MIKE ASHEY PRODUCTIONS

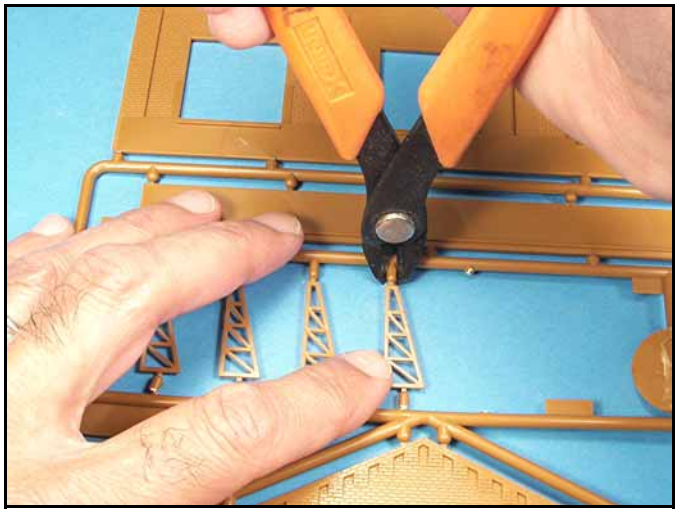
PRESENTS

BUILDING AN HO SCALE FREIGHT HOUSE

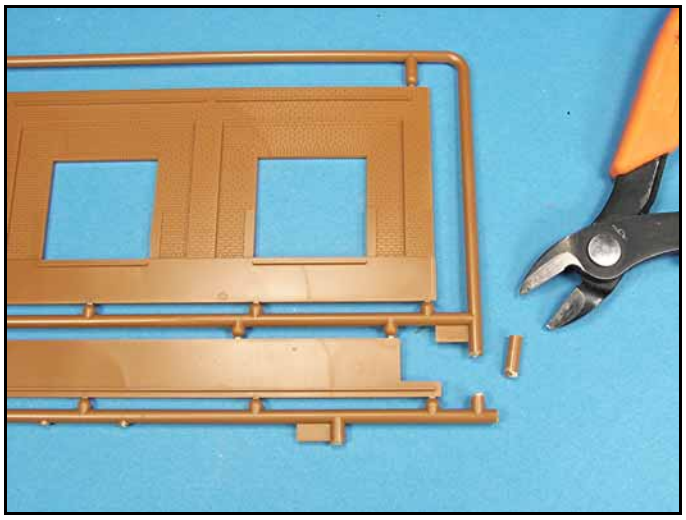
BY

MIKE ASHEY

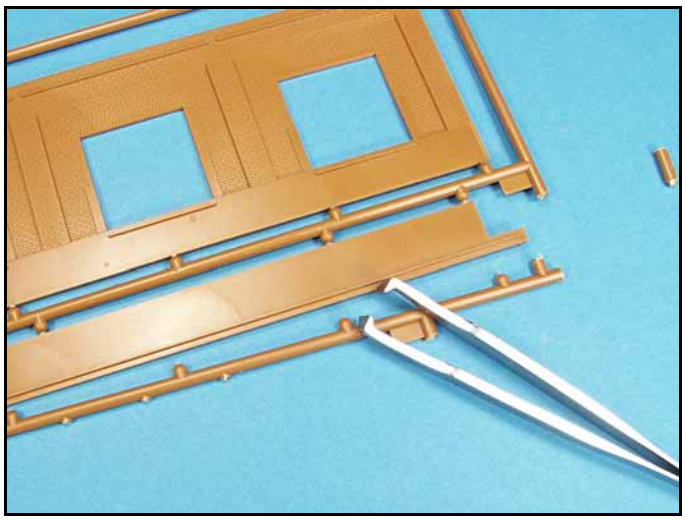
This is a Walthers Cornerstone Model and it was an easy build. The parts fit together well but the building sides and the roof halves could have been designed with more secure attachment points. The instructions are a bit lacking so study them carefully. The instructions do not provide any detail on how the roof overhang framing is supposed to be attached to the overhangs. I glued them on wrong and had to get new parts from Walthers which they gladly provided for free. There is a picture in this article which show the correct and incorrect positioning of the roof overhang support. The model was painted with Testors and Folquil enamels and weathered with pencil pastel dust. Specialty tools were purchased from Micro-Mark (www.micromark.com)



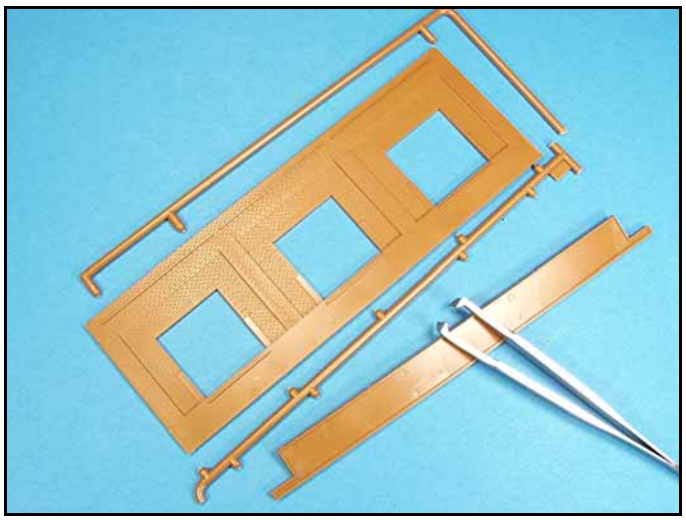
Clipping small parts directly off their trees can damage the parts due to the stress placed upon the part as it is cut from the tree.



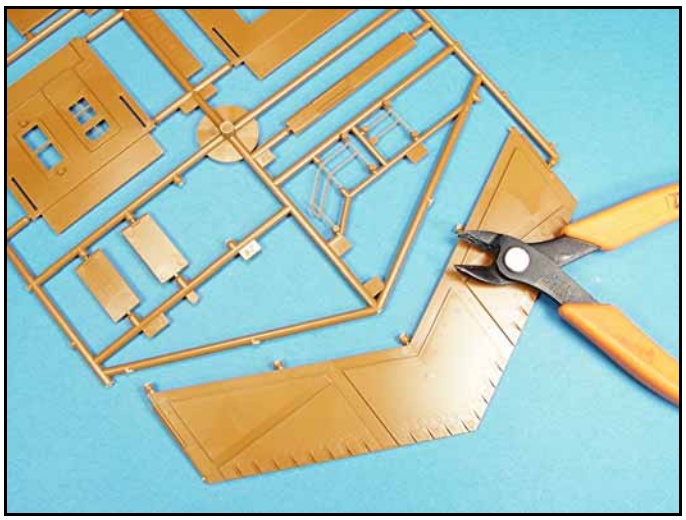
To relieve the pressure on parts before cutting them off, remove a section of the tree on both ends.



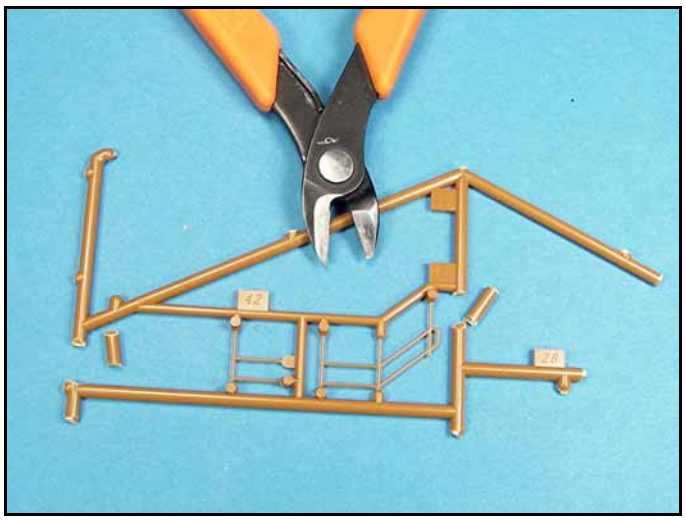
For tree attachment points that are small, a pair of nippers can be used to cut the attachment points close to the parts surface.



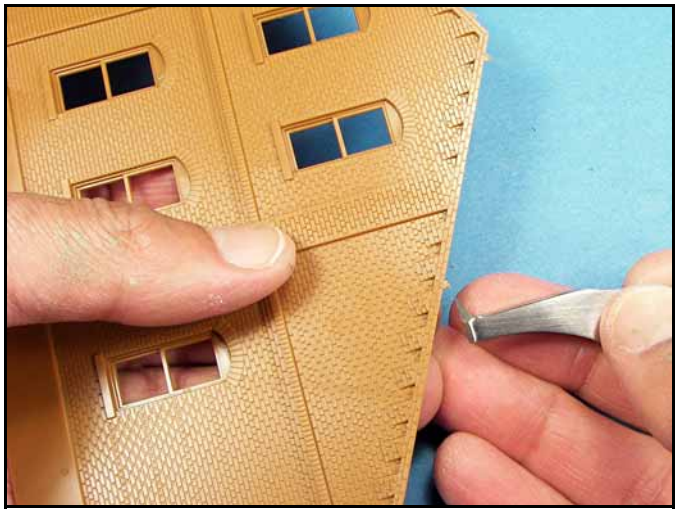
Here the parts have been cut from their trees using nippers. This reduces the amount of scraping and sanding needed to remove the remaining excess tree attachment plastic that is still attached to the part.



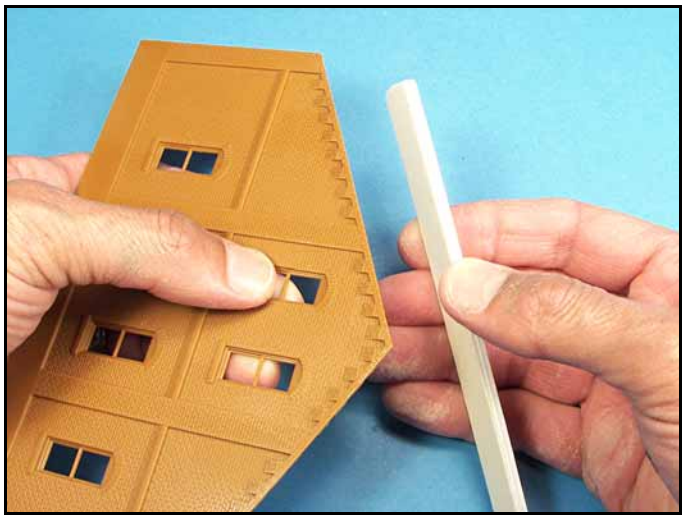
You can also use larger cutters to cut half-way through the tree attachment points and then trim the remaining plastic off with nippers before you sand the surfaces smooth to remove any excess plastic.



These parts were very delicate so cutting the trees at the ends to relieve the stress on the parts as they are cut off prevents them from being damaged or broken.

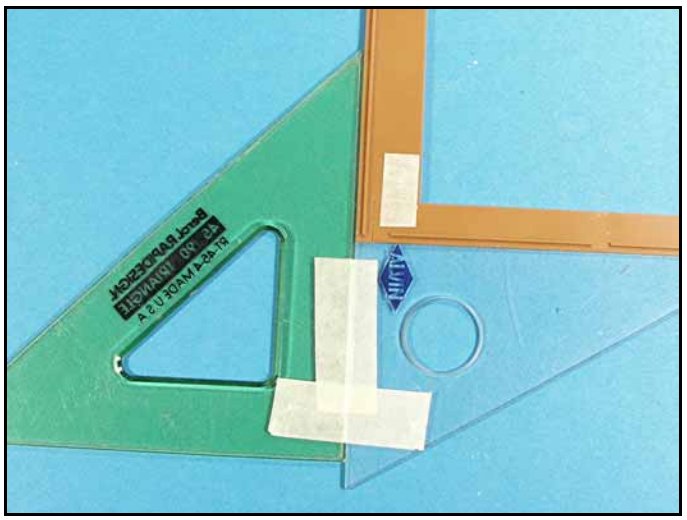


Nippers come in real handy to remove small amounts of excess plastic. Sometimes you can gouge the surface if you use an X-Acto blade.

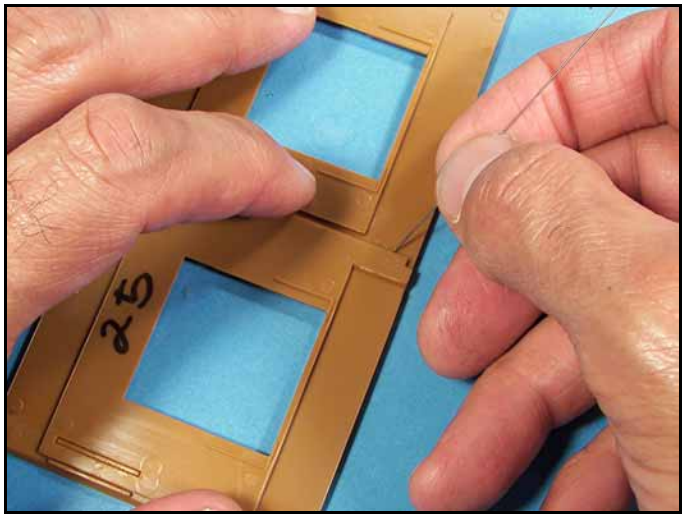


I like to use sanding sticks to smooth out the surface where the trees attachment points are. These sanding sticks can be found in the nail care sections of drug stores.

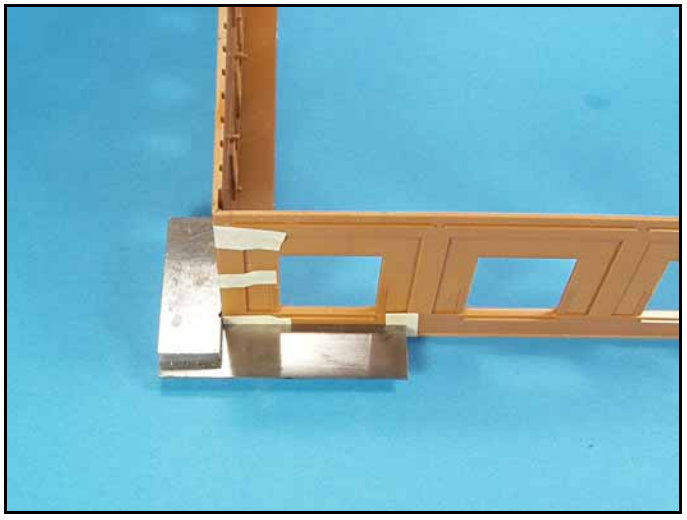
Once all the parts are cleaned up, I like to tape the assembly together to see how it looks, check the fit, and make notes on the instructions for fit challenges that will need to be addressed.



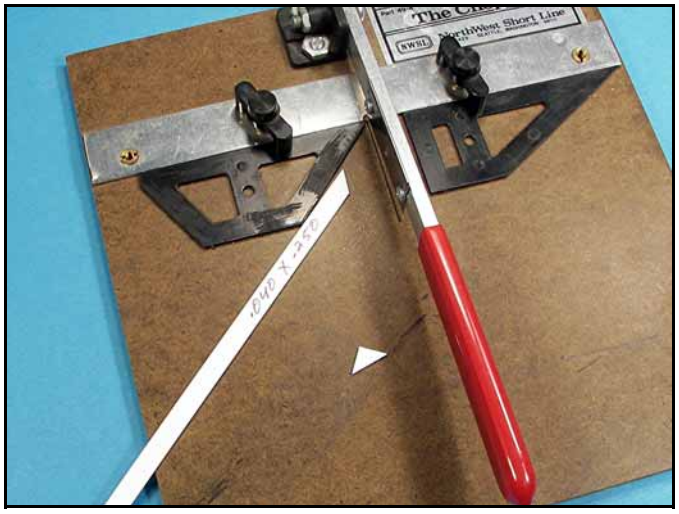
The base of the model has four sides. To be sure they are glued at 90 degree angles I used two small drafting triangles taped to my work bench to set the edges. I then applied tiny drops of super glue along the seam lines.



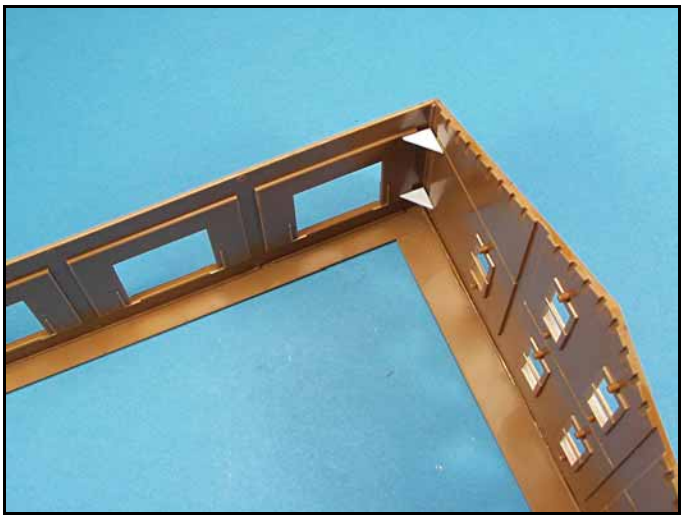
I like to use a thin wire applicator to apply super glue. I place a big drop of the glue on a piece of paper and then dip the tip of the wire in the glue and transfer the glue to the seam area.



To be sure that the edges of the building were set at 90 degrees, I used a machinist square to set the angles. I then applied tiny drops of super glue to the inside corners. Machinists squares can be purchased from Micro-Mark.

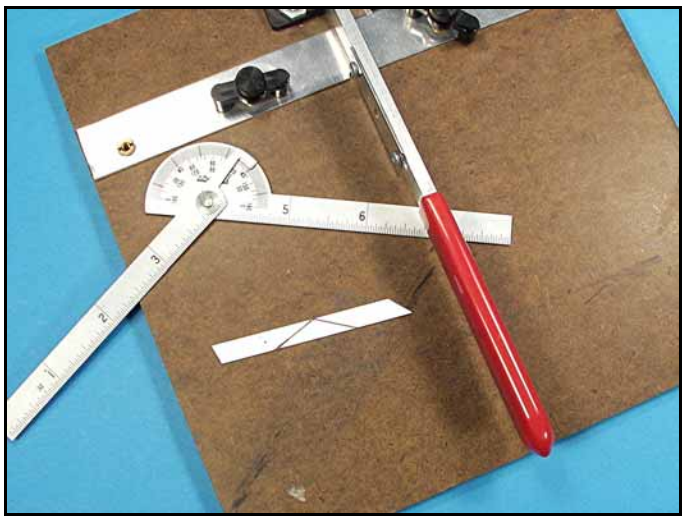


To reinforce the building assembly I cut triangle shapes with my trusty Northwest Short line Chopper.

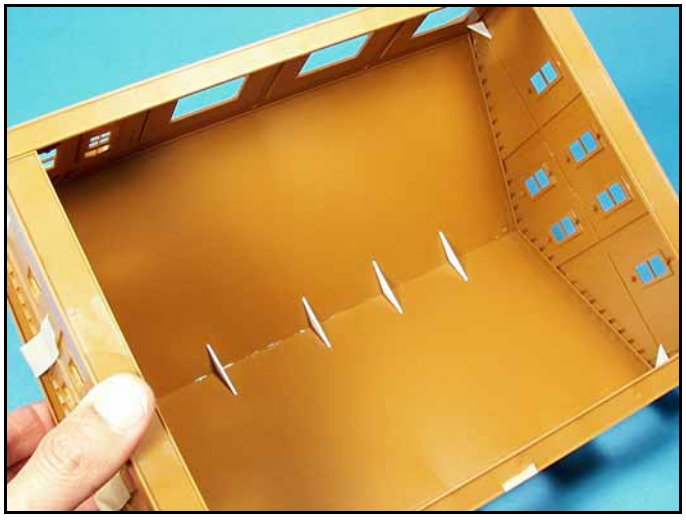


Each inside corner of the building got two reinforcement triangles. This addition added a lot of strength to the assembly and prevent flexing. It also made it easy to handle.

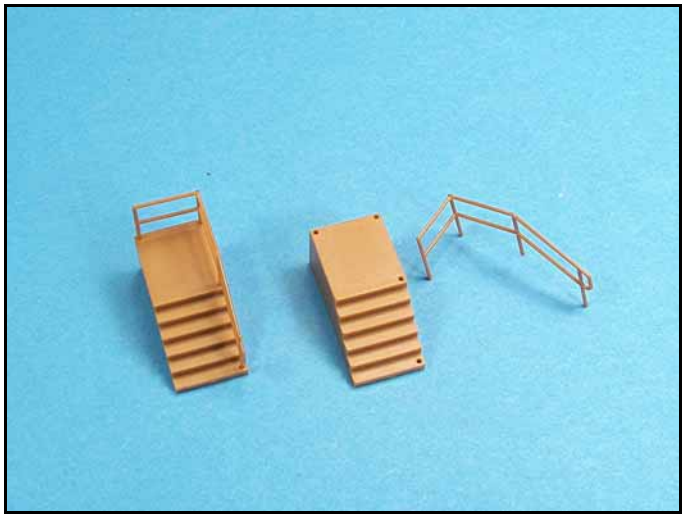
I used a compass gauge to get the angle of the roof. I taped the roof down and then ran a bead of super glue along the seam line at the top being careful not to get any glue on the surface.



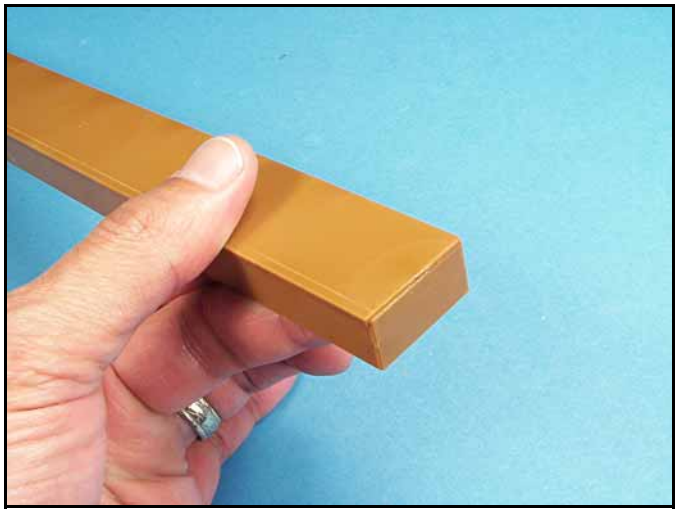
I transferred the angles to lengths of plastic and then I cut them out with my trusty chopper.



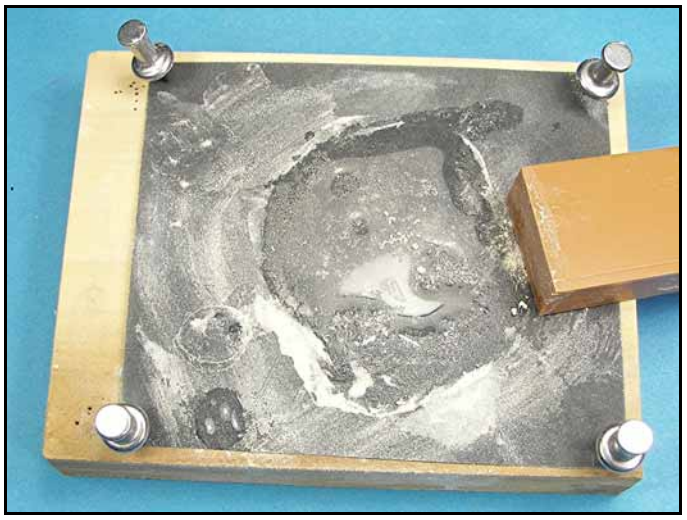
Several of the triangles were super glued to the underside of the roof. Here again the addition of these small parts made the roof assembly very strong.



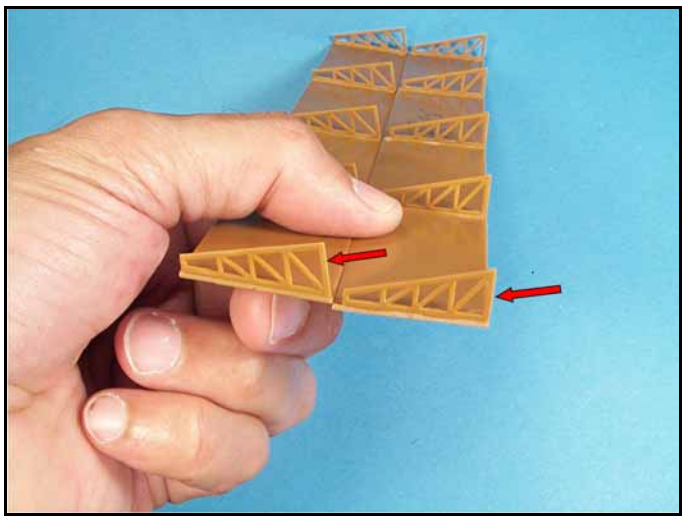
The hand railings were in two sections so I positioned them on the stairs and added tiny drops of super glue to the attachment points.



The model has very few fit problems except for the loading dock edges. I super glued around the perimeters of the edges and then scraped the glue flat after it dried with a number 11 X-Acto blade.



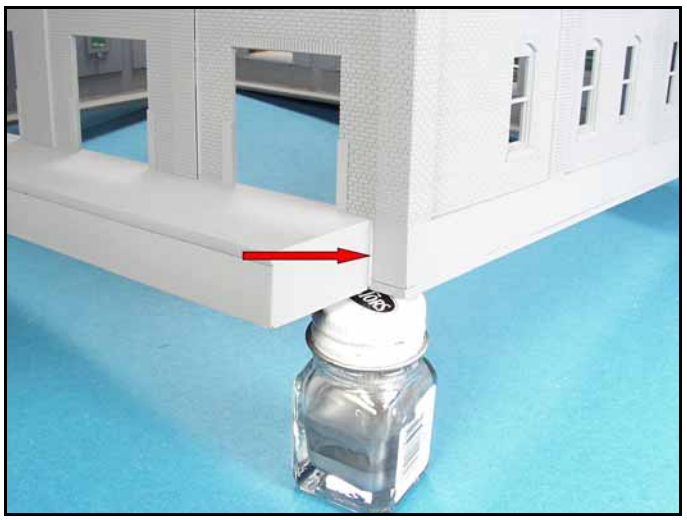
I then wet sanded the edges until the plastic was flush with the edges of the assembly. I then polished the plastic with 0000 steel wool pads.



The instructions were not real clear on the positioning of the girder supports for the roof overhang. The correct position is on the left assembly where the support beam is at an angle from the back edge of the roof overhang.

All the subassemblies are now complete and they will get one last check before they are primed. The parts were cleaned with Polly-S Surface Prep which removes skin oils and mold release agents from the surface of the plastic.

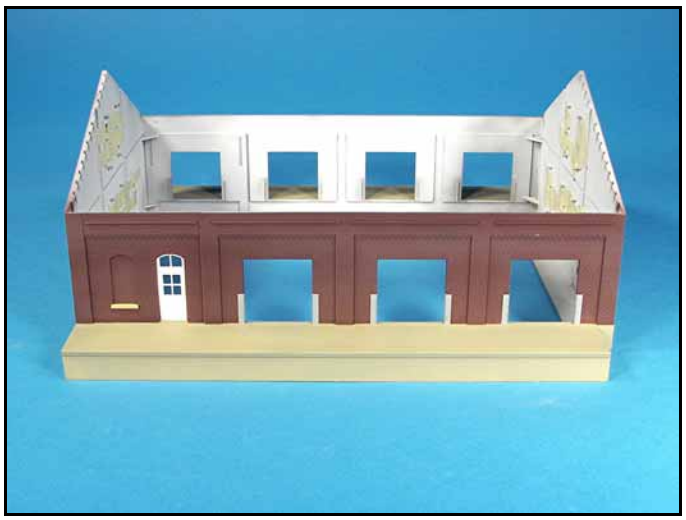
I like to use Floquil paints, especially their primer. The paint pigments are super fine and they adhere very well to plastic.



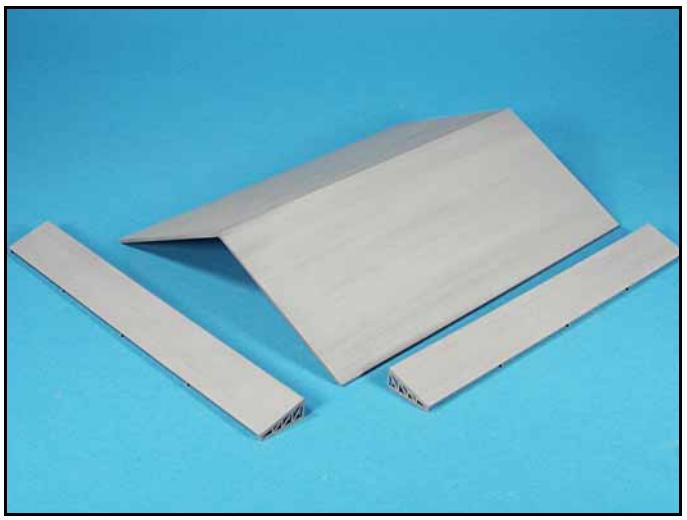
After priming I noticed some voids along the inner edges of the loading docks. These voids were filled with white glue applied with a thin wire applicator and then contoured with a damp Q-Tip. The surfaces were then re-primed.

I like to mix paint colors to achieve lighter and darker shades. I label them and make notes as to which colors have been changed.

After masking several layers and colors the model is just about ready for some simple weathering. Note the cut outs covering the window frames. They were carefully measured and cut from index card paper.

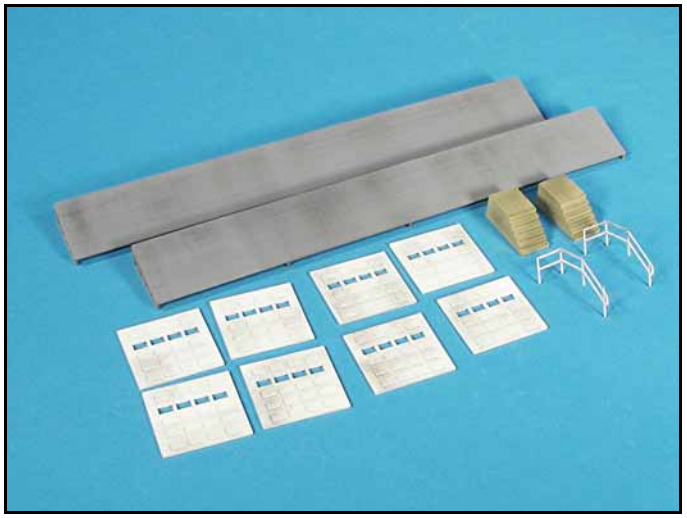


The metal protection plates on the sides of the docking bays were painted light gray and the edges drybrushed with Testors silver paint to simulate worn metal.

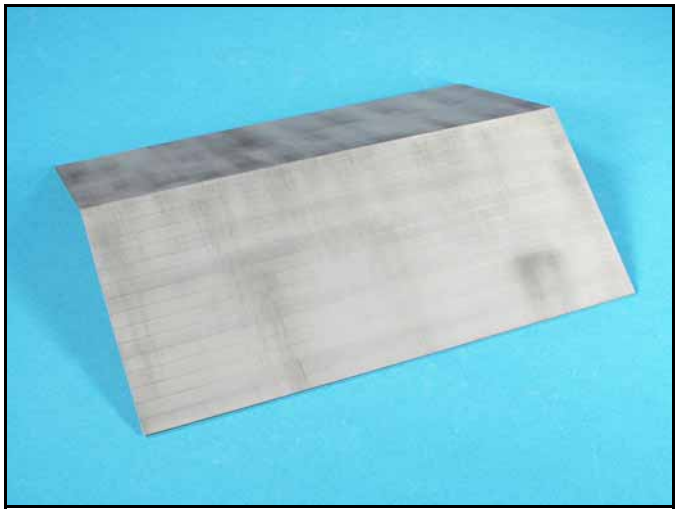


The roofs were painted Testors flat gray and then over painted with the same color lightened with some flat white. I left the surface a bit streaky so that the darker shade of gray had a subtle appearance.

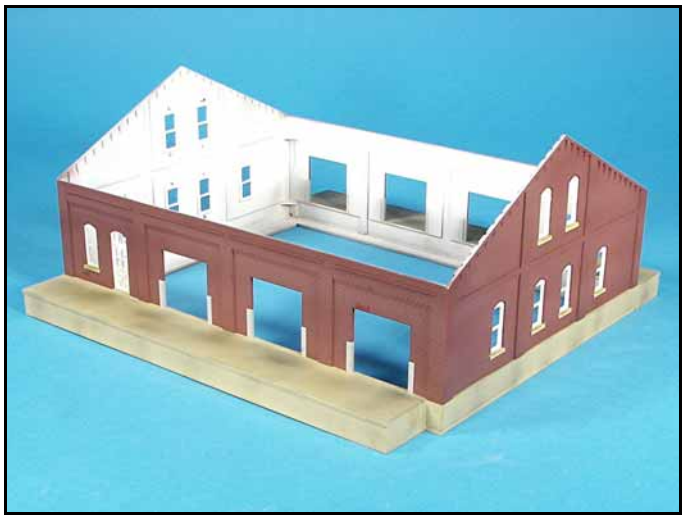
Simple weathering can be achieved with pencil pastel dust. I run the pencil across sandpaper to get a pile of a particular color. I then use a flat brush to apply the dust to the surface. Pastel dust sticks best to flat paint.



The smaller parts have all been streaked and dusted with different shades of dark pencil pastel colors. The surfaces were then coated with Folquil clear flat to seal the pastel dust.



I carefully applied dark pastel colors to the roof and streaked it from the top down to simulate the weathering effects of dirt, age, the sun and rain. Its best not to overdue weathering.



I also added dark pastel dust to the concrete surfaces to simulate dirt and wear and on the white window frames to simulate aging. Here again less weathering is better than over doing it.

After all the surfaces were sealed with Folquil clear flat, the windows were attached using white glue. The glue will dry clear and it will not damage or fog clear plastic.

I carefully scraped away surface paint along the attachment surfaces of the roof overhangs and then carefully super glued them into place. I also added some rust color to the metal framings of the overhangs.

The model is now completely assembled and all the different subassemblies, their different colors and their surface weathering all add to the overall appearance of the model.

Note how there are sharp lines between colors. This is achieved with careful masking. See the accompanying article on Mike Ashey's paint layering technique to see how the model was masked and painted.