

Rochester Model Rails

Dedicated to quality model railroading in upstate New York

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The color postcard above depicts the Bath and Hammondsport Railroad Station circa 1900, Hammondsport, NY, at the south end of Keuka Lake. The building in the foreground left is the passenger depot (still standing today) with the famous pointed roof at the south end of the building. The B & H RR freight depot (lower building to the north of the passenger depot) is attached to the passenger depot. The wharf shed or steamboat landing is shown on the right. Two tracks are shown, one in front of the depot and one behind. The large building on the hill just above the point of the depot is the Lakeview Winery. Off to the left is the Lyon Brothers Grape Warehouse and to the right, out of site, are the Engine House and Power House (still standing today). Note: three local folks are modeling the B & H RR – Ed Seus, Dick Honeyman, and Dick Senges.)

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RMR Recommended Train Events

CEDAR SWAMP STATION

On the Lehigh Valley Railroad's

Rochester Branch

By Eccentric Rod

The Lehigh Valley Railroad's Rochester Branch ran from the depot at Court Street and South Avenue in Rochester, NY, to Rochester Junction. Rochester Junction was located on Plains Road west of Rush and south of Route 251.

There were three other depots on the line, Mortimer, Henrietta and Cedar Swamp. Cedar Swamp? Where was Cedar Swamp? Answer: It was located where Route 15A crossed the branch line. A photograph (Page 3) by Sheldon King shows that the depot was little more than a flag stop. But it had a sign and a siding. Simple wooden crossbucks warned of the crossing that appears to be little more than an enlarged path. Mary Hamilton Dann says that the intersection was notorious for accidents since the heavily wooded surroundings muffled the noise of the approaching train.

Perhaps you would like to have a Cedar Swamp Depot on your layout? The building is relatively simple and I have drawn a plan for you. The photo shows one end had a window and probably the other end did also. There was no reason for the rear to have windows. Do not forget to put in a stove to keep your passengers warm. Some of the Lehigh's depots were painted light gray with dark gray trim.

For added realism include a pair of crossbucks to your highway crossing. A simple siding with a parallel driveway can serve as a team track. For added realism, make your crossing heavily wooded and place some automobile accident debris by the roadside. See the photo on page 3 and the drawing of the depot on page 4.

(For those of you that would like copies of the drawing, send a LSSAE and your model railroad scale to the editor.)

H. O. M. E. S. Layout Tours

Hamilton, Ontario

By Dick Senges

The H.O. Model Engineers Society Inc. of Hamilton, Ontario, (H. O. M. E. S.) and the Bay City Historical Foundation Hamilton & District sponsored a Layout Tour on November 15, 2003 in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. About 20 layouts were on tour throughout the Hamilton area.

Only some of the layouts were visited since it was impossible to see all 20 in just 8 hours, but the ones seen were exceptional. David Lee's 30' x 30' HO scale *Poyntlas & Dreerie RR* was very nice with super buildings and a lot of detail, especially figures. David is MMR #27.

Gary Courtemanche's *Blood, Sweat & Tears* HO scale 12' x 16' layout was 100% scenery complete with just spectacular buildings and mini scenes. Gary's layout has been in many of the national magazines and competes favorably with the best in the North America.

On3 layouts are always neat to see with those great scenes of Colorado. Dave Burroughs' layout was no exception. His 23' x 15' Denver & Rio Grande Western was superb. The sound systems added much to the layout and the rocks were very realistic. A very well done layout.

All in all it was a great idea to have area layouts on tour and it is hoped that the local folks in upstate NY will follow suit and sponsor this type of event.

*Rochester
Model Rails*

Web Site:

www.trainweb.org/rmr

Cedar Swamp Depot

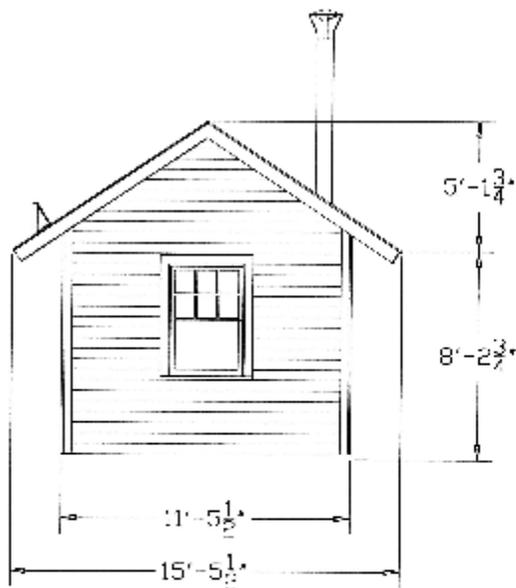
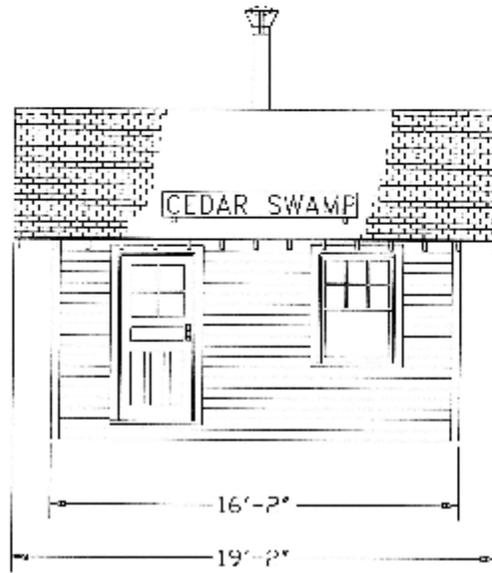
Notice the two-tone paint on the depot, the large flag and the flagman, and the wooden crossbucks. See the HO scale drawing on the next page.

Photo Credit – Shelden King.



CEDAR SWAMP DEPOT

HO SCALF



Guidelines for Good Photographic Composition

or

How to Make Better Pictures

By Leaf Shutter

Guideline No. 3 The Rule of Thirds

Unless it is an extreme close-up the subject should be placed at one of four intersection points created when the view is divided into thirds horizontally and vertically. In other words, the principle subject should be placed at one of the four intersection points, A, B, C or D of the drawing below. Photographs with the principle subject plop in the middle are dull, commonplace and uninteresting.

A	C	
B	D	

In the case of extreme close-ups however, it is probably best to center the object in the frame and not follow this 'rule of thirds'.

HOW TO DECAL EFFECTIVELY

A Coverup Everybody Can Live With

by Lou Nost

Before we get into the details I need to share some of the reasons why my techniques will be different from those of you who have developed your own. Mine are neither better nor worse than yours are, mine just work better for me, more often. I still have my bad hair days.

In the good old days of solvent based paint there were only two choices of MRR paint colors available. *Floquil* was a dull or flat finish and *Scalecote* had a glossy finish. I used both and I found that my results were much better on the *Scalecote* paint. I then found improvement with the *Floquil* paint if I added 25% to 35% of their Gloss Coat or Glaze to the base color. Therefore I will do what is needed to make my work surface glossy. Some of the new water baser paints like *Accu-Paint* or *Accu-Flex* and others have a surface that looks flat but has provided good results as a coating under a decal. These new paints share a technology in which the pigments are ground much finer than was possible in the past so the roughness of the surface is much reduced, minimizing the problem of air entrapment under a decal. Do not be afraid to try them, I did and they work too.

- Why use decals?
 - To duplicate a model of a specific prototype
 - To produce a specific model that never existed
 - To produce variations on a theme
 - To add detail that would otherwise be difficult to model
 - Easy to use and forgiving

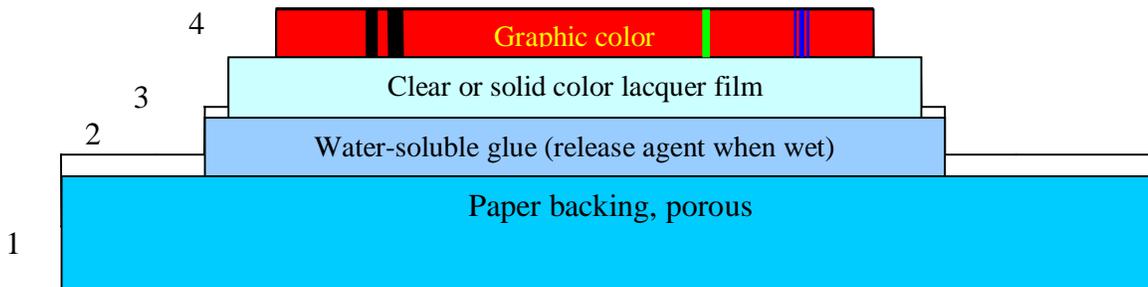
- What is a decal?
 - A thin film of lacquer on a sheet of paper with specific graphics on it.
 - A thin film of lacquer on a sheet of paper of one uniform color.
 - A multi-layered sheet whose layers react differently to different liquids.
 - A system developed to apply high quality graphics to almost any durable surface.

- Are decals the only way to decorate a prized model?
 - No. There are other ways to do it.
 - § Hand lettering with paint or India Ink
 - § Pad printing
 - § Dry transfer rub on lettering
 - § Silk screening
 - § Air brushing and stenciling

Tools

1. **Microscale Micro Set [1]** (reacts with water to remove glue from decal film)
2. **Microscale Micro Sol [2]** (reacts with lacquer film to liquefy it)
3. Tweezers to manipulate and hold paper backing while positioning decal
4. Sharp razor blade (#11 X-Acto) to cut wanted graphics from large sheet
5. Six inch straight edge
6. Water: distilled, filtered or soft
7. Two artist's camel hair paint brushes to apply the above solvents, one each for [1] & [2].
8. Sharp pointed tool to prick any unwanted air bubbles under our decal film
9. Soft paper toweling for blotting away excessive solvents

Anatomy of a Decal Sheet



1. Porous paper is used as a transport medium to hold a decal intact until it is to be applied.
2. Water-soluble glue coated onto the paper so that it becomes a release agent when wet.
3. A lacquer film (clear or colored) is applied over the glue to form the body of the decal.
4. A graphic is applied over the lacquer film, #3, which could be another lacquer layer or it could be a permanent ink of contrasting color or colors.
Examples could be ink jet ink from an ink jet printer or hand applied India ink.

The Process

1. Select your model and acquire the appropriate decals.
2. Paint the model and make sure it is not a flat finish. Add gloss or glaze (35%) to base color if it is only available as a flat finish.
3. Spray on a glossy overcoat if model is already painted.
4. Cut decal with a sharp razor or **X-Acto #11** blade, into manageable sized pieces. Dip one piece at a time into warm water with a touch of detergent to make it wetter than normal. Avoid hard water as it will leave a white residue under the decal film or on the model as it evaporates. Allow the decal to soak on the paper backing until it is 100% free to move around on the paper backing.
5. Using brush #1 and the **Micro-Set [1]** wet the area to which the decal is to be applied. Carefully move the decal and paper backing as a unit to the location desired, positioning the decal film as close to its final destination as possible. Do not allow the decal film to separate from the paper backing as you remove it from the dish of water. You will not be able to manipulate or position it where you want it under most circumstances. Hold the decal film in place while you slowly pull the wet paper backing out from under it. You can use the **X-Acto #11** blade to do this or the brush wet with the **Micro-Set [1]** solution.
6. Flood the intended area with **Micro-Set [1]** so as to displace the water and glue from beneath the decal and wick away the excess with the brush or paper towel being careful not to move the decal. If necessary apply more **Micro-Set [1]** and adjust the decal film until it is exactly where you want it to be.
7. Allow the area to dry up thoroughly thereby “tacking the decal film lightly into position. The decal probably will not be 100% down on the surface of the model at this time, but it should be in proper position and look like it belongs there. If not, repeat Steps 6 & 7 until you are satisfied with the location and orientation of the film.
8. Now, and only now, apply **Micro-Sol [2]** to the interface of the decal film and the model with the other #2 brush and watch as capillary action wicks the fluid in and under the decal film where it will fill all the voids between the decal film and the surface of the model. The **Micro-Sol [2]** is formulated to penetrate the lacquer decal film and shortly the fluid will soften the film into a rubbery membrane with the consistency of bubble gum. As the **Micro-Set [2]** evaporates and vacates the voids, it will cause this rubbery membrane to be drawn down snugly around all the intricacies of the model’s surface. **Once you have applied the Micro-Sol [2], DO NOT ATTEMPT TO MAKE ANY ADJUSTMENTS TO THE DECAL.** Allow the fluid to do its job. Go to bed, cut the grass, paint the spare bedroom, anything to take your mind off the drying process. You can repeat the wetting process with the **Micro-Sol [2]** as often as necessary as long as you do not attempt to move the softened decal film. Allow it to dry between applications.

9. At this point there are two types of visual defects that could occur:
 - A. Microscopic air bubbles under a clear lacquer film. These will appear frosted or milky and are the result of using a flat finish on your model. We didn't use a flat finish so WE will NOT have this problem.
 - B. Sizeable air bubbles that generally appear around a rivet or along the edge of a door or some other raised detail, effectively obscuring the detail.
10. After drying overnight, the decal film should not be mushy but crisp and brittle once again. It can now be worked carefully with a sharp #11 blade or the prick pin to puncture any visible bubbles.
11. Apply more **Micro-Sol [2]** to the punctured areas with the appropriate brush, pushing on the bubble to get the fluid in under the decal surface. I have been known to cut the bristles of a brush shot, so that the brush will be able to apply a force on the bubble much like the action encountered when stippling a stencil on a wall. This will draw the remaining film down after it is softened and the fluid once again evaporates. Repeat this sequence of cutting, wetting and drying as often as necessary to eliminate all remaining bubbles.
12. For those impossible bubbles only, try this. Fold a small piece of paper towel into six or eight layers and wet it with **Micro-Set [1]** so it will be wet but not able to soften the decal film. Wet the stubborn bubble again with **Micro-Sol [2]** and allow it to soften the decal again. Using the wet towel pad, compress the bubble down into place using as much thumb pressure as needed to obtain the desired result. Allow all solvents to dry overnight.
13. Wash the model with mild detergent and water to remove any haze or streaks left behind from the evaporation of the fluids. Allow the model to dry thoroughly and spray the whole model with a topcoat of your choice of glossiness to unify the surface appearance of the model. I personally like to see my models with a semi-gloss finish that can range from satin to semi-flat. This will serve to hide the edge of the decal film, as variances in sheen will draw the viewer's attention. Many high priced, high quality, pre finished models suffer from this variance, where pad printing or silk-screening is used. The topcoat will also serve as a protective layer over the decal even though the decal has become one with the gloss coat below it.

Full gloss is used when a new or well-maintained look is desired. Semi-gloss, semi-flat, matte, or satin is for when an eye pleasing appearance is desired. Dead flat is for that well used, neglected, or textured look. It is needed on unfinished wood, soil, rusted panels, old automobiles, animals, people, rooftops, etc.
14. Your model is now ready for weathering, be it light, heavy or not at all. Most weathering will tone down any level of gloss. Weathering can vary from subtle to overpowering and is a subject unto itself and deserves to be a stand-alone article. Many people resort to weathering only after they have ruined a prized model to a poor paint job or a botched decal job.

Note: Walthers has a product called **Solvaset** a fluid to be used as an aid in the application of decals, It is a single component fluid and in my estimation, a compromise which does not allow you to have full control over what is happening to the decal film. It assumes that you can position a decal quickly and perfectly, every time you apply one to the body of a model. Solvaset starts to soften the decal film while you are still positioning the last inch of a 6" stripe on the side of a diesel or the side of an 80' passenger car. The **Micro-Scale** system with two distinct fluids puts total control in the hands of the modeler.



Ask Doctor Dick (The Scenery Doctor)

Mark writes:

I am building a mountain on my HO scale layout and need some information on how to build realistic rock tunnel liners. I will be using two double tunnel plaster portals. The double tracks enter the portal and then curve since the mountain will be in the corner of my layout.

Doc:

Well, I would cast the liners out of molding plaster and shape them like the inside of a cut rock tunnel making sure they follow the radius of the track. Easier said than done.

First, use a large latex mold like the No. 1 mold sold by *Bragdon Industries* of CA. This mold has great rock structure and is about 12" x 30" so has lots of area to choose from. You can use a portion of the mold to get the rock tunnel liner structure that you will need. Remember that most of the liner will not be seen by the viewers since it will be inside the tunnel and dark, so it is not as critical as a casting that would be on the outside of the mountain.

Next, lay out the mold so that when you make the casting you will get the curvature desired. That is, height, width (check with your NMRA gauge), and also convex or concave. Here I mean make sure the mold is positioned in such a way that when the casting is made, the rock face is toward the inside of the tunnel, not the outside. Once

out of the mold, square up one end of the casting so it butts nicely with the portal.

Here is the big problem. You want a curved tunnel liner and the one you just cast is straight. What to do? One way to solve this is to cut the liner in half (across the liner, not linear) and make two liners. Fit the two liners to the track radius and proceed to make them one liner again, but with the proper radius. You can do this by covering the outside of the liner with plaster cloth or *Wet N Shape*. Then cover with *Hydrocal* plaster cementing the liners into one liner.

The next step is to fill in empty triangular space between the two liners created when you fitted the two cut liners together. Use small pieces of cast plaster from the mold. Make sure you use the same material (molding plaster) so that the repair will take the acrylic stain at the same way as the original casting. Also, try to fit the small pieces with the least amount of gap so that the filling process is minimized.

To fill the gaps between the pieces and the original casting, mix up a small batch of molding plaster and use a large eyedropper. Be careful here and try to be neat. Then before dry, use a wire brush to blend the filled gap with the rock casting. Or you can let dry and chip some of the newly filled material to match the original casting. Lastly, color the rock tunnel liner with your favorite acrylic washes.

Personal Profile

Otto M. Vondrak – Technical Director RMR

Otto M. Vondrak has been a model railroader for the past twenty years, with an interest in scenery design and construction. Otto helped found the RIT Model Railroad Club in 1996, and has directed the scenic development on their HO scale Rochester & Irondequoit Terminal since. The R&IT is a composite of Rochester-area railroading, and the scenes include recognizable areas like High Falls and the Rochester Amtrak station, as well as dramatic rock cuts and rural scenes.

You may recognize Otto's name from the pages of *Railroad Model Craftsman*, where he has contributed several features regarding Rochester railroads and model railroad scene construction. Several of his technical drawings have appeared in RMC, from layout track plans to small town stations.

Otto is also a member of the Rochester Chapter of the NRHS, and has volunteered at the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum for many years. He is also a member of the Metro-North Division (NER) of the NMRA in his native Westchester County. Hoping to contribute to the preservation of his favorite road, he joined the New York Central System Historical Society in 2002. Otto is also a joint partner in the popular Internet forum Railroad.net.

Otto was the Technical Director of the *Rochester Model Rails* model railroad newsletter published in upstate New York for the years 2002 and 2003. Otto also named this newsletter back in its inception in May 2002.

The interest in trains began with a Lionel set at age five. Eventually, Otto graduated to HO scale trains and built several small layouts while in high school. Originally from Katonah, New York, he came to Rochester to attend RIT and receive his BFA in Graphic Design in 1999. Now back in Westchester, Otto is currently production manager for *Hudson Valley Magazine* and art director for *Westchester Commerce* magazine. Even at this great distance, he continues to remain active in RITMRC and the railfan community at large.

Railroad Quiz

First Locomotive Headlight

Fires of pine knots on sand-covered flat cars, then large candles projected by glass cases, fitted with reflectors, were tried out first. In the 1840's and 1850's whale oil lamps were used. After Colonel Drake struck oil in Titusville, PA, in 1859 and illumination oil (today's kerosene) became popular, it took the place of whale oil lamps. Then came gas lights fed from storage lights, and then finally, in 1881, electricity.

Depots Vs Stations

I bet you noticed that we titled the article on Page 4 Cedar Swamp *Station* while the drawing of the building was entitled Cedar Swamp *Depot*. This was not an oversight. It was intentional.

Technically, a *station* is the location. It can be as simple as a clearing in the brush along the trackside. The *station* as it is named pertains to the location only. The *depot is the building located at the named station*.

Next Issue:

Penn Yan Privy

Coupler Replacement Steps and Wheel & Car Maintenance

How to Make Good Photos Better – Guideline #4

Tuesday Night Gang – Philanthropy

Logging Cars – Product Review

*Ask Doctor Dick
(the Scenery Doctor)*

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