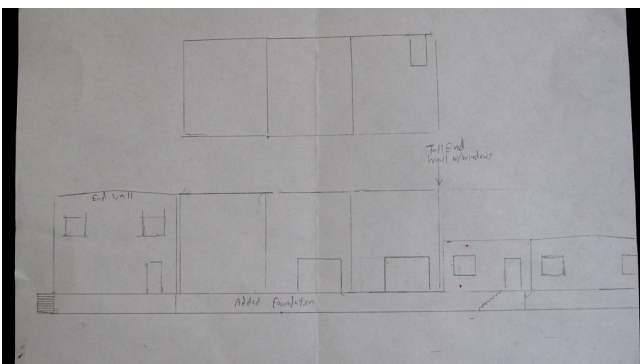


Sidetracked

By Robert Arnesen

2019 Volume 1



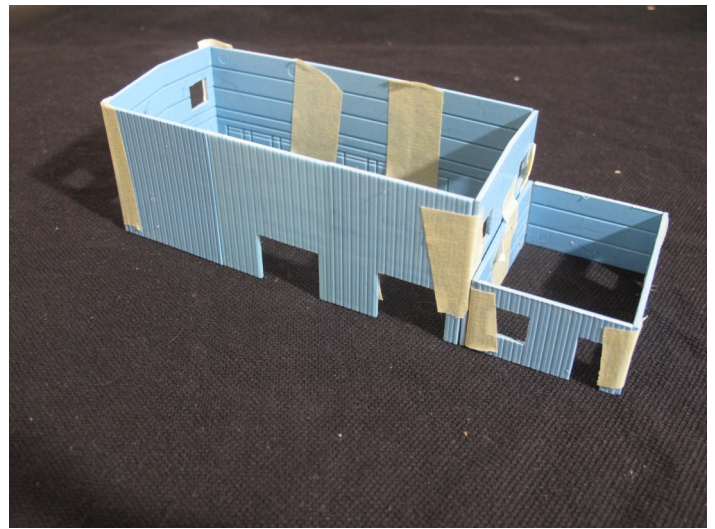
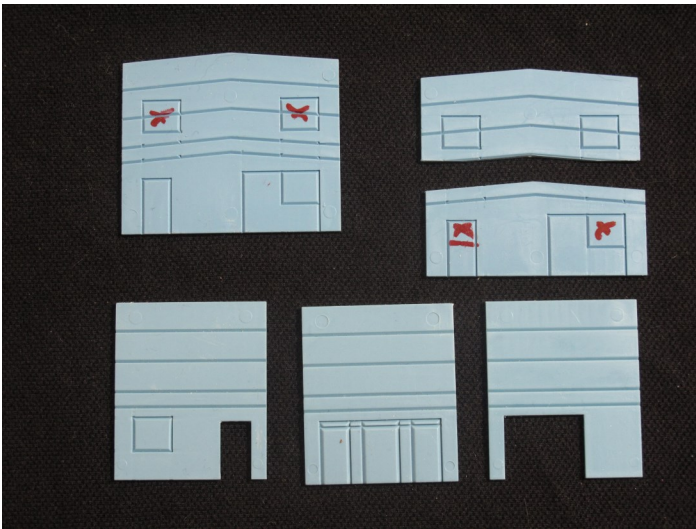
I'm building an N-scale structure using Pikestuff kits made by Rix Products. I am using two of their 'Modern Yard Office' kits for this project. Although there is a picture of a completed structure on the package insert, these kits are designed to be built any way the modeler wants them to be. If you want to get started in kit bashing, the Pikestuff line is a great place to start. The Kit consists of wall sections that have cut lines scored into the back so you can build a structure of various heights and place the included windows and doors in any place you would like. Some of the openings for doors are already in some wall sections. The roof is also built in sections to accommodate a longer or

shorter structure.

Some of the tools I used are in the photo below. One item that is not pictured but absolutely necessary, is a flat board or sheet of glass with a piece of sandpaper glued to it. This is used to true up the walls during assembly.

To get started, I laid out the wall sections and came up with a plan for the structure I wanted. I planned a warehouse area with an office attached to the side. The warehouse will have the full 24 foot walls, while the office walls will be cut down to 10 feet. A four foot foundation will be added. I placed the wall sections on a piece of paper and traced them out to make a rough plan of my structure. I then flipped all the wall sections over and marked the window and door locations as well as cut lines for the walls. In the photo, the wall height for the office has already been cut. The windows and doors are inserted from the inside so you have to be careful to cut the hole exactly the size needed. While there are deep score lines for the window and door locations, I found it best to cut these using a 3/16 inch straight gouge from an X-ACTO wood carving set. Use the gouge at a slight angle to the inside of the opening to be cut,

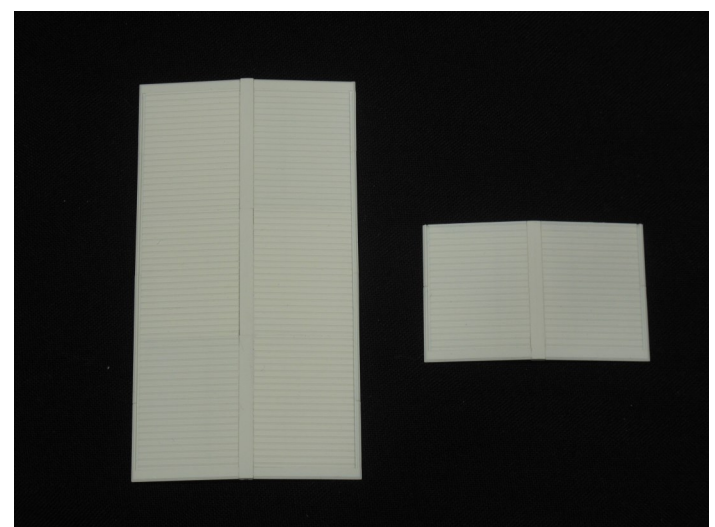
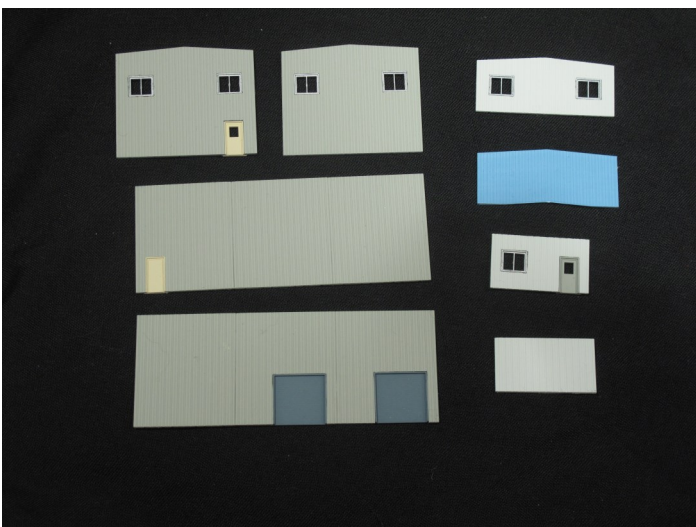




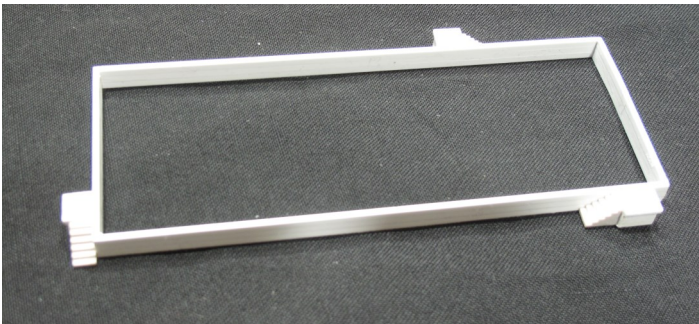
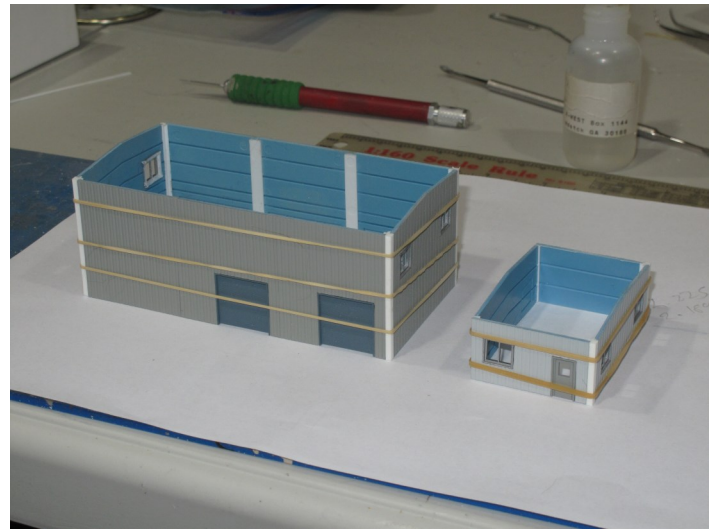
then file to fit the window or door. After cutting all the openings, I taped the walls together to make sure everything fit together the way I planned. It was at this point that I decided that the roll-up dock doors that came with the kit were too short; I obtained some 10" x 10" freight doors, also by Pikestuff and enlarged the two openings on the front to fit.

In the next step, I glued up the three wall sections that form the front and back of the warehouse using the glue strips as per the instructions. The roof is assembled from roof sections and roof trim. The roof parts are made to fit a variety of building sizes and must be cut and assembled for whatever size your structure is. Follow the instructions carefully so you don't get confused. It gets easier after you assemble your first roof.

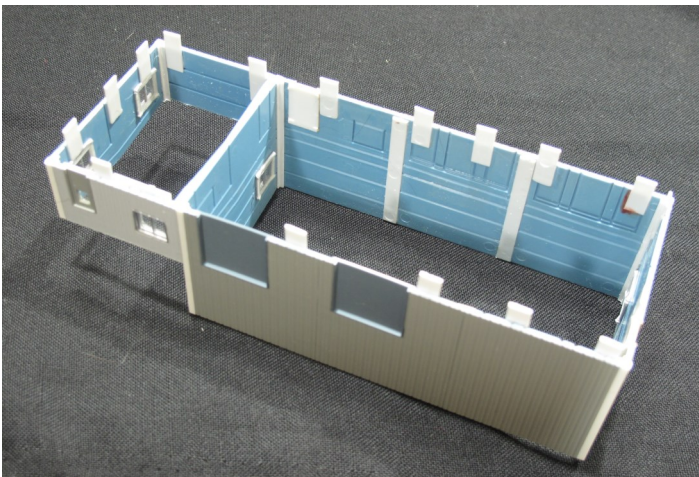
After assembling the wall sections and the roof, I washed everything in preparation for painting. I used mostly Testors Model Masters paint for this structure. In an effort to show that the warehouse and office may have been constructed at different times, I airbrushed the warehouse walls Topside Grey and the office Light Grey. The roof and trim were painted white, warehouse doors are Intermediate Blue and the windows silver. I masked the corner trim so that the glue surfaces would not be painted. The unpainted wall section in the photo is the office wall that will be glued to the warehouse. This section is necessary to support the roof.



When the paint had completely dried, I prepared the parts for assembly by scraping off the paint from the glue surfaces. This step is necessary because MEK is a solvent that welds plastic parts and a painted surface will prevent a good joint. I first glued the doors and windows into their openings. The corner trim was then cut to rough size and glued to the peaked end walls. I let this corner trim hang over just a bit; after this assembly had dried, I used my flat sander to bring the corner flush to the wall both top and bottom. I then assembled my two structure sections and held them together with rubber bands. MEK was applied sparingly from the inside of the structure and it was carefully checked to make sure everything was square and level. After this assembly has dried I joined the two sections together with Faller Expert plastic glue; I put on a couple of clamps and let it dry over night.

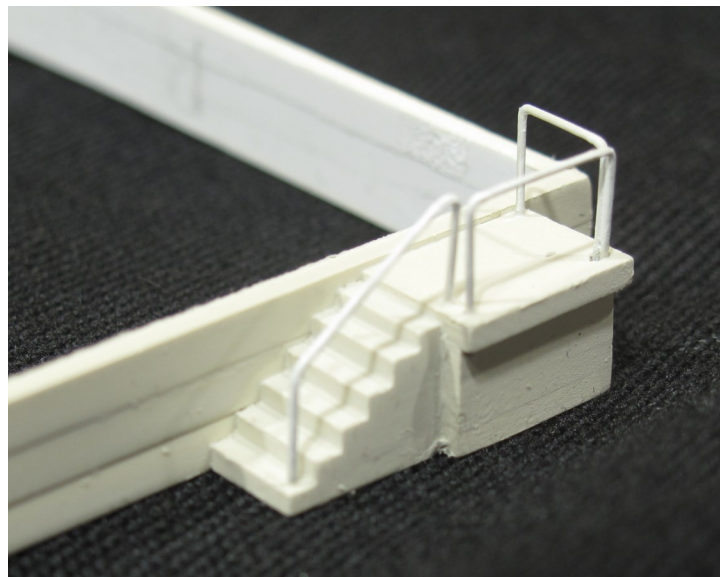


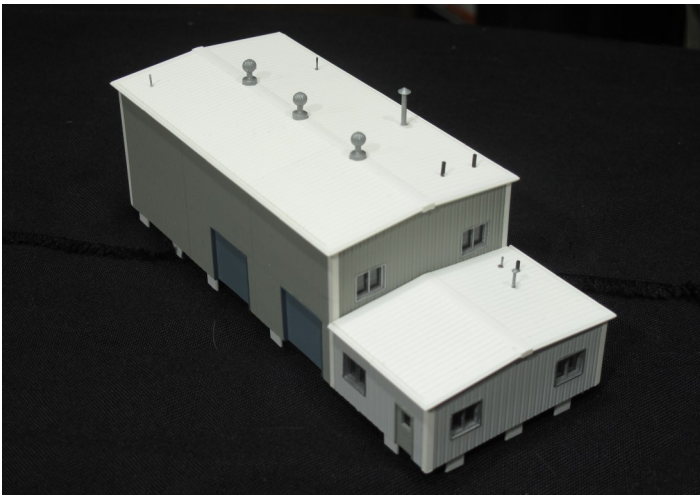
Next came the foundation and stairs. Pikestuff makes a kit for these but I chose to make my own. I wanted the roll-up doors to be the height of a truck dock or around four feet or about 5/16". I used what I had and glued together three pieces of .060 x .100 Evergreen stock. I cut this to the length of the four walls and beveled the ends to 45°. I then glued small pieces of the splice plates along the bottom of the structure. This will make aligning the foundation much easier. I glued only the corners of the foundation together, making sure I had a good fit then moved onto the steps. I constructed entry steps and porch with some Micro Engineering steps I already had and styrene. Setting the building onto the foundation, I glued the completed steps to the correct location. I cut a base out of .080 styrene to fit inside the foundation. I use this base to attach the model to the layout. Railings for the steps proved more difficult than I had planned. There are a few commercial railings out there but they were either unavailable or would not fit this application. I ended up making a simple tubular railing out of some .013 piano wire. Making the handrails turned out to be somewhat tedious but I am pleased with the result. The concrete portions are now ready for paint. The foundation re-



ceived a coat of white primer and afterward a concrete color. The handrails were hand painted white.

Window material is not included in these kits. The windows have a small recessed area for the 'glass' to fit into and must be cut to that exact size to fit properly. I cut some from clear stock using a razor knife and my NWSL Chopper. These were set in place with clear parts glue. The roof was glued in place and the foundation/stairs assembly was glued using the tabs placed on the bottom of the walls earlier. The plain white roof needed some details real bad. I added some cyclone vents along the ridge and some other items from my roof details box to represent heating and plumbing systems.





I planned to light the structure so I painted the interior black with some thickened paint. With no interior detail, I glued a light diffusing paper behind the office windows; I decided the warehouse portion would not be lit. Wanting to try something new, I made some outdoor security lights using warm white nano Led's I cut from a Christmas light string I got at Walmart. The Led is attached to magnet wire and set in a blob of plastic. I cut a light and wire section from the string and filed it until I had an acceptable light fixture. I then drilled a hole in the wall and glued my homemade fixture in place with super glue. These turned out really good and I plan to use these light elsewhere. A separate light is used for the interior. The structure lighting is powered with the Woodland Scenics Just Plug system. This lets me control the brightness of the

outside lights or turn them off completely.

I added some bumpers by the dock doors made from some strip wood colored and aged to look right. The structure was then weathered lightly and is now ready for the layout. I'm pleased with how this structure turned out and will use the Pikestuff kits in the future.

