

The 4th Division of the Pacific Northwest Region of the  
National Model Railroad Association Presents



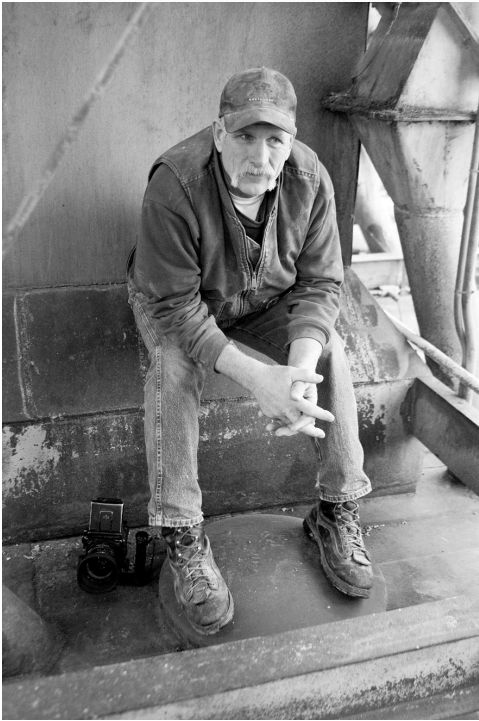
# Wednesday, November 9, 2011

**Location:** Summer Hill [165 SW 6th Avenue, Oak Harbor] meeting room, 2nd floor

**Time:** 7:00 PM

**Agenda:**

1. Welcome and items for the good of the order.
2. Show 'n Tell and Questions answered, plus some examples for Rolling Stock Contest.
3. Mr. Burwash and the Wellington Disaster



## “Vis Major: Railroad Men, an Act of God - White Death at Wellington”

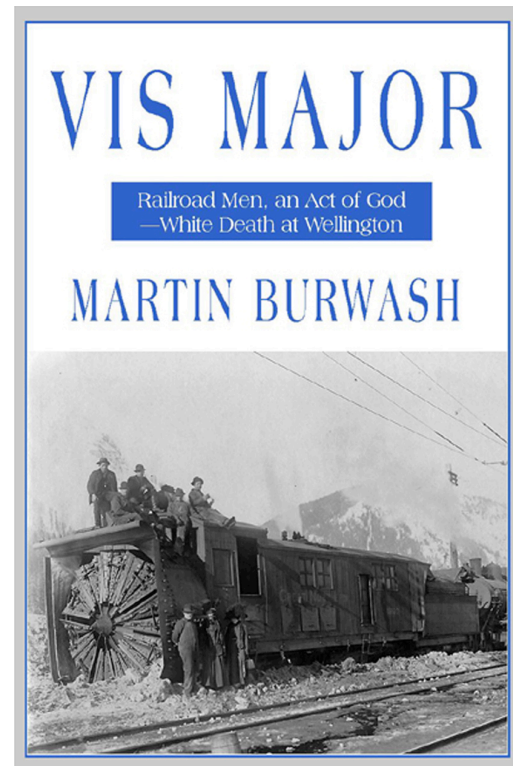
Martin Burwash will be our featured speaker for the November Clinic. He will discuss the 1910 Wellington Disaster from the railroader's perspective and read from parts of his book, *Vis Major*.

Martin works full time at a local feed mill and also farms about 60 acres of strawberries in Skagit County. He's a lifelong railfan and from that came his interest in the Wellington Disaster. He's published two previous titles, "Cascade Division" and "The Great Adventure." Each are books with his black and

white photos taken over the years of railroading in the Cascade Mountains.

*Vis Major* is his first attempt at fiction, although it being historical fiction, the book is very true to the timeline of what actually happened. Unlike other books written about Wellington, he tells the story strictly from the viewpoint of those who knew best what really happened, the railroaders. It will be interesting to compare this to the book *The White Cascade*.

**Mr. Burwash will be very happy to answer any and all questions you might have about America's worst avalanche disaster.**



The Skagit Valley & Whidbey NMRA Clinic						
Model Railroad Calendar for November 2011						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
						Anacortes & Fidalgo MRR Club 16th Annual Open House *
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
10AM - 4 PM 419 "Q" Ave Anacortes enter at North end of bldg.			Clinic at Summer Hill in Oak Harbor			Boeing EMRR Club Swap Meet at Kent Commons 9:30am - 4:00pm
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
						Great Train Expo at Puyallup Fairgrounds 10am - 4pm **
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
see: GreatTrainEx po.com						Jack Tingstad's Annual Model Railroad Open House 10 - 4
27	28	29	30			
Both Saturday & Sunday. A donation of food for the Food Bank pls.						

\* Coincident with the Anacortes club's open house will be Art Fournier's layout in the Summit Park Storage, 8853 Stevenson Road, Anacortes. He says the gate will be open, so follow the signs, to the left.

\*\* Also, on the 19th, in celebration of National Model Railroad Month, eight Tacoma-area modelers will host Open Houses on Saturday, November 19, 2011, from 10 AM to 4 PM. Layouts in N, HO and S scales will welcome you.

See the Grab Iron website for more information at [4dpnr.org/grabiron/?p=1633](http://4dpnr.org/grabiron/?p=1633)

## Last Month's Clinic:

Questions were flying fast and furious for about 90 minutes as people asked about track cleaning, ballasting, etc. Five "experts" were volunteered to act as a panel [Al Frasch, Dick Haines, Bill Harper, Jack Tingstad, Tom Hawkins] and had a good time sharing information. In fact, such a good time that it was decided that people can submit questions prior to each session and some or all will be answered at the beginning of each clinic! And, just in case you can't think of any questions or aspects of the hobby that need clarifying, I have listed a few that I thought of at the end of this newsletter.



This year we will have a new competition! This will be to build/modify a piece of rolling stock as per the 'rules' below. And, in case you think you can't do this, remember that one of the categories is "ready-to-run": take a car, weather it, add decals, add details like grab irons, and/or graffiti it!

## **Skagit Valley & Whidbey NMRA Group** **Piece of Rolling Stock Competition Rules**

### Introduction



The purpose of this competition is to build a piece of rolling stock according to the specifications below.

The entries will be judged by Di Voss [MMR, NMRA Standards and Conformance Department head,. Also, with his brother, the NMRANet development person] at our April meeting in 2012.

### Display of model

Material of your choice.

On rails or plain surface. Only the rolling stock will be judged.

### Rolling Stock

The rolling stock may be of any type [Revenue, non-revenue] or any scale and any prototype.

Piece must be weathered to some degree and decaled or hand lettered.

Commercial parts on scratch built rolling stock are permitted.

To win prize money Rolling Stock must have been built specifically for this competition.

Other older scratch built or craftsman kits that have not won prizes may be entered for illuminated Scrolls only.

### Additions

The judge will be asked to judge the rolling stock itself [see prize list].

Animals and people and other details may be added to rolling stock.



### Prize Categories

Best rolling stock in each category [kit or kit bashed, scratch built, craftsman kit, ready to run]. The builder will decide which category he/she wants to enter a particular model in.

Peoples choice irrespective of category.

Three Honorable Mentions.

### Prizes

All category winners will receive an Illuminated Scroll with their name and prize category and a monetary cash award.

Competitors can enter rolling stock in more than one category but only one entry in each category.

If a competitor receives more than one award he/she will receive only the illuminated scroll for the second award.



In the event of disputes the Competition Shepherd's and Judge's decisions are final!

Jack Tingstad, Competition Shepherd



# *The Miscellaneous Information Page*

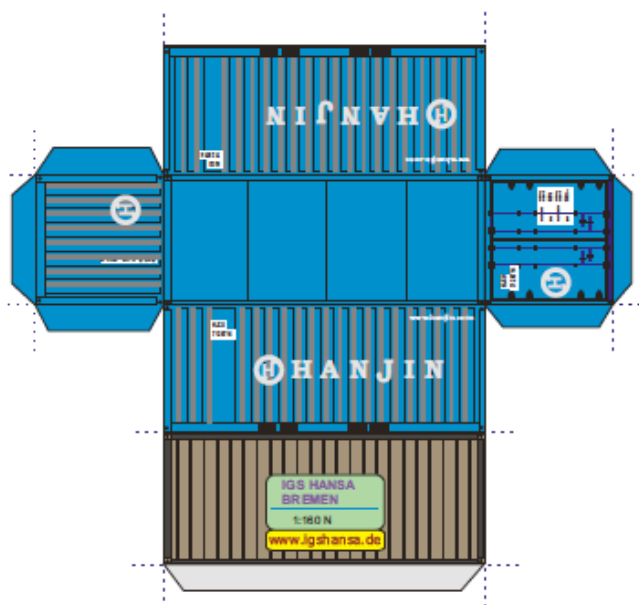


Plan on attending the PNR/PCR/NMRA Siskiyou Summit 2012 Joint Convention next May 2-5th in Medford, Oregon! This will be the largest convention within driving distance from our area until the National Convention comes to Portland in 2015!

See their webpage at: [www.pcrnmra.org/conv2012](http://www.pcrnmra.org/conv2012)

For more information!

Registration is \$45 until November 1st, \$55 after.



Need intermodal container boxes but don't want to pay about \$5 to \$10 each? Then go to either [IGSHANSA.de/igsorg.html](http://IGSHANSA.de/igsorg.html) and choose 'Download' on the left, or [home.wanadoo.nl/schatborn](http://home.wanadoo.nl/schatborn) for some printable containers that can be printed on card stock, folded and glued into very nice looking containers - for just the cost of paper!!

This is just one of dozens that can be printed to your scale.

## **Show and Tell is coming to our clinics that meet at Summer Hill!!**

Bring a model, bring that new tool that you discovered, show how one can use an old tool for new uses, show how you did a particular modeling 'thing', bring pictures of your progress. Maybe you found a good new supplier or maybe one that people need to stay away from. Whatever you wish to share, we would love to see/hear about it!!

## ***The Swap Table Will Return in January!!***

Again in January, bring anything that you wish to sell/trade/give away to the Summer Hill clinic side room prior to the clinic. Please have the name of the seller/donor on the items along with a price.

*If you have any information, good websites, things for sale of a model railroad nature or whatever, send me a note and I will add it to this page in the future editions as space permits.*



# Local Modeling Progress

Ever wonder how to build a mountain? Here Dick Haines shows us along the way from benchwork to mountain.



With a wooden skeleton at the spine (along the top crest) and plywood ribs in place to support the crinkled

aluminum window screen, a soupy mix of Structo-lite plaster is used with clothes dryer anti-static sheets that conform well to the ravines, etc.



This creates a mountain with a removable hole, and lid, just ready for scenic materials!

Well done, and thanks for sharing!





## More Local Modeling Progress

From Susan & Phil Gonzales, their *Eastern Sierra Pacific* continues to progress towards completion as can be seen in the pictures below. Phil says that they should be



close to having operation sessions this winter, now that his work level is lessening - should be fun! Besides, with all that oil being brought up out of the ground, they will be rich and can use all their time to finish up the layout!

And, if you need any help superdetailing a locomotive, just ask Rich Blake as seen here. And, I bet he could even help show you how to detail a piece of rolling stock for this year's competition!



# Skagit Valley & Whidbey NMRA Clinic Schedule 2011/2012

Notes: All regular meetings are held at the Summer Hill Community in Oak Harbor from September through June on the dates shown starting at 7:00pm or as otherwise announced.

NMRA Membership is encouraged, but not a requirement for attendance.

DATE	COORDINATOR	SUBJECT	PRESENTER
<del>09.14.11</del>	<del>Jim Tartas</del>	<del>Visit to Dr. Nick Muff's KCS Layout</del>	<del>Nick Muff</del>
<del>10.12.11</del>	<del>Rich Thom</del>	<del>Q &amp; A Panel of Experts.</del>	<del>5 Experts !</del>
<b>11.09.11</b>	<b>Al Frasch</b>	<b>Wellington Disaster - Vis Major</b>	<b>Martin Burwash</b>
12.14.11	John White	Wassail and Other Delights.	John White
01.11.12	Rich Blake	Virtual RR [Track Planning]	Rich Blake
02.8.12	John White	A View from the Head End on Amtrak in the Pacific Northwest	Tim Miller
03.14.12	Rich Thom	Steam from the Cape to Victoria Falls	Rich Thom
04.11.12	John White	The Reality and Model of the Everett & Monte Cristo + Competition Judging	Di Voss
05.09.12	Al Frasch	How to Drive a Steam Locomotive	Barry Anderson
06.13.12	G & V Jones	How to Airbrush. In and o/s G & V Jones Garage	Dave Clarke

## Back up Offerings

Local N Scale Manufacturer. Gold Medal Models [Loren Perry]

Electronics. [Harper/Mann/Jones ?]

Back Drop Painting. [Who ?]

## Extreme Emergency Reserve. [ In case of last minute presenter cancelation].

A Ride on the Orient Express- Slide Show [John White]

## Volunteers or Press Ganged

NMRA Liaison and Reportage	Gordon Garnhart
Keeper of the Purse [aka the Bucket]	Jack Tingstad
Layout Design Aficionado	Tom Hawkins
The DCC Man	John Mann
Newsletters and Announcement Flyers	Al Frasch
Refreshments	Phil & Susan Gonzales
Keeper of the Rolls[aka the Membership Roster]	Rich Thom
Librarian	Susan Gonzales
Clean-up Artists	Vera & Gordon Jones
The Tin Can Gaffers	Curt and Iver Johnson
Competition Shepherd	Steve Jaffray
Meeting Co-ordinator	John White

## Appendix

# A few topics that might be of interest as far as design and construction of a layout

The items below are listed in no particular order under a loose categorization and are by no means meant to be exhaustive of all possible issues. These are items/concerns that should be answered before/during the construction of any layout. For instance, the amount of funds available will have a great impact on the size and detail of any layout. The choice of Prototype or Freelance must be made in order to decide on era, rolling stock, locomotives, etc. There will be operational differences using DC vs DCC. And so on. . . . .

For many layout owners, some of these are things which were decided on almost after-the-fact, sometimes with less than satisfactory results. Essentially, the earlier that decisions can be made on these kinds of topics, the less 'remodeling' one has to do later.

### Personal issues:

- Amount of funds available
- Amount of time available
- Layout for self or family or group
- DIY or invite group help or have custom builder do it
- Skills in carpentry, electrical, etc
- Ergonomic: Physical restrictions now or in the future
- Eyesight and dexterity levels
- Pet access or lack of
- Child access and viewing/running trains: anticipate small children frequently or occasionally?

### Layout issues:

- Round-n-round or diorama or operations
- Layout as place to display trains/structures vs railfanning vs operations
- Superdetailed or 'good enough'
- If your layout is for operations will crews handle the equipment? Or "hands off"?
- Dense industry or country run and what percentage of each
- Mountains or flat country and what percentage of each
- Class 1 or shortline
- Switching vs mainline running and what percentage of each
- Urban switching or rural locals
- Are there some equipment that just must run such as big steam, 85' passenger cars, etc
- Ratio of track area to scenery
- Narrow gauge or standard
- Scale: T [1:450], Z [1:220], N [1:160], TT [1:120], HO [1:87], S [1:64], O [1:48], F [1:20.3] or G [various], most allowing n2, n30, n3 gauge variants
- Length of time to 'completion' beware the "I've lost interest" effect: better to fully complete, including scenery, your RR in smaller sections?
- Layout planning via pen/pencil vs computer layout programs vs just start laying track

### Physical layout issues:

- How much "management" allowed space dedicated to layout or must co-exist
- Design specifically for disabled access - cost considerations
- Height(s) of track/benchwork
- Shelf vs round the room vs free standing
- Multi-level or single level
- Will height require operators to stand on benches, stools or steps
- Duck unders allowed vs lift outs vs nod unders
- Space for layout - big enough for what you want to do?
- Location of layout [attic vs basement vs room in house vs garage vs free standing building]
- Windows, doors or appliances to work around
- Height of room (or more generally, headroom issues, including light fixtures, valences etc.)
- Layout space 'finished' before construction?



- Temperature, humidity and fresh air control [windows, AC, vents]
- Aisle widths
- If operations oriented, crew space and amenities allowed for
- Finish look via drapery, curtain, paneling or ?
- Fascia type and color and material
- Safety issues: egress, handrails on stairs, fire extinguishers, smoke alarms, emergency lights, etc.

### Layout railroad concept:

- Prototype vs Freelanced vs combination of these [protofreelanced]
- Era - early steam, high point of steam, transition era or modern diesel
- Some eras have fewer kits or R-to-R available, require more scratch-building
- Location to emulate, if any
- A particular prototype railroad vs fictional story
- Key prototype locations, industries or track to include - how true to prototype
- Traffic types that are to be simulated [logging, coal, IM, etc]
- Length of trains [usual and maximum]
- Length of cars to run [36' up to 85'+]
- Number of working yards vs staging
- Single track vs double mains
- Flat terrain vs various track grades
- If multi-deck, via gradual rise vs helix vs switchbacks
- Number of sidings
- Length of sidings
- If staging, size of staging area
- Point-to-point vs some form of a circle or dog-bone
- Trains pass once through scene or more than once
- Distance between towns [okay for train to be in two towns at once?]
- Linear order of towns vs 'spaghetti bowl' style
- Visible vs hidden staging
- Large, 'front of layout' industries or ones just hinted at
- Model railroad photography to be allowed for
- Scenery vs more track, i.e. what ratio
- Number of trains to run at one time will effect power needs

### Operating the layout:

- One person or operations crew
- Formal vs casual
- TT&TO, CTC, TWC etc
- Strictly prototype recreation vs getting the 'flavor'
- Passenger vs freight - what percentage of each
- Amount of switching vs run throughs
- Operations built around formal crew titles or 'free flowing'
- Communication: phone network for crew use vs radios vs 'hey you over there'
- Layout design to avoid "High-density" areas--usually occurring on multilevel layouts--where crew members are all bunched up within a few feet of each other

### Building the layout:

- Portable, reusable or permanent [might be important for the "senior" modeler who might be faced with moving for a variety of reasons]
- Minimum radius allowed
- Turnout sizes to use
- Hand-laid vs commercial components
- Manufacturer of track [Atlas, Micro engineering, Peco, etc]
- Code of track [N:40 vs 55 vs 80, HO:55 vs 83 vs 100, etc]
- DC vs DCC
- Separate electrical circuits in room for lights, general power outlets, layout power, etc
- Power requirements according to number of locos on layout
- Buss wire size
- Feeder wire sizes
- Solder feeders and other wires or use suitcase connectors
- Power busses [for train control, turnout control, signals, lights, interior lighting, etc]
- Open benchwork, L-girder with risers, platform style with foam board, etc
- Open lighting or covered via fascia and/or light panels
- Lighting via Incandescent, Fluorescent, CFL or LED and heat issues of each
- Day, night effects: dimmers, sunrise/sunset simulations, changing color temperature of lighting as simulated day progresses
- Overall lighting vs spot lighting
- The 'museum' look vs more open lighting

- Room temperature control as a function of quantity and type of lighting that you use and physical location of the layout
- Skirting and floor coverings
- Reach in widths of benchwork
- Location of detailed, fragile buildings near the front edge of the layout (the “oops” issue)
- Location of tracks very close to the layout edge (possible need for plexiglass barriers etc.)
- Liftouts needed?
- Machine vs mechanical vs hand thrown switches
- What glues are needed for different materials
- Glue down track or let ballast do the holding
- Ballast via real rocks materials vs Woodland Scenics’ walnut shells material
- Superelevation of curves
- Solder track joiners, where and how often
- Track feeders every ??? feet or every piece
- Track feeders soldered to outside of rail vs under rail vs on joiner
- Build all at once vs stages of layout building and bringing on line for operations part at a time

#### Scenery issues:

- Where are you trying to replicate
- What time of year
- Ratio of open scenery vs forest vs mountains
- Floor to ceiling scenery or benchtop to ceiling scenery or low level scenery
- Trees to be ‘specimen’ trees or good enough
- Height of trees
- Quantity of trees
- Scratch building structures vs kits vs fine scale models vs ‘buy and plant’
- Perspective and forced perspective considerations--reduced-scale buildings, vehicles etc. in layout background
- Mountains/hills: use cardboard web with plaster vs foamboard stacked and formed vs wire screen and plaster
- Plaster cloth vs plaster of paris coated substrate vs new lightweight materials
- Rock molds using plaster of paris vs hydrocal vs scultamold vs ???
- Water via envirotex vs water products vs ???

#### Backdrop issues:

- Height of backdrop
- Height of any backdrop mountains, hills, etc above the benchwork level
- Painted vs photos
- DIY vs commercial backdrop pictures
- Backdrop material: masonite vs styrene vs metal vs vinyl flooring
- Clouds vs blue sky and the relationship to lighting scheme

#### Staging issues:

- Stub end vs through or loop tracks
- How many staging tracks are enough [hint: never enough]
- Use of cassette or car-ferry
- Visible vs hidden [another hint: not hidden unless you must]
- Fiddle yard vs pre-set for operations

The list above was compiled by Al Frasch with assistance from Rich Thom and Jack Tingstad