

# Errol T. Waters Auto Service

By Tom Waters

Photos by Bruce Oberleitner

Errol T. Waters Auto Service started life as a kit from 'RailroadKits.com'. This little business fits right into the era of my Elbow Valley Railroad, the transition 50's. I am modeling a fictitious short line railroad tying Southern Idaho, with its Union Pacific mainline, to Lewiston in the North.



I like to have lots of vehicles which give the illusion of a busy community with a lot of commercial traffic. And a service station and repair garage is a must in the town of Portside.

My friend Bruce Oberleitner made a small structure for his railroad and named it the Errol T. Waters Auto Service. He made a custom billboard and provided me with a copy. Now, with a billboard for this structure on my railroad, it was only appropriate that the actual business appear.

## CONSTRUCTION

First I read the instructions provided for the kit. I had to print them off the internet as they are keeping costs down by not including them. As with any kit, I read the instructions completely before starting and inventoried the contents to ensure that everything was included. In this example, the first of its kind, there are items included that are not talked about in the instructions. The kit creator wants the modeler to use their creativity to make a unique structure. So, the instructions are very basic and show how to assemble the buildings using the materials and techniques that the kit was designed for.

So, off I go, cutting, sanding and painting the pieces the way I want things to look. A faded blue was chosen for the trim while a dusty white was picked for the walls.

First I used my pounce wheel to make nail holes on the walls in columns spaced approximately three feet apart. It is best to do this before inside bracing is added. Next, I used the old alcohol and India ink mixture to age the wood. According to the kit instructions, I added vertical bracing. Close attention to the instructions is needed here to keep from causing problems in later steps. Then a very light wash of white paint was applied. I immediately weighted each wall piece to keep them from warping. The trim pieces were given a watery coat of blue which required some touch up on the ends after they were cut to size and installed. After the walls were assembled and squared up I left everything alone for a day to cure.





I added a foundation to both buildings using some extra scale lumber so they weren't just sitting on the dirt. This is done in the same manner as adding the corner trim except I painted the pieces with two different shades of gray prior to installation. This foundation created some problems as the doors were now razed off the ground. I created the front wooden walkway and the steps in front of the restroom doors to fill this gap. On the garage I added a small tapered piece of wood as a ramp in front of the garage door and a step under the man door. These were given a light oily black wash to simulate oil stains.

Painting the gray plastic doors and windows was a challenge trying to match the blue painted on the raw wood trim. It took some effort to find the correct mix of gray and blue paint. Next time I'll prime everything with gray. The chimney was a very nice casting in brown. I've painted a number of metal chimneys so the color choice was easy. After applying the basic red brown I gave it a wash of white which was mostly wiped back off. An extra added touch here is to paint the inside and dry brush the top edges with grimy black.

I changed the location of the office door with one of the restroom doors which made the office building end the entrance. This just made more sense to me

I decided to cut the two garage doors in half so they could be open. This is done very carefully using the backside of an Exacto blade. Now I was looking at the garage minus its roof and realized that it would need a floor. A piece of cardstock was marked to match the inside dimensions and the corner supports provided a nice place to glue the floor in. I painted this new floor a concrete color and stippled in a darker shade of gray for variation.

The roofs were constructed pretty close to the kit instructions. One technique I used on the metal roofing for the garage was to soak the material in vinegar for about 15 minutes which seemed to make the paint stick better. I found a trick on the internet about adding a support between the roof peaks on the office building which helped give the roof and chimney more support.

As with most things the details make the difference. I added the cigarette machine and changed the pop machine out for an older model. Tire stands, and a chimney for the garage stove were pulled from my details supply. The lamps over the doors and the billboard were supplied with the kit and assembled as instructed (except the billboard sign). You just have to carry out the trim color on these. The gas pumps were not difficult once I decided how I wanted to paint them. I did add an extra layer of cardboard on the ends of the gas pump island as this was done to stop cars from bumping into them. I used some of the little signs supplied with the kit but I dug into my personal supply and added some others just to make this example unique. This kit comes with a nice selection of detail castings.

I have not finished all the signage that is supplied with the kit as I want to install it on my layout and then see just what I want to use. This also helps make it a more unique structure.

This is great little kit and a very satisfying project. I think its a great tribute to my Dad and Grandfather who owned the Weiser Garage back in the day.

<b>Bill of Materials</b>	
<a href="http://RailroadKits.com">RailroadKits.com</a>	Norm Wolf's Gas and Oil by Railroad Kits
<a href="http://JLInnovativeDesigns.com">JL Innovative Designs,</a>	Custom tire displays
<b>Polly Scale Paint</b>	Big Sky Blue, Rust, Flat Aluminum Caboose Red and Earth
<b>Delta Creamcoat Paint</b>	graphite and white
<b>Misc</b>	Signs, cigarette and pop machine from my detail box White glue, Weathering chalks, Scrap lumber