



Member since June 1988

**NEXT MEETING
NOVEMBER 15
6:30 p.m.**

Have a story
you want to
share?

Send it to the
Editor today
and you may be
published!

*Bring a friend to our
next meeting.*

DO YOU WANT TO WIN?

Attendance & 50/50 prizes are drawn at every Meeting, on the 3rd Thursday of the month.

**YOU HAVE TO BE
PRESENT TO WIN!**

DONATIONS

Bottles for Basics:

- ◆ 2017 - \$720.00
- ◆ 2018— \$325.40
- ◆ October—\$39.40

PRINTER

CARTRIDGES:

Total last year: \$107.00

YTD: \$70.00

Last Month: \$4.00

THE SIGNAL

THE GREAT FALLS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

VOLUME 22. ISSUE 6

NOVEMBER 2018



By Paul Lodge

ExTRAINaganza 2018

The **ExTRAINaganza** is a four-day family fun event that begins the Christmas season at the Great Falls Model Railroad Club. This year the ExTRAINaganza will be held each day from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, November 17; Sunday, November 18; Friday, November 23 (the day after Thanksgiving); and Saturday, November 24.

Last month's newsletter article said this would be the 9th annual **ExTRAINaganza**, but we were wrong. The **ExTRAINaganza** has been held on the weekends before and after Thanksgiving every year since 2009, which was the first year we had the building occupancy permit at 144 Mill Street in Auburn. This is our 10th anniversary celebration!

Trains will be operating on all of our permanent layouts, and three train sets under the Christmas trees will be raffled off. Children will enjoy decorating and eating gingerbread cookies, creating Christmas ornaments to take home, and playing the railroad games designed by the club. The younger children always have fun with the Brio layout and age-appropriate trains in the children's play area. While watching these activities, parents can enjoy light refreshments from conveniently located tables and chairs in the craft area. Train-related items which can be purchased at the club's store include locomotives and rolling stock in a variety of scales, railroad hats, whistles, T-shirts, specialty earrings, books, and other train-themed items. TRAIN TIME videos, produced by the Great Falls Model Railroad Club and seen on many local cable channels, will be shown continuously each day and will be available for sale.

Volunteers will be needed to help decorate the building on the evening of Wednesday, November 14, starting at 6 p.m. Wednesday is the regular night for the HO work session. With help from those who are at the HO work session and/or their friends and family members, the decorating session will go faster. Projects will include setting up and decorating Christmas trees. Members of the HO crew have reminded us that garlands should not be hung near any track since pieces of garland which fall onto the track cause short circuits and disrupt the trains. The building will have a festive look for our regular club meeting on November 15. Any decorating which needs to be completed can be done after the meeting. Many of the decorations will still be in place for the club's annual Christmas party on Thursday, December 20.

During the four days of the **ExTRAINaganza**, club members are needed to help by taking charge of games, supervising craft and cookie tables, selling raffle tickets for the three train kits, monitoring layouts, and teaching young "Guest Engineers" how to run trains. There is no charge for children to run trains on the HO layout, but we will still need someone to organize a list to ensure an orderly system of taking turns. Members are encouraged to volunteer to help at the **ExTRAINaganza** for all or part of a day or as often as you can.

Tickets for games with prizes and for decorating Christmas ornaments and cookies cost \$1 each or 7 for \$5. Admission is \$5 for adults; all children 12 and under are admitted free. **All club members and their families are also admitted free.**

FALL TRAIN SHOW AT MT. ARARAT HIGH SCHOOL

By Paul Lodge

The Great Falls Model Railroad Club's fall model train show on Saturday, November 3 at Mt. Ararat High School in Topsham was very successful. One of the special features of this year's publicity was a front-page picture and two-page story in the *Coastal Journal*. Jason Pafundi, associate editor of the newspaper, came to GFMRRRC on October 24 and interviewed Terry King and Paul Lodge. He supplemented their discussions with information from members of other railroad clubs by phone and email.

Club members loaded the rented U-Haul truck on Friday afternoon before going to Topsham to help unload tables for the Saturday show. Carl Butland drove the truck to Topsham on Friday with the GFMRRRC modular display modules and the Lionel items for Terry King to sell. Other club members added their modules on Saturday morning. About thirty club members attended the train show and many helped with sales and layouts. Paid attendance was about 350.

A new "attention getter" was added this year. A floor model traffic light, mounted on a heavy metal base, flashed red, yellow, and green at the entrance to the club's modular layout in the lobby, directing foot traffic to the GFMRRRC layout.

Refreshments were provided by the Mt. Ararat High School Athletic Association Boosters. People enjoyed the variety of layouts at the show, and most vendors did well. Club sales of surplus assets were brisk and profitable and the club did well financially at the door as well.

After the show concluded, members put the sections of the modular layout back in the rental truck, took down the tables, and dry-mopped the floor.

Jim Alberty, a composer who works for Apple at the Mall, filmed most of the show at Mt. Ararat High School and posted the video on YouTube. Jim usually films the Garden Railroad Club's Christmas layout at the Maine Mall each year and writes a score to accompany his video. The YouTube address for Jim Alberty's video of the GFMRRRC Topsham show is <https://youtu.be/2DH1GP91OK4>. Several members have checked it out on YouTube and been very pleased with the results of the Topsham Show and with Jim Alberty's video. The first response came from Peter McKenney, one of our "snowbirds" who is already in Florida for the winter.

Thank you to everyone who helped make the November 2018 Topsham Show a success.



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OCTOBER MODELERS FORUM

By Jamie Robinson

It was my great pleasure to host the Modelers Forum at my house on Thursday, October 25. A group of about 10 attended. My basement isn't usually presentable enough to receive visitors, but this occasion motivated me to do enough cleaning and organizing to make it acceptable.

My layout was up and running. (It's more of a test bench than a real layout, but I call it a layout anyway.) We were able to run a test train by utilizing Kent Waterson's mobile phone (running the Engine Driver app) as a wireless cab over the Wi-Fi network (via the Java Model Railroad Interface – JMRI). Josh Stevens also ran a train to demonstrate how it sounded running over different types of sub-roadbed.

I'm always happy to be able to show off my stuff, workbench, various tools and works in progress. Roger Plummer brought some tank truck trailers and showed how he had converted them from stock to a tri-axle variation, and Jim [last name??] brought a GG1, a steeple-cab and a piece of rolling stock to show as well.

Thanks to all who made the trek to Turner. It was great to have you there, and I look forward to perhaps doing this again next year.



SPIKEY'S STATION

By Tami Paine

Spikey Station's Halloween meeting on October 27 started with the children watching *Thomas' Halloween Adventures* and *Dinosaur Trains Halloween Adventure* DVDs. After the movies we learned about the Ghost Trains at Eagle Lake, Maine, and we watched the *Train Time DVD From Nowhere to Nowhere* found in our club's library. Following a discussion about the videos, we headed down to the HO layout to find the haunted house, ghost train and train wreck on the layout. It was fun having the HO members help us find these items.

Our next adventure was making train snacks out of pretzels and Halloween pencils. The Halloween pencils were generously donated by club librarian Terry King. Thank you, Terry. We finished the morning by making our own haunted houses and spooky trees that can be added to our portable train layouts. We had a spooky good time at Spikey's Station.

The next meeting of Spikey's Station will be on November 10, and the theme will be the Polar Express. We always have a good time with a movie, games, crafts, and refreshments; and we are glad to have more young people join us as often as you can come.

The Spikey's Station Crew will be helping with the crafts table for the **ExTRAINaganza** on Saturday, November 24, which is the last day of the **ExTRAINaganza**. We hope many of you will be able to come to the **ExTRAINaganza** on that day and on some of the other days. The **ExTRAINaganza** begins on Saturday, November 17, and continues the next day and on the two days after Thanksgiving – November 23 and 24. Hours are 10 to 4 each day. There is no admission charged for club members and for children under the age of 12. Admission for other adults is \$5. Activity tickets for crafts, cookie decorating, and games with prizes are \$1 or 7 for \$5.



JASMINE
HART



October Minutes by Paul Lodge



The monthly meeting of the Great Falls Model Railroad Club on October 18 began at 6:30 p.m. with the *Train Time* video of the inaugural run of the historic milk car on the Waterville, Wiscasset and Farmington Railway. The video ends with the WW&F milk car on static display at the harbor in Wiscasset. At 7:00 p.m. the meeting officially began with the Power Point slide show of club activities in September and October and previews of the upcoming events: the November 3 Train Show at Mt. Ararat High School in Topsham and the ExTRAINaganza at the railroad club on November 17, 18, 23 and 24.

Jamie Robinson gave an excellent presentation on his experiences at the 50th O Scale National Convention in Rockville, Maryland, which was held on August 22 through 25. His slide show included video of some of the outstanding layouts he had visited during the convention tours.

Paul Lodge was asked to give a summary of the Executive Committee meeting of October 11. His report included the following information:

Terry King reported that club member alarm codes have been corrected.

President McBride announced that the rental truck for the Topsham show has been ordered.

The door to the lower level was brought up for discussion. It would save heat during the winter if the door is built soon. The Executive Committee had approved the door at a previous meeting. George Pitchard volunteered to help install the door once it has been purchased.

Terry King needs lights in the library moved and replaced. **A motion was made and accepted to have the electrician install more lights and move some of the existing fixtures.**

Carl Butland observed that the fire extinguishers need to be recertified.

It was noted that the insurance coverage has been increased on the building and its contents as a result of last month's discussion about insurance.

The Executive Committee report was approved as given.

Terry King gave the Treasurer's Report in the absence of Owen Buck. The report was approved as

given.

Terry King noted that the Maine Central book ordered for the library has still not arrived.

President McBride announced that the train show at Mt. Ararat High School in Topsham is on track. Terry King added that at this time he has not rented as many tables as usual.

It was reported that the furnace room door has been fixed so that it will close automatically.

President McBride asked for three volunteers to act as the kitchen crew for our upcoming events. We have the ExTRAINaganza on November 17, 18, 23, and 24 and the Surplus Inventory sale on December 8.

It was reported that we do not currently have any operators for the N-Scale layout during events.

Members were reminded that we will have the Surplus Inventory Sale on Saturday, December 3 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Before the meeting adjourned, the Attendance Prize and the 50/50 raffle were drawn. Dexter Baum won the 50/50 raffle. Josh Stevens won the Attendance Prize and chose a Conrail mug



Pictures from past Extrainaganizas

SURPLUS INVENTORY SALE SET FOR DECEMBER 8

By Paul Lodge

The fifth annual Surplus Inventory sale will take place at the Great Falls Model Railroad Club on Saturday, December 8, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Each year the club acquires large quantities of rolling stock, locomotives, and structures. Many of the items available for sale have never been displayed at any of our shows, and club members will have the first choice.

Are you looking for the perfect gift for a friend or relative who likes trains? Would you like to add to your own railroad book collection or to your personal model railroad empire? This is a great way to improve your model railroad collection at very reasonable prices.

Whether you're buying items for display or for your own layout or to give as Christmas presents, we hope you will join us on December 8 for the Surplus Inventory Sale.



LIBRARY NEWS

By Terry King

After waiting since April, the book *Maine Central: My Life on The Pine Tree Route 1971 – 1996* has arrived. As expected, it is already checked out. Hopefully, it will be available by the next meeting. If not, I will start a waiting list so those who want to read this book can be notified when it is available.

Member Carmen Coulombe has generously donated 54 DVD's. These are all Kalmbach's *Dream-Plan-Build* series and include model railroad tours, narrow gauge, and different railroads across the country. Following is a list of some of the DVD's: George Sellio's *Franklin & Manchester: Parts 1 through 3*; Tony Koester's, *Allegheny Midland*; *Amazing Alco's*; *F Units In Action*; *Railroads And Coal*; *Green Mountain*; and *American Streamliner*.

Our library now has 554 DVD's in stock. A lot of these are *Train Time* videos, but we do have a variety of other titles. We have Fast Tracks printable track templates and Fast Tracks videos. *Builders Guides* is on one DVD, but this can be viewed only on a PC. We have Fast Tracks Hand Laid Track Resource CD. We have Cleaver Models Steel Industrial Buildings in Vol. 1 (HO) and Vol.2 (O), which have around a dozen different building plans, and their Wood Frame Industrial Buildings in HO & O scales. Do you need signs for your railroad? We have a CD with those also.

If you have any suggestions on what book we should purchase next, please e-mail me at greatfallsmodelrailroadclub@yahoo.com.

Paint Schemes on the Great Falls Railroad

By Travis J. Johnson

In this case it's silver (dullcoat will turn it to a dull silver or light gray color.) I noted that all silver would be a biMost railroads go through many different paint schemes for various reasons. Some have special schemes for events or milestones of the railroad. Others want to change the look or feel of the company's image. A few railroads don't change their paint schemes or make such small changes that they are hardly noticeable. This month I'll be talking about the variations of the Great Falls Railroad's original scheme, from past to today in both the modeled world and in real life.

Something's Different

706A and 706B are an A/B set of F3s that the Great Falls Railroad bought new in 1946. (No, the GFMRRRC did not purchase them in that year; this section of today's article uses the time scheme for which the HO layout is designed.) Originally painted in the standard Blue and Grey with White Stripe Phase 1, they were involved in an accident that damaged some of the body panels on both units. The slow-speed collision with a poorly placed rail car did more to mess up the paint than to the units themselves.

The units went into the shops in 1961, the same time that the GFR brass was contemplating a commemorative paint scheme. It had been 25 years since the arrival of the FT diesels, and the last of the steam had left the road in 1955. The 706's came out with a mostly silver car body, blue on the roof and down around the windshield to a small patch on the top of the nose. The white line with the blue letters was retained down the sides of the units with the "waterfall" on the A unit as on the other units. Until the 1990's, the 706's would be the only units in this scheme, dubbed the Silver and White Stripe by rail fans.

The Models and Process

While working on an A unit with the Blue and Silver scheme, I had taken a photo to show my progress. Looking through my photos a few weeks later, I noticed the one that showed the work in progress. Gears started turning in my head... If I keep the white line and blue lettering in it and remove most, if not all, of the blue above it, would it look good?

I acquired Athearn blue box F units (one A and one B) and began the experiment. I usually started the process of painting the final colors with the lightest color too much so I opted to go with blue on the roof.

After looking at the model, I thought that the crew might not appreciate being blinded every time the locomotive faced the sun. I extended the blue down to the top of the nose. It took me a couple of attempts to get the nose to look even and "right" before I moved to decaling the unit. The decal layout is the same as the other F units. The only adjustment was the addition of a blue line behind the lettering in the stripe.

And Another?

What do you do when your units keep getting dirtier than you expected? What if your paint scheme is light colored in the wrong areas? How about adjusting the scheme? The Great Falls Railroad did just that. Replacing the gray in the original scheme with blue helped to reduce the number of times that the units went to the wash rack. EMD GP7 number 801, bought used in 1956, was the first unit to receive the new paint scheme. Along with the change in color came a change in the way the white line crossed the car body. The bow wave was changed and replaced with a line straight across the nose of the unit. The bend of the bow wave didn't die completely; it was just reversed and moved to the opposite end of the car body.

Rail fans gave mixed reviews to the new scheme, and surprisingly their reviews were mostly positive. What became known as the Blue with White Stripe scheme would be the one most used until the early 90's. The GFR was able to cut down the amount of time spent in the wash racks for the units with this scheme.

A Happy Mistake

I can only say that this scheme came about by accident. One of the original locomotives that I used to figure out the paint schemes was painted blue with a white stripe and gray walkways. The unit is an SD35 and was one of only two units painted by the club that I could find at the time. Larry Cannon had painted it, and he did not know the exact arrangement of the color scheme as Paul Lodge had painted the prototype. As a result, he continued the blue further down than Paul had designed it. I used this to my advantage and added a new scheme to our club's variety.

Next time on Paint Schemes, I'll write about another new paint scheme and one with a spooky twist!

WORK WEEKEND AT THE WW&F

By Joe Fox

Columbus Day weekend each year is the fall work session at the Waterville, Wiscasset and Farmington Railway Museum in Alna, Maine. From October 5 through 8, 2018, over 100 volunteers accomplished a variety of improvements to the museum area and the railway. Several members of the Great Falls Model Railroad Club are among those who volunteer at the WW&F on a regular basis. Additional volunteers during this fall's four-day work weekend came from all over New England and from many other states. One gentleman even came from Australia. I believe the oldest volunteer is 84, and he is one of our most active and energetic workers. Lunches each day and dinners from Friday through Sunday were provided by kitchen crew volunteers led by Nancy Weeks from the GFMRRRC.

Projects planned for the weekend included constructing 1,200 to 1,400 feet of main line track down the mountain, clearing land at the Sheepscot Station for the parking lot expansion near the entrance, burying conduit from the Sheepscot shop building to the Percival House, and building new stairs and a deck on the front of the Percival House. Before the Columbus Day weekend, volunteers had worked over 250 hours to prepare the track-building materials and to repair sections of the right of way.

By Monday evening, the work crews had constructed 1,422 feet of track. Most of the front deck of the Percival House was completed, along with preparation for an overhead crane in bays 1 and 3 of the shop building. With the help of our electrician, electrical conduit was buried for electrical and other utility lines. The parking lot addition was cleared out and will nearly double parking availability.

This fall the WW&F was able to have a much larger spiking crew and they were able to accomplish rail laying more easily and efficiently because of a new rail crane that had been designed and built by our volunteers. The old method for moving rail required 15 to 20 guys to pick up a 600-pound rail and set it in place on a small ve-

hicle that has joint bars on the front so that it could then be loaded onto the work train. The new crane proved to be much more efficient as our crew built 560 feet of track per day, as opposed to the old way of only 300 feet per day.

Rails and railroad ties were loaded onto two flatcars at the Sheepscot Station and brought to the work site. The flatcars on the work train are used as open passenger cars during special events at the WW&F. The benches on which passengers would ride had been removed and were being painted by other volunteers.

The original WW&F used mostly 32-pound rail. Today we use 60-pound rail because it is still fairly easy to purchase and plenty heavy enough for the equipment we run. When a three-foot piece of rail weighs 60 pounds, it is called 60-pound rail. Each rail weighs 600 pounds. The flat car carries 20 rails at a time for a total of 12,000 pounds per load.

The ties are used guard rail posts from the New Hampshire DOT. These pressure-treated ties cost \$3 each as compared with \$20 for a new creosote tie.

At the work site, each 600 pounds of rail is easily off-loaded from the flat car and onto the ties that have just been laid. As the track is laid, the work train moves forward so that the volunteers can nail the spikes into the ties. When all the rails and ties have been used, the work train returns to the Sheepscot Station for another load.

We will ballast and tamp during our Spring Work Weekend, which is the last weekend in April. Next fall we hope to build the track all the way to Route 218, which is around 2,000 feet from our new end of track. We currently have 2.5 miles of usable track from Sheepscot to Top of the Mountain. We have almost another half mile of track down the mountain that will be put in service in 2021 when we open the mountain, which will give us almost 3.5 miles of track.

Our 1100 members generously donate between \$80,000, and \$100,000 per year during our Annual Fund drive which funds various projects and helps us to purchase used equipment, such as bulldozers, backhoes, and tractors. Fortunately, we have many talented core volunteers to lead projects so that we can do most projects in house. The success and growth of the WW&F is solely from the members and volunteers. The WW&F is always looking for new volunteers. Volunteers with no experience are welcome if they are willing to learn or have a talent they wish to share.

Three members of the GFMRRRC Train Time Team (Dick Clark, Josh Stevens, and Paul Lodge) videotaped the Saturday work session. Their WW&F Work Weekend videotape contains two 30-minute episodes and is available exclusively through the Waterville, Wiscasset and Farmington Railway Museum.

We hope many members and friends of the Great Falls Model Railroad Club will come to the WW&F for our Victorian Christmas on Saturday, December 15.





THE GREAT FALLS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

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Upcoming Events

November 15, Membership Meeting,
6:30 p.m.

December 8, Surplus Inventory Sale
at Club from 10:00 - 3:00.

Every Wednesday at 6:00 p.m.

Work Session



ExTRAINaganza
November 17, 18, 23, 24
10:00 to 4:00 each day.

We need a lot of help for this event.

Recurrent Activities

Please check web site or Facebook page.

HO Operating Session:

December 1, 9:00 a.m.
December 15, 9:00 a.m.

2nd Thursday of each month—6:30 p.m.
Executive Committee Meeting

3rd Thursday of each month—6:30 p.m.
Regular Monthly Meeting

4th Thursday of each Month—7:00 p.m.
Modelers Forum

Spikey's Station
December, 22— 9:00 a.m.—noon