



A Miniature Trip To The Lake

Connie Sauve continues to share her “On the Road Again” vehicle series. In this issue Connie takes us on a road trip in a 1:48 scale camper scene called, *Roughing It*.

BY CONNIE SAUVE

When I moved to Arizona from California in 2015, I joined the Tucson Miniature Society (TMS). The TMS club has put on a miniature show every year since 1979. The club likes to pick a theme for the show and any member that wants to, can make a project that ties in with the theme to display in the exhibit room at the show.

In 2019, the TMS decided on the theme ‘Mini Roads Traveled’. One of the club members had a wonderful camper trailer that the club decided to take on as a club project. She generously volunteered to make up the 1:12 scale kits for each member that wanted to do the project. I loved the camper, but really didn’t need another large involved project to work on.

Then I remembered I had a 1:48 scale Miss Lydia Pickett’s Traveling Trailer kit from Robin Betterley, in my mini stash. This was the perfect time to finish one of my kits that I’ve had for a while.

I pulled out the box that had everything I’ve collected for the camper project. When I first bought the kit, I knew I wanted a car to look like it was pulling the camper. I settled on a green 1953 Buick Skylark, 1:43 scale die-cast car from Franklin Mint, made in 1987. It was a close enough scale to the 1:48 scale camper. The green color went beautifully with the greens of the camper.

I started this new project by building the camper. Robin Betterley’s kits go together beautifully, and have everything needed to

complete the camper and all the furnishings inside. I only made a few changes to the camper as I loved it the way Robin designed it. I added some red crystal tail lights to the back of the camper and also a license plate. The kit came with a wood box for the front, but I really wanted propane gas tanks at the front of the camper, so I made them from scratch using large wood beads. The top and bottom are cut from a plastic straw. Once I had the tanks finished, I sprayed them with Rust-Oleum Heirloom White spray paint. Then added a metal spigot for the tank valve.

After working so hard on all the furniture and accessories inside the camper, I wanted to make sure the interior had lights to see all the details. I used an LED Nano bulb



FEATURE



1 The dog has its own bed, but when the master is away the big bed is better. 2 There is an even smaller scale version of the camper inside the 1:48 scale camper! 3 The sitting area outside the camper. 4 Connie even made tiny propane tanks. 5 A full view of the inside of the tiny camper.





inside on the ceiling and added a flower shaped bead I had in my stash for the shade. This is the only light I needed for the whole project, which made the wiring very simple for a change. The wire goes out the bottom of the camper, through the base and out the back of the wood base of the display case. The on/off light switch is glued to the back of the wood base so I don't have to take off the glass cover to turn the camper light on and off.

The tiny furniture was easily painted by first assembling each piece. I then used a piece of double-stick tape in a cardboard tray and stuck the furniture to the tape. I used a light coat of Heirloom White spray paint to quickly paint the furniture. The interior furniture pieces were so much fun to finish and accessorize. All the fabrics and accessories were included in the kit. I added an O scale dog on the bed, some dog dishes and a potted



flower on the table.

As I was building the camper, I was designing the landscaping in my head of how I wanted the finished scene to look. I decided on a wooded camping scene next to a lake. Hobby Lobby had a nice six-sided glass display case that I thought would be a fun departure from a square or rectangle shaped scene. The angles on the case gave me some great areas to highlight the various parts of the project.

Once I had the display case, and also the camper and car which are the two major pieces of the scene finished, I was able to lay out the landscaping and test where I wanted to place them. The back left corner was perfect to position the open side of the camper right next to the glass, so the interior can easily be seen. The back right corner worked great for the dock. I positioned the whole scene on an angle, so I had a large area of land and also a large area of lake to work with.

For the lake, I painted the bottom using blues and greens with black in the middle to create depth. For the front edges of the lake area, I cut some narrow pieces of acrylic and surrounded the edges of the lake with them. I sealed the acrylic well in the joints with clear silicone so when I was ready to pour the resin later, it wouldn't seep out. I also sealed the dirt banks of the shoreline with white glue.

The scene now needed some figures, so after a bit of searching online to see what was available, I bought two different sets of O scale model railroad figures by Woodland Scenics, to populate the scene. One set came with two canoes and four figures. I liked the red canoe and chose two of the figures to be canoeing. The third figure I used



This is a wonderful camping scene in 1:48 scale.

to lay in the hammock which came with the camper kit. The final figure looked like she was wearing a bathing suit, so I repainted her top, cut her at the waist since the water is only about 1/2" deep, and she is one of the women swimming. The second set of "O" scale figures from Woodland Scenics came with a dock, three figures, and an aluminum boat which I didn't use. The man and boy I used as they came. The woman became my second swimmer, so she was repainted

and cut at the waist too. I decided the swimmers looked more like they were floating around in the water instead of swimming, so I made two black inner-tubes from Fimo for them to float around in, which also helped hide the fact that they are cut off at the waist. The inner-tubes added a lot of fun detail to the girls.

I laid out all the figures, canoe, camper, car, and dock on the base, so I could better envision where all the trees and landscaping would go and what I needed to buy. The dock



1 The back of the camper shown in the setting with a tiny squirrel.
2 Three ducks paddle about by the pier. 3 Connie added two campers that are enjoying the afternoon canoeing on the lake.



sat too low in the lake, so I added wood to the posts to make them longer so the dock sits above the waterline. By the time I was ready for the landscaping, I had a better idea of how I wanted the scene to look. I found some nice model railroad trees at the craft stores, also bushes, cattails, rocks and green foam for the patches of grass. It was so much fun adding all the greenery. It made the scene come alive!

The next big step was adding the resin. I mixed the two-part resin, and poured it so the lake level was the same height as the acrylic edges. Before the resin had completely set up, I added the canoe and floating girls to the top of the resin. I added some texture to the

perfectly smooth lake surface by adding Water Effects by Woodland Scenics. Additional ripples were also added to the water around the floating figures and canoe to give the water some motion.

I couldn't resist putting a few critters in the landscaping. I love adding details like this! The raccoon is ready to climb the tree, a little squirrel is checking out the new camper and there is a cute little skunk sneaking up on the guy in the hammock. The little stinker is by Barbara Meyer, as are all the critters. I bought the tiny metal ducks on eBay and painted them to look like male and female mallards. They are 1/4" long!

The final touches to the project

were adding the dad getting his fishing gear out of the car, and the little boy and his dog showing off the fish he caught. I also added a campfire and a couple logs to sit on. Who goes camping without a campfire to sit around? There is even a tiny metal coffee pot, percolating next to the campfire.

I had so much fun creating this scene, it brought back memories of when my family used to go camping. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me, Connie Sauve at cmsauve2@gmail.com