

A larger collection (compared to last month) of modelers gathered for the Modeler's Forum on Thursday, October 28th. It was good to see some of the regulars back, but always looking for new modelers and the projects they may bring. Attending that night were Bob Willard, Carmen Anastase, George Pitchard, Tom McAvoy, Kent Waterson, Jamie Robinson and Dick Holman.

As typical, Bob started off the evening by showing four older Revell 1/48 scale (O-Scale) kits. The kits were originally produced in the 50's, many of which Bob built as a kid. The kits he brought with him included:

- Honest John Missile with Mobile Carrier
- White Gas Truck
- Ford Pick-Up Truck
- Chevrolet 2-Ton Truck

Bob has started a few projects based on these models, a modified trailer from the missile carrier and a shortened version of the gas truck.

Another project Bob presented (still in a mock-up phase) was a steam shovel on tracks. The frame and shovel mechanism are from a Lionel steam shovel, the winch and steam plant are from a Bachmann car. Both the boiler and the stack needed to be shortened for the new vehicle. The tracks are a set that Bob had molded previously and used again for this project. The cab sides are basswood and will eventually have a corrugated tin roof.

Perhaps the item that generated the most attention was a O-Scale Kemtron brass GP7 painted in the Maine Central scheme. The model hasn't been run in a while and will need some cleaning and lubricating (after chasing the spiders out!), but hopefully will be running on the club O-Scale layout at some time.

Carmen followed Bob with a couple projects. He completed fabricating the pipes for his pipe truck and load. Using styrene tubing, he cut caps for the flared joints and then thinned them down with a Dremel. The completed truck and load looked great!

Carmen is also making a mock-up of the US Pipe Seal Unit, a very large structure for his layout. He laid out the footprint for the building (which took four 8.5x11 pieces of paper), one building end and a side section (made from foam board). Due to the size, he may need to "selectively compress" the structure. Carmen was looking for thoughts on how to fabricate the rolled-up door on the building end. Suggestions included either a quarter or half round tube, or perhaps being able to find something similar in another kit.

George commented that he has not been doing much modeling, instead focusing on the club O-Gauge layout. Modifications are being done with the hope of having everything running by ExTRAINaganza.

Tom followed with a few questions. He had seen people commenting about the use of the desiccant packs that often are included with materials. Where these effective and/or useful for removing moisture? A discussion followed on using these packs, primarily in toolboxes or other places that were moisture sensitive.

A second question had to do with Dwarvin fiber optic lighting (without wires). After watching the videos and reading about the product, Tom was impressed and sought the groups options. None of us had much extensive knowledge of either the product or fiber optic lighting (perhaps there is someone else in the club that is more knowledgeable and could help Tom out).

Kent then presented as update on his battleship diorama. He was able to visit the USS Alabama last month and was able to extensively photograph the only remaining battleship catapult. With the additional research, time has been spend creating a variety of parts that form the internals of the catapult (bulkheads, the gun propulsion mechanism and pulley system).

Jamie next presented his work on project for Whitethunder McBride. The project involves converting a Varney toy Aerotrain into a functional HO model. The motive power for the locomotive is a power unit (modified from an Athearn chassis) specifically made for the Aerotrain. Jamie then added a platform to support a Loksound v5 decoder, added keep alive capacitors, and wired up the five lights on the front of the locomotive. An iPhone 4 speaker was mounted in the shell.

Dick closed out the meeting with a display of unique vehicles. Dick started with a Magnuson 1948 pickup, a solid body truck, and made a mold for the truck. Out of that mold, numerous versions of the truck were produced. Even copies that produced defects were adapted to turn the defect into worn or rusted sections of the truck. In some cases, the entire bed was removed, and then scratch-built beds were created with various functions attached to the bed. Different wheels and different paint schemes altered the year of the truck and made for more variances. Grinding out the wheel wells made space for larger wheels which then were built into a heavier duty truck.

Dick also presented a more traditional hollow cab version of a similar truck, and then another duplicated truck off a 1938 GMC.

Although Dick does not have a home layout, these vehicles are brought to our various shows and then setup on his module for the club layout, be sure to look for them at an upcoming show.

It was great to see the variety of projects each was working on. We wrapped up about 8:30 after a robust evening of sharing. The next meeting will be a combined November/December meeting, meeting on the first Thursday in December, December 2nd. Come join us on the 2nd and catch up on the various projects and show us what you have been doing as well. Hope to see you there.