

It was great to see a larger group out for the Modeler's Forum on March 24<sup>th</sup>. Eight of us joined together for an interesting collection of ideas and skills. Attending that night were Bob Willard, Jamie Robinson, Dick Holman, John McMullen, Paul Lodge, Art LeTourneau, Carmen Anastase and Kent Waterson.

Jamie started the evening showing a Brazilian Wide Gauge (5' 3") track gauge. The gauge was turned on a lathe from brass and fits O-Scale Code 100 and 125 rail.

After that Jamie brought out an Atlas B39-8 locomotive that he is upgrading for the club. The original QSI decoder was discarded and replaced with an ESU LokSound 5 21-pin decoder. To assist in making the connections Jamie used a NixTrains Decoder Buddy (making it easier to wire up the 21-pin decoder). Improvements included ground lights, functioning number board lights and the headlight. Jamie also added his homebrew keep alive circuit. Although it wasn't in place yet, Jamie intends to add magnetic reed switches to disconnect the keep alive circuit while programming the decoder.

Dick then presented a series of passenger cars that he is repainting and decaling for a customer. Two of the cars were converted into work cars, one with the windows blanked off (since this is what the customer had seen and desired). The cars are not intended to operate but instead will be on a table-top static display.

John returned with some more building updates. John has been spending the winter building the various structures and brought in two more. One was the Walthers Rocky Point Lighthouse. The kit requires minimal gluing and is engineered to snap most parts together. The kit came with a file to print window coverings which John printed on heavy card stock although he will probably not use them. John then asked the question on how to wire the lights (what circuit should they be attached to)? Looking at the instructions, it appears the lights will work with either AC, DC, or DCC power sources.

The second building John intends to model as a library. John painted the exterior a beige color and used rattle can spray paint to color the roof.

The last thing John brought was a camper that he purchased at one of our Used Asset sales. The camper was just a bag of parts, but John managed to assemble it into a decent looking model that can function as a structure along the roadway on part of his layout.

John also asked for sources of printed stone and brick patterns. Sources suggested were Chooch, LARC, and MicroMark.

At this point, Bob and Art did a static grass application demo. Art used a Noch static grass dispenser while Bob used a homemade dispenser (made from an electric flyswatter). Art used a longer type of grass (7mm) and neither dispenser worked particularly well. Some strands stood up, but much more laid over. Bob used a shorter grass (no dimensions were given) and this seemed to work much better. Both dispensers were battery powered, perhaps a dispenser that used household AC would work better?

Next was Carmen giving an update on figuring out how to place his row houses in a tight section of his layout. Carmen built a mock-up of the area and used various pieces to estimate how much space was needed. A typical prototypical arrangement was with two

to four houses built next to each other with a small yard out front with a fence to separate it from the railroad tracks. Using the mock-up, he was able to determine his buildings could only be an inch deep and will thus assemble them to that dimension.

Kent then gave an update on his battleship & Kingfisher diorama. The Southern Maine Scale Modelers contest is scheduled for April 10<sup>th</sup> and Kent is pushing to complete the project by then. Kent showed pictures of the mostly completed battleship quarterdeck, catapults, crane, 40mm Bofors guns and various other components. Kent brought with him two the Kingfishers which will be included. One is an intact aircraft that will be on one of the catapults, the other is an aircraft that was damaged during a storm. Much work is left but Kent believes he can get it done in the remaining three weeks.

Bob followed with some Chip brushes he purchased from Harbor Freight (very cheap) and showed how they could be disassembled and used to make small stands of grass. He also showed some alligator clips mounted on bamboo stakes that make great small parts holders. Bob found the clips at Hobby Lobby.

Bob then brought out his completed steam shovel he has shown work-in-progress the last few months. The completed model looked great and will make a great addition to his modules.

Lastly Bob presented a scratch-built logging truck based off a picture in a magazine. The model was built from styrene with numerous cast resin components. Another nice model.

Paul finished out the evening with some history behind both his own Pine Tree Lines rolling stock and the Great Falls scheme. Paul chose the name Pine Tree Lines – PTL due to a combination of the “P” and “L” being his initials, and the common association with PTL as “Praise the Lord” which fit with his wife being a minister. The color scheme idea came from the New York Central “Pacemaker” scheme, in this case a Tuscan red and grey scheme. Paul like the two-tone scheme and modified it to green and Tuscan red (taking advantage of the molded color of the “boxcar red” undecorated cars). Paul then created his own custom decals and had them produced by a vendor in NH. The white decals on the green and red scheme really made the models “pop”. Paul keeps a ratio of 50% of his cars from his home line and thus created many models of these boxcars. To round out the home fleet he also made some older wooden cars with an older paint scheme to add variety.

To go along with the cars, Paul created a caboose in the same scheme and the locomotives. Paul like the distinctive stripes of the Maine Central locomotives and made the same for his models.

Paul then described the thoughts behind the Great Falls color scheme which has blue on top (representing the sky), a white stripe representing the river with a sort of “v” acting as the water coming over the falls before traveling downstream. The grey then represents the base, perhaps the ground or ballast.

To go along with his coal loader on his layout Paul had purchased a number of the Tyco Virginian hopper cars. Friends knew of his collecting of these cars and now Paul has 65 of them! He also showed the “Hopper Car Unloading Set” that accompanied these cars.

Paul had a pair of these wondering if the mechanism that works to open the doors on the hopper cars could be designed and 3D printed.

Once again it was great to see the number of modelers and skills on display that evening. We're sure there are others in the club that have projects, ideas and tools to add to the discussion, come join us one of these 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday evenings. Our next meeting will be on April 28<sup>th</sup>, hope to see you there.