

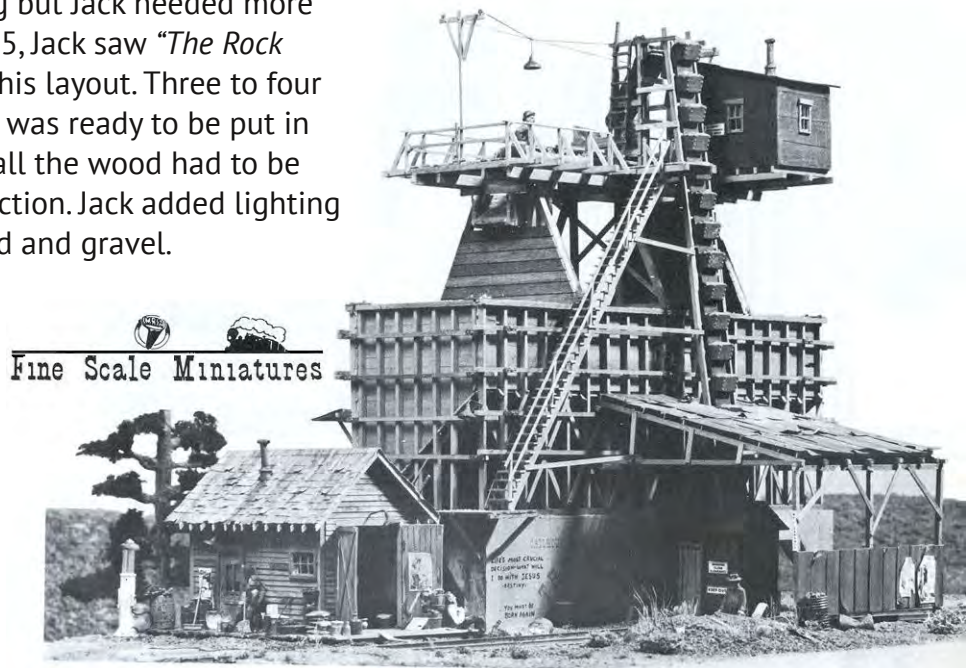
"The Rock Bunker" a Modeling Experience by Jack Palmer

- Kerry Cochran

Long time FRRS member Jack Palmer moved into his home in South San Francisco in 1964 and soon thereafter started building a HO model train layout. After the first layout, a good friend of his, Lee Straton, encouraged Jack to build a new layout. Jack told Lee if that was the case, Lee would have to help him do it. Layout # 2 was underway.

Soon the new layout was operating but Jack needed more buildings for the layout. About 1975, Jack saw "*The Rock Bunker*" and just had to have it for his layout. Three to four weeks of work on the model and it was ready to be put in place. This was a craftsman's kit - all the wood had to be cut and stained during the construction. Jack added lighting to the kit and the proper scale sand and gravel.

One of the interesting modeling details was the sand and gravel Jack used for this model. In discussions with Jack he indicated that he would get up at 6 am while at the museum and go looking for sage brush to use and he would collect "*Portola Dirt*" while at it. He sifted all the dirt he collected and used various sizes for his layout and "*The Rock Bunker*".



In late 2019, Jack moved to a retirement center and the layout had to go. He enlisted my help to perform the task of cleaning out the layout room. During the move out, I saved several (if not all) buildings from Jack's layout. During this time I felt that some of the structures and buildings needed to live on in a new venue. I took "*The Rock Bunker*" and created a diorama of the structure, rewired the lights so they would work again, added a base and a power supply. In November 2019, the diorama was taken to Jack's new residence and placed on display in a bookcase. The model remains on display in Jack's living room for visitors to see.

I am fortunate to have some of his "*Portola Dirt*" in the materials that Jack has given me along with some of the brush and trees from his layout.





*Previous page - Jack's
bookcase display.*

*This page - two view
from Jack's original
layout.*

*- Photos by
Kerry Cochran*

