

## The Big Train Project Status Report (Part 142)

This month's report is even more different from the usual than the previous one. It reports on the 2019 Scale Model Expo, which has become an annual free-to-the-public event held at EnterTRAINment Junction. Its objective was to showcase the various forms of scale modeling practiced by miniaturists from areas in and around Cincinnati, Ohio. This year's show included live-steam and ride-behind locomotives, models of boats, planes, automobiles, steam engines, and a large number of displays of 1/6<sup>th</sup> scale figures and dioramas of military and civilian scenes. The following is a small sampling of the variety of items that were available for viewing.

Figure 1 shows a collection of beautiful scratch-built locomotives capable of pulling cars with real passengers on board.



Figure 1. Large Scale Locomotives

At the other end of the weight spectrum were models assembled from printed cardstock. A wide variety of models can be built in this medium, including aircraft, vehicles, and buildings. The most interesting and intricate of the buildings at this show was a model of the St. Vitus Cathedral in Prague in the Czech Republic (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Cardstock Model of Prague's St. Vitus Cathedral



Despite the resistance of cardstock to compound curves, appropriate segmenting of cardstock sections still makes it possible to model aircraft with their rounded surfaces. It also makes it possible to include significant fine details of the myriad details in such areas as cockpits, landing gear, and engines (Figure 3).



Figure 3.

This year's show included a large number of superbly detailed boats, including the excellent model of a side-wheel riverboat, complete with lighting, passengers, and cargo (Figure 4). Most of the models displayed were capable of radio-controlled operation on water.



Figure 4. Side-Wheel Riverboat



Steam engines on display included the green walking-beam engine, being run on compressed air for this display (Figure 5). The brass engine in the foreground of the figure, though static at the show, is fully functional for powering ship and boat models.



Figure 5. Steam Engines



The 1/6<sup>th</sup> scale modelers had a very large presence at this year's show. Much of the 1/6<sup>th</sup> scale modeling is descended from the original Hasbro GI-Joe, a one-foot-tall action figures first sold in 1964. Since then numerous other manufacturers have produced both figures and accessories in this scale – including weapons, uniforms, vehicles, and aircraft from many periods in history. The diorama in Figure 6 show a modern Middle East hostage rescue operation, with both good-guy and bad-guy casualties, including the crashed helicopter in the foreground. The hostage, in a business suit, is being helped out of the way in the center of the scene, while troops are trying to get the helicopter pilot out of the burning aircraft, and another is carrying a wounded soldier away at the near-right of the scene. The ability to pose the articulated figures and the high level of detail that can be incorporated into uniforms, weapons, and vehicles in such a large scale make possible a wide variety of scenes that can be depicted with exceptional realism.



Figure 6. Middle-Eastern War Diorama

A more sedate military scene is shown in the diorama in Figure 7. Set in World War II, soldiers from a US Army half-track are asking directions from a pair of civilians.



Figure 7. World War II Scene



The less warlike subject in 1/6<sup>th</sup> scale in Figure 8 is a hot-rod shop, including not only vintage hotrods, but also fancy motorcycles, and even some more recent models of a Corvette, a Camaro, and a Ferrari.



Figure 8. Modern Day Civilian 1/6<sup>th</sup> Scale Diorama

The wide variety of available choices of subject, scale, and medium allow miniaturists to express their artistry in many ways, whether the models are static (like the dioramas ) or active (like the model trains and boats). With shows like this, EnterTRAINment Junction provides these hobbyists with a way to share their joy in the results of their creations with the public, as well as enticing visitors to view the work of EJ's own creative miniaturists on display in the EJ layout.

© 2019 Tom Bartsch  
MVGRS Big Train Project Coordinator