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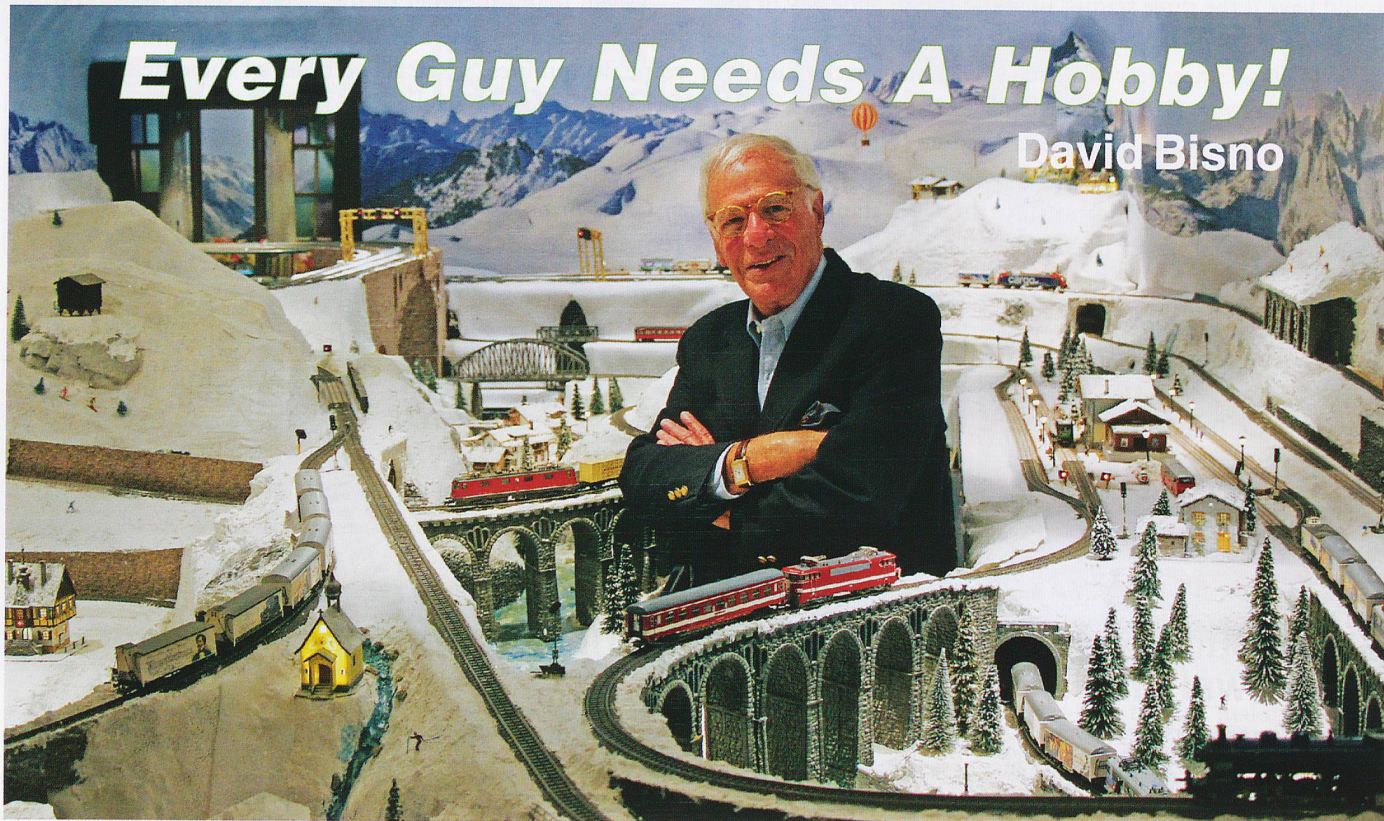
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## Every Guy Needs A Hobby!

David Bisno



David surrounded by his trains.

All photos: David Bisno

It was my first trip to Europe, summer 1959, as a college student in Boston, that I availed myself of an inexpensive Harvard College charter flight to London. It would be a trip by myself, with \$1,000 in my pocket with which to make-do for 11 weeks, hoping to exchange my then hobby (No.1) of performing a bit of 'magic' for a bed and a meal. The English were receptive; I was grateful. First it was hitchhiking to Cambridge until I determined that waiting alongside the highway with my thumb out was too time consuming. I tried British trains visiting college libraries in Oxford and the music festival in Llangollen. From Chester, ignoring all advice, I drove a small motorcycle the 400km to Glasgow and Edinburgh. The rain at Loch Lomond was one thing; forgetting to drive on the left was another. I returned to Chester from Scotland via over-night train, sleeping on the floor of the baggage car with the damned cycle. I discarded the idea of a hobby of motorcycling.

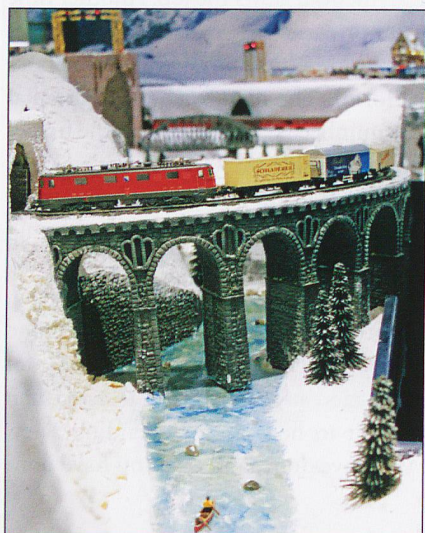
And then it was to Switzerland, where I was in awe of the snow-covered Alps and totally enamoured with the trains gliding effortlessly between towering peaks and around glimmering lakes. I was 'hooked.' Almost every year since

A train crosses the viaduct whilst chilly canoeists look on.

(I am now 79) I have returned to Europe, usually stopping off in Britain for a week or so of high culture, and then heading on to Switzerland to ride the trains (Hobby No. 2), devise new routes... and return to the U.S. each year with a new, brightly coloured, model of a Swiss locomotive. Twenty five years practicing ophthalmic surgery, and another twenty five designing and presenting lectures and courses (Hobby No.3) on a myriad of topics for 'silver-haired scholars' (see: [www.davidbisno.com](http://www.davidbisno.com)) within institutes for lifelong learning in this country and overseas (wherever they speak English), left no time for building a model Swiss train layout.

Finally, 5 years ago, impressed with the accomplishments of other model train aficionados on the US east and west coasts, I committed myself to building what I had long dreamed of: a Swiss, winter, alpine, model train, HO gauge, layout. Working 8-10 hours/day, fully committed to my new (4th) hobby, I had 95% of it done in two years. And, of course, to check out my accuracy of modelling all things "Railroad-Swiss", my wife and I reverted back to my 2nd hobby. Dedicated to serious research, with cameras and note pads in hand, we enthusiastically returned on multiple occasions when the snow was at its most glorious, to glide on the rails between Geneva, Montreux, Gstaad, Klosters, St. Moritz, Pontresina and Poschiavo. Whether on the SBB, the Rhätische Bahn or the Rigi Bahn, we were confirming the accuracy or deciding to change what I was building in miniature in our basement in New Hampshire.


Upon completion of the layout three years ago, imagine my delight at being able to invite friends and fellow modellers to my home for ideas and further suggestions - Fay always providing a yummy lunch of fondue, sausages and spätzle for fellow European model railroaders. It was from a model RR colleague, Irish-born Boyd Misstear (now living in



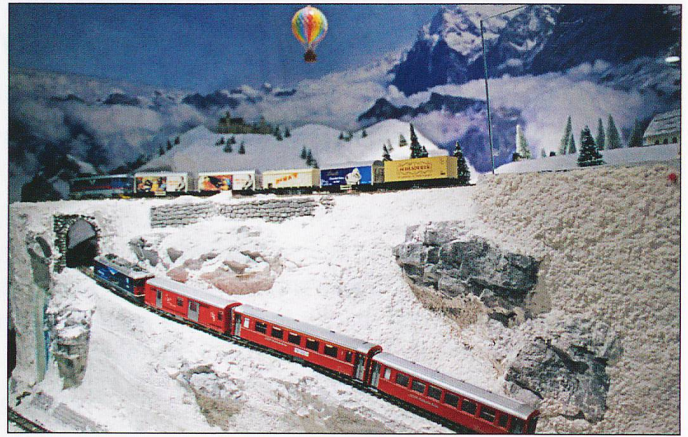
Connecticut) that I learned of the Swiss Railway Society and this journal. Ever since receiving my first issue, our Swiss rail travelling (hobby # 2) has become all the richer. See: Issue No.125 - March 2016 – ‘In Praise of the Swiss Railway System’.

Having completed the layout a few years ago, the challenge was how to document and share the endeavour. I discovered the creative potential (Hobby No. 5) of designing and having printed in beautiful colour my own photographic books to share with family and send as gifts. These, of course, can be done on any subject, whether travel, a special event or a hobby. I used Shutterfly software but the following link: <https://www.tomsguide.com/us/best-photo-books,review-2651.html> will lead you to many others. See photograph of my cover. The real fun began when I discovered the challenge, and the joy – albeit not without a few frustrations – of making a video movie. (Hobby No. 6) My goal: to document my Swiss, Winter, Alpine, Model Train Layout combining the music of the Johann Strauss Family; my own Swiss rail travels; history and literature from the gilded age of European rail travel and my model trains.

I invite you to grab a drink, put your feet up and enjoy my first attempt (6th hobby) at making a video-movie: <https://aglobalreach.wistia.com/medias/icwbhfdy6t> I would love to hear from you with ideas, suggestions, critiques. [davidbisno@gmail.com](mailto:davidbisno@gmail.com)

*Thanks for joining me. A guy can never have too many hobbies!* 

A hot air balloon floats over the narrow gauge with a Bemo rack track train below.



## A Sign of the Times?

Peter Marriott reluctantly disfigures his wagon with graffiti



It always amazes me that there is so much beautiful countryside in Switzerland but so many of the wagons are covered in graffiti. I am sure many members feel the same way as I do - we don't like it! However it exists and if you wish to place your model in the real world then perhaps some graffiti should be on it. If you have an artistic flair you can design and paint your own miniature graffiti on wagons, buildings and walls, or alternatively there are a number of companies producing graffiti transfers that are easy to work with.

I recalled that lots of SBB Cargo Hbbillns vans and tankers carry graffiti so I decided to experiment on one side of each of the Roco HO scale wagons I had. I bought my transfers from Railtec ([www.railtec-models.com](http://www.railtec-models.com)). The first step was to carefully cut around the graffiti design on the sheet of transfers over a self-sealing cutting board using a sharp Swann

Morton knife and a steel rule. Then I carefully moved the transfer on its backing sheet to a small dish with a little water in it to soak for around 20-seconds or until the transfer would easily slide off the backing sheet. Introducing the transfer to the wagon is the tricky bit and I carried it on the tip of my craft knife. All the while it should still be wet so that it will stick to the wagon. If it dries out it will not stick to anything! When the transfer is in situ, dab it with a dry tissue to ensure that there are no bubbles and it is smooth along its length. I left my transfers 30 minutes to dry, then gently painted the wagons with Revell matt clear varnish to seal the transfers to the wagons. I was pleased with the results and both wagons looked more realistic - but I would still rather both real and model wagons were kept in pristine condition! 