

# TOGETHER FOREVER



OK, I'll admit it, I'm just a bit strange. My anniversary is coming up and I've been thinking about a gift for my wife. (Don't worry, this isn't it). As I'm planning my Hauntsville display and what I'm going to do with some areas where a house won't fit, I came up with the idea of a cemetery family plot. A scrap of Styrofoam was used for a base and carved with my Hotwire tools. Then it was covered with Woodland Scenics fine turf. The black fence was cut from 1/8 inch plywood using my scroll saw. The pattern was taken from a woodland log fence I saw in a magazine. Using the Hotwire knife tool, I cut a step in the base so visitors will not have to climb to enter the "family" plot. Department 56 contributed the loving couple (the piece is titled the Kiss of Death) along with the bench they are sitting on. There are two small tombstones I found at a craft fair and one large Lemax monument. I used the Hotwire knife tool to cut diagonal holes in the base so the little tombstone on the right would tilt and then I cut a larger hole under the monument so it would appear to be falling over with age. When this is set up in my display I'll add some fall moss in the corners to add a soft, natural feel to the scene. From Department 56 I have purchased a set of 10 ravens and I placed two

of them in the scene, one on the fence and one on a tombstone. I added a sign pole with a bat at the top to get something tall into the scene. In the final display I'm sure there will be some background trees---You can never have too many trees in a village.

## The road less traveled

So how does one get from place to place while visiting Hauntsville? Well, like any well run village Hauntsville has a Division of Highways managed by Witch Ursala, that is responsible for maintaining safe, well at least semi-safe, roads throughout the village. At the forefront of the display there is a secret roadway that allows access to the Hauntsville Estates residential community. Of course this road had to be constructed.

### **DEATH RIDES A WHITE HORSE**



One of the 4 Horsemen of the Apocalypse, the one named Death, resides in Hauntsville when he is not out with his friends spreading Plague, War, Famine and Death to the world. I was lucky enough to get this shot of him as he rode his horse along the coastal road. The road is made from a single piece of  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch white Styrofoam that, when finished, was attached to the village Styrofoam base using floral pins. The roadway was carved using the Hotwire sculpting tool. By looking at the photo above you can see that I used the wire to “plow” a depression the length of the “roadway”. Then I used the edge of the wire to round off the edges so there were no sharp points. There is no way to describe this other than it is done by feel. Notice that there are no straight lines or edges. Small bends and curves provide a more natural look to the roadway. I tried to photograph this before painting the road but since the Styrofoam is white and the cuts are very tiny they do not show in a photo. By looking at the painted version below you can see there is a roadway in the center, and a roadbank on each side.



Also note that the road is NOT flat. At different points along the road I cut a bit deeper into the foam to make the roadway lower and this also left some small hills

in the road. In essence I'm making an unpaved country dirt road. Once carved, I painted just the roadway, not the banks, with a Woodland Scenics paint called Earth Undercoat. As you can see it makes the rough cut Styrofoam look like muddy dirt. I use this paint all over the display where ever I want mud or dirt such as grave holes in a cemetery, pathways in a field, or muddy walkways across a yard. I did not paint the banks with the undercoat instead I used the same color paint as I used for the rocks seen in the foreground. While the paint was wet I used two different colors Woodland Scenics turf that was sprinkled over the wet paint in the same manner I use for all my landscaping.

Once the roadway is completed and pinned to the base of the display it is a simple matter place Death on his horse on the roadway. Next a few trees were added. I placed a bench to create a roadside "rest" area, and added a pumpkin for some color. If you look you can also see a pair of ravens and a cat that add to the mood. The roadway will enter a cave that provides the secret entrance to the Haunted Estates.

My village is full of these little extra touches that provides detail and interest throughout the display. The Hauntsville Division of Highways is working on other roads. Perhaps the next edition will show some of these. Just keep dropping by to see what else is new in Haunstville.