

Quick facts about the model layout:

- ❖ The Maine Central Model Railroad was built by Harold “Buz” and Helen Beal, along with their nephew Harry Fish. They spent 30-35 years construction the layout in Jonesport, Maine.
- ❖ The model is HO scale, or 1:87. 1 foot in real life is 3.55 millimeters.
- ❖ The layout, when it was in Jonesport, was meant to represent the Maine Central Railroad roughly around 1960. With the addition of new sections to the layout, there is no longer a set time that the layout represents.
- ❖ According to the nephew Harry: We didn’t build it highly detailed to the letter, we built it to create an illusion of reality, and so things aren’t always to scale. This can be seen best in Jonesport, where the Beal’s house (blue single story) is larger and closer to O scale than HO.
- ❖ The section of the layout that represents Jonesport contains the Beal’s home. The shed that the layout was housed in is not modeled yet, there are plans for it to be modeled in the future.
- ❖ The red house on the top of the hill near Bangor is Stephen King’s house. The Beals sent him a letter asking him for a photo of his house so they could model it on their layout. He did.
- ❖ Some of the structures are replicas of real buildings. Some examples include Union Station in Bangor, Stephen King’s House, the Beal’s House, and Flo’s Hot Dogs. Many buildings are simply building types, like a sawmill named after Buz or a flower shop after Helen.
- ❖ The wooden buildings were custom built by Buz and the plastic ones were made from kits. Some of the wooden buildings, like the Beal’s house, is not to scale as Buz’s eyesight made working in HO difficult.
- ❖ Helen claimed to have made over 6,000 trees by hand. This was done through a process of cutting twigs off bushes, drying them, dipping them in glue, and finally shaking them in a green foam. Most of the trees she made are still waiting to be placed on the layout.
- ❖ Every Sunday afternoon, Buz and Harry, along with a close friend, would run the trains for 3-4 hours, using computer generated manifests.

- ❖ Relatives and neighbors began bringing friends over to see the layout, and soon it became open to the public (not on Sundays). Upon entry, the shed would be very dark with the lights off. Buz would slowly turn the lights on to the amazement of the visitors. Per Harry: The people would stand there and they couldn't believe it.
- ❖ A person who had visited the layout multiple times and had gotten to know the Beals told them to "let me know when the time comes that you can no longer keep this going, and I will find a new home for it." A few years later, this individual connected with the Seashore Trolley Museum and the Wyss Foundation donated the funds for the construction of the building and the cost of relocating the layout.
- ❖ In April 2022, the Seashore Trolley Museum hired a company to dismantle the layout. They cut the layout into 20 sections so that it could be safely transported the 5 hours from Jonesport to Kennebunkport. In mid-November 2023, the sections were brought into the new building and the reassembly began.
- ❖ The aisles had to be made much wider than they were in Jonesport to meet code. This resulted in an additional 43 ft of track being added to the layout. The currently underdeveloped areas are where the layout had to be expanded to meet code and to fit the room.
- ❖ The layout was originally one large loop, but had to be separated into two distinct sections, again due to fire codes.
- ❖ The large blue skyscraper doesn't actually exist in Bangor and was constructed to hide a 4x4 support that was in the Jonesport shed.
- ❖ After opening the building to the public in May of 2024, we received a second layout as a donation from a local woman, Emmlyn Bentley.
- ❖ The 2nd floor will soon have exhibits of the history of railroads in Maine, including trolleys versus steam locomotives, forestry and manufacturing, and how railroads helped develop communities.
- ❖ The funding for both relocating and housing the layout in the newly constructed building were donated by philanthropist and train enthusiast Hansjörg Wyss. He has visited many of the premier model railroads throughout the world and considers ours to be one of the best.