

North Thames Region



NEWSLETTER

January—February 2018

Happy New Year To Everyone



1st: The City For The Dead
John Astin



2nd: Mr Saffron Walden
John Howden



3rd: Harrow's New Year Parade
Geoff Foord/Alan Colegrave

**Congratulations
to our Movie
Festival
Award
Winners,
pictured
receiving their
Awards from
the national
IAC Chairman,
Mike Whyman
(reports pp. 6—10)**



Junior Award: Sofia Travels to Spain
*Sofia Foord (The Award collected by
Anna Foord)*

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Chairman's Chat



Brenda Granshaw FCI has been a member of Wanstead and Woodford Movie Makers for over 20 years and became their Chairman again in 2015. She was Chairman of the North Thames Region from 2007 to 2014, and is now serving for the second time.

First of all, let me congratulate John Astin for winning the North Thames Annual Competition with his excellent film "The City For The Dead". I must admit that I thought it was going to be a film about the inmates of Brookwood Cemetery but it soon became clear that this was not the case and we were treated to the history of the cemetery and the way the new residents were transported from London.

I must also thank Alan Colegrave, Geoff Foord and Tim Stannard for all the time and effort they have dedicated into getting the Competition up and running on line. At least half the entries were entered on line and I am sure this percentage will increase in future years. The judging system also seemed to work well, certainly identifying the best films. I am sure all those present had their favourites but that is to be expected. For me, I loved the film about Antarctica with beautiful close ups of the penguins.

Although we all enjoyed the day, it was a great pity that the audience only totalled 28. I wonder why more members did not come. Was it because they thought that Amersham was further than it actually is? We were surprised that it only took an hour from Chingford. Was it because the event had not been well advertised? I do feel that we should have done more to get the message out to clubs, particularly as it is so easy to send emails. Some members had thought that the only way to enter was on line and so were put off. This will not be the case for a number of years as there is still a good number of members using editing systems which do not lend themselves to easy up loading to Vimeo.

The other thing I found sad was that having seen lots of excellent films in the Knock Out Competition, only two of them appeared in the Annual Competition. It is such a shame that the films included in the Knock out Competition are not put forward for the Annual Competition.

This brings me on to the Knock out Competition for 2018. It was apparent last year that fitting 3 programmes of films along with the judges' comments into a club evening was generally impossible. We have therefore decided to move to groups of two clubs. With only eight clubs entering the Competition this year, the winners of the first rounds will all proceed to the Final. It is a year since John Howden, as the then Chairman, wrote about the apathy that exists amongst the club membership. Reading the above paragraphs you will recognise that the situation has not improved and the declining interest in Regional events continues. While I recognise that many members are getting older and no longer have the same enthusiasm about making films, there is still an important role to play as part of the audience for the current film makers, so please make an effort to come and support the events in 2018.

As usual the IAC AGM weekend took place in October. It was a very entertaining weekend hosted by SERIAC at Sittingbourne. The highlight has to have been the trip to the picturesque Allington Castle, made all the more special as it has decided not to allow any more tour groups to visit for the foreseeable future. The Mermaid Competition on the Sunday had a range of fun films. SERIAC has produced a DVD of the entries of which I have a copy. **If you would like to borrow it to show at your club please contact me.**

And so another New Year is here again.—may I wish you all the best for 2018.

It's good to hear from three more active Clubs in the Region:

Woodstock FilmMakers have been involved in recording the five month project of the restoration and updating at the Church of St Mary Magdalen in Woodstock. Two members of the Club have been attending several times per week to record progress and they have been supported by various other members as required. One of the Churchwardens is a member of the club, so communication has been excellent.



Woodstock members deciding on fixed camera positions to film the celebratory church service

The contractors have been extremely co-operative and helpful, to the extent that when the two man film crew were unable – due to age! – to access the vault discovered close to the church wall, the site manager took the camera himself and filmed within the hole.

Once the project was completed, the Club covered the first, celebratory service in November.

The site manager offered to be involved in a 'piece or pieces to camera' explaining the work that had been undertaken. This footage was viewed and declared very useful. He was a 'Natural'.

The Club is now creating two films from all the footage, one of about 12 minutes and one longer, probably about 45 minutes, for the church and contractors.

Looking to 2018, two members had recently shown two club films 'The Oxford Canal' and 'The Mechanical Music Museum' to the local Banbury Steam Society. The Society had been very enthusiastic and, as they were celebrating their 50th year in 2018, they have invited the Club to film their annual Steam Festival in June. It was agreed that this was a good club project and we should accept. More detailed planning will be possible when an outline programme is received.

The Chairman continues to stress the need for individuals to make short films.

Several subjects were suggested and members are asked to make a short (max 3 minutes) film to be ready for the April meeting.

Bourne End has now changed its name to:

Bourne End Film Makers

New Contact Details:

Secretary: Bob High, Lantern Cottage, High Street, Lane End, High Wycombe, HP14 3JF.

Email: rhigh@highandwatt.com

Competitions Secretary: Sara Shankster

Email: sara@booster.co.uk

On 16th October, **Enfield Video Makers** held its annual internal Falconer Shield Competition, named after Vida Falconer, a founder member of the Club.
The Competition was won by Ken Martin with his video "**A Glimpse of Yorkshire**" which had also been shown at the NTR Film Festival in Amersham.
This will form EVM's entry into the Enfield Challenge Shield Competition to be held later in 2018 when neighbouring clubs will be invited to take part.
We were approached recently by Coast Video, a club based in Cullercoats, North Shields, to submit a DVD of our films to be shown at their club meeting in November.
They have reciprocated by sending their DVD containing 18 films. It was mentioned that these were made in the last two or three years, as they may be hard-pushed to compile such a DVD from existing members.
This all sounds a bit too familiar and I suspect that like clubs in the South, they may also suffer from age, infirmity and dwindling numbers.
Nigel Lee, Enfield VM Treasurer

Moaner Geezer/Gal

A response to the item in the last Newsletter:

Why does it have to be 'yet another bad decision' by the NTR council in choosing the date of the Film Festival in Amersham ???

What makes us the 'bad guys' ?

Why didn't this 9.5 Group check with us before choosing their 'Annual Get-Together' date to avoid it being on the same day as OUR Film Festival and AGM ?

How many people even know of this group, apart from the members, and how many of them are there ?

I agree with the Editor, if no one knows they exist, then how can we avoid possible clashes ?

If every group/organisation checked with every other possible group/organisation before they made decisions about dates then nothing would ever get booked or attended.

Our Festival Officer spent many hours, days, weeks and months getting the film competition updated and organised so trying to find out if some other group had their meeting on the same day was a minor detail he could, and did rightly in my opinion, do without.

Don't forget, if we didn't have dedicated folk like him in the background we wouldn't be able to enjoy lots of the things we do.

You have to make decisions in life so be brave, or even toss a coin if you can't make your own mind up, and go to whichever event comes up heads or tails.

Oh dear, yet another decision to make in choosing heads or tails to be the one that decides for you. Let's hope it's not a double headed coin !!!!!

Dave Smith's comedy, "The Birthday Present", provided an amusing climax to the Festival Show.

Tongue in cheek (?!), he tells us about making it:

I decided to make a film in standard definition with a 4x3 format to see if it could stand up to the high quality of the 16x9 videos that most club members are producing today. Tom Hardwick's article on the £7.45 Bolum radio mic in the 2015 FVM Magazine gave me the idea, as I had purchased one to find out for myself how good or bad it was. Tom's conclusion on the product was spot on.

The cameras I used were Canons, the XM2 and XL2, with the XL2 set on Manual Focus and used for 98% of the filming .

Lighting for the interior was provided by two 500 watt Halogen lamps on stands from Screwfix. For the overhead shots, an off cut of mirror was purchased for a tenner, a frame made and hung from the ceiling with a couple of chains (Health and Safety stand by!!).

Well, that's the boring bit done—lets get on with the filming!

As it was going to be a one-man-band operation, the cameras were set up with remotes.

A 7" monitor was connected to the XL2, the lights were adjusted, and the camera focused on a teddy bear (my stand in!) .

There was no script—just ad-lib (not recommended).

The XL2 was used for the overhead shot into the mirror that quite pleased me until on play back I realised the continuity was all over the place. I forgot to turn off the central heating boiler, fridge freezer and kitchen clock.

The big disadvantage of doing it all yourself is not getting any movement into the shots.

The outdoor footage was shot with just the XL2 using the on board mic, plus a Zoom H1 with lapel mic which was then synced up in post.

I looked up on the internet on how to fake a black eye and purchased a face painting kit for £1.99 from Cheap Jacks in Oxhey.

My wife offered to save me the cost of the make up kit, by volunteering to give me a black eye for nothing' , but I declined the offer!!

To create the sounds of the smashing of the plates in the kitchen ,well, I got a bit carried away! We are now having our meals on paper plates—still, less washing up!!!

For the barking dog , I recorded a Jack Russell that resides a few doors from my place. I approached the owner and asked if I could take the dog for a walk . He was OK with it. Off I went ,dog on lead, Zoom H1 set to record, mic dangling down in front of dog ,dog not pleased, dog ended up biting my left leg and drawing blood. So I returned dog and had a trip to Watford General Hospital for a tetanus injection— but I did manage to get the sound effect I was after!! Not deterred, the final sound effect I wanted was me breaking wind when I sat down. So, In the morning, I ate a hearty breakfast of double beans on toast, set up the recording gear and waited, but things did not turn out as I visualised and I ended up taking a trip to M&S for a fresh set of underpants!

My venture into doing my own sound effects turned out to be quite a learning curve which I don't recommend, so the next time I will be investing in a commercial product -and blow the expense! I edit using iMovie and downgraded nearly all the footage using the fine grain filter as I wanted the video to be judged on its content and not on the quality of its footage.

I was pleased with the reaction to it when it was shown at the NTR Festival this year. For me, it was well worth the pain and suffering and the trip to Watford General for the tetanus injection .



**Dave's kitchen set-up;
the teddy bear is his stand-in!**

The NTR AGM & Movie Festival

Sunday October 15th saw the Region's most prestigious event, the AGM & Movie Festival Day, take on a completely new look, in a new venue.

The facility to enter videos online had already been added to the usual way of entering a DVD by post.



(l>r) Penny Love, Brenda Granshaw & John Howden conducting the AGM

Instead of continuing the tradition of having a panel of three judges from another IAC Region, agreeing the award winners in discussion, a "panel" of ten experienced judges from around the world had agreed to use a percentage marking system to judge the videos online. *(A list of the judges is on page 8).* Each entry was watched by three of the judges, who independently submitted their marks and critiques. The venue, too, was new to the Region, the Drake Hall in the Community Centre, Chiltern Avenue, Amersham.

It was an excellent choice *(see photo opposite)*. It had a large car park outside, free on Sundays, very good acoustics and a raised stage that accommodated a large, quality screen.

The £5 entry fee, including a buffet lunch, was an absolute bargain.

Visitors were welcomed from 10 am with coffee and biscuits, and there was a chance to chat before the first batch of films started at 10.35am.

It was good that the national IAC Chairman, Mike Whyman, had been able to attend.

It was also encouraging to

welcome members from the Aston Clinton U3A who belonged to a video section within their U3A, and had entered a film in our Competition about a Tall Ship adventure to Antarctica.

There were thirteen films shown in Session One, including, as it happened, the overall winner.

Alan Colegrave and Geoff Foord, both from Harrow FM, were at the controls, and both picture and sound quality were very good.

A 15 minute comfort break was then followed at 12 noon by the AGM.



Sue Howden with the Raffle



Mike Whyman,
IAC Chairman



John Howden,
in mid-lecture

After the elections (see *the new 2017—2018 Council members & roles on page 10*), there was the increasingly familiar discussion about possible ways to enhance club & regional membership and achieve more active involvement.

Another highlight of the day was the top quality buffet lunch, lovingly prepared and served by Jean Colegrave and Anna Foord.



Drake Hall, and an intent audience

Yet another innovation this year was to have a guest speaker, and it turned out to be the Region's ex-Chairman, John Howden.

John has led a very varied life both as clergyman and BBC broadcaster, and he talked most entertainingly about his experiences working on different local radio stations.

The films resumed at 2.30pm, and there were then two 1-hour long sessions, with a 30-minute Tea/ Coffee and Raffle break.

Everything ran to time, and the Award Presentations (see *Front Cover & page 8*) brought the day to a close at around 5.30pm.

It had been decided to do away with cash prizes this year. 1st, 2nd & 3rd Award Winners received plaques, and the Commendeds and Highly Commendeds Certificates.



(l>r) Alan Colegrave & Geoff Foord at the controls

About 29 people had attended.

30 films had been entered of which 25 had been shown in full, along with excerpts from 2 others.

Most had been documentaries or travelogues, with the odd comedy. Sadly, there had been no ambitious dramas.

Do you want something to fill a vacant club evening?

- **By the time you read this, all 29 films where permission has been granted will be available online on the new Video Plus website:**

<https://vimeo.com/user56839430>

- **There is plenty of high quality material to fill two club evenings.**
 - **The films can be downloaded or streamed.**

IT WOULD BE INTERESTING TO HAVE YOUR CLUB'S FEELINGS/COMMENTS

Award Winners

1st	The City For The Dead	John Astin	89.5%
2nd	Mr Saffron Walden	John Howden	89.3%
3rd	Harrow's New Year's Parade	G. Foord/A. Colegrave	85.0%
4th	Close Call	Alpha Prods., PBFM	82.3% (HC)
5th	The Railway Round the Bay	John Astin	81.3% (HC)
6th	I Want It All	Andrew Tweed	80.0% (C)
7th	John Howden	Brumal	78.3% (C)

(HC = Highly Commended; C = Commended)

Plaques were awarded to the first three, and Certificates to the next four.

**The results of the festival are published on
<http://www.theiac.org.uk/newsNTRAC/comp2017.htm>**

The Judges

Emmanuel Dubois	France
Ned Cordery	USA
Owen Carrey Jones	UK
Tom Hardwick	UK
Paul Kittel	UK (Did the judging in Norway)
Bob Howes	Australia (News Producer)
Michael Taylor	Australia (Theatre Producer)
Dave Watterson	UK
Tim Stannard	UK
Mike Whyman	UK

Thoughts on the Festival . . .

From Competition Officer, Alan Colegrave . . .

While the 2016 NTRIAC Film Festival was very much of an experiment and a learning curve, our 2017 Film Festival was a refinement using many of the same processes. The main difference this year was that we accepted physical entries in the form of DVDs, BluRays and Memory Sticks.

Of the 30 films entered, 60% were online, 37% on DVD and 3% on a memory stick. The physical entries were initially uploaded to the NTRIAC Vimeo site. However, this filled up quickly so I had to store several entries on my personal Vimeo "Pro" site. Hopefully, for the next Festival, we will have our own NTRIAC "Pro" site so storage will not be a problem.

This year, the entry fee was the same for both online and physical entries.

To process an online entry took about two minutes, whereas physical entries took from 15 minutes to well over an hour to process.

Filmmakers can obtain a basic Vimeo site free of charge. You are restricted to 500MB uploads which means longer films may need a bit more compression. If you prefer, then there is YouTube.

I prefer Vimeo as it is a Filmmaker's site. If there is nothing on TV, then there is plenty to watch on Vimeo. We are well into the 21st century. The Internet is for the most an essential tool. It would make running the Competition a lot easier if everybody uploaded their films.

The judges were about 50% pro and 50% top amateurs. For the vast majority of films, the marking was very consistent. The film that came third received 84, 85 and 86 points. Using this online system, we can ask people who know about filmmaking to judge. Giving the judges the flexibility of judging when (within a 12 day window) and where they do the judging, helps. One British judge judged his entries in Norway as he happened to be working there.

Geoff Foord from Harrow Filmmakers is taking over running the Festival next year so there could be several changes. **Your comments would be useful.**

From Peta Simmonds, Woodstock Video Club Secretary . . .

Three members and a wife attended the NTRIAC Film Festival. It was the first time the Club had entered any films and it was an interesting exercise viewing the other films submitted.

The judge's critiques were useful, but in this instance didn't say anything that the makers weren't aware of.

Concern was expressed that the Club had not received the judges' comments on any of the four other films entered. It would have been useful to have understood what was required as this would help in the future.

It was also thought that it would have been useful, participants willing, to have seen the judges' comments on the rest of the entries, as these would give guidance for future work.

It was agreed that a session would be set aside in future – not too far away, to view the winning entries so that the members could learn by discussion.

And a few depressing statistics . . .

- The Festival was attended by only 18 people who were not Council members, or directly connected to Council members.
- Of the 8 award-winning films, all but one were made by Council members.
- Of the 29 films shown, 11 came from one Club.
- There was only one Youth Entry, and this from the granddaughter of a Council member.
- Of the 19 Clubs listed in our Club Directory when published, only 5 were represented in the list of films shown, and probably in the audience.

Is there a way forward for the North Thames Region?

Your 2017/18 NTRIAC Council

President:	John Howden LACI
Chairman:	Brenda Granshaw FACI
Vice Chairman:	Christine Collins FACI
Regional Contact & Membership Secretary:	Penny Love FACI
Treasurer:	Brenda Granshaw FACI
Newsletter Editor:	John Astin FACI
KO Competition Organiser:	Brenda Granshaw FACI
Annual Competition Organiser:	Geoff Foord
Publicity Officer:	Eric Jukes
100 Club Organiser:	Bob Chester
Council Member	Alan Colegrave FACI
Training Officer:	<i>Post discontinued</i>
Youth Officer:	<i>Post discontinued</i>

★ **UNICA 2018: Blansko, Czech Republic. 1st Week in September.** ★

★ Interested? Have a look at: www.unica-web.com ★

★ **Dave Watterson FACI is the current UNICA President** ★

★ For further info, e-mail him: president@unica-web.com ★

SPOTLIGHT ON THE FUTURE



WEDNESDAY JANUARY 31st 2018

Final closing date for entries to BIAFF 2018

APRIL 13th > 15th 2018

BIAFF 2018 at the Cairn Hotel, Harrogate, HG1 2JD

Details in Film & Video Maker and on the IAC website

SEPTEMBER 2018

UNICA 2018 in Blansko in the Czech Republic

Details on: www.unica-web.com

NTR 100 CLUB

Contact: Bob Chester

Tel.: 020 8449 2004

E-Mail: robertalanchester@yahoo.co.uk

Each of the following wins £12

September 2017

33 Ken Martin (owns 1 Share)

70 Beryl Jones (1)

8 Margaret Farrer (2)

84 Tony Loader (2)

October 2017

14 Lorna Gill (2)

44 Peter Noaks (1)

3 Edward Catton-Orr (3)

99 Michael Slowe (5)

November 2017

45 Tony Loader (2)

91 Brian Palmer (1)

27 Andrew Saunders (1)

25 Martin Page (2)

December 2017

3 Edward Catton-Orr (3)

55 John Howden (1)

32 Fred Curtis (1)

73 Dr. Susan Crowther (1)

**There are still a few shares left for sale: contact Bob by
phone or e-mail (see above)**

YOU NEED TO BE IN IT TO WIN IT!

HACCA 2017

The South-East Region of the IAC (SERIAC) has a number of individual County Festival Competitions. The Kent Film Festival, for example, recently had 38 entries, 9 more than for the whole North Thames' Regional Festival Competition. There used to be an Essex Film Festival, but that disappeared a long time ago.



Judges: (l>r) Ben Simon, Tim Stannard & Eric Jukes

The only competition in our Region that is at all similar is the Hertfordshire Amateur Cine Clubs Association (HACCA), though this is for clubs, not for individual filmmakers.

There are 3 active Clubs remaining in the county, and last October, just days after the Regional Festival, Potters Bar FM took their turn to host the 2017 event between themselves, Hemel Hempstead MM and St Albans MM. Each Club is allowed up to 25 minutes screen time, and 3 judges come along to pick the best 3 films shown during the evening (in their opinion).

Another problem in this day and age is finding judges, and it often seems the same handful of

willingly volunteers are judging almost all the competitions!!

Nevertheless, Eric Jukes, Ben Simon & Tim Stannard did a competent job with their constructive comments, and in selecting the winners.

As it happened, each Club showed 4 films.

Hemel Hempstead had “**Quest for the Mystery Green Man**” (*Alan French*), “**Tree to Tree**” (*Andrew Pennycook*), and “**Black Rain, White Light**” & “**None Must Know**”, *both Club Productions*.

Potters Bar's 4 were “**Douro Discovery**” (*John Astin*), “**A Close Call**” (*The A Team*), “**Evanthia**” (*Christine Collins*) and “**Speedy**” (*Ed Kinge*).

The final quartet from St. Albans were “**The Callanish Standing Stones**” (*Alan Linfield*), “**La Petite Chapel**” (*Ted Bateman*), “**Split Screen**” (*Mike Cobert*) and “**Namib**” (*Mike Murphy*).

After considerable deliberation, the judges chose:

3rd Place: Split Screen (St. Albans MM)

2nd Place: Evanthia (Potters Bar FM)

1st Place: Namib (St. Albans MM)



St. Albans are presented with the HACCA Shield

Deadline for the next issue is Sunday February 4th 2018

Please send all contributions by e-mail & attachments to:

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