

Member since June 1988

**NEXT MEETING
JUNE 20
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:

- ◆ 2018- \$407.00
- ◆ 2019— \$309.00
- ◆ May—\$43.00

PRINTER

CARTRIDGES:

Total last year: \$222.00

YTD: \$104.00

Last Month: \$25.00

THE SIGNAL



THE GREAT FALLS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

VOLUME 23. ISSUE 6

JUNE 2019

SEASHORE TROLLEY MUSEUM TRIP PLANNED FOR JUNE 22

By Paul Lodge

At the April meeting of the Great Falls Model Railroad Club, about ten members indicated that they would like to visit the Seashore Trolley Museum in Kennebunk. GFMRRRC John Middleton volunteers there and will be our tour guide.

The GFMRRRC has a group reservation to ride and tour the Seashore Trolley Museum on Saturday, June 22. We will have a special group rate of \$9.50 per person, which is the usual admission fee for students ages 6 to 15. Children ages 3 to 5 would pay the regular children's rate of \$5, and those under the age of 3 are admitted free.

There will be a streetcar ride (approx. 25 minutes) departing at 1:50 PM followed by walking tours of three car barns of exhibits and the Restoration Shop. (The tour can take up to 2 hours.) The group will see approximately 40 historic cars, aged from 1898 to 1970. The collection is national in scope and there are representative foreign examples. The Museum closes promptly at 5:00 PM.

We will be leaving the Great Falls Model Railroad Club at 12:00 noon in order to be at the Seashore Trolley Museum by 1:30 PM. Members who will take a different route should plan to meet the GFMRRRC group near the Museum entrance at 1:30.

If it is easier for you to meet us at the Seashore Trolley Museum, you can check their website for directions or follow these suggestions: From north of Saco, take I-95 South (the Maine Turnpike), then EXIT 32 – BIDDEFORD. After the tollbooth, go straight across Route 111 onto the Biddeford Connector. Continue straight for 1 mile and then turn right onto Route 1 South. Follow Route 1 for 3 miles until you reach the traffic light between Arundel Antiques Village and Antiques USA in the town of Arundel. Turn left at that traffic light onto Log Cabin Road. The Museum will be 1.7 miles down the road on your left.

In order for John Middleton to have an estimated size of our group, please let Paul Lodge know if you are planning to go to the Seashore Trolley Museum on June 22. Also let him know whether you will be leaving with the group from GFMRRRC or if you will meet us at the Seashore Trolley Museum.



MAINE CENTRAL U-18b CONVERSION PROJECT

By Kevin LaMarre

Like many modelers, I pick up old “dead” or dummy locomotives here and there with the intention of future rehabilitation or cannibalization and have developed an eclectic collection in my “spares line-up”. I located a nice dummy U-33 locomotive in my spares that was a good candidate for the project.

To go from a “Big Boat” to a “Baby Boat” requires some shortening of both the body and the frame of the locomotive. After carefully looking at photos and drawings, as well as more measuring, I found that cutting in the mid-section would work best on both counts. I cut the plastic body using a miter box to get a square and clean cut. I then measured again and again and “trued up” the two body halves.

Have you ever wanted to do conversion work on a locomotive but felt that it was too intimidating a project to take on? Well, that’s what I thought until I did a conversion project of my own and was pleasantly surprised by the results.

I’ve wanted a General Electric U-18B “Baby Boat” for my HO scale Maine Central layout for some time, but they’re hard to come by or priced beyond my modest means. Not long ago I read an article in a model railroading magazine about conversion work on locomotives and became inspired to give it a shot. I wasn’t clever enough to copy the article or the source so I can’t give a specific reference, but I came away with some interesting points: *Observe carefully, measure carefully, take your time, and enjoy the project!*

Like many modelers, I pick up old “dead” or dummy locomotives here and there with the intention of future rehabilitation or cannibalization and have developed an eclectic collection in my “spares line-up”. I located a nice dummy U-33 locomotive in my spares that was a good candidate for the project. As a “first-timer” in trying this, I figured a dummy or a “dead” locomotive (one with a non-running motor) was desirable. In case it got “botched up” bad, I wouldn’t be out too much, and it could be replaced at the GFMRRRC company store, surplus asset sale, or railroad show.

The first thing to do was to lay everything out to see what I had and what might be needed. Then I looked for references in my own little library, in the ample club library, and on the internet. A great site I use a lot is www.railroadpicturearchives.net. If you’ve never tried it, you’ll be surprised at the great volume of prototype photos it contains.

To go from a “Big Boat” to a “Baby Boat” requires some shortening of both the body and the frame of the locomotive. After carefully looking at photos and drawings, as well as more measuring, I found that cutting in the mid-section would work best on both counts. I cut the plastic body using a miter box to get a square and clean cut. I then measured again and again and “trued up” the two body halves. Gluing in some inside plastic tabs helped me to “dry fit” the body and I could adapt the frame to it later. Regular plastic model glue was used to join the two body parts, being sure everything was lined up flush and square before leaving it to cure.

Next came the frame work. I cut the metal frame about in half, using a fine-tooth metal blade in my miter box. A spare piece of steel stock served as a fitting and adhering tab for the frame and added extra weight for the locomotive. I used **JB Weld** to join the two frame halves. As the weld set up, I checked to make sure all was in alignment. The nice thing about JB Weld is that it doesn’t set up immediately, so you have time to correct any errors. Just be careful not to get any of it on your fingers. It messes easily!

Once the frame was cured, I inspected it and temporarily mounted the trucks for fit and movement. After some minor adjustments, I test-fitted the body to the frame. Here’s where taking frequent measurements beforehand paid off, as the fit for the two sections was just about perfect. I couldn’t believe it!

It was then time to detail the locomotive to make it conform to the aspects of the U18b. I used spare pieces of plastic from my parts box and, with diagrams and photos as a guide, began the final transition. The top radiator deck needed some expansion, and I added louvers made from very thin plastic to hide the side seams, applying body putty where and as needed. During this time, I shortened the railings and added the Kadee couplers, being careful to align them to the NMRA standard coupler.

The next step was to carefully wash off the locomotive body with soap and warm water, using a soft bristle brush to lightly scrub off any loose plastic and sand putty. After rinsing, I allowed the body to air dry overnight. During that time, I painted the frame according to the prototype photos. (Continued on page #5)

SPIKEY'S STATION UPDATE

By Tami Paine

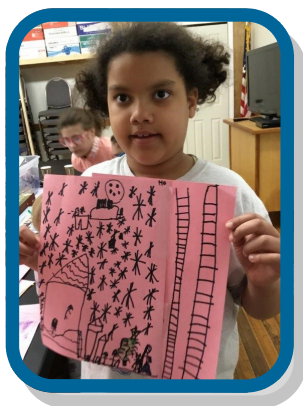
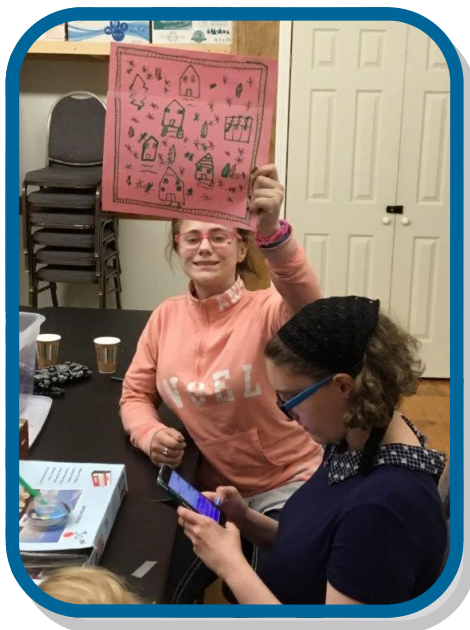
Spikey's Station theme for May 25, 2019, was layouts. We talked about bench work and track work. We discussed scale, looked around the club to see the different scales, and discussed the square foot challenge rules. Then the kids used crayons and colored paper to draw their plans, showing how they would arrange their own square foot challenge projects.

We had a scavenger hunt, looking on the layouts for fire trucks, cows, picnic tables, and other special features. While the older kids hunted for items on the N scale layout and the younger kids looked for items on the G scale layout. They had so much fun that they decided to switch scales, and the younger kids did an amazing job finding items on the N scale layout.

Using train crossing bells, they also played a game called Train Crossing (otherwise known as Red Light, Green Light). We all had a great time.

On Monday, May 27, the Spikey Station crew – kids and adult helpers – participated in Auburn's 150th birthday Memorial Day parade. (See Parade article.)

On Monday, May 27, the Spikey Station crew – kids and adult helpers – participated in Auburn's 150th birthday Memorial Day parade. It was a great experience and we were all proud to be part of this opportunity to introduce people to the Great Falls Model Railroad Club.



April Minutes by Paul Lodge



Before the meeting began, a video was shown of the Chinese steam train running through Vermont. The video was followed by the monthly Power Point presentation showing club activities since last month.

President Whitethunder McBride opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made and accepted to approve the Secretary's report as published in the *Signal*.

Owen Buck was on vacation in Italy and we had not received an updated Treasurer's Report.

The Power Point presentation included slides that featured our newest exhibit in the meeting room. One of the trains from the GFMRRRC Best in Show layout at the 2014 West Springfield Show is now on display above the doors from the meeting room entrance to the end of the G-gauge room door. The display is thirty feet long and depicts a State of Maine potato train with two Maine Central locomotives and caboose. The train was donated by Dick Rubin, and the shelf on which the train rests was designed, constructed, and installed by Ralph Luby.

Eric Long reported that nothing has yet been done on the roof project. Because of his work schedule, he does not have a time table as to when he will be able to start the project.

Saturday, June 22, was chosen as the date for club members and their families to visit the Seashore Trolley Museum in Kennebunkport. Members would leave the club at about noon and get to the museum at about 1:30 to 2:00 p.m. The admission cost will be **the special group rate of \$9.50???** per person instead of the usual higher price.

Rick James showed a name badge which club members can order for \$15. It will show the club logo as well as the person's name. Rick plans to have a sign-up sheet available at the next meeting so interested members can submit their orders. If anyone knows of a better deal, please contact Rick.

A motion was made and accepted to pay up to \$250 for a computer that the HO group can use for logging HO inventory and other purposes.

A motion was made and accepted to pay \$150 to have the parking lot cleaned of sand and debris.

Travis Johnson gave the Nominating Committee's report for club officers for next year. They were as follows: President, Mike Meserve; Vice President, Jamie Robinson; Secretary, Paul Lodge; Treasurer, Owen Buck;

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Librarian/Archivist, Terry King and George Pitchard. Three directors were chosen from the following group of nominees: Roger Allen, Rick James, Darin Long, and Eric Long. There were no additional nominations from the floor. Ballots were passed out for the 2019 Officers and Directors and the results are as follows: President, Mike Meserve; Vice President, Jamie Robinson; Secretary, Paul Lodge; Treasurer, Owen Buck; Librarian/Archivist, George Pitchard; Directors, Rick James, Darin Long, and Eric Long. Congratulations to the new club officers!

Whitethunder McBride won the attendance prize and chose the armband radio. Jim Theriault won the 50/50 raffle.



MODELER'S FORM PICTURE FROM ARTICLE ON PAGE 6



CONVERSION CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE.

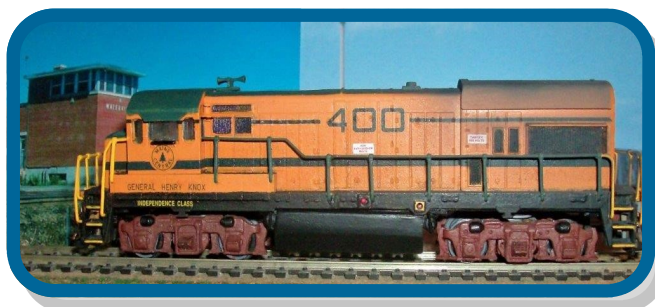
The following day, I primed the body with a light coat of primer. Giving it the day to dry, I then inspected it carefully. It's amazing what little imperfections a coat of primer can reveal! It was mainly where I had puttied the seam so I applied another "skim coat" and allowed it to dry. The next day I sanded it with a very fine grit wetted sand paper, then sprayed it with a light coat of primer and inspected it again. After curing, it was ready for its two colors of MEC paint.

I masked off the lower body and spray-painted the roof of the locomotive, applying **Tru-Color MEC Pine Green (TCP-102)**. I didn't thin it, but applied several light and even coats. It adheres well and tacks up quickly, especially if you are ventilating your painting area, which is always a safe thing to do. I let it set for about an hour, removed the masking tape slowly, and let the body cure for a couple of days before repeating the process with the body.

I masked off the roof of the locomotive and spray-painted the body with **Tru-Color MEC Harvest Yellow (TCP-103)**. I let it set for an hour before slowly removing the masking tape. After letting the locomotive cure for another day or so, I inspected the body and found a couple of places that needed touching up with a fine paintbrush. No matter how careful you might mask off, there will always be a goof or two that needs covering!

Before adding the decals, I brushed on a thin coat of **Model Master Acryl Gloss Clear (#4638)** where they were to be placed. It makes a good smooth surface for the decals to adhere to and blend in. The decals I used for the U18b were the **Microscale Maine Central Diesels (1974-1985) (#87-935)**. The decal work went well as I followed the directions carefully and looked closely at the prototype photos. When doing a specific locomotive, look for any small differences because locomotives (like people) have them. I've had very good luck using **Micro Sol** decal solution to get the decals to set and blend onto the body. Sometimes it takes a second application to get rid of any air bubbles or to make a final setting.

As I wanted my "boat" to look relatively new, I over-sprayed a light grime color on only the rear of the locomotive to simulate dust and exhaust staining. Finally, I gave the model a couple of spray coats of **Dull Cote** to blend everything in and cut down any remaining shine. When all was dried, my U18b, Baby Boat, MEC #400 was mounted for a photo session using a backdrop of the Waterville yard that I had created, and I said to myself, "Hey, look at that! I did it!" And so can you!



MODELERS FORUM UPDATE

By Kent Waterson

The Great Falls Model Railroad Club Modelers Forum met on Thursday, May 23, with a variety of projects and displays. Those present were Bob Willard, Dick Holman, George Pritchard, Dexter Baum, Kent Waterson, Jim Pepe, Paul Lodge, Jamie Robinson, Tami Paine, and her friend Pauline Fortin. Eric Long joined us later.

Bob Willard began the evening with various items he had purchased either online or at some of our recent shows. His first item was a veil of 1mm beads that he will use as billiard balls on a scene he is building for his portable O-Scale layout. We anxiously await seeing the balls painted with the appropriate numbers ☺.

Bob also displayed some O-Scale brick sidewalks he had purchased. He had cut the pieces on a small table saw and demonstrated the painting and weathering he had done. One interesting fact he learned was that the plaster pieces would not allow Pan Pastels to adhere to the surface.

Other items he had brought were some O-Scale advertising signs and a variety of 3-D printed parts in a variety of scales from Rusty Stumps, including a wheelbarrow, hand truck, wooden Indian, and bottle crates. Lastly, Bob showed a new brand of superglue he tried. Colle 21 Superglue claims it will never harden in the bottle and comes with a fine point applicator. Although it is made in France, the glue is available in the US.

Dick Holman made a welcome return to the Forum after missing for a while. Dick brought in an HO flatcar that he had painted as a mobile Barnum & Bailey Circus platform. Items on the flatcar included a four-person bicycle that he made by cutting apart multiple two-wheel bikes. With the leftover wheels he fashioned unicycles. Numerous circus figures populated the platform, including an eerie two-headed person and other standard circus performers.

Dexter also shared an Atlas S-2 that he had painted green and black with the scheme for Acadia Dock & Terminal. The model had been updated to DCC and outfitted with various jewels to serve as marker lights. Lastly, he presented a four-story brick building he had purchased. He believed the building would be too tall for his application and cut out a middle story to lower the building. What was most impressive was that the cuts, which fit very well, were made with a hand saw instead of a table saw. Well done, Dexter!

Jim presented a pair of railroad plaques from two Carolina railroads, the Atlantic & East Carolina and the

Aberdeen & Rockfish. The plaques displayed F-Units and various freight and passenger cars for the railroads.

Paul gave us a quick update on the club's participation in the upcoming Memorial Day parade. Tami Paine is organizing the Spikey's Station kids and adult helpers for the GFMRRRC parade locomotive and banner.

Tami demonstrated the wide range of modeling concepts that are brought to the Forum. She showed us craft modeling items from Fairy Gardens and Kindness Rock Gardens that were not specifically railroad oriented. She talked about painting and hiding the rocks, and assigning each rock a serial number. As people find the rocks and move them to a new location, the travel can be tracked on a Facebook group.

She displayed several items she had made from air-dry clay, including mushrooms and some bird houses painted as Fairy Houses. She also brought a sample brick she makes as a memorial for someone who has passed away. She paints the brick and seals a paragraph of text onto the brick as a memorial.

Tami's last item was a building she had purchased at one of our shows. It needs to be cleaned and redone, and she asked for suggestions on how to do both.

Tami mentioned that the club had sponsored various contests in the past and wondered if we could do it again. After a short discussion, we tentatively planned a square-foot module contest with a Christmas theme. The contest will be discussed at the next regular club meeting and final details worked out at the next Forum.

Jamie wrapped up the evening with a building, the Magnuson Models Menasha Wooden War Co. He had built the model previously but was reworking it. After a coat of rattle-can primer, he sprayed a coat of brick red (again from a rattle-can) and washed it with a grayish mixture. Then he dried it with an air gun. The building is in progress and will have a lighting system when complete.

The meeting wrapped up at 8:30 with everyone a bit wiser from the variety of skills presented.

All club members are invited to come to the Modelers Forum occasionally or for regular meetings. We meet on the fourth Thursday of each month, and we welcome all aspects of modeling and crafts. Some of the best ideas come from unexpected places.

AWARD-WINNING TRAIN DISPLAY INSTALLED

By Paul Lodge

Great Falls Model Railroad Club members Dick Rubin and Ralph Luby have donated to the club the train which helped to win the "Best in Show" honors for GFMRRRC at the West Springfield Model Train Show in 2014. With the help of George Pitchard, Dick and Ralph installed the static display in the meeting room on Wednesday, May 15. There are two Maine Central locomotives, a string of State of Maine potato boxcars, and a Maine Central caboose. The combined length of the locomotives and cars is about thirty feet. At the May 16 monthly meeting, club members admired the completed display, which begins above the meeting room door and extends to the N-scale room. Thank you, Dick and Ralph, for this outstanding exhibit which honors the GFMRRRC award-winning achievement.



SURPLUS INVENTORY SALE JUNE 8, 2019 (8 to 1)

The Great Falls Model Railroad Club will hold a special 2019 Spring Surplus Inventory Sale on June 8 at the railroad club from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. At this sale, only Lionel (O-Scale) and American Flyer items will be available.

At the successful Surplus Inventory Sale on May 18, only HO and N-Scale items were available. We hope club members and visitors will enjoy these specialized sales.





THE GREAT FALLS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

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Upcoming Events

June 8—Surplus Assets Sale Lionel, "O" and American Flyer 8:00 until 1:00 p.m.

June 22—Trip to Seashore Trolley Museum. \$9.50 per person. See front page for more information.

July 20, Seashore Division of the N.M.R.A. Summer meeting 9:00 a.m. Dinner will be available for a small cost.

Please check web site or Facebook page.

SURPLUS ASSETS SALE

"O", LIONEL
& AMERICAN
FLYER

June 8

8:00 a.m.
until
1:00 p.m.

Recurrent Activities

Operating Sessions none until Fall

Regular Monthly Meeting

3rd Thursday of each month—6:30 p.m.

Modelers Forum

4th Thursday of each month— 7:00 p.m.

Spikey's Station

May 11 - 9:00 a.m. until Noon.

Work Session

Every Wed. Evening - 6:00 p.m.

