

Great Falls Model Railroad Club

Modeler's Forum March 9, 2024

by Jamie Robinson

Modeler's Forum convened at about 3:00 p.m. with 6 modelers in attendance: Bob Willard, Carmen Anastase, Dick Holman, Travis Johnson, Jamie Robinson and Steve Doughty. We were joined shortly by two more — Sean Crossen and Margo Robinson.

Bob Willard opened the forum with his scratchbuilt model of the Auburn & Turner Railroad's carbarn. The carbarn was located at the Turner end of the line. The carbarn is constructed from wood, and the roof is covered with styrene to simulate metal. Bob painted the model with the new airbrush he spoke about at the forum in January. He noted that the carbarn is only finished on three sides as one side of it will be directly against the wall. Bob used his own plaster castings for the foundation stone and Tichy windows for the building.

Bob next brought out an O Scale 3d printed model of a Caterpillar D2 crawler tractor. It was quite reasonably priced and he bought it via Etsy from a Polish company called [Playmoreit](#). It took about three weeks to arrive. The model is shipped with its supports intact to protect it. The photos really don't do the model justice; you can actually see through the screen protecting the radiator! 3d resin printing has really changed the playing field for modelers.

Bob wasn't finished either; he hauled a 1/48 scale garage workshop out of his seemingly bottomless bag of tricks. This one was made by a company called [Miniart](#) and Bob purchased it via eBay for about twenty bucks! Miniart offers a variety of items in several different scales, and eBay seems to be the most convenient place to find them.

Steve Doughty has been working to put an elevated trolley line on his home layout. After making some arches to support the elevated roadway over his existing tracks, and using a conversion track for the platform area, he realized he needed some type of stair for folks to reach the passenger platform. While prowling around at Norm's O Scale in Casco, Steve found a vintage Minitoys pedestrian footbridge that could be adapted to fill the bill.

Jamie brought a couple of 3d printed vehicle kits from a new company called [Custom Model Depot](#). The supports have been removed from these, but they will still require a bit of clean-up and sanding. Some of the models do not come with window inserts. Custom Model Depot includes a tip sheet on the back of their instruction sheet and offers more detailed suggestions on their website. Their models are offered in several different scales. For those of us in O scale, where properly scaled non-military vehicles have long been difficult to find, 3d printing has opened up a whole new world of possibilities. Jamie claims that one of these days, he'll actually build one of these kits...

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Travis Johnson related how he has been using the Maine Geological Survey website and the Lidar data presented on it to locate and follow old railway roadbeds. In many places, so much landscaping has changed over the years that there is literally no trace of many old railway lines. Lidar data on the website is located [HERE](#). Travis related that there is a fair bit of railroad-related information on the [Forgotten Maine](#) Facebook page too.

Dick Holman related that he is scheming just how to fit elements onto the 4" circle required for an HO entry into this year's "Square Footer" contest. Rules for the contest are on our website [HERE](#). Modelers of all abilities and scales/gauges are encouraged to enter. There will be prizes for the winners. The theme of the 2024 contest is "In the Woods", and it does not have to include a railroad element.

Carmen Anastase described some items he has purchased from a website called [Temu](#). The company offers free shipping for purchases over a certain amount, and Carmen has sometimes augmented his purchases with small tools to get over that threshold. He showed some hobby utility knives and small squares he has acquired thusly.

Carmen continues to move forward with his \$1 truck project. Purchasing these vehicles at dollar-type stores, he converts them to flatbeds for hauling pipe from his HO factory. He related that some trailers are much harder to modify than others due to difficulty removing the different body types. Carmen described some of the issues he has had applying modern hi-visibility striping to these models due to the extremely slippery nature of the plastic. Suggestions made were to scuff it lightly with very fine grit sandpaper and then apply a gloss coat to it.

He's still working on his backdrop buildings too. Having deconstructed several kits that were already built in order to narrow them for backdrop use, Carmen said that moving forward, he's much more likely to use unbuilt kits. It's quite a struggle to take buildings apart if they are built well...

Shawn Crossen and Margo Robinson offered some comments through the session, and we look forward to having them attend in the future.

The next Modeler's Forum reverts to the traditional 4th Thursday slot, and will be held at 7 p.m. on Thursday, April 25. We hope to see **YOU** there!

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