516 Kelly's Craft Sand - Brown
Apple Barrel Paints
      #20575 SandStone
      #20576 Toffee
      #   Burnt Sienna
         Black
Sophisticated Finishes
      Rust
Aleene's Tacky Glue
Woodland Scenics
      T-50 Blended Earth
      T-49 Green Blend for trees and bushes
Misc
      Earth and gray toned weathering chalks
      91% isopropyl alcohol
      Elmer's white glue
      Eye Dropper
      Testor's Dullcoat

The Base

The base is nothing more than a piece a 1/4" plywood. I painted it with an earth colored latex paint and sprinkled in some Woodland Scenics T-50 turf material while the paint was still wet. I then added some beige colored sand for the roadway. The base was sealed with a mix of water (5:1) and Elmer's white glue with a few drops of 91% isopropyl alcohol and applied with over the scenery with an eye dropper.

Summary

All in all, it took me about three evenings to build the little diorama. So in the infamous words of Doug Foscale of Fos Scale Limited Models.....

Don't Just stand there! Build Something!