

Member since June 1988

NEXT MEETING
June 15, 2023
7:00 p.m.

*Please bring a
friend to our next
meeting!*

When you send an article
with pictures, please do not
embed them into the article—send them as a separate file.

**DO YOU WANT TO
WIN?**

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

**YOU MUST BE
PRESENT TO WIN!**

Bottles for Basics:

- ♦ Feb. — \$13.00
- ♦ March — \$0
- ♦ April — \$0

**We are no longer
collecting used ink
cartridges or toner
packs.**

THE SIGNAL

THE GREAT FALLS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB



VOLUME 27 ISSUE 5

May 2023

MONTHLY MEETING JUNE 15 - 7 P.M.

Upcoming events:

- June 10 — Outside Clean-up Day
- June 17-18 — display at the Vista Room in Greene
- July 8 — Surplus Asset Sale
- August 19-20 — Balloon Festival

MAY 18 MEETING MINUTES

PAUL LODGE — SECRETARY

President Mike Meserve opened the Great Falls Model Railroad Club meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. The Secretary's Report of the Executive Committee meeting of May 11 was approved as read. Owen Buck gave the Treasurer's Report and noted that we earned over \$5,000 on the Topsham Show. The report was approved as given.

Margo Robinson reported that we had good feedback from the vendors. Having the table rental company set up and take down the tables was a relief for those who stayed to clean up after the show.

Members were invited to attend the Modelers Forum on Thursday, May 25, starting at 7 p.m. Bob Willard noted that he will bring a project using wood. Plans are in the works for another "Square-foot Contest," but a topic for the contest is yet to be determined. The attendees at the EX-TRAINaganza in late November will determine the best in show.

Bryce Weeks and Shawn Doyle have recently been chosen to head up the HO Division. They noted that trains are set up for the next operating session.

Lexan has been donated to the O-scale layout to help protect trains running near the outside of the layout from falling on the floor. [Lexan is described online as a clear polycarbonate resin thermoplastic, which is an extremely resistant flexible protective surface with an impact strength much greater than acrylic, another thermoplastic substance with similar properties.]

There have been no changes on the G-Gauge layout or the N Scale layout since the last meeting.

The HO Modular Group has decided not to continue using the painted backdrops on the modules. The backdrops have not been used for the last two shows, and that has been much better for operations.

MAY 18 MEETING MINUTES (CONTINUED)

Without the backdrops, people running the trains can see where the trains are located and observe items on the modules which might be tempting for someone to take.

President Meserve announced that L/A Arts is having an event on Tuesday, May 23, at 7:00 p.m. at 168 Lisbon Street in Lewiston that may be of interest to club members. Phil Morse from the Seashore Trolley Museum will give an update on the progress of the restoration of the *Narcissus*, the last surviving high-speed wooden interurban car that ran on the interurban system from Portland to Lewiston.

The [Vista of Maine](#) in Greene has allotted space for the GFMRRRC modular layout so that families can enjoy watching trains at their family friendly event on Father's Day weekend. Travis Johnson and Ed Webb plan to set up the layout as a special feature for this event. The Vista plans to have a food truck or other food options available at the event.

During the winter, problems had arisen with the tractor and the snow blower, making them unusable until repaired. The tractor has been fixed professionally and the mower works. The snow plow is not yet fixed.

Margo Robinson reported that she emailed her contact at the WW&F, but has not heard back with any additional information on the August 12-13 event that we have been invited to.

The Club Cleanup Day is scheduled for Saturday, June 10. We will get together and spruce up the grounds after the work session.

Rick James has invited the club to become part of the Ham Radio Club's show at the Ramada Inn in 2024. Our presence would allow us to highlight our club and pass out flyers of future events.

Last month the changes to the club's Constitution and By-laws were discussed and explained. A motion to accept the changes was made and approved by the club members in attendance. [If you would like a clean copy of the final version, please email Jamie Robinson (jamie@greatfallsmodelrrclub.org) or download one [HERE](#).]

There was a good discussion about when to have monthly meetings. A survey of club members was taken some time ago. About fifty percent of the members wanted to keep the third Thursday as the monthly meeting night, and the other fifty percent wanted to try Saturday afternoons instead. Some of the suggestions from the members included having the meeting on Thursday or Saturday, depending on the time of year in order to avoid the need for driving after dark. There seemed to be a consensus for considering the season of the year to determine when the monthly meeting would occur. It was decided to table discussion on the topic for this meeting and prepare a proposal reflecting the club's desire.

The last major agenda item was the election of officers for 2023-2024. The Nominating Committee proposed a slate of officers on which the club could vote. There were no additional nominees added to the ballot.

The officers elected for 2023-2024 are as follows:

President - Jamie Robinson

Vice President - Eric Long

Secretary - Bryn Doyle

Treasurer - Margo Robinson

Archivist/Librarian - Rick James

Directors elected were: Shawn Doyle, Darin Long and Guy Lovell.

Paul Lodge will be the backup Secretary and Owen Buck will be the backup Treasurer. As Past President Mike Meserve will also be a member of the Executive Committee.

DONATIONS

There are still two spots open for Power Sponsorship @ \$150. Current power costs are about \$250/month...

Thank you to all those who have signed up. Please note that you can sign up at any time! These sponsorships are of great value to the club; as you all know, our dues cover less than 25% of our fixed costs and those costs are increasing every month.

Thank you Joe Saunders for the Lexan donation, and thank you Edward Little Class of 1958 for your donation!

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Thank you to all the members who made the time to attend the Club's annual business meeting and vote. There are some new faces on the list of Officers! I look forward to working with all the Officers and Directors to continue moving the Club forward.

Airline issues notwithstanding, I expect to be able to attend the June meeting. I already know that I will not be able to attend the August meeting, but the remainder of the year looks okay so far...

I'd like to see a resurrection of monthly presentations at the meeting, so in June, I will present a show on model railroad clubs I have been privileged to visit this year.

Please think about a presentation you might be willing to create for a future meeting. I definitely won't be able to put one on every month! Do you have slides? Movies? Videos? What talents do you bring to your workbench? Think about it...

Jamie

APRIL 29 TOPSHAM SHOW BY JAMIE ROBINSON

Wow! What a show. This was our first public show since the fall of 2019. We had a great time and the show was a tremendous success.



We changed our planning methodology this year. Table charges were increased to \$35. Still a reasonable cost in comparison to other venues, this price increase resulted in table sales revenue covering all of our known costs leading up to the show, even allowing use of vendor services to set up, position, and take down the rental tables. Additionally, we maximized use of the Club's own tables to reduce rental costs as much as possible. With all fixed costs having been covered by table charges, door and sales revenue made the show a (badly needed) financial success.

Margo did a great job with the arrangements. There was ample spacing for vendors and visitors, and vendor spaces were clearly identified. Vendors expressed great appreciation for the communication and planning leading up to the show.

The Booster Club was instrumental in assisting the school Athletic Dept. laying the protective mats out on the gym floor in response to an unexpected shortfall of manpower. This last-minute contribution allowed food to be brought into the gym area, and was greatly appreciated by all of us! The Booster Club did a splendid job with refreshments, even delivering to the vendor tables for convenience. There were ample supplies of food available, with none of the early shortages we've seen at other events. Thank you, Boosters!

Vista of Maine Event

BY JAMIE ROBINSON

On Father's Day weekend, June 17th and 18th, the [Vista of Maine Vineyard and Cider](#) in Greene will host the Great Falls Model Railroad Club's modular layout and a couple of informational and sales tables.



This event is a first for both the Vista and for us. They are working to make their venue more family-friendly and nobody loves trains like kids do... We're both hoping that this will be a success and will be enjoyed by all.



This area will be reset for the occasion and the layout will be set crosswise through two of the arches. We'll set up a couple of tables with information about our Club, Operation Lifesaver and some child-friendly sale items too (hats, dress-up kits, whistles, etc.). Why not stop by, enjoy a tasty libation, and check it out? It's a beautiful view!

THE SIGNAL

Membership

BY JAMIE ROBINSON

Couple of things about membership. The membership year is based on the calendar year, i.e. January — December. If a person joins the Club on or after September 1, their dues are credited toward the following year, and the remainder of the current year is free.

In the past, we haven't been consistent about reminding members when dues are payable. We'll work on that going forward. If you have not paid your dues for 2023, please do so if you wish to be continued as a member.

Dues for the new year are payable on or before January 1. In accordance with Article II, Section 5 of the [Constitution and Bylaws](#), there is a three-month grace period extending until March 31, during which time the Treasurer will contact members in arrears to determine whether or not they wish to renew.

What does membership mean?

Please think about what your membership means to you. We don't stand on principle; we don't check your membership card before admitting you to the building. The public is always welcome to visit us, attend meetings, and even come to operating sessions. That's not going to change. The only thing you really have to be a member for is to vote at the annual business meeting.

So why join? It's about commitment. We are exceedingly fortunate to have had founding members with a deep sense of commitment and who made significant sacrifices and contributions to ensure that the Club would have a future. It's truly an honor to continue in their footsteps.

Our members are committed. To be a member means sharing some of the responsibilities of keeping the Club moving forward. We need people to help, and typically folks step up when it's necessary. If we are going to continue to move forward with events, we'll need you to keep pitching in as you always have.

Your dues help us continue; we keep them low to encourage as many folks as possible to join. Most model railroad clubs our size have annual dues far in excess of ours.

We have relied extensively (perhaps even over-ly) on the expertise of select individuals in the past for certain tasks. Many of the players have changed and some can use some assistance.

If you are interested in the Library, talk with Rick James. He would welcome some assistance there.

If you can help us with the grounds, we really need you! Since Carl Butland left the area in 2022, our groundskeeping hasn't been the best and this does not reflect well in the public view. Would you be willing to help on a more regular basis? Please talk with Travis Johnson and Ed Webb.

Outdoor Work Day

We're going to have an outdoor workday on June 10 to get the outside of the building and the grounds squared away. Are you a gardener? There was a garden at the foot of the sign. It's been severely neglected since at least 2019. I don't know whether it can be resurrected or not. We could really use your help!

If you have it, bring it:

- Rake
- Brush clipper
- Weed whacker
- Shovel

We have some longer-term plans that (hopefully) include reconstruction of the platform outside the library, and replacement of the double doors downstairs as well as the addition of a roof over them. We will also be doing some more painting and freshening up of the exterior of the building.

If you have ideas, suggestions, or thoughts, please don't hesitate to speak up!

QUILT RAFFLE

Vicky G. from Milo, ME won this beautiful quilt in the raffle on April 29th. She paid for postage and it was mailed to her residence.



MODELER'S FORUM April 27

BY KENT WATERSON

More and larger photos are available on our website: <https://www.greatfallsmodelrrclub.org/modelers-forum/>

Another large group of modelers gathered at the Modeler's Forum on April 27th. More projects and ideas presented with a variety of interests. Attending that night were Bob Willard, Paul Lodge, Jamie Robinson, Kent Waterson, Carmen Anastase, John McMullen, Shawn & Bryn Doyle, Jay Wiley, Roger Plummer and Dick Holman.

MODELER'S FORUM (CONTINUED)

Jamie started us off with a couple projects on his workbench. The first was an HO metal Mantua flatcar that he is refurbishing. The second was a Model Die Cast stubby flatcar with a load created from a part out of a computer printer. Wood decking was added from cheap coffee stirrers found on Amazon.



Kent followed by presenting his completed V1/Flak37/flatcar diorama. The model placed third in the recent Southern Maine Scale Modelers contest. Also shown was the completed Model Railroad Hobbyist Steam Throttle. All the plastic parts are 3D printed and the electronics assembled per MRH's instructions. Lastly, he showed an HO Boston & Maine caboose that arrived from Walters ... in only took them seven years to fulfill the order!



Next up was Carmen with a pair of "Lionel-y" old standard gauge signals. He also brought some economically priced hobby knife sets he picked up from Wish.com, three packs with #11 blades and handles for \$20. Next, for his light rail layout he had purchased a Pikestuff small engine house and was asking what a appropriate color would be. The kit photographs showed a blue building and was informed that blue was a common color.



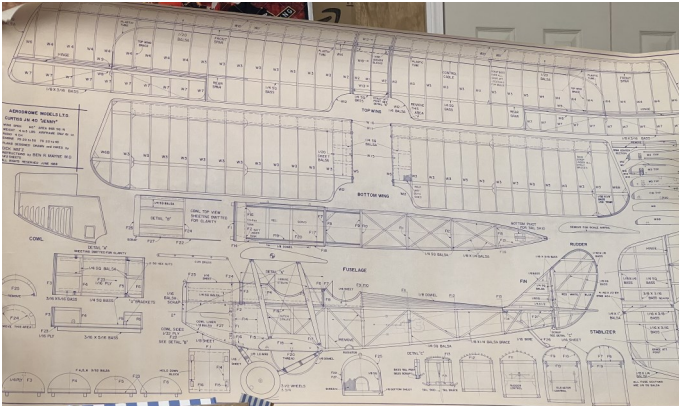
The last thing was a mock-up of a section of his layout that is narrow but will contain a series of partial buildings, fences, and cars. Opinions were sought on the arrangement and would trees be appropriate or perhaps too cluttered.



After a long absence, Jay was back with a collection of pieces he has picked up from various sales. The first was a kit of the station at Wiscasset that had previously been started. Next was a pair of cars picked up from Maine Model Works that were missing a few pieces but were reworked into a usable model. One internal braced boxcar and a second kit with metal ends and wooden sides.



Also shown were a Laconia car kit of a Ralston Purina car, and Internationals all tin kit, a couple Funaro and Camerlengo kits, one a wood sided caboose kits that he replaced the stairwells and added safety chains to the railings along with a figure, the second kit being a boxcar kit. Next was an Ambroid all wood kit, a multideck stock car with chickens and pigs. The last cars were a Tichy crane car and a maintenance tender. The tricky crane car was done very well. Lastly Jay presented the plans for his next RC plane, a Curtis Jenny. The Aerodrome Models kit features a 66" wingspan, we look forward to seeing the progress on the build.



Bryn next brought us up to date on her hayfield model. The field was completed with multiple layers of static grass to simulate a mowed field look. She has a tractor to add to the scene but is looking for a mower to complete the scene. Anyone who might know where to source one of these is encouraged to contact Bryn.



Next up was Roger with a large collection of dump trailers. The numerous configurations were all variations of the Herpa models dump trailer. Another model was a lowbed trailer with modifications such as removing the ramps and adding mud flaps. The last model was a Mack Granite resin cab mounted on a Herpa chassis.



Bob closed out the evening with a display of his own dump trailer, a chain drive Mack with scratch built trailer. To the cab were added resin cast hood and fenders. The sides were designed, and laser cut by a friend. Also shown was a Katahdin Iron Works rail vehicle fashioned out of the same Model T cab of many of his projects. Lastly Bob related the difficulty of producing perfectly formed discs from styrene. To solve the problem, Bob purchased a punch set from Amazon that solved the problem perfectly.



The last item on the agenda for the night was the proposal for another square-foot contest. Entries need to fit on a one-foot square base with no overhang. Entries need to be completed by the November ExTRAINaganza and the winner selected by a people's choice vote. All are invited to participate in the contest.

MODELER'S FORUM (CONTINUED)

So closed another meeting of the Modeler's Forum: from HO dump trailers to 66" wingspan aircraft, the forum has it all! Come out and join us on May 25th and add the to variety, we hope to see you there.



2023 SQUARE FOOTER CONTEST

What is a Square Footer?

It's a diorama that measures 12" on each side. It may be as tall as you wish, but nothing may extend over the edge of any side. The square foot diorama should be constructed to permit displaying it on a table.

The Great Falls Model Railroad Club has held a number of Square Footer contests over the years, yielding some impressive entries, and we look forward to reinvigorating it going forward in the post-COVID world.

For the 2023 contest, there is no specific subject matter. The diorama does not even have to be a railroad-related subject (though that is preferred) and it may be in any scale, so this is a real opportunity to showcase your talents from other arenas.

There will be different categories from beginner to expert. The public will select the winners by voting during ExTRAINaganza in November.

HO LAYOUT COMMITTEE

Shawn Doyle and Bryce Weeks have taken over leadership of the HO layout committee, replacing Darin Long who has toiled ceaselessly and well over the past several years.

Leadership of the committee includes staging the layout for operating sessions as well as overseeing them, not to mention general oversight for what's going on with the layout.

One change for folks to note will be the return to some neglected standards—specifically that cars remaining on the layout must be equipped with Kadee-compatible metal couplers and metal wheels.

POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITY

Here's a auction tidbit that was sent in. Someone might be interested in exploring this opportunity further:

Our next in person auction won't be until Sunday, June 11th. There has been a minor change. It will be an in person only auction, held at the American Legion hall on 12 Church Street in South Paris. It will consist of items from a couple of estates and house contents. The link for this auction is [Public Auction Sale: Pennsylvania estate with additions Sunday, 6/11 - South Paris, ME \(auctionzip.com\)](https://www.auctionzip.com/public-auction-sale-pennsylvania-estate-with-additions-sunday-6-11-south-paris-me). We have been putting photos up throughout the week and will continue to do so in the next couple of weeks.

We have postponed the online portion of this auction, however, we are not quite sure when it will occur. This online portion consists of the planes, trains, and boats collection we are working on. There are quite a few scrapbooks of trains and military life (inc. ships), and a lot of model trains from Lionel to N gauge. It also includes other train related items. Keep an eye on the updates and Auctionzip for the date of the auction.

PROJECT HADES

BY JAMIE ROBINSON

Work on the turnouts at the entrance to the Obie Intermodal Yard continues.



All four of the powered turnouts are now complete. Two of the turnouts are curved, and all are long, making them very graceful and able to handle long cars and trains smoothly.

The next step here is to complete the “inside” turnout (top right of the photo at right) leading into the IM tracks themselves. This turnout will be operated by a hand-throw (visible at the layout edge, top left of the photo at right).

There’s some electrical work to be done before these turnouts can be powered up, but we’re inching closer to being able to operate into the IM again!





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THE SIGNAL

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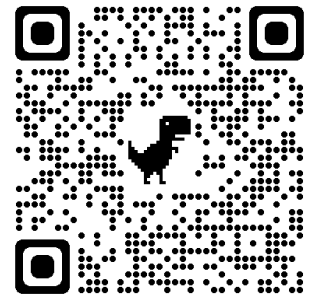
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www.greatfallsmodelrrclub.org

Upcoming Events

June 10 — Outside Clean-up Day
June 17-18 — Display at the Vista Room
June 24 — HO Operating Session
July 8 — Surplus Asset Sale
August 17-18 — Balloon Festival



Grab your Great Falls shopping bag at the Company Store and show us off at the supermarket!



[Check us out on Facebook.](#)



Recurrent Activities

HO Operating Sessions

June 3 at 9:00 a.m.

June 24 at 9:00 a.m.

July 1 at 9:00 a.m.

Regular Monthly Meeting

Thursday, June 15 at 7:00 p.m.

Spikey's Station

NONE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Work Session

Every Wednesday 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Every Saturday 9:00 a.m. to Noon
(unless there's an Operating Session)

Modelers Forum

Thursday, June 22 at 7:00 p.m.

Executive Committee

June 15 concurrent w/Monthly Mtg.