

ALONG *The* ROUTE

1825-1932

1825-1921

1825

Colonel John Stevens builds a steam locomotive and a circle of track on his estate at Hoboken, New Jersey. The first full-sized railroad in America, it may also be the first hobby garden railway and live steam model railroad.



1830-31



The locomotive John Bull is constructed in England, taken apart and shipped to the owners of the Camden & Amboy Railroad in America as a full-size kit!

1835

Thomas Davenport creates a motor-driven model train powered by electricity.

1869

East meets west at Promontory Summit, Utah, as Central Pacific and Union Pacific rails are joined.



1880s

European toy makers develop a thriving export business, supplying colorful toy trains to the growing American market.

1893

Columbian Exposition in Chicago features many railroad exhibits showcasing full-size and miniature railroad equipment.



May 10 — The Walthers family welcomes its newest member, William Kearny Walthers.

1898

Märklin introduces its first electric toy trains

1899

Bill Walthers age 7 receives his first train for Christmas, the start of his life-long love of trains of every shape and size. After days of winding the clockwork mechanism, he develops a blister on his thumb that becomes infected and requires minor surgery. Promised a better train, he's good for the doctor.

1901

Lionel Manufacturing Corporation is founded.



1904

George Lee builds the first known model railroad in the United States, operated with Märklin clockwork equipment. Layout is rebuilt in 1906 for American-made models, and converted to electrical power in 1907.

1907



American Flyer begins production.

1914

WWI begins, cutting off US from European toys.

1921

Ives unveils first Standard Gauge trains.



Railway & Locomotive Historical Society is founded, one of the first railroad historical groups.

1922-1932

1922

Bing unveils a new smaller scale of

trains called "half-o," or more simply "HO," scaled to 4mm and running on 16.5mm gauge track.



1930

As an electrical engineer, Bill Walthers home attic is not only a layout for his Ives and Lionel standard gauge equipment, but his laboratory. Here he develops and tests a variety of new electronic devices that include twin-solenoid switch machines to control turnouts, signals that use Christmas tree lamps, and interlocking circuits that use telephone-style relays and more.

1931

Mr. W. K. Walthers, 1560 W. Pierce Street, Milwaukee, Wisc., has been interested in model railway work for some years. He would like to hear from all of our readers residing in or near his city with a view to the formation of a Model Engineers Club, or an occasional meeting for mutual benefit. Telephone No. Orchard 6347.

Bill Walthers runs a personal ad in the April issue of *The Modelmaker* looking for other Milwaukee-area modelers to exchange ideas and possibly form a model engineers club. (Were not certain, but this may be how Bill met Al Kalmbach, Linn Westcott and others who would later form the National Model Railroad Association.)

1932

Out of work because of the Depression, Bill Walthers turns his hobby into a business and sets up shop in his home on Pierce Street in Milwaukee.



Walthers First ad for self-published and printed *Signal & Control Manual for Miniature Trains* (priced at \$3.00) appears in May issue of *The Modelmaker*. Soon after, letters arrive asking for help in locating supplies, purchasing parts, or requesting additional information about plans in the book. Bill begins supplying electrical supplies and helpful answers, setting the cornerstone for the future of the company.

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1932-1941

1932-1935

1932 continued

Bill begins producing signals and track for standard gauge (#1 gauge)

Walters First mail-order catalog of supplies is offered — cost is 3¢, or mailed overnight for 15¢. First year's sales add up to a very respectable \$500!



1933

Model Craftsman magazine (later Railroad Model Craftsman) is founded, and Bill Walters first article, Operating the Model Railroad, appears in the June issue.

Walters offers its first O Scale signals and track, and begins production of car kits following purchase of American Model Co. from Ed Alexander.

Century of Progress opens in Chicago and includes major display of model electric trains.



MODEL RAILROAD CLUB OF MILWAUKEE, Inc.
Owning and Operating THE MILWAUKEE UNION TERMINAL RAILROAD
215 E. National Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

1934

Model Railroad Cub of Milwaukee is formed; Bill Walters is a charter member.

Model Railroader debuts in January — Bill contributes a series of articles showing how to transform a holiday display train set into a real model railroad.

Walters issues first O Scale catalog listing freight car kits (bronze or aluminum castings and wood parts; also available assembled) and passenger cars featuring stamped brass sides.

1935

Union Pacific's daring new Streamliner is the talk of the town, as the brilliant yellow train barnstorms across America. Popular Science commissions Bill Walters to build a model and write a how-to article — due in five days — he finishes on time!



1935-1941

1935 continued

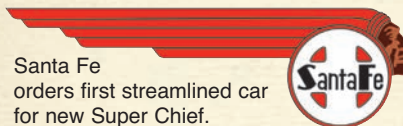
First NMRA convention is held in Milwaukee over Labor Day weekend with 75 in attendance, mostly from the Midwest.



Walters offers its first water-slide decals.

1936

Model Railroad Cub of Milwaukee moves to new quarters in a Milwaukee Road station, and begins construction of the O Gauge Milwaukee Union Terminal layout.



Santa Fe orders first streamlined car for new Super Chief.

Walters expands O Scale with first North Shore interurban cars and Ingersoll Rand boxcab diesel. Passenger cars now have punched brass car sides, embossed rivets and cast bronze ends including new Hiawatha cars to match the Lionel Atlantic.

1937



Walters operations outgrow the family home. Bill acquires first office and manufacturing space in the Erie Terminal Building, which led to the name "Terminal Hobby Shop."

Walters begins replacing rough castings with machine-made lead die cast parts, which are more detailed and accurate.

First HO models released under the Walters name, based on items formerly offered under Taylormade brand. Line includes Milwaukee F6 Hudson, Alco HH600 diesel switcher (sand cast bronze body); passenger cars with cardboard sides, wood sides, ends and floor; and freight cars with all-wood bodies.

1938

A.C. Gilbert purchases American Flyer line and introduces new HO Scale models.

"HO" GAUGE MEN



Walters produces its first HO track.

1939



EMD unveils its FT, the first road diesel built especially to move freight.

Bill Walters is contracted to supply generic O Gauge streamlined car and loco models for a special display layout at the World's Fair in New York.

Walters begins in-house printing of decals.



Walters introduces its own brand of "Crestline" passenger cars kits featuring wood and pressboard sides, and diecast trucks.

World War II begins in Europe in September.

1940

Bill introduces streamlined O Scale passenger cars, based on tooling developed for the World's Fair layout.

Meredith Smith, NMRA Engineering Manager compiles and presents first NMRA clearance standards, adapted from actual dimensions used by American Railway Engineering Association, in the March NMRA Bulletin.

1941

Model Industry Association (later Hobby Industry Association (HIA)), is formed.

Supplies of hobby materials including tinplate, wire, motors and more are becoming harder to find.

US enters WWII on December 7.

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1942-1962

1942-1957

1942

Emergency materials restrictions ban manufacturer of all nonessential goods (including most hobby products) that require critical materials such as brass, copper, and chromium.



1943

Too small to handle major war work, Walthers keeps up morale on the home front (and among service personnel in rear areas) supplying wood and paper kits, and selling off its

remaining inventory of pre-war products, leading to famous "bottom of the barrel" ad.

1945

Victory! As the only model railroad firm to keep producing the few model supplies it could during the war years, Walthers begins gearing up for bigger and better things with new O Scale models and some additional HO items.

1946

Bruce Walthers returns from active duty with the US Navy and begins working full-time for his dad.



Walthers introduces new line of paper building materials and a new cartoon mascot named "Willie."

1949

Gulf, Mobile & Ohio becomes first large railroad to be 100% diesel powered.

Walthers Catalog becomes Walthers Catalog and Reference Manual for the first time.

1950

Plastics, which have been increasing in use since the 1930s for all kinds of products, gain a foothold as a new material for model railroad products.

Dozens of new firms enter the model railroad field, creating more diversity with limited lines of specialized products.

1951/52

Walthers introduces Goo® all-purpose adhesive for wood and metal kits. TS-5 Switch Machine is unveiled.



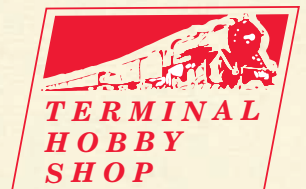
1952

Walthers announced #7700 series of 60' short passenger cars with pre-painted built-up bodies and plastic roof. Detail parts from other suppliers including Silver Streak and Central Valley are included with Walthers kits for the first time.

1954

Decaling gets easier with introduction of Solvaset.

Responding to requests from modelers who don't have local hobby shops, and problems within the industry as other distributors cut back or drop model railroad supplies, Bruce creates Walthers new mail order arm, Terminal Hobby Shop.



1955-56

NMRA horn-hook or X2F coupler is adopted as a standard for HO models, especially train sets.

1957

NMRA introduces Recommended Practices in January, designed to promote interchange of equipment and specify major component details to improve designs and functions.



1958-1962



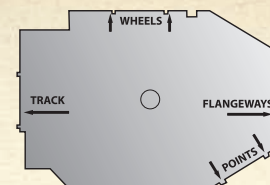
1958

Decals to the rescue! After several bad years, Walthers sales rebound almost overnight as Athearn unveils undecorated HO kits. Demand for decals skyrockets, and the company becomes profitable once more.

Walthers acquires its first official home at 1245 North Water Street in downtown Milwaukee.

1959

Newer and smaller N scale is unveiled – named for its 9mm gauge, the word "nine" begins with N in nearly every language.



1960

NMRA issues first metal standards gauges for HO and O, hailed as "...the most important NMRA development in many years."

1961

NMRA introduces Achievement Program to build a wide range of modeling skills, and recognize individual modelers as Master Model Railroaders.

1962

Arnold begins making first commercial N Scale models.



ALONG *The* ROUTE

1962-1986

1962-1971

1962 Continued

Walthers 30th anniversary brings major changes and introduces wholesale lines for the first time including 15 Akane, Alexander, Binkley, Laconia, Cal-Scale, Semaphore Hobby Industries, Central Valley, Anderson track, Permacraft, Floquil, Main Line Models, Kadee, Marnold, Silver Streak and Northeastern Scale Models.

BeeJay Building series, based on Walthers building paper are unveiled with die cut inner frame to which the building paper is applied.

Walthers purchases the Marnold power supply line.

1967

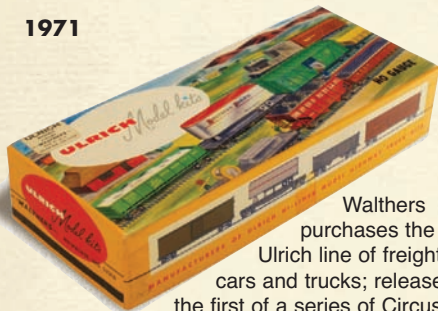
HO catalog now lists 40 wholesale lines. Brass model of an ACF Center Flow covered hopper announced (only brass car model ever imported under the Walthers name).

1969



Walthers moves to bigger quarters on 64th Street

1971



Walthers purchases the Ulrich line of freight cars and trucks; releases the first of a series of Circus passenger car kits based on converted WWII Army hospital cars.

1972-1986

1972

Märklin introduces amazingly tiny and fully operational models in Z Scale, so named as it seemed unlikely anything smaller could ever be built, and Z is the last letter of the alphabet.

Walthers rolls out its first plastic HO kit, a 50' mechanical reefer under the "Golden Spike Series".

1973

"Craft Train" kits (multi-media, non-plastic models) is introduced by Bruce Walthers.



1976

First Walthers N catalog is published.

1977



Walthers completes its move to its current home at 5601 W. Florist Avenue on Milwaukee's north side.

1978

Last Walthers wood and metal passenger car kits are produced.

1979

Walthers acquires tooling for the SS Ltd. Line of cast metal details and structure kits.

märklin®

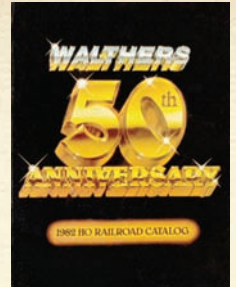
Walthers establishes a partnership with Märklin; first step in becoming a major importer of European product for the next decade and beyond.

1981

Walthers acquires HO-West line of printed paper backdrop scenes, which are reintroduced as Instant Horizons™.

1982

Walthers celebrates its 50th anniversary. First Walthers-brand plastic freight car is introduced (40' composite gondola). Last year that Marnold and full line of passenger cars will be listed in Catalog.



Walthers acquires Magnuson Models, begins

production of superbly detailed structure kits in resin for the first time.

1983

Walthers first in-house plastic models include Ponderosa Pines tree kits, plus a 40' composite gondola and an FGE insulated boxcar in HO Scale.

1984

Bruce hands the throttle to Phil.

Walthers purchases popular Train Miniature line and begins producing HO Scale freight car kits.



Walthers first Amtrak passenger models, including Amfleet cars and E60CP electric loco are produced in plastic after acquiring the tooling from American GK.

1985

Walthers begins HO freight car of the month releases featuring special 12-pack dealer displays (this popular program would run for the next 10 years).



Walthers introduces exclusive all-new Code 83 track system, custom-made by Shinohara

1986

Walthers produces first joint projects with Roco and Arnold in N Scale.

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1986-2003

1986-1995

1986 continued

First all-new Train Miniature car debuts at Boston NMRA convention, the Airslide® 2-Bay Covered Hopper.

1987

Walthers HO Catalog includes special section for new G Scale models this year.

1988

Electrical engineer Bernd Lenz introduces the first Digital Command Control system, which is used in Märklin and Arnold models.

1989

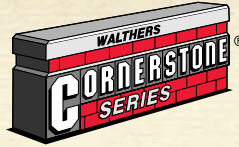


Walthers rolls out its first major theme, The Great Circus Train in HO Scale, based on the colorful equipment at the Circus World Museum in Baraboo as it appeared in 1967. Complete series includes

20 spectacular cars, wagons and a brass model of Grand Trunk Western #5629 decorated for Schlitz/Old Milwaukee, corporate sponsors of the prototype train.

1991

Combining industries with freight cars, Walthers new Cornerstone Series®, including Interstate Fuel & Oil, American Millwork, Water Street Freight Terminal, 2-stall Engine House, Overhead Crane and Electric Utility Pole kits make their debut in HO Catalog.



1992

Walthers introduces its first new locomotive since the 1930s with the Fairbanks-Morse H10-44 in HO Scale.

N Scale Cornerstone Series structure kits are introduced.

Licensed NASCAR® racing sets come to Life-Like Racing™ line.



1993



HO Engine line expands with all-new SW-1 switcher.

First industrial themes combining Cornerstone Series kits and Walthers freight cars are released based on petroleum and intermodal operations.

1994

First Walthers designed and tooled N Scale freight cars, Cryo-Trans 75' reefer and Thrall stand alone double stack car along with 40' containers, are introduced.

1995

TRAINLINE®

Trainline® Train sets providing high-quality and affordable prices for beginners are introduced.

Amtrak line expands with new Horizon fleet models.



First major industrial theme, "The Works," debuts to make steel modeling easier than ever before. Series stars all-new Cornerstone structures including Walthers biggest kit to date, the Blast Furnace, new mill cars, and our first hardcover book, The History, Making, and Modeling of Steel by Dean Freytag.

1996-2003

1996



New locos and accessories are added to Trainline series including GE Dash 8-40B and depot kit.

1998

Walthers introduces the Big Trains Catalog featuring G, O and S Scales.

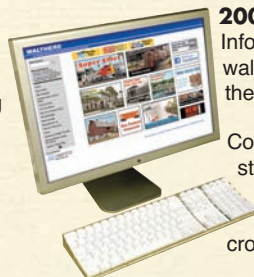
1999



Passenger car line expands with new Amtrak Superliner II cars.

2001

Information services expand as walthers.com goes online for the very first time.



Cornerstone Built-ups join HO structure line with new trackside interlocking tower, speeder shed and crossing shanty.

2002

Walthers begins production of new plastic passenger car line with HO Budd 10-6 sleeper 46-seat coaches, 24-8 slumber coaches, diners (our first cars designed for drop in lighting kits) and a converted Amtrak 1700 series baggage car.

2003

PLATINUM LINE™

New Platinum Line™ of fully-assembled, superdetailed freight cars rolls out of the Walthers shops with new C&O, UP and GTW style cabooses in HO.

First year for new N Scale Cornerstone Built-ups.

ALONG *The* ROUTE

2003-2010

2003-2007

2003



Walthers begins its classic name trains series with all-new models of the legendary Santa Fe Super Chief cars and a custom-run of Athearn F7 locos.

2004

First Walthers Pullman-Standard passenger cars are introduced in HO Scale.



Modern Engine Servicing Facility theme introduces powered, assembled 130' Turntable with programmable indexing.

2005

Walthers acquires the model train and toy assets of Life-Like™.

Gold Line™ freight cars are introduced by Walthers with knuckle couplers and RP-25 metal wheels.

Walthers passenger car line grows with new HO Scale heavyweight cars.



2007

Walthers celebrates 75th Anniversary with all-new models of Milwaukee Road Hiawatha in early orange and later yellow schemes, as well as several structures.



2008-2010

2008

märklin®

Märklin names Walthers its exclusive North American distributor.



First N Scale passenger car is added to Walthers line. A bright spot in the history of Walthers HO passenger car production, revised Superliners are introduced with real metal finish to simulate stainless steel and all grab irons factory installed.

2009

LGB appoints Walthers as its exclusive North American distributor.



Stacey Walthers Naffah becomes the first member of the fourth generation of the Walthers family to join the company started by her great-grandfather.

First plated metal finish PROTO 2000 engine, CB&Q E7 is introduced.



UP City Streamliners introduce new prototypically tinted windows in HO passenger car line.

Walthers structure selection line expands with new Lasercut wood kits.

2010

BROADWAY LIMITED

Walthers name train series rolls into a new decade with an all-new replica of the famed Broadway Limited in HO.



Santa Fe Super Chief is revised and upgraded with plated metal finish and matching late production F3 PROTO 2000 diesels.



Cornerstone Series® structure line expands with laser-cut Boomtown USA and amazing Los Angeles Union Passenger Terminal kits featuring cardstock construction.



NMRA celebrates 75th Anniversary where it all began, back in Milwaukee.