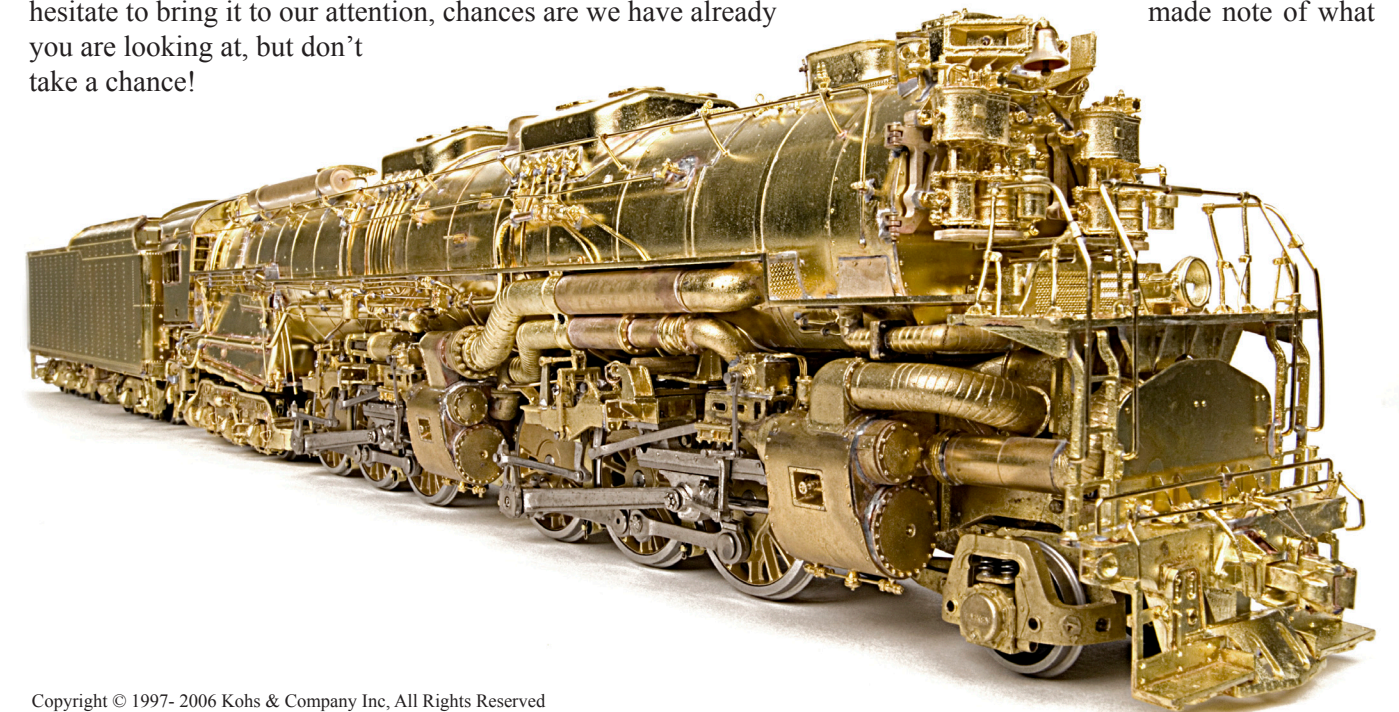


The H8/AG 'Allegheny' Class Project Update Number One

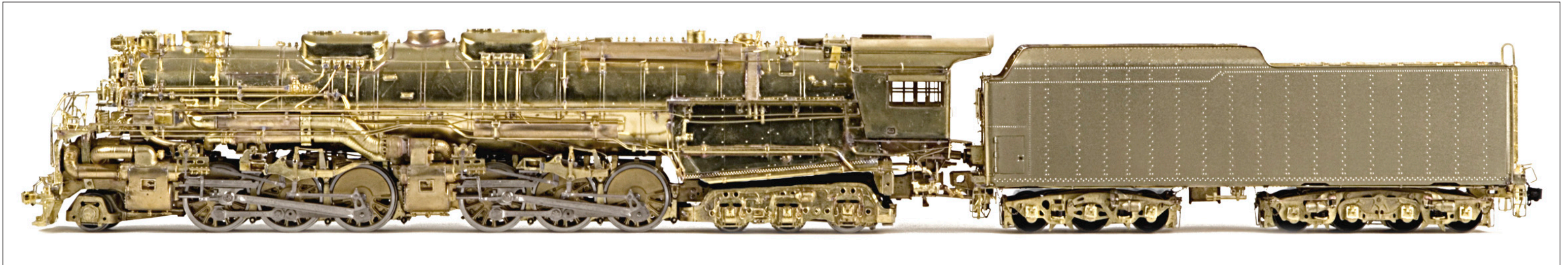
Beginning with the formation of our company the production of the 'Allegheny' class prototype has been contemplated and planned for and that time is at hand. As one of our project supporters it's time to provide you with a project update, the first since the reservation process was begun. We knew that this particular project was on many modelers wish lists, but we had no idea just how many and how wide spread the interest was. The H-8/AG project has been the fastest selling model of any that we have undertaken, a sell out before production is even completed. As of this writing we have models going to seventeen different countries.

When our active planning for this project began, we felt that we had a strong understanding of the prototype since we had been involved in a gauge one H-8 project which remains as one of the finest models ever produced, but there was more to learn and we have been working hard at it. Because of your interest in and support of this project you are probably already aware that there were sixty-eight 'Allegheny' class prototypes built and they were spread between six different production orders. Having decided to produce versions of the model that represented the in-service configuration of the locomotives it seemed that many of the original production differences would meld with the normal influence of the over the road experience. This has proven to be a fair statement in many ways, but what was left to account for in terms of significant visual differences has left us working overtime to incorporate them into our models. There are eighteen areas of difference not including the usual lettering and piping, this also does not include the basic differences between the H-8 and AG locomotives. Consider it as a challenge issued for you to identify as many of these differences as you can in the photos or books that you may have available. When we provide the next update we will be providing a more detailed accounting of the differences so that you can check your work.

The logical starting point for this first update is to share with you a number of photos of the first sample model for the project. Please keep in mind as you review the photos that this is the 'first' sample, it is not complete and does not incorporate any corrections at this stage. If you notice something that is of concern don't hesitate to bring it to our attention, chances are we have already made note of what you are looking at, but don't take a chance!



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The sample model in the photos is actually a version that we are not producing, the sample was started before the final version decisions were made. At this point in the project development, all of the identified corrections have been reviewed with Mr. Lee our builder on a point by point basis and a consensus has been reached regarding what is moving into production. With the assistance of one of the most knowledgeable individuals we have ever worked with, Mr. Jerry Ballard, we have identified 106 corrections to be incorporated into the locomotives and 54 to be dealt with on the tenders. It should also be mentioned that a thorough review of previously produced Allegheny models was undertaken to make certain that the same mistakes would not be made again and to allow us to significantly improve the level of detail that we would be delivering.

Our reference for this project consists of over four hundred copies of original blue prints, approximately two hundred copies of original Lima builder's photos, another 250-300 photographic prints of the locomotives in-service and every book published that provides any significant coverage of this prototype. In addition to all of this material, with the assistance of Jerry Ballard, we made a trip to the Ohio Central Railroad shops to get a first hand look at a number of different components that were used in building the prototypes. Multiple visits have been made over the years to inspect one of the two remaining class prototypes in existence, road number 1601 located in the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan. We have often heard from interested modelers that it must make the project development really easy having the 'real thing' just down the road from us and to some degree that is true. On the other hand as we have come to learn that using an existent museum locomotive can provide some unexpected pitfalls that must be taken into account to avoid complications and mistakes.

Typically when railroads made donations of prototypes to museums there was an effort made to clean up the locomotive and to replace any significant hardware that may have been 'borrowed' for one purpose or another. In doing this, there was little concern for doing things in a historically correct manner and that has to be taken into consideration when looking for answers where no appropriate ones may exist. Better to have one than not....certainly, but they never provide all of the answers you'd like. It is common that you find answers that you were not looking for with detail that was seemingly understood

In the next update we'll be providing more insight into the correction process and also the process of developing all of the unique tooling required to produce one of our models. If there is something specific that you would like to see included be sure to let us know.

