



## NEWSLETTER

Santa Clarita, California

September, 2011

# September Meeting

Monday, September 26, 2011

7:00 pm

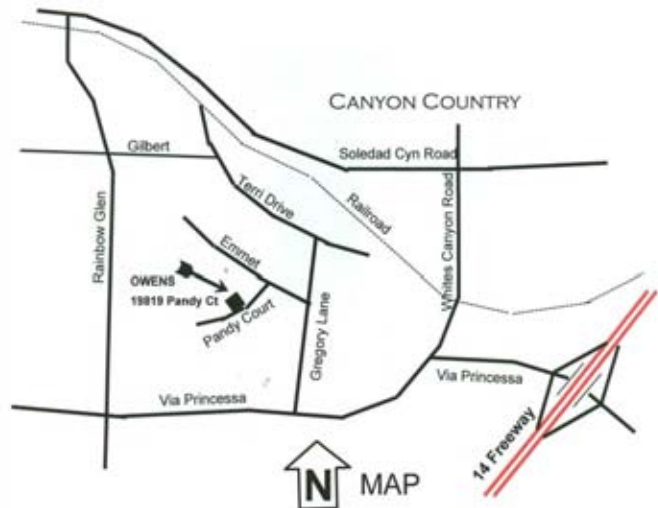
**JIM & SANDI OWENS**

19i819 Pandy Court, Canyon Country, CA

### DIRECTIONS

Traveling North or South on 14 Freeway, exit at Via Princessa. Turn West (left) on Via Princessa. Continue on Via Princessa and turn left at the tee of Whites Canyon / Via Princessa. Turn right on Gregory (the first street on the right). Go to the second street Emmet and turn left. Turn left on the first street, Pandy Court. We are the 4th house on the right.

Traveling East or West on Soledad Canyon, turn at Rainbow Glen and cross the railroad tracks to the four-way stop. Turn left on Gilbert to the next stop. Turn right onto Terri to the next stop. Turn right on Gregory to the first street and turn right on Emmet. Turn left on the next street, Pandy Court to the 4th house on the right.



### HIGHLIGHTS

This will be the first time we will be visiting Jim & Sandi's layout. It seems that health issues have caused postponements until now. Jim sent a photo (right) of his layout so we hope everyone can come to see his layout and attend the meeting.



OCTOBER

We have planned an event that will include a ride to downtown LA on the Metrolink and lunch at the well known Phillippe's Restaurant. Located just a few blocks from Union Station, Phillippe's is famous for their French dip sandwiches. The event will be on a Saturday since the Metrolink does not run on Sunday. **WE NEED YOUR FEEDBACK ON WHETHER TO HAVE THIS ON SAT. 22nd OR 29th.** The majority rules.

NOVEMBER

The **Southwest Garden Railroad Show** returns to the Fairplex in Pomona on November 5th and 6th. This will be an all G-Scale show and is the only large scale train show on the west coast. Printable coupons for \$2 off admission will probably be available before the show.

**November Club Meeting** will be at a restaurant on Monday, November 28. The location will be announced later.

**ON TRACK** by Alan Wright

In the latest, October, issue of *Garden Railways Magazine* there is an excellent and comprehensive article on Scale and Gauge as applies to large scale model railroading. As club members know, this is a subject that I mention often in meetings and I think, too often, is overlooked when planning a new layout. I am well aware that we have some who just don't care and want to have both narrow gauge and standard gauge equipment on their layouts.

Scale is important to me and that is likely due to my architectural background. I model narrow gauge and have both LGB (1:22.5) and Bachmann (1:20.3) equipment which is close enough to work together. My buildings are all in 1:24 scale which is an easy (architectural) scale to work with and helps to keep the buildings from overwhelming the layout.

This all reinforces the idea that scale and what you intend to model must be considered in the planning phase. If you want to include some of both on your layout, consider keeping them separate but connected. This could be modeled as a narrow gauge line with a transfer to a standard gauge line.

Our meeting in August was a double-header, that is, we visited two fine layouts at the Pilling's and Smith's. Both of them had made a number of improvements in their layouts so there was plenty to see and enjoy.

We started at the Pillings layout and his train ran flawlessly. Don has made numerous changes and improvements that make this approximately 16 year old layout even better. Some time back Don added an elevated cable car track in their living room.

Ray Smith has constructed a nice enclosure for his controls. He and Martie continue to add to and improve their layout. In addition, Ray has installed a point-to-point street car on a shelf in the family room of their home.

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## LIGHTING YOUR BUILDINGS

By Alan Wright

There is nothing quite like seeing your layout at night with all the buildings and selected areas lighted. It is a magical effect that I never tire of. I planned to have my buildings lighted from the beginning and I extended power to all the locations I thought I would need as I constructed the layout.

Although some transformers in use for powering and controlling the trains have accessory connections I believe the lighting should be on a separate transformer. I have used a Malibu transformer with a timer which is used primarily for landscape lighting. The transformer output is 12 volts AC and has



an on-off switch on top. The timing function can be disabled by removing the slide out shims from the dial. Since the wattage of most of the lights will be very small a transformer of 88 watt

size should be more than adequate. These are designed for outdoor use, so they don't have to be covered. I believe these can be purchased for under 50 dollars.

The cable made for the Malibu lighting systems is intended for direct burial. The 16 ga size is easy to work with and it comes in 50 and 100 foot bundles. Plan to install this cable from the transformer to a location on the layout where it can be distributed to areas where you expect to have buildings and other lighting needs. The wire could be run for part of the distance through plastic electrical conduit or pipe to allow more runs at a later time.



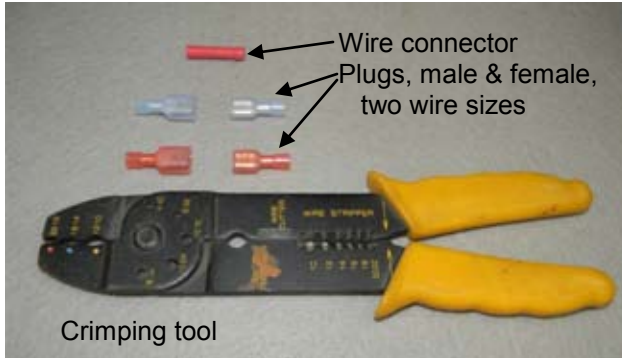
Some examples of wire or cable that you might find useful in your wiring tasks.

- #1 16 ga. stranded copper wire, insulated. Use where you need a larger wire with the leads separated.
- #2 16 ga Malibu stranded copper wire cable.
- #3 20 ga. Two copper wires in plastic insulation. (telephone wire). Useful to distribute power inside buildings. Not very durable where exposed to elements.
- #4 22 ga. Two solid copper wires in plastic insulation. Used to distribute power and connect light bulbs inside buildings.
- #5 Plastic wrapped bundle of small gauge copper wire in various wire combinations consisting of one white (neutral) and 5 or 7 or 9 individually colored wires. This is wire used to connect sprinkler valves to landscape controllers. An efficient way to distribute power to several buildings in a group. (Don Pilling likes this wire).

There are various ways to connect your wires and cables and your choice will depend on the exposure of the work and security of the joined wires. Buildings should be equipped with plugs that will allow them to be disconnected. This type of connection will usually be exposed when it is removed from the building wiring lead. There is a wide variety of plugs available and choice will depend of your specific needs and how much you want to pay.

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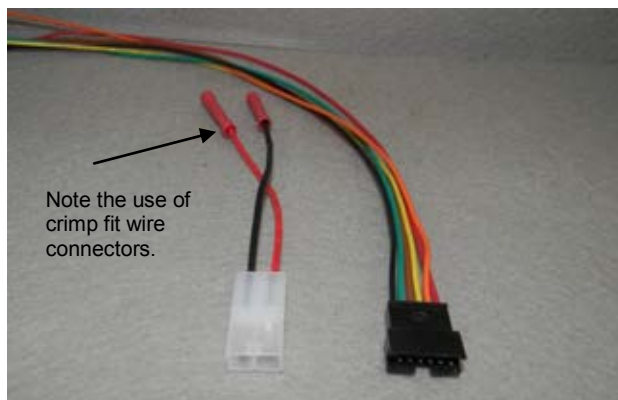
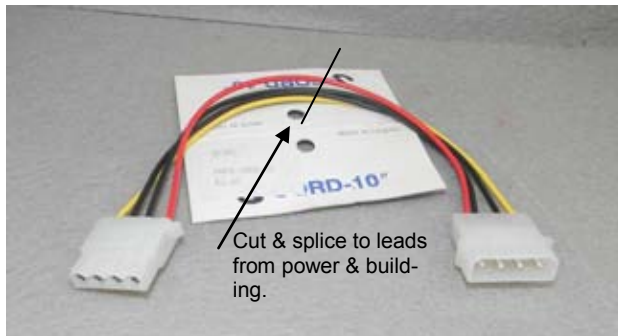
## LIGHTING YOUR BUILDINGS



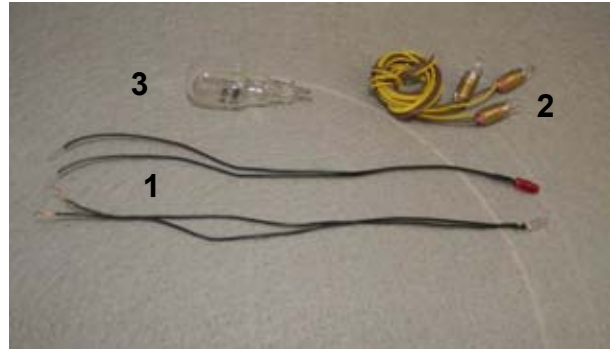
The crimped fittings shown above are quick and easy to install and inexpensive. The connectors and plugs come in packages of 6 pairs or more and are encased in plastic jacket which insulates and protects.

Of course, a soldered connection may be desirable in hard to reach locations later. This always presents a problem where two wires must be insulated from each other and then as a finished enclosure. Electrical tape can insulate the two wires and a shrink fit tube slipped over the assembly. This may not be enough to seal everything from exposures.

Other types of plugs are available and some examples are shown below. They are more expensive and have more bulk. These are mostly sold in electronics stores such as Radio Shack.



If you expect to light your buildings you must have windows that are open or glazed with glass or clear plastic. I like the small bulbs shown in the photo below which usually are not too bright and have a slightly warmer light. I have not used LED's yet but have seen them as miniature Christmas light strings.



#1 Grain of Wheat bulbs, available in colors & clear. The wire leads are very small with stranded copper wire. I got my supply at San Val quite awhile ago. Electronic supply places may have them.

#2 Small clear bulbs in a screw base that has a small wire lead attached. Forget about replacing bulbs, install new unit if it burns out. I bought this package of bulb fixtures at a train show, but hobby stores carry them sometimes. Also available are green shade wall mount and stand alone light standards from the same sources. See example on next page.

#3 This is a replacement bulb for a Malibu light fixture. These are available in 4W, 7W and 11W sizes and have a base consisting of 2 wires. Use this where you need a lot brighter light. Make your own contacts by soldering a wire to each of the two small wires on the bulb. This is how I electrified two railroad lanterns for use with my landscape lighting.

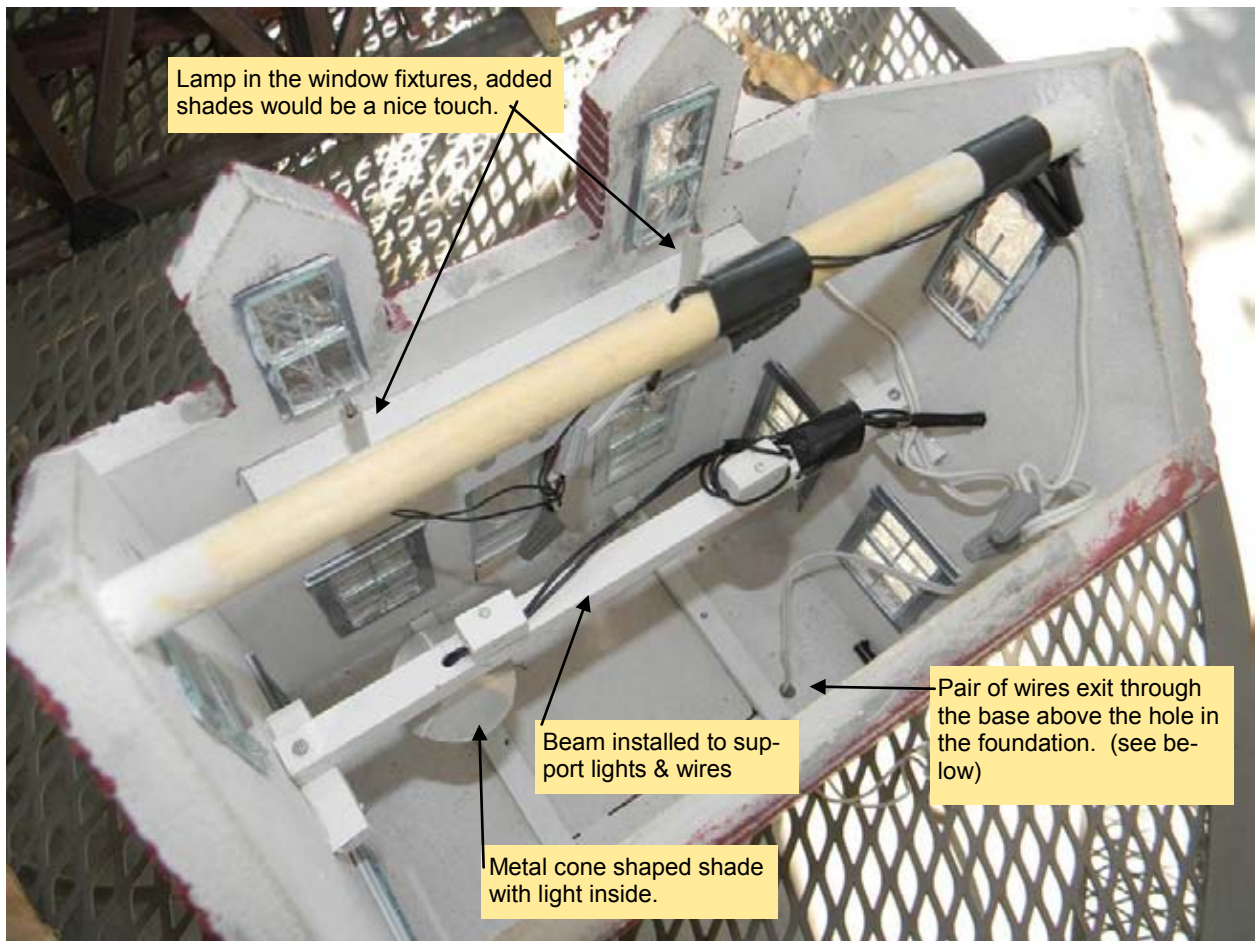
I have not had any problems with bulbs burning out prematurely even though it is sometimes hard to confirm the lamps voltage limits. With the small bulbs you will find you may need more than one or two to do a decent lighting job, but it will be more realistic to have them spread throughout the building.

continued

## LIGHTING YOUR BUILDINGS

Examples of installed light fixtures are shown in these two buildings. (with the roofs removed). The lumber yard does not have any interior lights, but has two green shade fixtures extended from the outside walls. You will see these for sale at the train shows. Easy to install.

Below, the B & B house has "lamps in the window" lights and two lights designed to illuminate the first floor only. These lights have a cone shaped shade to direct the light down. A beam was added to support the fixtures and the wire leads. If your access has to be through a hole in the floor make sure it is large enough to reach through by hand.



Leaving the roofs loose on the lighted buildings is a great help for the installation and to make replacements later. Assemble all the leads from the fixtures and attach to single pair with connectors that will reach the incoming power leads. Where I poured concrete foundations I left a hole with the power leads positioned under the building to hide it from view with the building in place. (see photo left).