



THE EUREKA AND SOUTH PASS RAILROAD

When Fantasy and Reality Collide



Welcome to the Minicon, and my first clinic...ever



Reality Check: I was a journalist for 40 years, more than 20 spent living in Europe and Africa. It kept me from building my dream model railroad. But not from buying stuff, like this Campbell Scale Models mine.

My first model trains were German, Trix and Fleischmann, bought by my dad, an Air Force officer, when I was a kid and we were stationed in Wiesbaden, Germany.



Fleischmann





But I always dreamed about
having a turn of the century
Wild West layout.



I think it was because the first TV show I remember seeing was Wagon Train



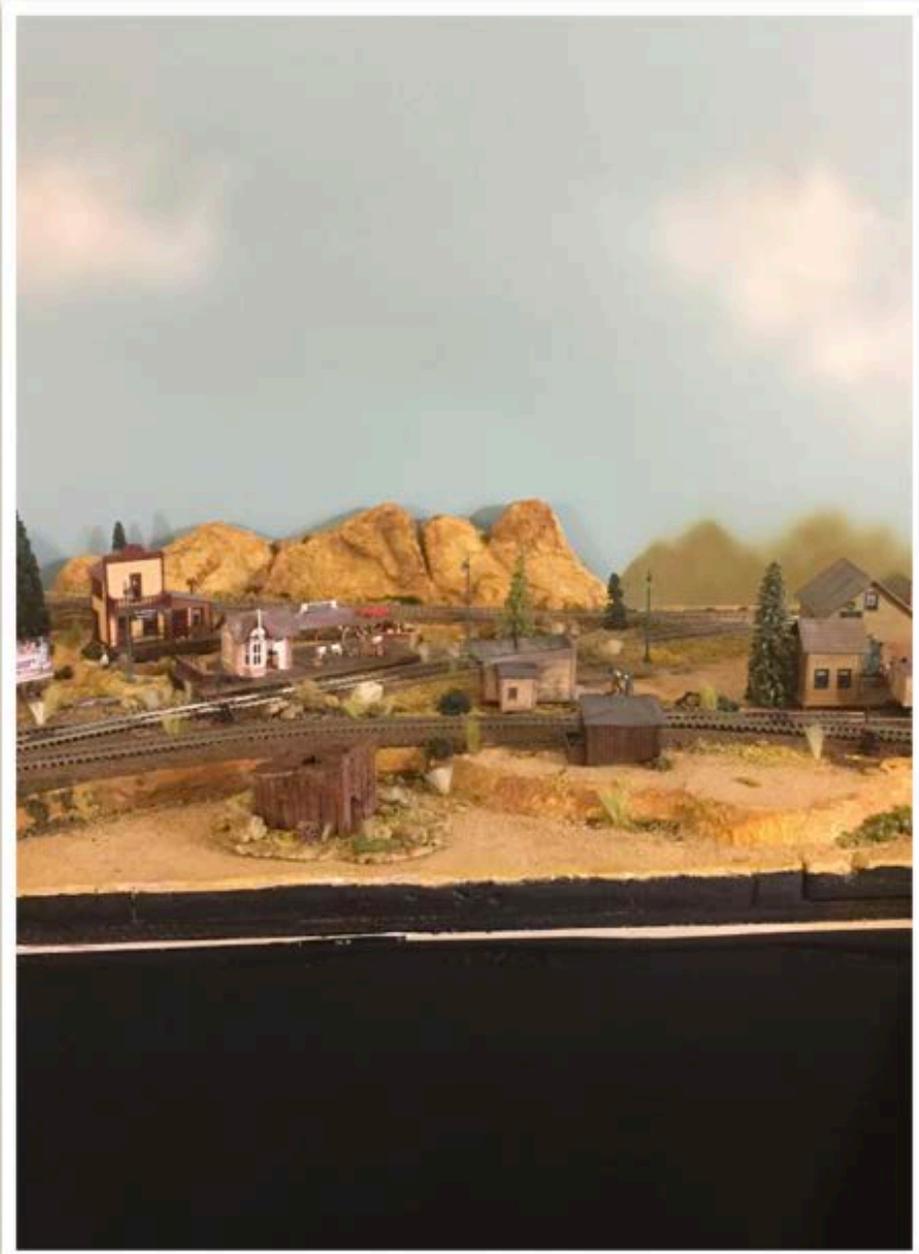
And so the Eureka and South Pass RR was born.

I BOUGHT A BRASS LOCO BACK IN THE 1960S AND
HAD IT LETTERED FOR THE E&SP EVEN THOUGH
I DIDN'T HAVE A LAYOUT FOR IT.



It took me decades before I could build my layout.

Finally in 2017 I started...And here we are today.



I located the E&SP in Nevada because I liked the look of the countryside...or at least the way I imagined it should look. After all, it's a fictional railroad operation, isn't it?
And I've never been there.









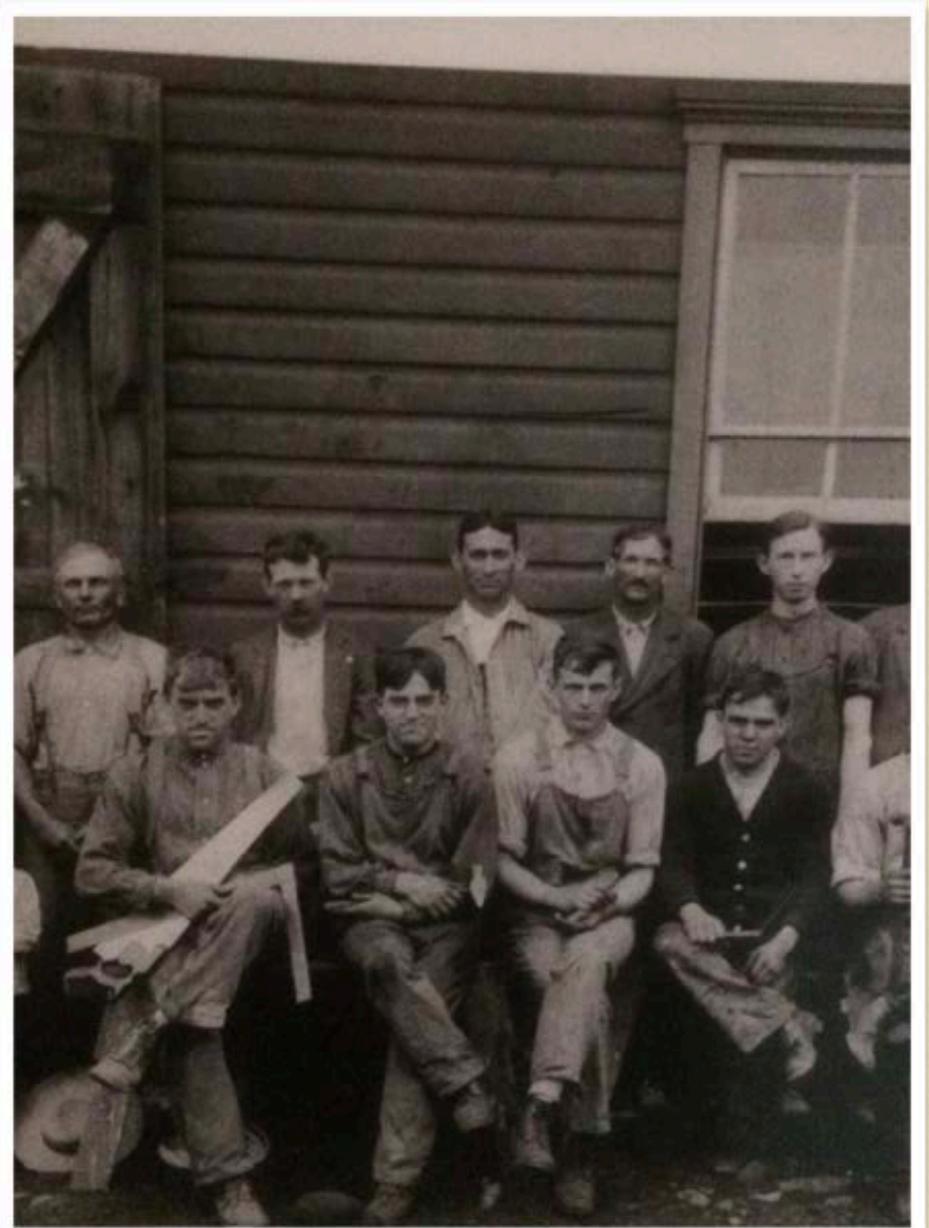






MAKING HISTORY

Since I wasn't following any prototype, I decided to make up a history for the E&SP and to integrate my family into the layout's story — *FOR THEIR ENJOYMENT.*





In my history, the people in that old photo from my wife's family collection became the crew of the sawmill.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT



- In my history, one of my sons, Brian, is the founder of Eureka, having discovered silver. He opened a mine and became mayor. Another son, Adam, opened a shipping company. My daughter, Katie, is Eureka's schoolteacher (and wife of the Lincoln Lumber Company owner.) My wife Pat is editor of the Gazette. I write for the paper. The grandkids are involved, too. The mine is named after one, the creek after a second. The third, not seen here in this old photo, is Eureka's only baby (Born last September). I built a wagon works and named it for him.
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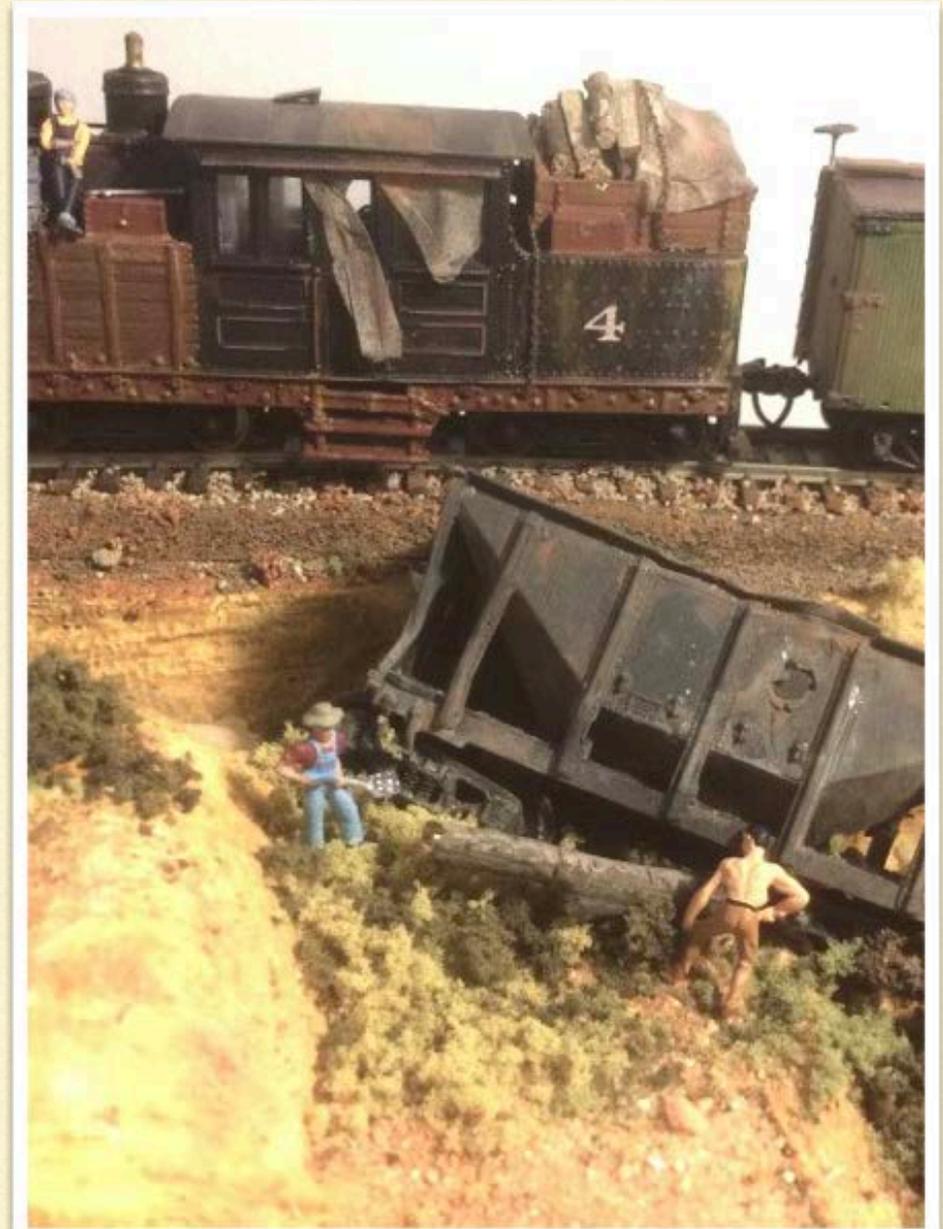
And then I decided to create the Eureka Gazette newspaper and to write articles for it. After all, as a former journalist what special something could I bring to model railroading?

The articles are coupled with scenes on the layout..
Excerpt from the **Eureka Gazette**, May 20 1895

Eureka – The Eureka and South Pass Railroad suffered its first major accident this week when an old gondola car derailed and plunged into a chasm near the headwaters of Calum Creek.

No one was injured in the accident, which occurred when the empty gondola was being transported to the Eureka railyard from a siding near South Pass. No other cars in the train were affected.

Officials of the E&SP declined comment on the cause of the derailment. But Brian Parker, Managing Director of the railroad, promised a thorough investigation. Sources close to the railway's management said speed was not a factor. Instead, they said they were told an improperly secured log fell off another freight car ahead of the gondola in the four-car train as it descended the steep incline behind Parker's Peak. The sources say the log likely bounced under the wheels of the gondola, causing it to flip off the track.



The Eureka Gazette

The “*Gazette*” even has its own small weather-beaten office



Even if you don't feel like making up a history or articles for your layout, you should write a brief description to hand out to visitors, especially if you host an open house. If you're following a prototype railroad, you should be able to find loads of information.

THE EUREKA GAZETTE

"THE BEST IN THE OLD WEST"

The Eureka and South Pass Railroad is a fictional HO scale railroad located in Nevada in the late 1890s.

It was built around two mines, one located at Parker's Peak and called the Parker's Peak Mine, and the other, called the Flack Mine.

The town of Eureka is home to Adam's shipping and storage, the bank, an assay office,

the Coombs family bakery, Milner's general store, Lily's Pleasure Palace, the blacksmith shop, Kee's Chinese laundry, Adam's miners' supply and the Eureka Gazette.

The town also features the train yard with its turntable, repair-in-place building and various out buildings.

South Pass is a village above Eureka.

It is home to the Lincoln Lumber Company, named after the illustrious President Abraham Lincoln.

Among the layout's other features are Calum Creek, a narrow body of water running from the hills adjacent to the Parker's Peak Mine, and the statue honoring pioneers of the west, also near the creek.

Besides writing, there are many visual things
you can do to enhance
your layout
like adding a newspaper office
or....

Having Fun Finding Old Posters to use on structures



Or adding people and animals







OR SCRATCHBUILD A WAGON WORKS

Because your wife's grandfather started one in 1892!

You can make a website for your history, articles and photos. There are many options. I use Wordpress.

You can follow the history and the making of the layout on my website:

<https://esprblog.wordpress.com>

Are you ready to try writing your own history?

A little research may lead to amazing discoveries!

Which is why the story
doesn't end there... because
a funny thing happened...

I DISCOVERED
THERE IS REALLY
A EUREKA IN
NEVADA AND IT
HAD ITS OWN
SMALL
RAILROAD: THE
EUREKA AND
PALISADE!

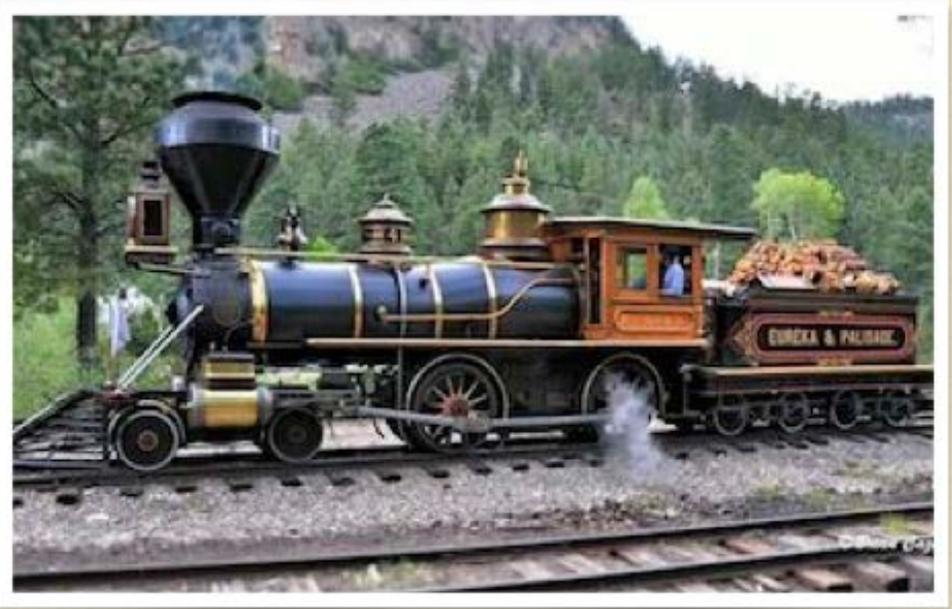


AND SO I DISCOVERED THERE ISN'T JUST PROTOTYPE
MODELING, OR FREELANCE MODELING OR EVEN
PROTO-FREELANCE MODELING.

I DISCOVERED WHAT I CALL
“PROTOTYPE MODELING IN REVERSE”

HERE'S WHAT HAPPENED.
A FRIEND OF MY WIFE'S CAME TO SEE THE LAYOUT
AND ASKED WHERE IT WAS LOCATED.
I TOLD HER, "EUREKA, NEVADA."
SHE SAID, "I ONLY KNOW EUREKA IN CALIFORNIA. HAH."
SO I DID AN ONLINE SEARCH.
AND FOUND:
THERE IS A EUREKA IN NEVADA,
FOUNDED AFTER A SILVER DISCOVERY
AND IT HAD A SHORTLINE RAILROAD,
THE EUREKA AND PALISADE.

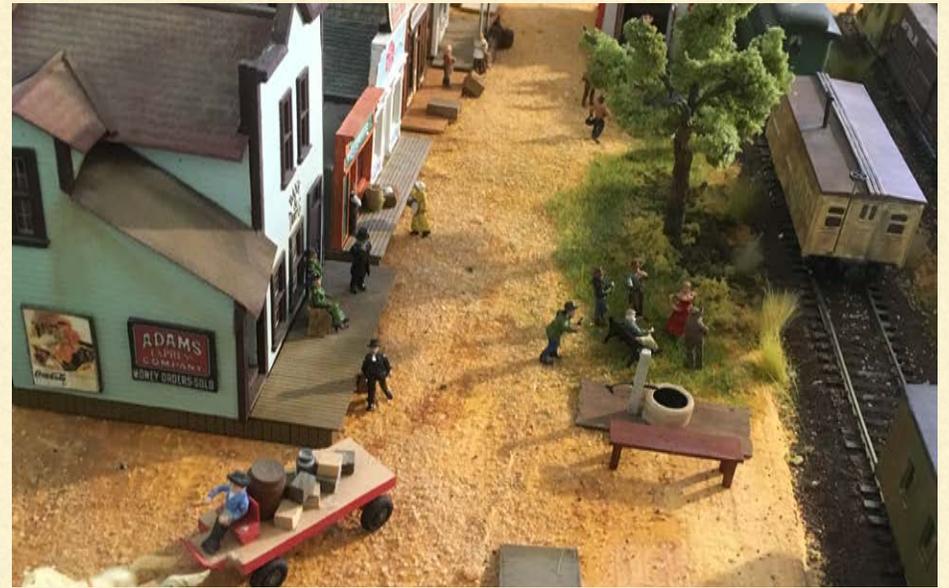
THE EUREKA AND PALISADE



THE EUREKA AND SOUTH PASS



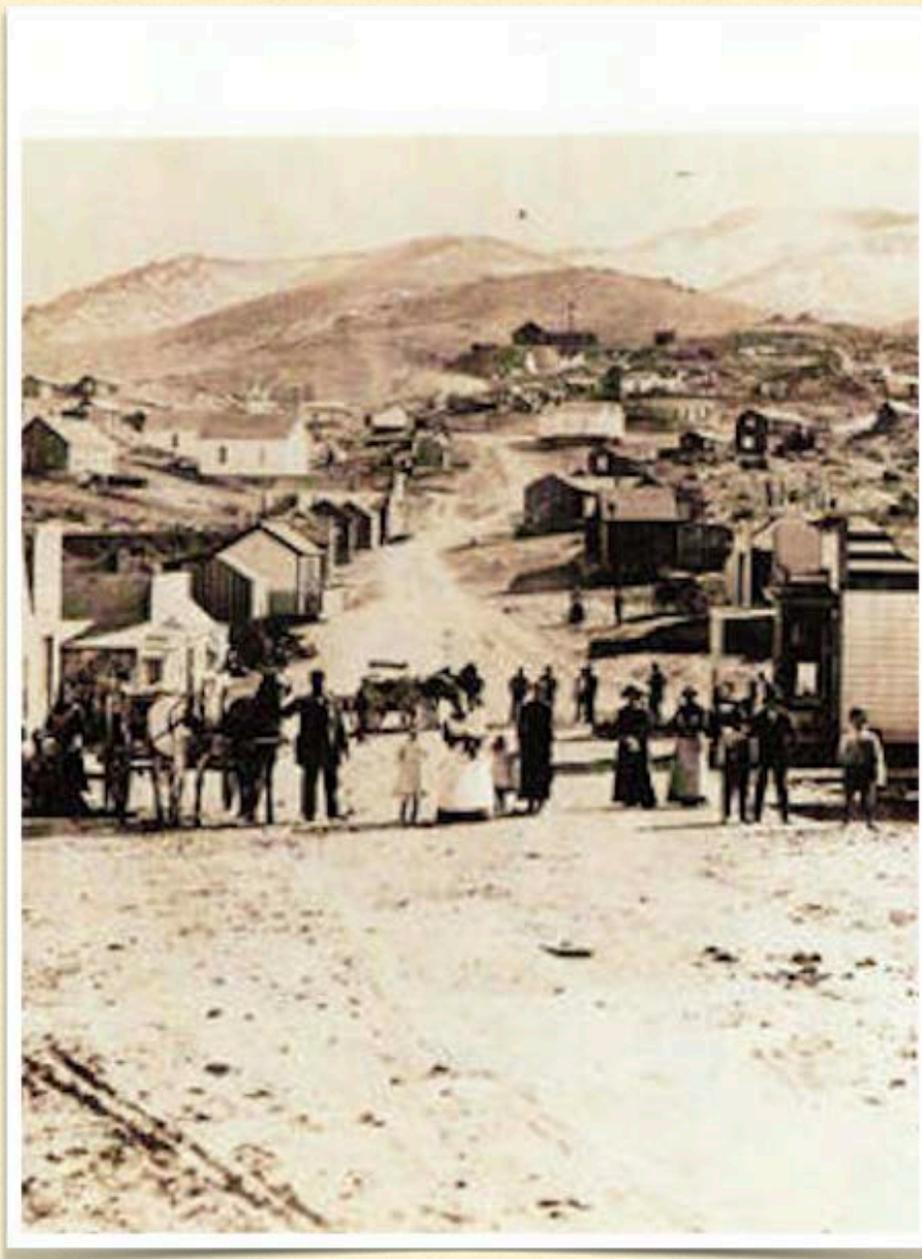




WHAT TO DO?

I'm not contemplating a complete make-over. But there are now some worthwhile ideas swirling in my head. One project could be scratch-building some beehive-shaped stone charcoal kilns. Charcoal was needed in vast quantities to fuel the furnaces where gold, silver and lead was recovered from ore mined in the Eureka District. This resulted in massive deforestation – a way for me to explain why few trees have risen on my layout.

(An interesting aside is the fact that there was a Charcoal Burners Protective Association and its members, mainly Italian immigrants, went on strike in the 1870s to protest low wages. Their action threatened a costly shutdown of smelting operations and resulted in a confrontation known as the “Fish Creek War” in which five strikers were killed by a local posse. I don't think I'll recreate that.)



A REAL EUREKA KILN



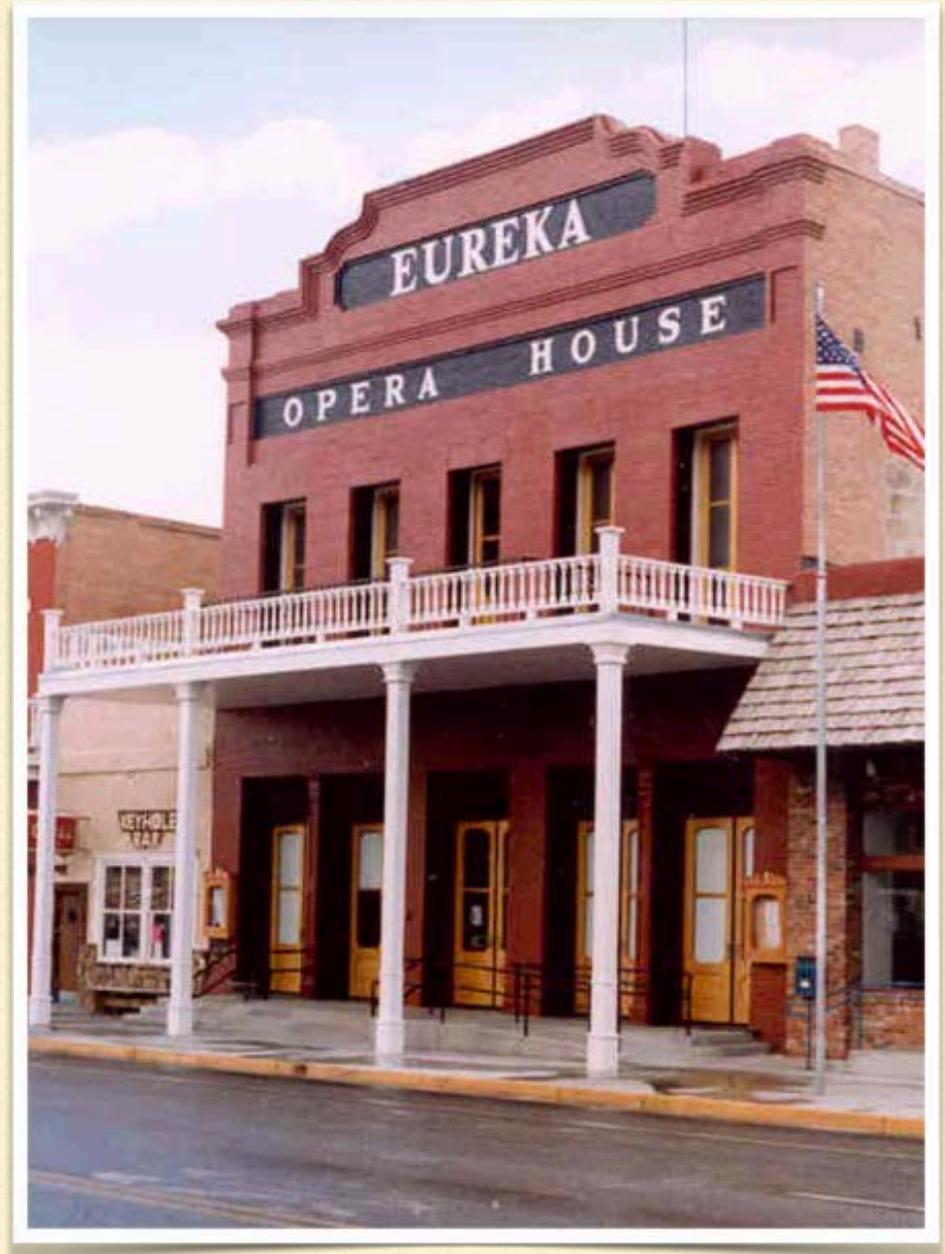
A SCULPTAMOLD
FORM READY
FOR SHAPING
AS A KILN



PROJECT IDEA?

But the first major project on my “adapting” list may be making a replica of the Eureka Opera House. According to Eureka’s official website, it was “built on the ashes of the Odd Fellows Hall, destroyed by the great main street fire of August 1879. The Opera House was used for the first time for the New Year’s Eve Costume Ball in 1880.”

In the years that followed, plays, dances, operas, concerts, and other social events were held there. It later became a movie house. (The building is now the town’s Convention and Cultural Arts Center.)



THE FUTURE OF THE E&SP

My Eureka has a small but growing population of miners, loggers (who might become charcoal burners) and town folks. Life is good. But aside from Lily's Pleasure Palace, the local saloon, there isn't much to do besides work. An

Opera House might just be the thing for a diversion!

It's all about enjoyment, and that holds true whether you are into prototype, freelance, proto-freelance or whatever-you-want-to-call-it model railroading.

Have fun!









Let's Hope...

IT DOESN'T
END UP AS A
GHOST TOWN
WITH DERELICT
BUILDINGS



So to sum up:

1. write a one-page description of your layout for guests
 2. start a website if you haven't already
 3. prototype: do some research and include in your write-ups
 4. fictional: create a history, include family members
 5. **GET YOUR KIDS AND GRANDKIDS INVOLVED**
 6. start a newspaper and write articles paired with scenes
 7. **ABOVE ALL: HAVE FUN!**
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CHEERS!



GO AHEAD, MAKE MY DAY!

QUESTIONS?

