

Bill Mosteller's Virginian Railway

Photos and text by Ken Wilson

Earlier this year I had the opportunity to visit Bill Mosteller to photograph his HO scale Virginian Railway for the August-September issue of *The Potomac Flyer's* "Photo Layout Tour." Since he has chosen to depict the Virginian in 1959, there are no steam locomotives, but plenty of Fairbanks Morse Train Masters. Bill (photo right) chose not to build the benchwork and track for his layout. Instead, he contracted with Dave Bennett of traininstallations.com to construct his layout, designed by Bob Sprague, and install it in his basement. The bench work for his railroad looks like a piece of furniture, but the backdrops had been just a plain blue, waiting for future detail. My current visit was a pleasant surprise. All of his plain blue backdrops are now beautifully painted with mountains, trees, and clouds. Bill had tried to hire art students from George Mason University to paint the backdrops, but he was unsuccessful and the connections were never made. He then contacted Dave Bennett who provided the name of an Atlanta-based muralist who has painted other railroads they have built. Anna Parker of SweetTeaMurals.com presented Bill with three proposals: clouds only, clouds and mountains, or clouds, mountains, and vegetation. He selected the full package, and the results are stunning (photo below).

