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Pip Critten  
Writes...

## Chairman's Chat & Editorial

In the last edition of SoCo News I was far too lazy to write my own editorial so got Artificial Intelligence to write it for me. It even created the pictures used to illustrate the article.

In this edition I am taking a look at "Assisted" editing. You make all the decisions and let the software take care of some of the boring bits, leaving you to be creative.

In the latest Beta version of Premiere Pro, Adobe's video editing programme, there is a new facility, Text Based Editing, that can significantly speed up editing.

I can see that it would be ideal for compiling a quick rough edit of an interview. Imagine you have someone talking to camera for several minutes and you need to cut out all the fluffs, ums and ers.

In the past we would need to play the clip through to find the parts to remove. Or you were searching for the bit when they talk about a specific thing. This could take a while to find and select.

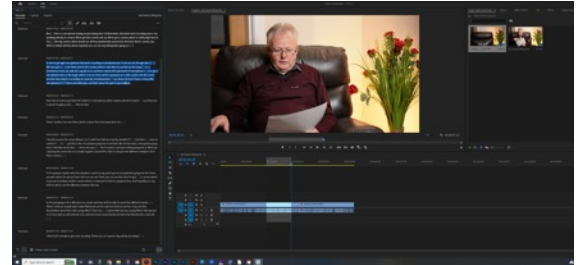
Now, within the import footage area you can tell Premiere to automatically transcribe the audio into text for you. It is able to identify more than one speaker too.

In the left hand area you will see that it has transcribed the spoken word into text. It's not yet perfect but it does get the vast majority correct and you can easily edit the transcript to make corrections if needed. It also identifies pauses and you can search for text too.

Now here comes the clever bit. You can select text in the left hand panel and delete it and it automatically ripples deletes the corresponding footage from the time line. As you select text it automatically moves to the right

place in the time line and as you move the play head it shows you the text that matches it. Very clever.

So, imagine trying to find the part in a talking head shot where they mention a particular thing. Finding it up to now would involve listening to the whole clip. Now you simply search, select and delete and it cuts out the corresponding video footage from the timeline.



If you have a two camera shoot you can transcribe them both, synchronise on the time line and the programme will edit them both together.

With such a great start you may only have to switch between the cameras or find B Roll footage to cover jump cuts. So, not Artificial Intelligence doing it for you but Intelligence assisting you to work quicker and more efficiently.

There is also the added bonus that you now have an accurate transcript that can be automated into sub title captions.

What will they think of next?

Keep Smiling, Pip

[pipcritten@googlemail.com](mailto:pipcritten@googlemail.com)



Hello, my name is Andrew Panton. I am a film maker based near Bristol.

I spent four years working with the late George "Johnny" Johnson to create a film called Attack on Sorpe Dam which features Johnny's complete Dambusters story. Johnny did see the film last year before he passed away and was very happy with it. We agreed it would be released around the time of the Dambusters Operation 80th anniversary in May.



Johnny provides a first hand account of his story from joining 617 squadron to the attack on the Sorpe dam and the devastating aftermath of the Dambusters operation

on May 16/17 1943. The film is unique in terms of being the only film of its kind narrated entirely by a Dambusters veteran telling the story in his own words, exactly as it happened.

The UK premiere of the film will be on Saturday May 13th at the IMAX screen auditorium of the Bristol Aquarium.

More information about the film can be found at the film website:

[attackonsorpedam.com](http://attackonsorpedam.com)

The trailer is available at:

<https://vimeo.com/789137752>

Tickets for the UK film premiere on Saturday May 13th are available at:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/attack-on-sorpe-dam-premiere-george-johnny-johnsons-dambusters-story-tickets-501293180397>

I was hoping you may be able to help raise awareness of the film premiere as I expect there may be people in your club interested to see the film.

Best regards,

Andrew Panton (Film Director Attack on Sorpe Dam)



# Let's film the family gathering

Tom Hardwick

Tom's top tips for filming family events

How about this? There's a family reunion / big birthday gathering coming up, and distant relatives can't be there. Hey, let's film it, for such an occasion means you'll have a sure-fire audience for such movies. The absent sibling will love it and the great-grandparents will remember all their children's children's children.

### Here's a quick rundown of ideas.

Little interviews with grandchildren might be fun for Nana's birthday, somewhat away from the noise. The younger the child, the more surprising the results I find. Get them to introduce themselves, too.



Film the kids at play to show the day wasn't just boring adults



Close-ups add clout; are always appreciated yet often forgotten

You can't film too much, and if the camera's always in your hand, always ready, the more it, and you, will be accepted (I hesitate to say ignored).



It's the kids that change the most as the years roll by, so capture them now

With a host of cameras at my disposal I'd still use my diminutive and unobtrusive Panasonic SD900. I'd use the sidescreen and film from the waist. I'd get establishing shots showing everyone in the garden, move with the camera, stick to wideangle to get the best close-up audio. I'd get *close-ups and details*, so useful on the edit bench later.

### So; some thoughts for you.

Don't encumber the camera with any external mics or lights or extra lenses; keep it as inconspicuous as possible. Make filming people fun - compliment people at all times, show them snippets on the sidescreen. Have spare batteries and SD cards at the ready. Be in filming mode rather than partying mode. And be in happy mode, as this is *contagious*.

### Think ahead. Plan ahead.

If a birthday cake is to appear, be ready, and film the candles being lit. Be in the right position, watching the recipient's face. Start filming way before the gang start singing.

Remember everything filmed today will appreciate in value as the years roll by.



Keep a lookout, for there will be moments to grab when you're all but invisible

### Editing

Different edits can be made for different people. Stills from the (25 different pics/sec) timeline make great portraits to be sent to one and all on social media. I've done this *lots*, and it makes you look like a wonderful photographer having captured exactly the right moment in time.

Film the babies and children the most, as they change the most. Film the oldies as they might well not be here tomorrow. Get someone to film you tucking into the champagne to show you were part of the celebration.



There'll be lots of opportunities to grab video of photo shoots in action



Tom continues ....



Have you camcorder ever-ready to catch the laughter



Don't forget to film the table decorations, the flowers, presents and candles



Always worth capturing the hard work of the chef and the caterers, and record the delight on the faces of the hungry guests

**Pick your location**

Have the camera steadied by a table, the grass, even a mini tripod, and you can 'pick people off' in telephoto. Great montages to music can be assembled from this, and you get faces as they really are, unchanged by having a camera pointing at them.

If there's entertainment, make sure you capture it. Film an entire music piece and use the music to compliment grabbed faces on the timeline. Film the magician and the kids' reactions.



Capture the people filming the cake cutting, as well as the cake cutting itself



Forego the champagne, but catch the action



Good to film the speaker, but get the audience reaction too

**Keep filming**

Forego the cake to get shots of the cake. Listen, is there to be a little speech? A present opening? Is there a surprise going to happen that you need to know about beforehand? Have eyes in the back of your head, and above all, keep filming.

It can all be summed up by saying this. To get the best results you've got to be there, recording the event for posterity, knowing that **this day will never come again**. You must be alert to the changes, plan ahead, be in the right place at the right time.

[tomrhardwick@gmail.com](mailto:tomrhardwick@gmail.com)



## Amateur Oscars 2022

Melvyn Dover

It's time for Melv's  
Amateur Oscar  
Night

Dust off your tiaras, put on your best bib and tucker, hire a limo and step onto the red carpet, for it's time for Melv's Amateur Oscar Night: award-winning people and films specially selected from a special selection of people and amateur films (as Ernie Wise might have said, "from films what I have seen".)

Don't get carried away too much. Winners won't receive a gold statuette, or any money, certificate etc, but on the other hand they don't have to make a speech thanking their mums either.

The Best Actor Award in the SoCo regional competition this year was won by **Candice Palladino**, who played 'Missy' in *Blink*, a film by **Geoff Harmer** and a four star winner at this year's BIAFF. I've seen several of Geoff Harmer's films online, going back to *Karen's Room*. He also contributed to *A Darker Shade of Red*, a stylish full length thriller, which I enjoyed.

He seems to have a knack of drawing out superb performances from his cast. I'm pleased that the competition recognises good acting in this way because not all amateur competitions seem to.



Now I do like to watch comedy, so the Award for the Best Film-making Group goes to (da dah..!) **XDL films**. I enjoy immensely their output and seek out new films of theirs when I spot them online. Their comedies make me laugh, with fine scripting often co-written by Brian Saberton, the very same who writes a column for the IAC magazine. It seems Scotland's output is high and XDL is part of that.

XDL films often feature a couple called George (**Willie Morrison**) and Doris (**Margaret Jarvie**), with neighbour-niece Ruth (**Helen McAleer**) providing catalytic interference on George and Doris's daily lives. And incidentally disrupting their digestive biscuit eating. The team feature in several films available online. Witness how George and Doris deal with crooks and scammers: burglars raiding their shed, a rogue antique dealer for example, or trying to work out their family tree. And Ruth is quite capable of phoning to ask if it's okay to come round, when she's already standing on the doorstep as Doris answers the doorbell before the call has finished.

**Helen McAleer** excels as one of the walkers in (*The Secret of*) *The Hidden Glen*, which exhibits beautiful timing with again a superb script. Joining her antics are **Bill Malone** and **Linda Gauthier**: A film worth seeking out.

### Am I allowed to award more Best Actor awards?

I'd like to give one to **Lauren Cornelius**. I first saw her in *Good Morning Mr Kenley* in which she played a hotel receptionist. She repeats a super performance in *Euthimmersia*, in which she plays a character who signs her life away to a company which specialises in making death a positive experience, only to change her mind once the process has started. Like actors in the XDL films mentioned above, she exhibits a great confidence on screen and is comfortable and natural in the parts she plays. And like with XDL I suspect there's a good director behind the scenes too.

I still recognise that acting on film needs plenty of reacting, and editing plays a part too. A fine example is *The Immorality Code* by **Solent Movie Makers**, a full ninety minute feature, with a story by **Howard Blake** which stars **James Gould**, **Kate Robbins**, and **Anthony Knight**, among others. It's a thriller which proved capable of keeping my attention and I can certainly appreciate the effort involved in making it. Well worth one of my Oscars.

Finally, a gong goes to **Bradford Movie Makers**, for all they've achieved in their long history, and especially of course for their recent nationwide release *A Bunch of Amateurs*. Many amateurs picked up their fist movie camera due to their love of cinema, so Bradford can feel very proud of their film 'going the other way'. Wendy Ide of *The Guardian* described it a 'a little gem'.

Must go. By the time you read this **BIAFF '23** will have produced more award winners...

Happy Filming

Melvyn Dover



# Intermission

To Whom It May Concern

With the duration of movies becoming ever longer, it surely becomes an act of kindness to re-introduce intermissions to a movie, in order to allow patrons to restore a degree of comfort, without disturbing people unnecessarily. Many of your patrons are elderly, and few have cast iron constitutions.

The elderly have to virtually plan to see a long movie; I forego my regular cup of coffee, to avoid making a dash to the loo at an interesting point in the movie, resulting in my losing continuity.

To include an Intermission break in the middle of a 3 hour long movie would be a Win Win for everyone. Patrons would be able to have their early coffee and avoid a dash to a toilet, cinema owners would benefit financially by selling extra items from the Candy Bar and possibly another coffee, especially as many Patrons plan in advance. Intermissions also give breaks to projectionist staff, plus the opportunity to fix or adjust something or maybe enjoy a cuppa.

I recently viewed Black Panther: Wakanda Forever at the local Cinema. From the commencement of the Movie Trailers and Commercials, to the final roll of the credits, patrons are obliged to remain seated for 3 hours ... and as

this was a 'Marvel Movie', patrons must remain until the very end, they being keen to watch any teaser which may appear, promoting the next 'Marvel Movie'.



Worldwide, film studios are being built everywhere, even on tiny islands like the Isle of Wight, UK. Film entertainment is growing and our respective cinema managements would be quietly blessed should they cater for our needs.

May it be requested that a 10 minute INTERMISSION be included, as a trial? I'm sure it would be appreciated.

Many thanks.

Gaz.

Gary Peterson  
Editor of  
Australian  
Movie Maker

Puts out a tongue  
in cheek plea to the  
cinemas



TFMC members had another chance to practise and improve their skills at the face to face meeting at Bitton house on Monday 3rd April during a practical green screen evening.

Several scripts were filmed in front of the specially lit green cloth ready for pre-shot backgrounds to be inserted during editing. Although small in number we had a great time practising lighting and filming short sketches against a green screen.

Chairman Ivan had filmed a few possible background shots to be keyed in and these were viewed from his computer. The various backgrounds were all seen to be lit the same way – ie overcast but not dull. We discussed the lighting of the scenes to try to recreate the same lighting with the equipment brought along by Pip, Neil, Alec and Keith.

After the green screen and lights were set up (Alec had brought his green screen frame) and the lights were set to everyone's satisfaction we then filmed two sketches.

The first, written by Alec, was of two people on a railway station and the second, written by Ivan, was a follow-up to a sketch featured in our recent club film "The Bench" and was a meeting of two "spies".

These were practised and filmed a number of times so that all members who brought along cameras could have a go at filming them.

TFMC has recently been notified and is delighted to announce that, having entered two club films into the latest BIAFF competition, "The Bench (a series of events)" and "Unquiet Spirit" each has gained a Three Star award.

Whilst pleased with the results, they are almost secondary to the fun that members had in making them, the sharing of knowledge and the development of closer ties and friendships between everyone involved.

Congratulations goes to other club members on their individual successes:-

**Suzie Topolska**, whose film "The Adventures of Cowboy Kale" achieved a Five Star rating.

**Keith Rossiter** whose film "Trogir - City of Dragons" was awarded a wo Star rating.

**Geoff Hodgkinson** whose film "The Ups and Downs of Prison Life" was awarded a Two Star rating.

Anyone is welcome to attend both the Zoom and face to face meetings, whatever your expertise and wherever you live. A limited number of "visitor" places are available for the zoom meetings which can be "booked" via the website contact details. Feel free to visit and if you find that it isn't for you, we shall not be offended if you leave early.

Please note that there is now a £1 charge for evening parking at Bitton House.

Both the TFMC website and Facebook page are normally updated regularly during the season.

<http://www.teignfilmmakersclub.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/tfmcadmin>



Ian Simpson

Wollongong  
Camera Club Movie  
Makers,  
Australia

# Movies of Their Times - Part One

## Part One: The Decline of Film

In the January-February issue of *FILM COMMENT* in 2019 there was a reproduction of a lecture by the American painter and film writer, Manny Farber. This lecture had occurred some 40 years earlier, but this wasn't the intriguing bit. Rather, it was the concept that Farber had presented that caught my eye and started me thinking whether this concept could be applied to our movies.

What Farber had said was that when we view commercial movies made in past decades, we should review them in their historical context. Or in his own words:

*"... I think as a movie moves back in time—I think it's impossible for a movie not to be its period—it accumulates all the artefacts of its period."*

*"I'm interested in concrete facts that indicate the period and the period indicates the film."*

*".... And I think the period repeats, from film to film."*

In his lecture, Farber had chosen two decades to illustrate his concept; the 1930's and the 1970's. In an attempt to develop this concept for amateur movies, I have also chosen two decades to compare; the 1980's and the 2010's. Both were periods of disruptive change in our hobby, both saw well established equipment and processes disappear, both saw the underdog become the top dog.

### The 1980's

The decade of the 80's in Australia has been called: "a decade of thrills and spills", "a decade of tectonic shifts," and "the decade that transformed Australia." For Australian movie makers and Cine Clubs it was also a decade of transformation and tectonic shifts. The new kid on the block was video. The magnitude of the effect that the introduction of video had on the cine market can be seen in the following table that gives the number of cameras of each type listed in the annual *Australian Photography Photo-Directory*.

Year	Number Listed Video Cameras	Number Listed Super 8 Silent Cameras	Number Listed Super 8 Sound Cameras	Number Listed 16mm Cameras
1980	8 (separate camera— recorder units)	37	49	7
1986	12 (camcorders)	2	8	0

The decline in the number of cine cameras listed in 1986 indicates where manufacturers thought the market was heading and where they should put their R&D dollars.

To examine the effects of this "tectonic" shift on the movies amateurs made, I will consider the two factors Peter Norris mentioned in 1989, of the movie making in the 1960s, the *"conservatism and technical limitations inherent in film making."* Little had changed from the 1960s to the 1980s as far as cine movie making was concerned.

Source	Percentage Documentary	Percentage Travelogue	Percentage Fiction	Percentage Experimental
Australian International Amateur Widescreen Film Festival 1984—1990	33	50	14	3
Top of the Clubs 1987	37.5	25	37.5	
WMM—1986—1987	12	41	47	
SAACS Australia Wide Annual Film Competition 1987	30	22	22	26*

\* General

## The Types of Movies We Made

Assessing old records, I came up with the above table of the types of movies amateurs made. Although it could be debated what makes a documentary film versus a travelogue, the overall conclusion is that over 50% of amateur films for public screening and competitions were non-fictional; the capturing of live events.

Aside from the types of movies made, how did *"conservatism and technical limitations"* influence the structure of amateur movies? The majority of cine cameras used in the 1980's were, so called, silent cameras; cameras that only captured images, no sound. If you wanted to capture live sound whilst you were filming, you used a separate tape recorder or a sound camera loaded with pre-stripped film.

### Slow Pace and Overlong Movies

When viewing 1980's amateur family and travelogue films from today's perspective, common conclusions are that they are slow in pace and overlong. The reason for this is more complex than simply blaming the high cost of film and hence the need to include as much of this precious footage in the final film.

In the 1980's home entertainment consisted of free-to-air TV and pre-recorded video tapes—by mid-1988 60% of households had a video recorder. Attention spans and concentration were longer than as one had to view a small TV screen of 18" to 25". Also the only distraction was a landline phone. So family members and friends were more tolerant of these slower paced, longer films.



The very manual, time consuming editing process and the fact you were cutting up your only record of your family activity or holiday, meant you were conservative in your editing decisions. Each cement splice meant a loss of frames, so you couldn't "undo" your editing decision. Also a poorly made splice would "clunk" through the projector and jump on the screen, not a good look during a film presentation.

### Sound Simplicity

Another feature of 1980s amateur films, in general, is the simplicity of the sound tracks. For family events and travelogues this was generally narration over music. Any sound effects had to be sourced from LPs or pre-recorded cassette tapes, if you had them. The soundtrack was created after the film's visuals were edited and required either a tape recorder synchronised to the projector or a sound projector. Either way, sound was normally mono.

In the case of the stereo recorder, one track was for narration and the other for music, whilst for striped films the main stripe was either the sound track or it was

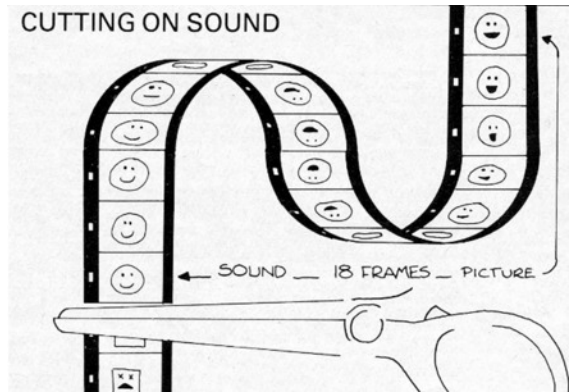
Ian continues ...

assisted by also recording on the balance stripe. The quality of the sound from striped films was generally poorer than that of tape, an observation that was readily noticed with the arrival of Hi-Fi VCRs.



When films shot silent wanted to include lip-sync scenes, these scenes were shot to disguise any poor miming—shot as a long shot, shot the character in profile or shot the character with something disguising lip movement, such as a phone. Where the character was miming to pre-recorded words, then it was down to the skill of the actor.

So called double system sound recording was available at great expense but it further complicated the editing process. Attempts to sync wild tape recordings to film were very hit and miss. With a Super 8 sound camera you could achieve lip-sync, but that introduced problems



during both filming and editing. The sound recording head in the camera was displaced 18 frames from the picture gate. So, to make editing of pre-striped film easier, during shooting the actor was asked to “react” for the first second before uttering the required lines. At times this could effect the pace of a conversation or heated argument.

#### Get it all in

In spite of the pleading of writers, such as Ivan Watson in the UK magazine *Movie Maker*, to shoot more closeups in your films, generally amateur films were filled with wide angle shots. Perhaps this was because, shooting wild, they didn't want to miss any of the action, or because of the conservatism that had always been present in amateur photography - not to go too close.

Ian Simpson



## Gloucester Film Makers

Since my last report we have been busy at our club. Thanks to Paula and Derek Clare

we had a most interesting evening on March 13th when we had a green screen night. Also our members had an opportunity to test their skills on the teleprompter. Many did and we had a great evening.

We hosted the 56th Annual Gloucester Inter Club Film Competition on March 18th. Congratulations to the Tewkesbury club who won the Ray Toleman Trophy for Best Film with “The Last Train”. They also won The Cheltenham Videomakers’ Trophy for Best Cinematography with their film “Gloucester Cathedral Tower”. Bristol with “Action at Ashton Court” claimed The Vale Sound Trophy.

Our film “Staycation” was placed as the second Best Film.

Many thanks to the members of the Teign Film and Video Makers club who had to judge the ten films entered.

With the technical skills of Derek and Paula Clare, plus Chris Wheatley, we had them on screen to hear their comments and award recommendations.

April 3rd saw five entries in our Documentary Competition which was won by Chris Byrne with her film “The Laxey Wheel”. After the Competition members showed some of their earlier works which included Berlin and Switzerland in the 1960s plus some Lego animation.

Looking ahead to May 8th the Holiday/Travelogue Competition will take place.

For further information on our club please see our website which is; [www.gloucesterfilmmakers.org.uk](http://www.gloucesterfilmmakers.org.uk)

John Greene





# The Chocolate Soldier Competition

Formally known as 'The West Midlands Amateur Film Festival'

Hosted by 'Virtual Video Group'

## Competition Rules 2023

1. The host club is the 'Virtual Video Group'. The VVG contact is Ian Bennett [yannybav@gmail.com](mailto:yannybav@gmail.com)
2. The competition is open to all clubs and societies in the U.K.
3. The competition will normally be held annually during November.  
The 'Virtual Video Group' will arrange the date and advertise as appropriate.
4. This is an Open Competition and there is no set theme.
5. The entry should be the work of the competing club, society or their members and must not have been previously entered into this competition.
6. Maximum running time of 10 minutes including titles and credits.
7. Only one entry is allowed from each club or society.
8. Entries should be submitted via the 'You Tube' platform. See link to the entry form: <https://forms.gle/R8N5uRommDqSizGs8> Please paste into your browser.  
All details must be notified to the 'Virtual Video Group' on the entry form three weeks before the competition.
9. In the event of over subscription 'Virtual Video Group' reserve the right to pre-select entries.
10. There is no entry fee for this event.
11. Judging will take place on the evening of the competition.  
The winners will be decided by an audience vote.
12. Third second and first placed winners will receive a certificate which will include a watermarked digital version of the trophy.
13. It is up to individual clubs to ensure that all copyright is obtained.

The 'Virtual Video Group' shall not be held responsible for any infringement of any current copyright law.



## Being a Film/Video Club Chairman

Ivan Andrews

Reveals what it's like to be the club chairman of Teign Film Makers Club

When I became chairman of the Teign Film Makers Club (TFMC) approximately 8 years ago or so, it was sold to me as quite an easy job. There are three committee meetings per year and apart from chairing those meetings and the AGM all I had to do was stand up and welcome everyone to the fortnightly meetings we held at Bitton House at the time. I soon found out there was a bit more to it than that.

### The purpose of clubs and the chairman's role

I suppose the first thing I learned was that being the chair of a film makers' club is about making sure it runs smoothly. Clubs are social meeting points between people with an interest in the same hobby, so it's not just about members making better films, it is also about giving people the opportunity to socialise, hopefully make friends and enjoy each other's company and of course to contribute to the main activity – making films.

In some ways it could be said that the former purpose is the most important. Without us getting along together (most of the time anyway), the club will not achieve its objective of giving members the opportunity to learn more about film making, show each other our self made films and get supportive feedback so our next productions can be better. Also although I have seen many excellent films/videos made solely by individual film makers it has long been my experience, and now my conviction, that film making can be much more enjoyable, and in many cases produce better results, if films are made by groups of interested people. Giving members the opportunity to team up and make films together is a role any video/film club can play and in my view should be encouraged.

So bearing all that in mind what is the role of a club chair person? I believe being the club chairman is about making sure everything that is needed to make the club run smoothly, actually happens although not to feel I have to 'do' it all myself (easier said than done I have to say).

Building a strong committee is a first consideration so that decisions can be tossed around and shared. Action taken and programmes are planned on a committee level, remembering to consult with all the other members as far as is possible. One of my tasks is to encourage members to take on tasks that help the programme along, whether it be presenting an issue on Zoom, writing a script for a club project or simply making sure the club room is open.

At TFMC we are fortunate to have quite a strong committee. Apart from myself we have a treasurer, a secretary, a publicity officer, a web master who is also deputy chair, and four keen committee members who contribute ideas. Fortunately it is also a committee who are, in the main, open to new ideas. For example we recently decided to change most of our "in-club" "competitions" to "challenges" in order to encourage newer people to our hobby to get involved. It had been noticed that some newer members were reluctant to enter competition thinking they would never get "placed". When offered a challenge they would come up with something and get positive feedback. It's always best to try and be positive about someone's film. We encourage members to find the strengths in each other's films before offering ways in which it could be improved.

When the first lock-down was introduced, one decision our committee took was to decide to hold meetings on Zoom as our meeting room became

unavailable. Although there were a couple of members who "do not do Zoom" it soon became a success meeting weekly for an hour and much to our delight we added four new members to our club, two or three people from other clubs and one returning member who had joined a neighbouring club. When Lock-downs were withdrawn, we decided to continue meeting on Zoom weekly and meet face to face in our club room once a month (rather than fortnightly as before). One benefit of this is that those members who cannot get to the club house (for a variety of reasons) can still be members and join our meetings on Zoom. We have four or five members who cannot get to our club room who are still with us on Zoom.

### Group maintenance

One thing I like to do is to make sure I welcome everyone individually, whether it be to a Zoom meeting or a face-to-face meeting and I try to encourage others to do the same. It encourages people to keep coming if they feel welcomed and included. During Zoom meetings we try to encourage everyone to have a chance to say something should they wish to and that they are listened to and respected. My mantra is "by all means disagree with what I have to say but don't put me down or try to make me feel foolish for having a differing opinion or just not knowing". On Zoom meetings we have developed the practice of raising a hand if you want ask a question or make a contribution and I am constantly on the look out for raised hands so no-one gets left out. Not everyone does that of course and so I look for those who might stay quiet and find questions to ask them so they are included.

A video/film club is made up of individuals who don't always see eye to eye. If conflicts are left to fester they can upset the activities that the club is set up to offer and meetings can cease to be fun and productive. I see my role to try and make an effort to help solve any conflicts, focussing on the issue under debate and *not* the personalities involved – trying *not* to make the issue "personal". My role is also to help the committee make a final decisions on what action to take, if and when a conflict arises (fortunately for us very rare).

If someone is missing from meetings for a few weeks I will email to find out if all is well for them and to tell them they have been missed. Having said that, I learned from my time as a youth worker in a past life that people use clubs for as long as "they" want and not for as long as I would like them to.

### Getting support and making it fun

Finally, what we do must be fun. Fortunately TFMC is a very friendly crowd and when we meet for practical sessions at our Club room or on line on Zoom we strive to not only make the sessions interesting and useful but also fun. This also applies when planning club projects. We try our best to include as many members as wish to be involved so everyone gets a chance to take part.

I am fortunate as chair as I get amazing support from our members and for this I am very grateful because it makes it fun for me too. I am the first to admit I am not the best film maker in the club or the most knowledgeable but I enjoy the sessions, have made many new friends and so far have enjoyed being chair of Teign Film Makers.

Ivan G Andrews



# Defeating the Alien Hordes - for less than a Fiver

Larry Hall Talks us through the making of a prop space gun.

You can watch the film to see the process in more detail - see the link at the end of the article.

When you're planning a science fiction adventure film, one of the key items for the intrepid hero is a good blaster, ray gun, phaser - call it what you will - to protect himself against what might be out there.

These props are generally made by professional craftsmen and model makers at the film studios and they undoubtedly cost a lot of money. Prop guns can be hired but, again, the cost is likely to be quite high, We 'budget' film makers have to take a more economical and realistic path, so how do we lay our hands on a realistic blaster without breaking the bank.

One way is to look towards the toy market. The major player in toy guns is the NERF company - N -E-R-F, who make a whole series of exotic-looking toy weapons designed to fire harmless foam darts. They aren't cheap but I picked up this fearsome rotating barrel handgun for the princely sum of £2 from a charity shop.

The only drawback is that they're very obviously toys and finished in garish colours. Any alien worth his salt would laugh his mandibles off if he was threatened by one.



shells with matt black. You can see the remnants of that lurid yellow but I don't need to spray the insides.

With everything dry they're starting to look a bit more weapon-like. I've sanded it all down and roughed up the rest to provide a key for the paint. I'll spray the side pieces and the orange parts on the rotating barrel with silver metallic paint, having masked off the areas that I want to keep black, with masking tape.



A couple of coats later, and some drying time, and we're ready to start reassembly. The rotating barrel clips into place and I'm pleased to see that the trigger still works.

Now to reassemble the two main body parts, hopefully remembering which screws went where. After a little final detailing and a couple of coats of matt varnish, it's finished.



Now, I know what you're thinking. How will it look in a film? Will it work as a realistic blaster? Hmmm ... let's see ... You can see "Defeating The Alien Hordes" by clicking the link:

Defeating The Alien Hordes  
[https://youtu.be/-XD9yWQh\\_xU](https://youtu.be/-XD9yWQh_xU)



So here's the plan. Take it apart, it's simply held together by screws, spray paint the yellow areas black, remove the NERF logo, and paint the orange areas in metallic silver.



We're in the open air for safety reasons. I've taken the gun to pieces and in the process of spraying the two outer



Larry Hall



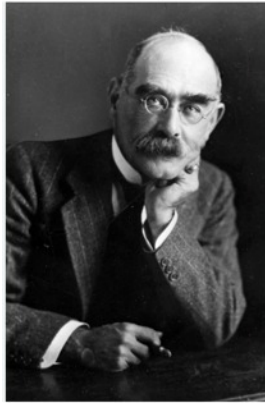
# A Smugglers Song



David Price

Talks about the making of "A Smugglers Song"

The Bristol Film & Video Society were pleased to be granted a short term residency of the Ashton Court mansion near Bristol by Artspace Lifespace in August 2021. Amongst other projects this residency allowed some club members to commence a short film based on Rudyard Kipling's 1907 poem, *A Smugglers Song*. Kipling's famous poem is believed to have been inspired by stories associated with contraband activities along the Sussex coast in the mid-18th century.



Nobel prize winning author Kipling lived in a 17th century house in the village of Burwash near Bexhill from 1902 until his death in 1936 and became familiar with the long history and myths surrounding smuggling.

It is believed that he took inspiration for the poem from some of the activities of the notorious Hawkhurst gang who operated along the south coast from Kent to Dorset in the 1730's and 1740's. The gang had a base at the ancient Mermaid Inn in the old Cinque Port of Rye in East Sussex. Even at the time the Mermaid had a long rich history with cellars dating back to 1156 and being rebuilt in 1420 with secret entrances into the property.

The Hawkhurst gang was a violent criminal organisation whose members were known to sit with loaded guns in the Mermaid Inn and were convicted of the murder of informants amongst their other activities.

The 18th century penalties for smuggling were severe and a total of 75 members of the Hawkhurst gang were either hung or transported over the years. The gang's illicit ways finally ended when 3 of their leaders were convicted of smuggling in 1749. The leaders were executed with their remains gibbeted in public within a metal cage and left to rot as a deterrent to others.



By contrast Kipling's poem offers a romanticised and sanitised view of smuggling in which the villagers knowingly accept tax free goods and co-operate with the gang.

Giving credence to the view that this poem reflected the activities of the Hawkhurst gang was that this was a large organised operation needing 25 ponies to stealthily move and hide the contraband overnight. No small undertaking for any organisation, particularly where speed and stealth were vital.

The poem's narrator is usually envisaged to be a male smuggler who explains the range of contraband which they are supplying to all levels of society. The narrator is conscious of the chance of being caught by the Customs Men and there is an implied threat and reward to the young girl for ignoring the evidence of their activities and not betraying them. For this version the film's creators made a deliberate artistic decision to cast a female voice as the narrator to represent the warning from a knowing collaborative mother or grandmother.



Rayleigh Beckett, at the time of original filming was nine years old and was cast as the lead dressed in period costume. She is the grand daughter of Producer, Steve Andrews, and has appeared in other BFVS productions since. The intention was to capture some of the atmosphere evoked by the poem and recreate elements of the era with some strong images.

The original principle filming took place in August 2021 at Ashton Court in Bristol but was augmented over the next 12 months by short bursts of location filming at other historic locations near Bristol, in Wales and parts of the South Coast.

The film was directed by Graham Egarr, produced by Steve Andrews and edited by Jane Andrews who also provided the female voiceover.

After its completion the film was premiered online to members at the BFVS's December 2022 meeting. The film was subsequently entered as a club production into the British International Film Festival (BIAFF) in January 2023. The club was pleased to learn in March 2023 that the IAC judges had awarded the film 5 Stars and determined it as the best entry by an affiliated club. The judges' comments included praise for the use of shadows, close ups, period costume and sound design. The lead actress was also highly praised for her screen acting.

The film will be given a BIAFF festival screening in Birmingham on 8th May 2023. It has also been chosen to represent the UK at the 83rd UNICA (Union Internationale du Cinema) film festival in Comacchio in Northern Italy which is taking place in September 2023.



Dave Jones

Shares his thoughts

## Where there's will ...

It looked interesting at first glance, so I decided to don my glasses, you know, those 'Reactorlite' ones, and waited a few moments for them to darken, so that he couldn't see where my eyes were 'pointing', then started to read the article in the magazine, held by the person next to me ... on the train. A humorous soul, he turned the magazine slightly my way, easing the task, and after a minute or two, he asked, "Okay to turn the page?"

"Almost ... last para," I replied. Odd, isn't it, body language ... you look at somebody and immediately like them, or ... whatever ... there was much assumed. The fact that it was a video camera magazine, that I had taken an interest, that he had bought it; they used to sell out extremely quickly. He assumed rightly that I was keen on making videos, as was he.

The next two hours went by very quickly as we travelled from Newcastle to London in first class, as there were no seats elsewhere. I never realised how popular London was, until I travelled by train. There were no cell phones back then, but we did have huge cameras, huge cassettes, huge editors, LANC etc. The amateurs used to get mixed up with the professionals back then ... resolution? ... not bad, a few lines here or there.

The odd thing is, there is a distinct possibility that that gentleman, who proved so affable back then, is probably still using a video camera, not a phone. It is also highly likely that he understands film grammar and appreciates good editing, pace, good sound etc., and still belongs to a club. It was all rather odd how everything went sideways, turned to custard ... we became ... them ... resented.

### Lighthouse

One day, I was assigned to North Foreland Lighthouse. Back then I was known as 'A Commissioning Bod', we were a type of 'Bio-Bot' that fixed things ... a backstop, if you will. We numbered two. At the end of the job, we had the Duke of Edinburgh visit, and he sacked all the lighthouse keepers and introduced them to automation on the way out of the door ... effectively. It was the last to be automated, and they had a feast on the back of it.



Who did the filming? The BBC. An Indian chap was the cameraman and Robert Hall was the journalist. It was poetry in motions to see these two work together. They were interviewing one of the keepers and I stuck to the cameraman like glue, watching every move. Between each shot, they ran the film back over the last take and positioned their interviewee's limbs precisely from shot to shot, for the sake of continuity. I didn't know they did this.

At any sticking point, there was a discussion, of sorts, so that Robert would ask the next rehearsed question without a surprise or shock appearing on the interviewee's face. (This is worth remembering when interviewing folk). If you've done your homework, it is quite possible that you will ask a question that won't bring an answer ... you then have to listen to flannel. Far better to stop and discuss the next question ... so you reposition your interviewee's limbs and it won't notice. Do amateurs do this? I never did ... I do now.

The keeper told Robert a few home truths. Anybody who has spent a time at sea, will always have a tale to tell.

Waves like this compress the air inside the lighthouse, then partially evacuate it when leaving. There is no water ingress, but waves such as this form a pocket of air when curled and the top of the wave strikes first. The evacuation is really equilibrium being re-established. Sometimes the whole of the lighthouse is submerged ... and it's very, very distressing when it goes on for days on end. Frayed tempers, headaches ... so you stand in the doorway, when possible, to get relief ... and there and then, you experience bliss.



'Man in doorway of lighthouse'. Courtesy of 'History Daily'

Wolf Rock was a very small lighthouse, as lighthouses at sea go, and it would often go under. We had men trapped there for ninety days, as it takes days for the seas to calm after a big blow. Helicopter platforms were built on top of lighthouses in latter years.

Robert Hall is extremely likeable, a charismatic type of English Gent, well spoken, well-travelled and his cameraman was something of a comedian. What we know as a 'delightful fellow'.

"When you make a film of this place, " he advised, "use footage off my camera, 'cos it's better than yours, and we also dig out a lot of very old film footage." Seemingly, it was fine back then. Everybody had a recorder, and it was quite legal to download and watch films later or 'when you got home', and it was okay to have the club members watch your films, but not beyond with bigger audiences. Since then, attitudes have changed, along with the cameras and to buy a Blue Ray Recorder started at £2000, a 'deterrent' of a price, but then, it came to pass that you didn't need one.

A dear friend and author, Alan Wallbank, recently won a 'top drawer' prize for a documentary, which he said he would mention, but that fact developed into something of a discussion. It is very typical of any trade or function, that some take to it like a duck takes to water, whilst others struggle; I'm one of the latter. I tackle the making of a documentary with a degree of resentment.



Continues...

Dave Jones

Shares his thoughts

Why resentment? Well ... after a month of planning, and another month waiting for good weather, you turn up on location, start filming and a coach load of children arrives, then somebody comes up to you and asked that you don't film the children, who are now everywhere with iPhones, filming you ... experiencing resentment. Your assailant sees your lips move, but nothing comes out, your eyes become bloodshot and grabbing your camera you walk apace toward your assailant with the feet of the tripod leading. He 'does a runner'. He goes looking for an official, and just when you are leaving and packing your kit back in the car, the police arrive ... so you get your camera out a make a documentary on 'Authoritarian Britain' ... a one-minute lampooning 'doco' inferring that our country's gone mad.

This ban on filming ubiquitous homo sapiens began in France, where a Frenchman could come up to you and say, "Veuillez effacer les images que vous avez prises de moi." (Don't film me ... wipe it) After a fight, when he tries to grab your camera, a policeman runs up to you with his gun drawn shouting, "Arrête ça! Arrête ça!" ... and you haven't a ruddy clue what is going on ... but the policeman says, addressing you in the second person, "You ... English, he want you to rub out your film ... he no want his picture taken." I show the policeman the dot on the screen. He turns to 'his mate' and says, "C'est miniscule, si petite." I

understood that, they've nicked words out of our language. The gendarme (French for 'copper') turned to me and said, "Show heem." His mate looked, grunted and said, "Ah... ça va."

The gendarme then said, "It's okay ... you can go," grabbed the holster of his weapon and on the third or fourth attempt managed to thread the barrel into the hole. I smiled at the gendarme and asked, "Do you have a long piece of metal in the bottom of that holster?"

He lifted the pistol out and pointed in the hole, "In this? No ... why you ask me silly question?"

"It's not a silly question."

"It is ... why have metal in hole?"

"So that you can't shoot yourself in the foot!"

He scoffed at me and walked off muttering, "Ces Anglais son fous." He was saying that I was mad. Determined to have the last word I shouted at his back, "It hurts like hell!"

In the last few days, hearing that Alan had done so well, I thought up a plan. We could win a lot of prizes, if I did some filming and Alan filmed me trying to make a documentary. You see, where there's a will, there's a way.

Dave Jones.

Private Sign

Please do not read

Keep Smiling  
Pip



## Alan's Ramblings

Alan Wallbank

Shares his thoughts

I think you will find my piece this month quite thought provoking! It follows a film I entered into this years BIAFF and to my great surprise it received 4 stars, but was apparently very close to five. Titled 'Struggling to Survive', it is a snap shot of daily life in and around the rural town of Rafael Freyre (RF) at the eastern end of Cuba.

In 1996 and 1998 I took my cine camera to film steam engines all over Cuba, mainly American built in the 1920's that worked in an around the hundreds of sugar mills all over the 800 mile long Island. The RF system was the most exciting where empty trains left the mill each morning to bring back full ones from the numerous branch lines in the late afternoon. In 2000 I returned again, this time with my newly purchased Sony Hi8 video camera, recording similar images as in the previous years, including RF. As on previous visits we spent four days exploring the network of lines travelling for miles in hire cars over appalling rock strewn roads to reach our intended locations. The resulting film from this tour has been very well received at numerous railway societies and other interest groups.

By the time I returned in 2016, all steam had finished due to the collapse of the sugar cane industry, but at RF a steam hauled tourist train ran most weekdays along with two single railcars that travelled over the old cane lines. Previously I had filmed in 4x3, but from now on it would be 16x9, although on my last visit in 2019 I decided to change back 4x3 so that I could use the footage and compare that with RF railway scenes recorded in 2000. The heat here was almost unbearable, as even on early January mornings the sun and mercury would rise quickly beyond 30c and there was virtually no shade!

I also took the opportunity to film in and around the town to add to all the footage taken in other visits after 2016 only to discover at the end of my stay that I had forgotten to change back to 16.9! That meant I had to somehow make a film using just the 4x3 footage, as I felt it would be irritating to the viewer to keep swapping from one ratio to the other. It was post Covid before this film was seen here by interested groups, but how would they greet one that was about Cuban life and railways? Thankfully it was all positive, but my main aim was to enter the film into an IAC competition.

Yet there was a problem, as I had added three Cuban music tracks, but couldn't get clearance to use them. To be honest, I have had an IAC music licence for many years, but haven't used it since about 1996 so I wasn't sure how to obtain the necessary 'permission to use'. I made enquiries, but resigned myself to the fact that a new film had to be made without catchy dance rhythm that I felt 'made' the film. My first task was to import a copy of the film made on a dvd into my Casablanca Avio, but the picture quality was seriously degraded, leaving me with little choice but to remake the film all over again from four mini dv tapes. I now had the opportunity to add 'up to date narration', but felt it was spoiling the films pace, so I had to use my words carefully, while adding on screen wording that I felt was appropriate.

I then had to find a way to re-edit the film parts that originally contained the music tracks, which took hours and hours of intense concentration. I must admit that I was happy with the end result, so it just goes to show that you don't need music to make a good film. Generally though, I felt the judges would not like the mix of town life

and trains, so I was amazed to receive glowing comments. They did though suggest that it would have been nice to get peoples views, but this is a country where know one talks openly about their situation and they don't want to be filmed either. With that in mind I went out to captured images that I felt would appeal to the viewer.

### Turning the clock back

I did have someone with me most of the time in case anyone objected to me being there, but thankfully it all went without incident. What is not evident in the film is that not much happens anyway, as there is nothing to do, nothing to buy and nowhere to go! As a resident once said, "We just exist!" If I had changed back to 16.9 I could have used a lot of the film from previous years and this would probably have satisfied the judges, but I couldn't turn the clock back.



What I feel is most satisfying is that the film was shot using a very basic mini dv tape camera, microphone, tripod and a hand held spirit level. The footage was loaded onto the most basic Casablanca and down loaded onto a dvd still an acceptable medium for 2023, but will

this be the last time they are allowed in the competition or other competitions for that matter, as apparently the '480p resolution is not to currant festival standards'.



Unfortunately, this film has come at personal cost to my eyesight, as the hours I spent starring at my tv that I use as a monitor has given me 'dry eye syndrome' in my left eye which I was unaware of until my eye lids became very red and I now have two cysts one under each eye lid which feels like having grit it the eye. The optician says it will take up to six months to get better, although the dry eye will remain so its a case of eye care for months to come. This means I will have to give up editing until the condition eases and perhaps forever! Hopefully, I can make some slight adjustments to the film for other competitions, but its not looking very promising at the moment if I can't edit. One pleasing outcome, is that the film has been seen in a RF school as it covers a period of time when the sugar mill was active, as today only the skeleton remains of the old building stand as reminder of happier times.

Finally, I was delighted to read that my film is being shown in Birmingham. If the film is indeed the end of my film making, then at least my work will have been seen by a wider audience.

My email is: [alan46exdriver@virginmedia](mailto:alan46exdriver@virginmedia) for anyone who wishes to contact me.



## This and That

Robert Paget

Tips, advice and  
chit chat.

The kitchen mixer tap had decided to fail, the indoor stop tap would not close and when I had fitted the kitchen I had not added isolation taps to the hot and cold pipes. On film it would have been a comedy. Luckily, we were not flooded, and thank heavens that the shut off valve under the pavement was operable. I had a new taps in the shed but would I need to alter some of the pipe work from Hep20 to copper? En-route to the "Plumbsafe" merchant, I was planning my shopping list. My experience has been that if you don't buy more plumbing parts than you need, then you haven't bought enough.

It struck me this is also a key guideline when shooting film. However well planned, some of your shots will not be the perfection you were hoping for and you may need additional cutaways. When adding refinement to your edit, fresh ideas can crop up; where you have recorded a "piece to camera" you may have "boxed yourself in" as regards the direction you can take the visual story.

Alfred Hitchcock said *"...the film is already made in my head before we start shooting"*. Compared to today's Hollywood multi-million dollar productions, he was probably circumventing what would now require several script writers and a mass of technicians and advisors.

### Not what I had planned

A recently completed film had taken far longer to edit than anything I had previously tackled. From a simple starting idea, it grew to include stories within the documentary story. I was not entirely happy with the drone footage I had taken, because I had not put much planning into the flight and not expected my very reliable Mini2 to deal badly when pointing towards low January sunshine, though it may be that the Freewell ND filter was contributing to this. The hoped for "light leaks" were now just horrible light streaks.



I had chosen to wear a grubby high-vis jacket with deep pockets... great for carrying other camera equipment, my 4K Osmo pocket2 gimbal camera and portable audio gear, and nobody seems to challenge or casually ask what you are doing when you look like a workman or surveyor. I knew I would be flying in strong winds, and needed to get the location shots I needed rapidly after take-off. The yellow jacket was clearly visible on my phone screen when taking a "birds-eye" shot with the drone, and immediately posed a problem. It looked even more obtrusive once I started the edit. Fortunately, cropping down the 4K footage, rescued the situation, and one static drone shot was useable through cropping and panning, giving the impression of flying from right to left.

The main core of the film was in my head, but I know only too well that ambition for us amateurs can easily outstrip achievement. I tell myself that if you can imagine

the shot or the effect you need, then with modern editing software and a decent camera, you can achieve it. However, it all depends on getting good shots to start with.

The new kitchen tap features in a film I started three weeks ago and may now be in its final version. Thanks to an idea I spotted on a Club website, I decided to explore far more of the video effects I could achieve. For the first time I have been "animating" changes of exposure and colouration throughout the duration of individual shots, and taught myself other ways of creating "flash to white" transitions. When you put any film together, there can be thoughts of "what will others think of this" or will it be disliked? Dumbing it down to conform usually eradicates creativity, I tell myself to be brave and attempt anything.

### Is it easier now?

Last year a respected filmmaker had mentioned how they thought a film which purely used animation software with computer generated 2-D "actors" with basic body and facial movements was "not really" a film. I pointed out how film competitions in the past often gave a percentage of points just for the film titles, because they were always difficult to film. Lining up plastic letters on cardboard, rubbing a pencil over "Letraset" dry transfers, setting up lighting, praying the camera focus was correct, the list went on. You then found that the camera frame-line differed from the camera used in the main shoot, and that it would have been better to write the title in chalk on a wall. Those days are long gone. We recently watched a rerun of the superb 1970s "Six Wives of Henry VIII", and apart from lengthy "tableau vivant" style sequences, the alignment and position of opening title script demonstrated how difficult it was for a TV company at the time. There is no "cheating" in using computer generated title letters or any other computer-generated effect. The skills are in using them creatively and selectively.

### Always trying to improve

Attempts to improve my camerawork and editing in the last couple of years made me realise that I needed to think about how I deal with every aspect of the film from scratch. Starting with titles and on screen "Astons", I alter their opacity and position, and have found that "fade in and out" times, as parts of a second, can look awkward unless they match. I generally avoid saying there is anything in the films of others that I "don't like", because it is immediately a non-constructive and personal comment, but titles that appear and disappear "instantly" on screen, unless deliberately so for effect or impact, can give the impression of part of the film still needing post production work.

Older digital editing systems now show their age, often in terms of the title character resolution and sharpness. Irrespective of selected fonts, having a title script less sharp than was achievable with cine film, does not present a film well. Where I use an opening logo, I always amend that that in some way. Many will have already formed an initial opinion on a film within the first three or four shots, so you are on a count-down from a critical audience as soon as the titles are on screen. Whilst there are skilfully produced videos posted to YouTube which are devoid of titles, and which achieve thousands of daily views, titles remain a very important aspect. I now attempt to produce opening titles which have a different look for each new film.





## Robert Paget continues....

Once on the editing time line, and viewing the output on a second monitor, I deal with the contrast and contrast centre of every shot. For colour grading, I now use colour wheels instead of colour curves, and rapidly check what is happening with the complementary colours. It is very subjective, just as so many aspects of your film are. Perhaps your initial "guess" is that the colour of yellow stonework needs correcting in the mid tones, or that greens appear too accentuated by an action camera both in low and mid tones.

If I am in doubt, I briefly enhance the gain to enhance that effect. I used to only consider the colouration of shots towards the end of the editing process, however long the film had taken to edit, but now find that shots which initially appeared not up to the standard of contrast and colour saturation which I had hoped for, may often have a lot more to offer, especially if your cameras have 10 bit depth.

### Event v Media

I used to wonder whether I should apply any image effects to the "media" (the full clip) or just the "event" (the shortened section of the clip on the time line), but now always choose to only work on the "event", just in case any part of the full clip is used elsewhere in the project.

Editing footage from a mixture of cameras and formats can disclose the difference in colouration produced of the same subject filmed at the same time. That will disrupt the visual flow of the completed film. Tackling this during the first "rough assembly" edit opens up possibilities, and when you are editing 2.7K (1440 lines) or 4K (2160 lines) you get a "second bite at the apple" in terms of framing and cropping.

Initial overcautious use of the camera, especially one you are unused to, can leave objects "in shot" around the edge of the frame, but which are now audience distractions. I tell myself that the shot itself, its duration and everything visually in the shot, has to be totally relevant to the film. Tight framing, particularly where you were unable to control the depth of field, will strengthen your visual storytelling. It has almost made me more wary of introducing zooms when shooting, because I can now produce gentle off-set zooms in post. My current editing software does not allow the "soft" start or "soft" stop which I could do when I was first editing MiniDV footage in Premiere twenty odd years ago, and motorizing the position of on screen titles.

### Separation can be a good thing

When allocating or adding audio tracks, it can be useful to separate and label the audio tracks used for your own voice, and of any interviewees in the film. I used to apply audio effects to the timeline audio events, but now apply them to the dedicated audio tracks. This has proved useful in what I am now editing, where a mechanical engineer speaks with enthusiasm and a northern accent.

Although I split his recording up to eliminate any hesitations and to alter timing, possibly only showing his face at two or three points, the audio EQ remains constant. A separate dedicated audio track is used for another "piece to camera" with another speaker having a far more rounded West Country voice.

Knowing that the film may ultimately be viewed on a range of devices from tablets to home audio surround systems, means that the ideal will never be achieved. I use a graphic equalizer for those audio tracks and attach an image of the settings I had used for one of them.

The more effort you put into the edit of visuals and audio, the less any of that will be noticed by an audience unless they are knowledgeable and critical filmmakers. They may even consider that you put no effort into post production. What you will be achieving is a film that has far greater natural flow, taking the audience on the visual journey you are creating.

### Tread carefully

Pointing out perceived errors in camerawork, editing and film structure to another amateur can be a dangerous path to tread, although I always ask a small group of friends for their honest views and opinions which I respect. An amateur film maker may not want to improve their work, or may have already made great steps to where they are now. It can be akin to telling someone who to choose as a spouse, or even what mobile phone or car to purchase, and all are a very dangerous route to travel. When you challenge yourself, there are no restrictions, and no wounds to ego are suffered.

### Always learning

With my both of my daughters teaching, the whole subject of education is regularly on the menu for discussion. You realise that those who teach, or openly discuss the field of their expertise or interests, are also learning through that process. Last week I had shown my four-year old grandson some film clips of a bee on the editing timeline. I told him to press the letter "S" on the keyboard to split the clip, which he did. I then selected some extreme effects we could experiment with plus cropping and zooming the image to examine the bee in detail. He found this great fun. Using the "newsprint" effect to varying strengths, possibly demonstrated what images of a garden flower produced by a compound eye may be like and my explaining something had in turn given me an idea for a film.

I had never thought about the difference between the words or feelings of "Joy" and "Awe", until my eldest daughter sent me an online link to a research study carried out in the Netherlands. I immediately saw a tenuous link to the brief editing session of the bee I had filmed. The nub of the research was to statistically measure the effect on young children of experiencing "Awe" when being shown art in many forms, and comparing that to situations which elicited "Joy" (such as fun or laughter). There was also a control section where instructional film or images are displayed. When those youngsters were then asked how they wished to deal with some gifts (confectionery sweets etc.), there was a trend of increased generosity, where they had experienced "Awe". The understanding that there is a bigger world out there compared to the world of "self".

Robert Paget



# One To Watch

A few from Pip Critten

I watched this amazing documentary about the stunt work of Buster Keaton and thought I would share it with you.

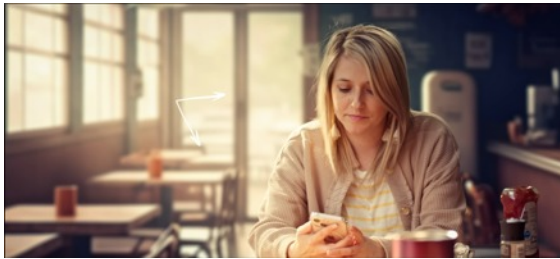
Selected  
Movies  
from  
the  
World  
Wide Web

Send your  
contributions to  
[piperitten@googlemail.com](mailto:piperitten@googlemail.com)



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=72FQIV-jpEk>

Here's a great video on the use of AI backdrops in your film making. Of course, you could also use a photograph.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GNYLCOXfPao>

History of the Dolly Zoom.



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eNFt\\_Gbewn0&t=310s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eNFt_Gbewn0&t=310s)

Brian Henson Introduces Digital Puppeteering!



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gzbBdRHqGcQ>

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**SoCo News Editor:** Pip Critten

**Email:** [pipcritten@googlemail.com](mailto:pipcritten@googlemail.com)

**Council Members**

Ivan Andrews – Teignmouth

# Changes

*New & Rejoined:*

MR DAVID FAULKES, Honiton

*Change of address / contact:*

*Resigned:*

MR CHRIS MARTIN, Cheltenham

FROME CINE CLUB

*Cancelled:*

*Deceased:*

MR J.V. DAVIES, Wimborne

*Moved into SoCo Region:*

*Change of Name*

The SoCo News Archive can be found

at either:

[Pip's SoCo News Archive](#)

<http://www.theiac.org.uk/iac/regions/soco/soco.htm>

# SoCo Diary Dates

To have your event featured in SoCo News drop an email to

[pipcritten@googlemail.com](mailto:pipcritten@googlemail.com)

For a full list of national and international events

[Cti](#)

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**Copy Deadline** for May - June 2023 Issue

To reach Editor by 15th April 2023