Rochester Model Rails

Dedicated to Quality Model Railroading

RITMRC members are regular volunteers at the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum, a project of the Rochester Chapter NRHS. Assembled for the museum's annual Diesel Days event in August 2005 are: (first row) Otto Vondrak, Joe Werner, Ryan Kane, (second row) Mike Roque, Jessy Stallone, Mike Sadovnick, Chris Stilson, and (top) John Redden, part-owner of NKP 79.   Photo by Kermit Geary, Jr.

Ten Years of the
RIT Model Railroad Club

by Mike Roque, Chris Stilson, and Otto M. Vondrak

The RIT Model Railroad Club (RITMRC) was founded in 1996 to promote the hobby of model railroading and to preserve the history of Rochester's railroads. This was no easy feat on a college campus widely known for its student apathy. As a young model railroader, founding member Otto Vondrak was influenced by articles about the successful college clubs at MIT and RPI. When he came to RIT in the fall of 1995, he set out to create a club following the strong traditions of other collegiate model railroad organizations. If they could do it well, RIT could do it better!

Today, just ten years later, approximately 30 active members from the over 90 total members continue as the stewards of RITMRC. The club's achievements include a 10'x25' permanent HO scale layout that is nearing completion, a FREE-MO modular layout, and five years of successful train shows that continue to grow every year. The story of the RIT Model Railroad club is one of model railroad club success in Rochester.

THE EARLY YEARS

After scrounging up ten potential members, RITMRC was officially recognized by Student Government in October 1996. After toying with the idea of starting a modular club, that idea was soon scrapped—the fledgling organization knew it needed a permanent space in order to thrive.

The club's first advisor, Professor Jim Scudder, was instrumental in helping the club find a space of its own. His friend Scott Lawson, formerly RIT's Facilities Manager and a graduate of RPI, understood the value of a model railroad club. Lawson was familiar with the accomplishments of RPI and saw potential for a similar group at RIT. He was in charge of making sure all of RIT's facilities were being used to their potential. With many organizations competing for a space of their own, Lawson proposed to Student Government that the Model Railroad Club be allowed to move into the recently vacated yearbook office in the Student-Alumni Union.

And so it came to pass in February 1997 that RITMRC was handed the keys to the abandoned office with the caveat that half of the room was to be shared with the Model Airplane Club. The club grudgingly accepted, and designed their model railroad to fit into exactly half the space assigned to them. In 1998, the Model Airplane Club was granted space of its own in another building, and RITMRC finally exhaled and comfortably moved into their new headquarters.

THE ROCHESTER & IRONDEQUOIT TERMINAL RAILROAD

Since 1997, RITMRC has been concentrating on their permanent model railroad, the HO scale Rochester & Irondequoit Terminal (R&IT) located in Room A-420 in the RIT Student-Alumni Union (Building 4). The R&IT features the latest in Digital Command Control (DCC) technology (the club first adopted the NCE system, designed by RIT grad Jim Scorce and manufactured in Webster. The layout now uses Digitrax for DCC, block detection, and wayside signaling), working wayside signals (designed and constructed by Integrated Signal Systems, formerly of Rochester), and highly detailed models and scenes inspired by the Rochester area.

The R&IT is a composite of Rochester-area railroad history, drawing upon many traditions to create a unique proto-freelance model railroad. Set in the modern era, the layout features CSX operations of former Conrail lines and Amtrak passenger trains as well as the local R&IT home-road freights. Visiting power from the local shortlines Rochester & Southern and Livonia, Avon & Lakeville is common.

Though the layout is set in the present day, vintage equipment is no stranger. Examples of late-model New York Central steam as well as first- and second-generation diesel power make frequent appearances on the R&IT. Intended to represent Rochester within the space constraints imposed, key scenes modeled include High Falls, the Amtrak station, and the Genesee Brewery. While much of the city scenery is freelanced, visitors regularly "recognize" various locations on the layout. Even the railroad's logo has strong ties to the community—black and orange reflect RIT's school colors, and the lilac blossom logo ties the railroad to Rochester. Plus, R&IT cabooses are painted yellow and blue to reflect New York State's colors.

Next Month ...... Part II

25 Minute Ride with Thomas

Meet Sir Topham Hatt

Enjoy Story Telling, Live music & Much More

Tickets:

www.railroadmuseum.net

Ticket includes a visit to the Medina Railroad Museum

The Model RR Post Office

Number 15 in the Series

by Norm Wright

A set of four toy "Transports of Delight" issued in Great Britain on Sept. 15, 2003, includes Sc. #2155, a 42p 0-4-0 Hornby M1 clockwork toy locomotive and tender, c. 1848.

HORNBY
M1 Clockwork Locomotive
and Tender c1948

Touring the *Floquil Paint Factory*

by Lincoln Penn

In 1990 I visited the plant of the *Floquil-Poly S Color Corporation*. I think you might be interested on how the most popular model railroad paints are made.

Their plant was located on Route 30N, north of Amsterdam, New York. It was a large facility, larger than you might expect. I would estimate 50,000 square feet. The building sits well back from the road with no apparent sign. Entrance is gained through the rear of the building. They share the building with *Mohawk Metal Finishing,* a sister company. A tank farm for the various chemicals used in making the paints is located several hundred feet from the building. The tanks are connected to the factory with overhead pipelines.

Floquil had it beginnings in rural New York State, in the rolling dairy farm lands south of Amsterdam. The first products were felt tipped pens that were used for coding shipping cartons. After the Second World War, a model railroader employee suggested they adapt their technology to making model paints. As a result, the *Floquil* paints with which we are familiar were born.

When a neighboring farmer complained that his cows were giving green milk, *Floquil* foolishly was blamed. *Floquil* moved to its Amsterdam facility since it needed more space. Today*, Floquil* is no longer located in Amsterdam. *Testors Corporation* owns them and their production facility is in Canada. *Testors* has its own line of paints including the *Model Master* brand.

The pigments for the paints are specially purchased finely ground. Each paint is made with exact proportions of red, yellow, blue, black and white. To these are added a resin binder and solvents. The hue of the mixture is compared to the standard by the production manager and adjusted if necessary. Once approved the paint is readied at the bottling machine for filling.

Floquil's bottles are made from a special high quality French glass noted for its clarity. The paint to be bottled is contained in a container as small as 5 gallons. Fifty gallons is the maximum and reserved for their most popular colors. This container is placed at the rear of the bottling machine. Four hoses convey the paint to each bottle. Four bottles are filled simultaneously. The filling machine must be thoroughly cleaned after each color is packaged.

After the bottles are filled and capped they are conveyed to the labeling machine. The labels have a different color printing depending on the type of paint. The *Poly S* paints are red while the traditional solvent-based paints are brown. The name of the hue and the catalog number is stamped on each label.

The completed paints are placed on a rotary table where they are packed by hand into cartons. These are then sent to the stock room awaiting sale.

The company employed about ten people. They all had their specialties but were expected to pitch in on the production floor if needed. This included the company president if necessary.

In all, the manufacture of the paint was a fascinating operation.

New bottles of *Poly-S Flesh* accumulate on a rotary table for inspection and boxing.

The paint to be bottled is placed in a five-gallon container at the rear of the bottling machine. A stirrer keeps the paint in suspension. Four bottles are filled simultaneously.

The labels have different color printing depending on the paint product. The name of the hue and the catalog number are stamped on each label.

Thousands of one ounce bottles are stacked ready for loading into the bottling machine. The bottles are made of a special glass noted for its clarity.

The completed products are stored in racks ready for withdrawal and boxing.

An incoming shipment of bottles has just arrived at the receiving dock. Each white container contains thousands of bottles.

The office workers are often called to the production areas when the need arises. Weathering kits are being assembled here.

Some Interesting Tidd Bitts…….

Their most popular hue **– Grimy Black.**

The composition of their solvent was a secret. I suspect a mixture of toluene and xylene.

Ask Doctor Duck

Bob writes:

As a follow up on your last "*Ask Doctor Duck*" in the May issue of the *RMR*, can you comment on the *Soundtraxx* DSD – B3TSLC sound decoder as compared to the *Soundtraxx Tsunami* – as installed in the *Bachmann* HO scale three-truck shay?

Doctor Duck:

This is a tall order, but here goes.

Shay # 1 - *Soundtraxx* DSD - B3TSLC Installed per Instructions in *Bachmann* Shay Tender and Speaker in the Coal Bunker

Vs.

Shay # 3 - *Soundtraxx Tsunami* TSU - 1000 plus NCE Z14SRP, with Large Speaker and the Tsunami in a Trailing Water Car

1. The trailing water car (Shay # 3) with the large speaker resulted in good sound representation, much better than the small *Soundtraxx* DSD - B3TSLC speaker in Shay # 1 coal bunker.

2. The front headlight did not work on Shay # 3. Tried a lot of things. Rear light works fine. The generator revs up, but no light. (Turned out the *NCE* Z14SRP was defective – replaced by factory. Works fine now.)

3. The bell sound is superior in the trailing car installation (Shay # 3). All sounds louder on Shay # 3.

4. On Shay # 3, I believe that the CVs that are functional are those on the *Tsunami* rather than the CVs on the *NCE* Z14SRP. I re-programmed many and they appear to be the ones on the *Tsunami.* For example, CV 116 adjusted the chuff rate, not the kick rate. CVs 1 through 4 are the same so hard to tell which decoder is reacting to the commands. CVs number 116 through 132 appear to be those on the *Tsunami* decoder.

5. Not sure what is gained by the addition of the NCE mobile decoder in Shay # 3 other than saving running 6 more wires up to the shay tender. Also, not sure all the functions that are available on the NCE Z14SRP decoder are being fully utilized.

6. The chuff sound and rate on the *Soundtraxx* TSU - 1000 is not that of a shay, as compared to the *Soundtraxx* DSD - B3TSLC decoder in Shay # 1. Also, had problems synchronizing the chuff rate to the movement of the # 3 Shay at very low speeds. Starting up, the wheels moved before the chuff.   Slowing sown, the chuff went on after the wheels had stopped.   This coordination did not appear to be a problem on the *Soundtraxx* DSD - B3TSLC Shay # 1 installation.

7. There is a distinctive hum (due to PWM) in the *Soundtraxx* DSD - B3TSLC decoder, and according the instructions, this <u>can only be minimized</u>, not eliminated. A real disadvantage to this decoder.

8. The two-wire connector on Shay # 3 worked out fine - easy to connect, small, well positioned, etc.

Conclusions:
1. Large speaker in the trailing car - **J** .

2. *Soundtraxx Tsunami* TSU - 1000 has light steam chuff sound, not shay chuff sound - **L**.

3.   Hum from the *Soundtraxx* DSD - B3TSLC is annoying - **L**.

Challenge:
How to get good quality sound and the right shay chuff sound in the *Bachmann* Three Truck HO Scale Shay

1. Find a way to eliminate the hum from the Soundtraxx DSD - B3TSLC + use a large speaker in trailing car. *(Ed. – See page 10.)*

2. Find a *Soundtraxx Tsunami* with the proper shay sound + use a large speaker in trailing car.

3. Find a decoder with good sound quality and proper shay sound that fits the *Bachmann* HO shay.

How to Eliminate the Hum
in the
Soundtraxx DSD-B3TSLC Decoder

(*Bachmann* HO Three-Truck Shay Installation)

by Dave Mitchell

A way to eliminate the buzzing noise from the *Soundtraxx* DSD-B3TSLC is to use it as a <u>sound only</u> decoder and use an NCE Z14 or N14 for the motor driver. This would give you a more prototypical sound with out the buzz.

To use the DSD as a DSX, you must replace the motor with a 150 ohm 1 watt resistor. This provides enough current draw to allow you to program the DSD without the motor. You can set the address different from the motor driver, and then consist the two together. This way, you can program each decoder separately using "program on the main" function.

This total would cost about the same as the *Soundtraxx Tsunami* alone.

Ed. – Dave Mitchell is the Superintendent of the Lakeshores Division of the Niagara Frontier Region of the National Model Railroad Association and an experienced decoder installer, especially in older locomotives.

Future Articles

Resin Casting

Modeling Keuka Lake - Hammondsport

PA Cabooses

Designing the Bath, NY Yards

Video Review – Photo Mural Backdrops

Tortoise Installation Made Easy

DCC Demystified

Building the Lakeview Winery

Coming Next Month ……

Jack Matsik's Car Loads

**Decoder Installation in
Older Locomotives – Part I**

The RIT Model Railroad – Part II

Matt Kovacic' s Oregon View Railroad

Train Events Calendar – Updated

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*Old Issues
of RMR*

Don't Forget to Visit

www.railroadmuseum.net

Web Site:
www.trainweb.org/rmr

Coming Train Events for 2006

Updated 4 - 27 - 2006

April 28 – 30   **Chatnam, Ontario, Canada – C**hatham Express: The NFR 2005 Spring Convention, Wheels Inn, 615 Richman Street. Clinics, layout tours, photo contest, raffle, banquet Info: 519-351-1100

April 29   **Sonora, CA –** 19th Annual Logging Modelers Convention.   Info: shayman@sti.net

April 29 – 30   **Ithaca, NY –** Cornell Railroad Historical Society, NRHS, Annual Finger Lakes Railfair and Train Show. Located at *The Field*, a sports complex 13 miles north of Ithaca on Route 34. Satruday 10:00am – 5:00pm, Sunday 10:00am - 4:00pm. Adults $5.00, chidren 3 – 12 $2.00, Family $10.00. Info: James Torgeson 716-439-2577.   Website: jst25@cornell.edu

April 29 – 30   **Brampton, Canada** - The Great British Train Show, Jim Archdekin Recreation Center, 292 Conestoga Dr., Brampton.   Contact: Mike Watts 905-683-0583

May 5 – 7   **Medina, NY** – *Day Out with Thomas*, **Medina Railroad Museum, 8:00am – 6:00pm www.railroadmusuem.net**

May 6   **Burlington, Ontario, Canada** - International Division, N.M.R.A. meet will consist of a layout tour in the Burlington area, co-hosted by the Burlington Model Railway Club, Hidden Valley Rd. Burlington. Registration at the home of Chuck Faist, 5209 Alton Rd., Burlington, Ont.   Phone 905-681-6274.

May 6 – 7   **Lindsay, Canada** - Model Transportation Expo, Lindsay & District Model Railroaders Victoria Park Armory, 210 Kent St. W., Lindsay

May 12 – 14   **Medina, NY –** *Day Out with Thomas*, **Medina Railroad Museum, 8:00am – 6:00pm www.railroadmuseum.net**

May 19 – 21   **Montreal, Canada** - 3rd Annual CARM Convention, Montreal 2006 McGill University. Go to www.caorm.org for full details. Celebrating 170 years of railroading in Canada.

May 27 – 28   **Midland, Canada** - Midland District Model Railroad Club Model Railroad Show, Midland Sports & Recreation Complex, King St., Midland.   Contact: Paul at okppmcd@msn.com

June 1 – 4   **Worcester, MA –** NMRA NER 2006 Spring Convention

July 1 –2   **Galeton, PA** – Bark Peelers' Convention, PA Lumber Museum

July 2 – 8   **Philadelphia, PA –** NMRA National Convention, Info: www.ij2006.org

Coming Train Events for 2006

Updated 4 - 27 - 2006

July 3 – 9   **Santa Clara, CA –** Garden Railway National Convention, Info: www.bagrs.org/convention/index.html

July 19 – 22   **Parsippany, NJ –** O Scale National Convention, Info: www.2006oscalenat.org

August 9 – 12   **Denver, CO -** N Scale National Convention, Info: www.nscalecollector.com/Denver_NSC.htm

August 12 – 13   **Gananoque, Canada** - Thousand Islands Model Railroad Show, Thousand Islands Model
                        Railroaders, Gananoque Recreation Center, 600 King St. E.
                        Contact: Bill 613-382-7575   or   Rick 613-382-3244

August 21 – 26   **Durango, CO** - 26th National Narrow Gauge Convention

September 10   **Buffalo, NY** – Buffalo Central Terminal First Train Show. Info: www.buffalocentralterminal.org

Sept. 30 – Oct. 1   **Brampton, Canada** - Brampton Model Railroad Show, Orangeville Shortline Model Railroad Club,
                        Brampton Fairgrounds 12942 410/Heartlake Rd., Brampton
                        Contact: Dave 705-435-4986   or   Carl 416-499-1498

October 14 – 15   **Bowmanville, Ontario, Canada –** 20th Annual Train Show, Bowmanville High School**,** 49
                        Liberty Street North.   Sat – 10:00 am - 4:30pm, Sun. 10 am - 4:00pm. Adults $5, Senior $4,
                        Family $10. Presented by the Soper Valley Model Railroad Association. Contact:
                        Ron Radcliffe 905-987-3099

October 20 – 22   **Parsippany, NY –** NMRA NER 2006 Fall Convention

November 4- 5   **Syracuse NY** - Train Show and Sale at NY Fairgrounds

November 12   **Batavia, NY** - The Great Batavia Train Show, Batavia Downs Gaming, 9:30am – 3:30pm.
                        Donation $5.00

December 9-10   **Rochester, NY –** The *New and Expanded* Two Day RIT Train Show and Sale,
                        Location – RIT Field House, many layouts displayed, largest train show in western NY.