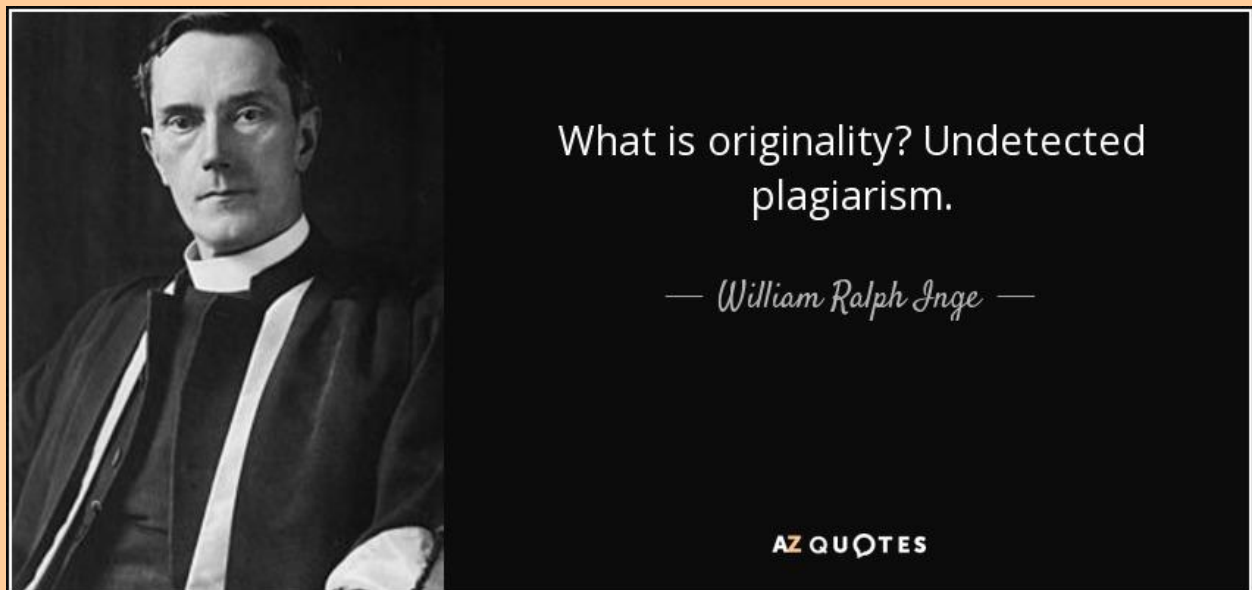


## Imagineering™

Rehabbing or Repurposing village pieces has nothing to do with making a village video – or does it? If your village video has ***things in it that viewers haven't seen before***, it's likely that you will attract more views.

In my column #24 (11/17/2021) on The Formula for a Successful Village Video, I asked, "*Is there something never seen before?*" Originality is a bonus. If you want to stand out, you will need at least one really good idea. It's okay if the audience doesn't "get it." It's your video. You'll get points for trying!



It turns out that our imagination is larger than D56's or Lemax's business models. D56, Lemax, and Luville can't make ***everything***, but we can build or convert most of what we can imagine.

Be sure to check out all the other topnotch and timely columns on TheVillageCollector.com – the always interesting "*Just So You*

*Know (JSYK)*" by David Spears, Brian Vaill's *"The Train Station,"* Thea Heyink's *"The Creation Station,"* *"Phil & Sue's Village"* (from England!), *"From Italy: Villaging in Europe"* by Peppe Apuleo (fascinating!), *"Scratchbuilt"* by Alan K. Rogers, *"Villagers' Café"* for gust columns, and *"Coach is Here"* by webmaster Bill Channell. ***Please keep visiting the Village Videos page and watch, watch, watch.*** There will be a new batch of village videos starting on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month! So many ideas, so little time... and not enough money.

The term Imagineering™, a portmanteau word, was introduced in the 1940s by Alcoa to describe its blending of imagination and engineering. The word Imagineering™ is trademarked by Disney. However, the term Imagineer was in the public domain before Disney's trademark and is not trademarked. Enough with the fun facts.

My introduction to Imagineering/rehabbing came in pammyj100's village video *"Department 56 & Lemax Christmas Village 2012-2013"* when I spotted a ***D56 building that was mutilated*** for effect in a vignette. Firemen were battling a fire at Al's TV Shop, one of the least expensive D56 buildings.



In the Comments section pammyj100 revealed her secrets (my additions are in *italics*).

"The building on fire is simple. First, I broke out a couple of windows (*with a rotary Dremel tool*) and painted around them with black paint to look like soot. Then I purchased a couple of candle flicker bulbs. You can buy them at a store like Michael's or anywhere they sell candlelight bulbs, and I ran the plugs into the building (*through the Dremel-enlarged light hole*) and attached the wire to the inside of the windows with a glue gun, so they stayed in place."

You can mutilate collectible pieces to create a scene? As parts of my brain short-circuited over this concept, her video did it again. But wait, there's more!

She mutilated both the D56 Golden Gate Bridge and the Lemax Classic Car Set's track to create another amazing scene. Whoa now, both of these pieces are more expensive collectibles in most folks' value systems.



As she explained in the Comments section, "The Lemax Classic Car Set comes with several pieces of track. I cut mine (*in half lengthwise using a jigsaw*) to fit across the bridge and used two loop pieces that keep the cars circulating."



"The hardest part about that was cutting out a small lower strut section of the D56 Golden Gate Bridge (*a pair of them, again with a rotary Dremel tool*) so the cars would fit underneath it... (*and then painting the "wounds" so they don't show*) but the challenge was fun, and the end result was worth it."

After my brain came back online and settled down, I was ready to try some Imagineering™. Game on!!

Remember, I am not crafty. I envy those of you who are patient and artistic enough to craft elaborate landscapes. However, there are some simple changes I could make to village items to fit my imagination.

There is painting. For figurines I can re-paint clothes when I use duplicates or multiples, and re-paint skin tones to add diversity. D56, in particular, is overwhelmingly Caucasian; Lemax does better but is still limited in Afro-American figures. And where are the Latino and Asian figures?

For buildings I can change the colors. When I built a village that resembled my hometown of Yellow Springs, Ohio, I painted several inexpensive buildings which were similar enough to our downtown buildings so that they matched hometown colors.

Can't find the store you want? Change the signs! Need a sign? Make a sign! Print a new sign in color (I go to Staples for color laser printing) sized correctly on card stock, and then use just a little Elmer's to paste on top of or over the existing sign.









I had to do some crafting to mimic my hometown's namesake – the Yellow Spring itself. I found a desktop rocky fountain, painted it orange to mimic the iron-filled water, and added aquarium shale stones to mimic the limestone surrounding the spring. The fountain was inserted into a Lemax platform base, mutilated to fit.





Vanessa Taylor took the D56 CIC Heritage Museum of Art and painted the building's columns and top decorations red and changed the sign to create an extra Chinatown piece.



Photo by Vanessa Taylor

One of the premier rehabbers is Red Misha. He needed a Macy's store for his New York-based CIC display. Just add some covering signs to an expensive D56 Dayfield's Department Store.



Photos by Red Misha



Why stop there? Let's change another department store into a Macy's!



Photo by Red Misha

Why not take a Walmart store and create a TJ Maxx?



Photo by Danielle Ramey



Need a larger building or structure? Use multiples of same buildings!

Way back in 2015 in my lightly viewed golf-themed Christmas village, I attempted to recreate the in-town holes of the Old Course at St. Andrews village. Behind #1 tee and #18 green are the Royal & Ancient Golf Club building and the Hamilton Grand Hotel.



The D56 DV Hickman Wells Gentlemen's Club had enough resemblance to the R&A (same color and columns), but it was hard to find a large hotel. Lemax made a nice, tall reddish brick hotel aptly named the Grand Hotel, so two of them pushed together were enough to complete the picture. D56's Big Ben completes the tower in the background,



In the same display that year I attempted to recreate Pinehurst Village and the surrounds of the Pinehurst Resort.



A pair of Hawthorne Village Red Lion Inn buildings from their Norman Rockwell Christmas in Stockbridge series were just good enough to mimic the large resort and its porches.





Down the lane from the Resort is the golf clubhouse. A new sign on D56 Original Snow Village Linden Hills Country Club helps complete the Village of Pinehurst scene.



How about a large urban department store that covers a whole city block? When D56 produced a Christmas in the City corner department store called Hollydale's Department Store (7"W x 7"D x 9"H), it was just begging for someone to tuck four of them together (now 14" x 14").



Look closely in the picture above and you'll see multiple D56 The City Globe buildings as well as multiple The Capital buildings!

Hawthorne Village also made a Jingles Department Store (7.25"W x 7.25"D x 6.5"H) in their Coca Cola series that had the same corner building configuration, begging for another city block major department store.



Need a suburban plat of cookie-cutter homes? Santa's Workbench (sold by Joann's Fabrics stores) made a home called Parker's Residence (9"W x 5.75"D x 6.75"H) with a carport. I bought eight of them, collected economically and judiciously over 5 years, and painted them different colors. *Voila!*







After I found and displayed D56 Champsfield Stadium in 2012 as part of a small college I yearned for more. It was fine for a high school or small college football game. However, I had bigger dreams.





The big **Aha Moment** came when I saw Hawthorne Village's Yankee Stadium (7"W x 8"D x 7.75"H) – a pie-shaped building that was quite different from D56's stadium/ballpark façade buildings (Yankee Stadium, Ebbets Field, Wrigley Field, Fenway Park). And, it had empty stands begging for people! Pie-shaped to me begs to be reassembled into a larger piece of the pie.



In 2016 my display was a "replica" of Newport, KY where I live and the city of Cincinnati across the Ohio River. I used the Sports Stadium (12.75"W x 5.5"D x 8.25"H) façade by Coca Cola Town Square (which can be configured for baseball or football), and used four pie-shaped Yankee Stadiums (with seats painted red) to build our Great American Ballpark downtown next to the river.





In 2018 I made a larger college/university display with 8 pie-shaped Yankee Stadiums and the main entrance/seating from the D56 Champsfield Stadium. I "stole" pammyj100's idea of moving football players on a mutilated ice rink, and I glued scores of o-scale seated people (buy them by the bag) into the stands.



By 2020 I had added two more pie-shaped Yankee Stadiums for a completed downtown stadium, plus found that Hawthorne Village also made pie-shaped stadiums for Fenway Park, Wrigley Field, Comiskey Park and Busch Stadium (much rarer and hard to find). My display that year was a large city with an animated parade. So, why not have a companion downtown ballpark for the downtown stadium? The completed football stadium had a footprint of about 31" in diameter, and the ballpark was about 22" in diameter. P.S. They don't play baseball in the winter.





The moral of this villaging story is ***don't be boxed in by the village manufacturers***. There are alternatives galore. Have no trepidation about trying to make something different, something you imagined you want in your village display. Failure is integral to learning and growing. Keep trying and each time it will get better and easier. Oh yes, and please make a really good video so we can see and enjoy what you made!

In my next column on The Village Collector, I don't know what I'm going to write about. I'm out of words for today and I'll try to do better next time.

Questions, comments and/or suggestions are always welcome. You can contact me at: [jpetersgolfpro@gmail.com](mailto:jpetersgolfpro@gmail.com), 419 Washington Avenue, Newport, KY 41071.



Krohn Conservatory g-scale Christmas display





Photo by Vanessa Taylor