



# INSIDE THE OC&E

Published by the  
Colorado Model  
Railroad Museum  
680 10th Street  
Greeley, CO 80631  
970-392-2934  
www.cmrmm.org

Extra 2018  
Volume 9  
Issue 5

## Colorado Model Railroad Museum Unveils New Exhibits for the Holiday Season

### Harris Department 56 Collection Donated to CMRM

Our museum has received a unique collection of Department 56 villages from Marilyn and Bob Harris of Lincoln, Nebraska. Because Christmas was such a special time in their youth, the Harris's already had an extensive collection of Christmas decorations, figures, and trees when in 1984 Marilyn purchased a single Department 56 ceramic church as a gift for Bob. Since then, that single church has grown into nearly 1,200 buildings, model trains, and thousands of accessories.



After an extensive search for a permanent home for their collection, they decided that the Colorado Model Railroad Museum would be the perfect location. Together, with the museum's staff, it was decided that the collection would be moved to Colorado in the fall of 2018 and prepared for display for the holiday season. A special display area was created at the front of the museum to initially hold a large sample of the collection.

Since Marilyn and Bob traveled extensively, over the years

### Odessa, Oregon Module

*By Jack Dietz,  
New Mexico Rail RunNers, Albuquerque, NM*

In April 2018, members of the New Mexico Rail RunNers were in Greeley at the Colorado Model Railroad Museum for the first of our bi-annual trips to run trains and otherwise enjoy the OC&E Railroad and the company of some of our favorite HO modeling friends.

The team in Greeley honored our dear friend and club member, Kent Shelton, who had recently passed away. As



part of this honor, there was a memorial run on the layout in Greeley operated by Buzz Lenander. This run occurred on Friday, April 27, 2018, and was repeated on Saturday, April 28, 2018, and our club members greatly appreciated it. Kent had been scheduled to receive his 500-hour shirt during this visit, and sadly he never had the opportunity to wear it.

During this visit, we discovered that the museum's N Scale display was going to be retired, and there wasn't another exhibit available to take its place. Because we are N Scale

Continued on page 2

Continued on page 7



they were able to find rare, exclusive, or discontinued pieces tucked away in shops around the country. The result is complete villages including Dickens Village Series®, North Pole Series™, Christmas in the City® Series, New England Village, Alpine Village, Storybook Village, Grinch Villages, Seasons Bay, North Pole Woods, Literary Classics™, Hot Properties™ Village; Disney, A Christmas Story Village, and many other miscellaneous or exclusive pieces.

The Colorado Model Railroad Museum certainly now has the most complete collection of Department 56 buildings and accessories available for public view in the United States (and probably in the world). But don't think that model railroading takes a back seat to these miniatures. The OC&E and other railroad exhibits will always be #1. But now there's a reason to



These are four of the many scenes on the new display. While the collections aren't an exact scale, they are very close to O scale (1:48), so figures and structures will have a lot of detail. Our first display will have an Lionel loop of track around the village.



### What is Department 56?

Many male readers of this newsletter may not know what Department 56 is, but their wives or girlfriends probably do. If you've ever seen a Christmas village diorama that has high quality porcelain buildings, that is probably a Department 56 display.

"Department 56" gets its name from the name of the import division of Bachman's, a retail florist, based in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The products were first available in 1976 and sales have grown quickly since then. Now headquartered in Eden Prairie, Minnesota, Department 56 has become a leader in the giftware, collectibles, and holiday decorating industry and is best known for their hand-crafted lighted villages, Snowbabies® figurines and extensive lines of holiday and home decorative products.

About two-thirds of sales are via smaller gift and Christmas shops, but the most recent growth has been through national retail stores, including Amazon.



## Setting up the Display



On Monday, November 12, 2018, a small team of volunteers started assembling the first Department 56 display at the museum. Megan LaForest and Val Vickarelli took the lead in the design of the exhibit and staged the individual pieces in the lobby of the museum.

It may look like a big mess, but everything had been carefully organized so that they could quickly lay out all the buildings. By the end of the session that Monday, everything would be placed on the display.

In the meantime, Darrel Ellis made the final adjustments needed for the lighting circuit inside the display cabinet and on the display table. Each building will have its own lighting and need to be plugged into power strips under the table.

The O gauge loop of track around the village also had to be wired as part of the display.



Norm Wolstein and Michelle Kempema help cut the fabric that will cover some of the wood supports on the second and third levels of the display.

Since the display has 3 tiers, Megan and Val covered the edges with more fabric simulating a retaining wall and attached the fabric with double sided tape.



And finally, the buildings can be placed on the display. They came back the following week (next page) to add details and to prepare for the November 20th unveiling for museum members!

The general public gets to see the collection on November 23.

## Public Reveal - November 23

10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Museum executive director Michelle Kempema calls the collection “a true treasure” and expects that “seeing the collection will become a Christmas tradition for the community.”

“There is such a connection between Christmas and trains, and this collection highlights that connection on a beautiful and joyful level,” Kempema said. “The Board of Directors accepted this collection with excitement to showcase a diverse form of model railroading: a layout that includes festive, wintry porcelain houses and a nostalgic appeal for the same holiday décor that’s found in many homes across America.”



Photo by Darrel Ellis



Photo by Darrel Ellis



## Members Reveal

Shortly after 6 PM on Tuesday, November 20, Members of the Museum got their first look at the new exhibit. Michelle told the story about how the Harris's first contacted her about a possible donation, and what followed. Darrel Ellis and Duane Fields pulled the cover off the display and everyone got to see the museum's Department 56 collection for the first time.



The display cabinet has its own lighting that progresses between daylight and night time.



Michelle estimates that this first display over shows about 1% of the donated collection. The museum will rotate parts of the collection in time, but ultimately, a museum expansion will provide for a larger display area.



## Odessa, Oregon Module Continued from Page 1

modelers, our club volunteered to create a new display module to replace the old one and presented it to the museum during the club's next visit in October 2018.

In discussing this module, we determined that we should set several goals. First, the module should be an N Scale representation of the OC&E, and it should be designed in a continuous loop to run during normal visiting hours. To this end, Doug Gary designed our track plan, that included elevation changes. We also determined that we would need a water feature and bridges to reflect the OC&E vistas.

In addition, there were no N Scale OC&E engines or rolling stock commercially available. This problem was resolved by Buzz Lenander, who after exhaustive research was able to find the appropriate engine and other necessary equipment. He then painted and decaled everything to fit our needs. The road numbers on this equipment reflect those of actual OC&E equipment.

With the scenic vision and design planned to follow the style of the main layout at the museum, we started to construct and scenic the module. After first laying track and testing it for smooth operation, we installed the base of our landscaping using closed cell foam board secured with Liquid Nails on our base. This was set, and we began to cut and form the basic vision of the landscape. The final element for the module was that it should reflect an actual location on the OC&E right of way. After some research, it became clear that the module's scenic design fit the landscape of Odessa, Oregon.

Construction started with laying track and ensuring that it ran smoothly, followed by creating the basic terrain features and sculpting them to a general form. Doug created the mountainous terrain using Bragdon Enterprises products. The addition of resin water and a waterfall completed the general design and became Odessa Creek. Two bridges that cross over each other represented in a limited space the numerous bridges found on the original layout, and adding some structural elements created the town of Odessa. With the basic landscape in place Buzz, Doug, and Jack spent many enjoyable hours putting the details and scenic elements in place.

One secret element was added to this module. Somewhere on the layout is a special rock called a "Belle rock." One of our club members, Jack Dietz, once had a golden retriever named Belle who loved to bring him a rock every time she went outside. Jack kept many of these rocks, and since her death he has added a Belle rock on each of his modules and every other module that he has helped construct.

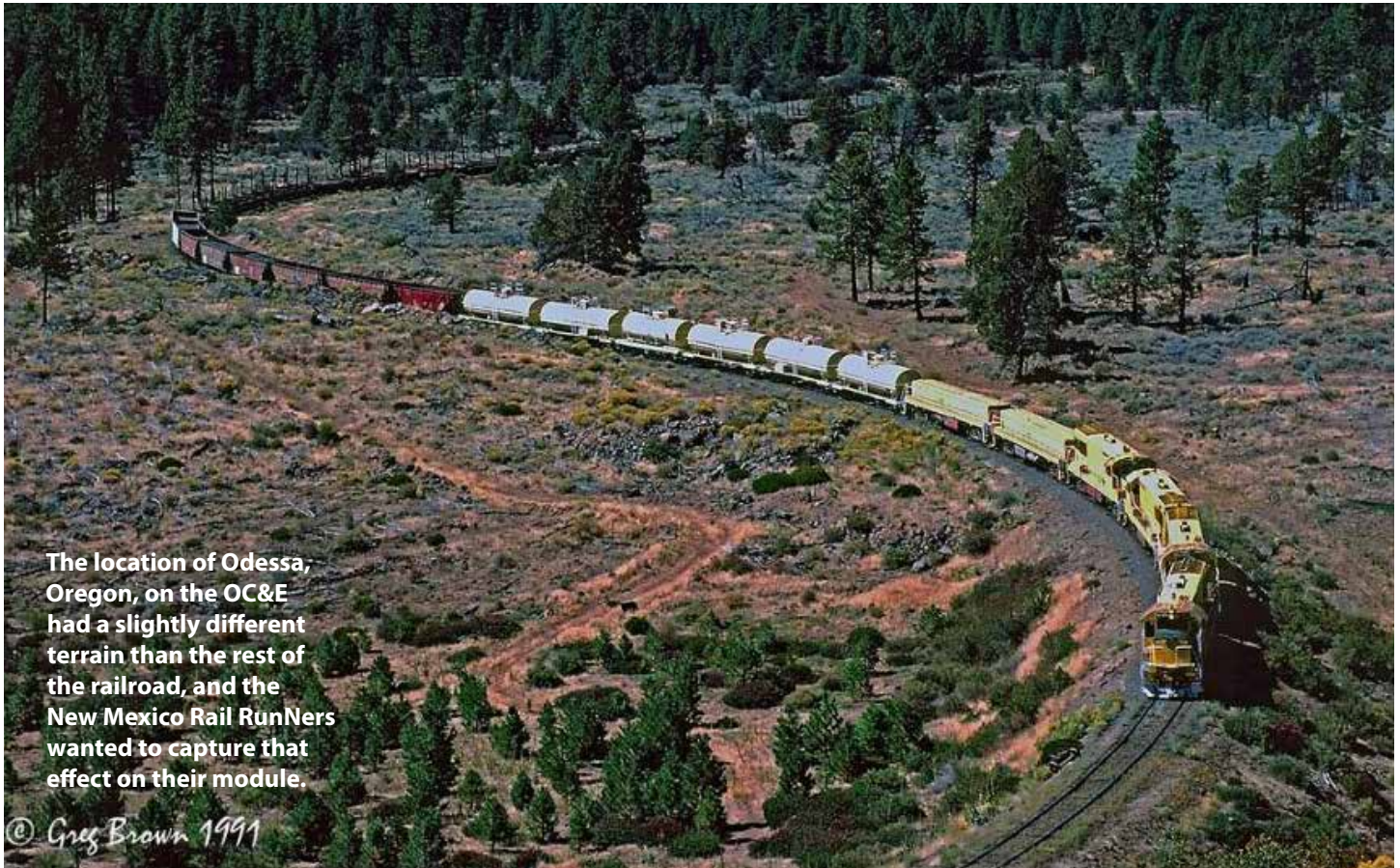
Aside from a desire to bring something special to the museum, the members of the New Mexico Rail Run Ners also wanted to honor Kent Shelton, our lost club member. Kent had been a long-term club president and he loved the Colorado Model Railroad Museum. Kent was always here during the years that we have participated in the operation of this wonderful exhibit. We were overwhelmed with the CMRM museum



**Top:** The OC&E water car used to help stop any fires encountered along the OC&E rails. **Above:** Buzz Lenander's model of the water car.

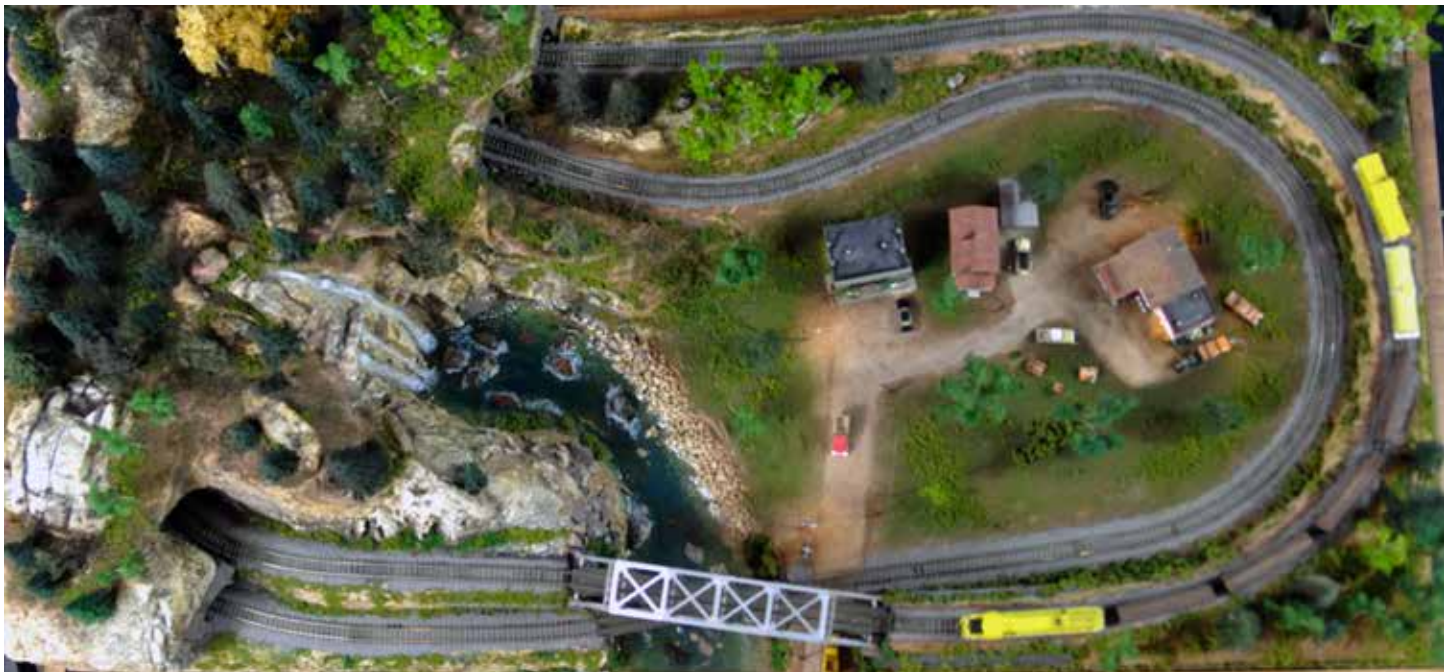
**Right top:** OC&E caboose #2007 was built by the railroad's shops, using a design from the McCloud River Railroad's extended vision cabooses. **Right center:** At first glance this might appear to be an ordinary U25B. However, a careful examination of the two stacks at the top middle of the unit, reveals that it has been repowered with an EMD diesel motor making it a TE53-1-4E as designated by the builder, Morrison-Knutson. **Right below:** Buzz Lenander modeled the #7602 from an Atlas U25B, and an Atlas extended vision caboose was the basis for the #2007.





The location of Odessa, Oregon, on the OC&E had a slightly different terrain than the rest of the railroad, and the New Mexico Rail RunNers wanted to capture that effect on their module.

© Greg Brown 1991



A satellite view of the layout shows how the New Mexico Rail RunNers fit a lot of neat modeling effects into a tight 2' x 4' layout necessitated by the space available to work with.

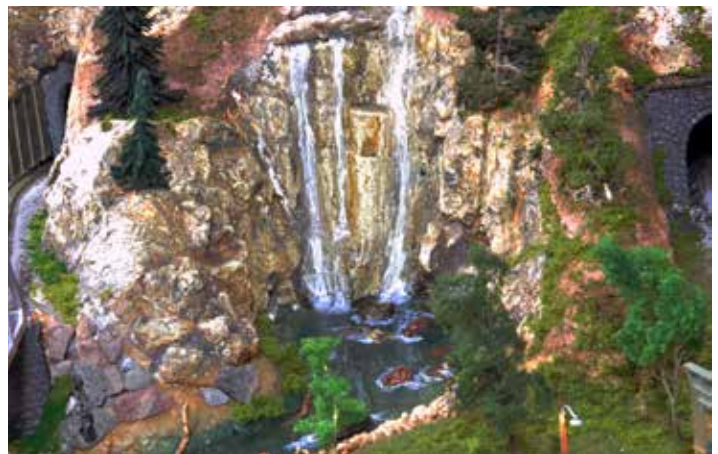


volunteers honoring him during our visit; so we created the Odessa module in Kent's honor. We hope that the museum enjoys the effort and love that we put into this module.



*In Memory of  
Kent Shelton*

*November 6, 1957  
to January 30,  
2018*



The three photos on the left show the construction progress in Albuquerque, while the two above show the finished product as installed in the museum. The waterfall is very striking; perhaps we should invite the experts from New Mexico to build something like that on the HO OC&E?

# Upcoming Museum Events

## November 20-21

- Holiday extended hours 10 AM to 4 PM

## November 22

- Thanksgiving - Closed

## November 23

- Open normal hours 10 AM to 4 PM

## November 24

- Santa, 10 AM to 1 PM

## November 25

- **Polar Express** Movie at the Kress Theatre! Tickets \$12, show times: 1 PM, 4 PM, and 7 PM. Includes 1 Free pass to our Festival of Trains during the Holidays  
 - Open Sunday hours, 1 PM to 4 PM

## December 1

- National Lionel Train Day

## December 14

- Members Only Night Trains with Santa 5 PM to 8 PM

## December 15

- Santa 10 AM to 1 PM, open 10 AM to 4 PM

## December 18 to December 31

- Holiday Extended Hours, 10 AM to 4 PM

## December 21

- Public Night Trains with Santa 5 PM to 8 PM (Must call the museum at 970-392-2934 to schedule a photo time slot)

## December 22

- Santa 10 AM to 1 PM, open 10 AM to 4 PM

## December 23

- Open Sunday hours, 1 PM to 4 PM

## December 24

- Open 10 AM to 1 PM

## December 25

- Christmas Day - Closed

## December 30

- Open 1 PM to 4 PM

## December 31

- Closed (Maintenance Monday)

## January 1, 2019

- Closed - New Year's Day

## January 2 to January 6, 2019

- Holiday Extended Hours 10 AM to 4 PM

## January 5, 2019

- Literacy Day



## Polar Express Under Our Tree

We have our Christmas Tree up and a Lionel Polar Express train under it. The museum has also purchased 4 of these sets to place in four area nursing homes for the Holiday Season.

## Polar Express Replaces Thomas

Thomas gets a break until Christmas and a Polar Express train will take its place on the museum's Children's Layout.

## CMRM Speaks!

In the 21st century, an organization like the Colorado Model Railroad Museum needs to communicate in several different ways:

**Facebook Group:** This is CMRM's primary focus for social media; the most current information of museum activities can be found here. Follow the museum at: [facebook.com/ColoradoModelRailroadMuseum/](https://facebook.com/ColoradoModelRailroadMuseum/)

**Website:** This is where you can find everything you ever wanted to know about the museum. There are now dedicated sections on upcoming events and an online store. The URL is: [www.cmr.org](http://www.cmr.org)

**Inside the OC&E Newsletter:** This is a traditional 8-20 pages of current news items that is published 4 times (or more) a year. Its goal is to document most activities that occur. An email notice will be sent out once an edition is available; sign up at: [www.cmr.org/contact/](http://www.cmr.org/contact/)

## Inside the OC&E

*Inside the OC&E* is the official newsletter of the Colorado Model Railroad Museum. Its purpose is to communicate news and information to museum volunteers and others interested in the museum.

The Winter 2019 issue **PUBLICATION DEADLINE:** Tuesday, **January 1, 2019 at 5:00 PM.** Send submissions to [drgw0579@comcast.net](mailto:drgw0579@comcast.net).

Bill Kepner, Editor.  
Ed Hurtubis and Bob Owens, Associate Editors

## New Website for the Museum

### New Website - Same URL [WWW.CMRM.ORG](http://WWW.CMRM.ORG)

The museum received a donation to develop a new and expanded website that went online on Monday, November 12, 2018. There are now dedicated sections on upcoming events, About the Museum, and an online store.



## Another New Exhibit

CoWLUG, the Colorado & Wyoming LEGO Users Group, has returned to the museum and is now building a Christmas-themed LEGO display layout. Watch it grow over the next couple weeks!

## New Video

Bill Rogers has posted another Extreme Trains video on YouTube: This includes the 283 car train run on November 16-17. The URL is: <https://youtu.be/0WDENOBmA-o>

## Fundraiser Auction

Ken Patterson, of the *What's Neat in Model Railroading* online video magazine (see the last Autumn 2018 issue of *Inside the OC&E*) has arranged for an eBay auction of a famous Utah Belt boxcar that was hand painted by Eric Brooman. The proceeds will be given to the museum. The URL for this auction is: <https://www.ebay.com/itm/Whats-Neat-Utah-Belt-Boxcar-Ho-Scale-By-Eric-Brooman/143019123933?hash=item214c9aa4dd:g:zooAAOSwBMpb8lV~:rk:3:pf:0>

