



# Jim and Mary Gill making ITV news

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Images © Herald Express

**Jim and Mary Gill, from Teign Film Makers, have been making TV news in Torquay, when they renewed their wedding vows on the town's observation wheel.**

Against Mary's wishes, Jim entered a competition to renew a couples vows on the English Riviera Big Wheel which was reopening on Torquay's sea front.

Jim, a regular contributor to SoCo News, expressed surprise at winning the competition saying, "When I first saw the competition I said I was going to put in for it but Mary was dead against it. But I said no let's go for it."

"Course when we won, she changed her tune then didn't she."

Mary said; "We are not used to all the publicity but it was lovely, really special."

The couple have been married 55 years and had their first date on 18th April 1953 and have not spent a single Saturday apart since.



Click the picture to see ITV coverage

When asked what was the secret of a happy marriage Mary replied, "Friendship as well as love, we are best friends."

Jim added, "Not to have any secrets. If you are truthful to one another right throughout your married life, you can't go very far wrong."

Over thirty friends and family helped them celebrate their special occasion, including their surviving children Tom and Susan.

The couple first met at Victoria Park Methodist Sunday School in 1948, Jim was 12 and Mary nine.

Their first real date was at the former Regal Cinema. Jim, 72, can even remember the date, April 18, 1953, when they saw the film Rough Shoot.



Mary said: "It was beautiful. We had a card from our granddaughter in Australia that reads: I am very proud you are my nana and grandpa. I hope to find true love like you have found."

SoCo News Editor, Pip Critten, commented, "I could not be happier for them. Jim has been a fantastic supporter of SoCo news."

"They epitomise what a good marriage is all about, lets hope they make 75 years."



# Editorial

**Pip Critten writes...**

Project SEARCH, the thing I do for my day job, the way I earn the cash to pay for my video toys, is in a transition period.

We have just ended our third year of operation, we are recruiting for year four and I've been making ten video's for them in my spare time.

We support young adults with Learning Disabilities gain paid employment through a year of internships at our local hospital.



Each Intern does three different internships during the course of the academic year. At their Graduation Ceremony I show a video about the work each has done during their time with us.

We have eight Interns this year doing three internships each which means

filming in 24 locations. All requiring special considerations to confidentiality as we work in a hospital.

Towards the end of the year, I film an interview with them talking about their experiences. This is edited down to exactly 3 minutes, (everyone gets the same time). I then have to match what they said in the interview to the footage shot many months earlier.

This technique also allows me to mask the jump cuts in their interview following editing.

They all do remarkably well in the interview. Especially when you consider they have lights shining on them, a camera and a microphone aimed at them from point blank range.

Very few people would volunteer for this or be able to cope with the situation, so I am rightly very proud of them.

We had also had visits from our Chair of the Board and the founder of Project SEARCH, who had come over in the year to present us with an award for our outstanding achievements. These too had to be edited up.

I now find out, with just days to go that the "system" had been changed and I could not show the films in the PowerPoint I had prepared.

Just as well really as the video projector in the board room was giving a horrible green cast to everything. Disappointing when you have spent hours trying to make things look good.

So I put everything into Show Cue System, a theatrical cuing system which I have told you about before.

A quick telephone call to Alan Barrett, Chair of Saltash Video Group, who saved the day by loaning me their video projector which shone out bright, showing skin tones as they looked in real life.



If you care to see the interns' video CV's [click here](#), they are all similar so you will get the idea. They are all up on my [YouTube Channel](#).

And to set the record straight for those who have questioned it; I do not do this professionally, it is not part of my job, I use my own kit and my own time, retaining my amateur status.

Keep Smiling,

Pip

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

## Readers Letters

Hi Pip.

Your 05 issue of SoCo News is another WINNER! As usual, of course! And, from what I hear, the reluctant SUN you cited is now actually shining on you too!!

SoCo News is so good that I guess you must always be a bit apprehensive that input for the next issue may not uphold the very high standard you have set but, miraculously, it always does!!

Re "Must Watch" in issue 05, the url listed for the Moonrise over Mt Wellington had an "s" added to the "http" which of course should not be so and needs removal to access the site – but, of course, your web-aware readership has probably worked that out and been able to access this excellent video!! But, a brief mention of this in next issue might let any who missed out enter the correct url in their search engine!

I always keenly look forward to each issue and, with summer now upon you, I'm sure it will shine even brighter in your next issue.

Cheers, Noel Leeder

Ed: In case you need the url it is <http://vimeo.com/58385453>

Hi

Something that occurs to me that might be a suitable subject of debate within the magazine. I am a recent member so it may have well come up in discussion already.

When I was in America last year I was appalled that most of the museums exhibitions banned use of camcorders. Especially so when I made the almost mandatory visit to Gracelands. A security guard was stopping visitors taking camcorders into the site. We had to lodge them in secure lockers. DSLR's and Mobile phones were permitted!

So when I'm touring the location what do I see but owners of DSLR's shooting video! On my return to the lockers I pointed out this anomaly to the guard. Of course he simply stated he was only doing what he was told and of course it was his job at stake!

Is this something that is widespread? If so have the IAC and associated groups ever tried to lobby for equality in this matter?

Yours

Mike Owens

# Chairman's Chat



## Anne Vincent

First I would like to say how sorry we are to hear that Westbury-On-Trym Photographic and Movie Club has been dissolved. I am not sure how many years the Club has been running, but certainly as long as I can remember.

SoCo would like to take this opportunity to thank the Club for their kind donation of £50.36 to SoCo being the residue of their accounts, it is very much appreciated.

Hopefully we will get some more summer weather, not exactly filming weather is it? However, members of Weymouth Cine & Video Club have been about with their cameras.

A little comedy film is in the can, and another coming up very soon, and only this week eight members filmed the Official Opening of the newly refurbished Centre of The Portland Quarry & Sculpture Trust.

Sixty local schoolchildren performed modern dance depicting "A Walk Through Time of the Stone along the Jurassic Coast".

This National Heritage Site is made up of the various ages of rock formation that stretches from Devon and along the Dorset Coastline, this is the only place in the world where all of the layers can be seen, and therefore this was an important day for the Portland Quarry & Sculpture Trust.

I am always pleased when clubs become involved in local projects, not only does it promote the clubs involved but helps to spread the word about our film making hobby which in turn may encourage others to join us.

Weymouth Cine & Video Club are looking forward to hosting the SoCo Competition on Thursday 26th September at Wellworthy Sports & Social Club, Wyke Regis, Weymouth, Commencing at 7.0pm.

Look forward to seeing you there.

All The Best, Happy Filming

Anne Vincent

## SoCo News Archive

Many thanks to

Bournemouth Video Club

Who will be hosting the News Archive:

<http://bhvideoclub.com/latest-news/soco-news-letters/>

# Rob Catt wonders...

## FALLING MEMBERSHIPS

This recurring topic of falling club memberships: it's mostly talked about in negative terms. Suggestions come up which are often no help at all, like - we should drop the word 'amateur' from our publicity. I can't see that as an incentive for a new member to join. But it does raise the question of publicity and it's worth considering seriously.

Publicity comes in many forms: Posters and Flyers - Articles to the local press - Interviews on local radio, but, best of all, word of mouth.

**Let's think about Posters** Where to put them? Many supermarkets will take A4 posters for their community service notice board. Try asking your local camera shop to display a small postcard. Ask local churches to display either of the sizes. The local Library is an obvious choice but what about your local Museum?

**The Value of Flyers** In these you can explain the virtues of the club and the services it offers to the members. It's an easy way of getting names and addresses into their hands and it's something they can walk away with.

**The Press** Often the local press will have a special column for what could be called 'community news'.

From experience, I have found that irregular contributions are more easily accepted and printed. It's also worth considering concocting a letter of thanks, or one of appreciation from a 'new member' who found a welcome in the club.

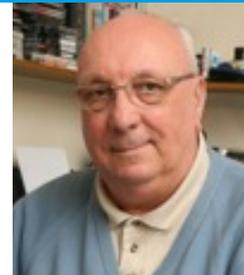
**Local Radio** A letter asking for an interview to talk about the club and it's efforts sometimes brings results, but if you've got a special showing or a competition you're more likely to get a response.

**Personal Recommendation** This is by far the best form of publicity

**Content** Remember the four major questions: Who, What, Where and When. All publicity should carry this. There's not much space on a poster to expand about the club so keep it brief and factual. With flyers, you can talk about the club programme, it's activities and who to talk to about what. With the press, please keep in mind the important point you want to make and don't be distracted by side issues. And the same things goes for radio interviews: Be friendly but know what it is that you want to say. Whichever source you choose, be enthusiastic. Enthusiasm can be very infectious.

We had a club quiz one night. Members were asked why they belonged, what they gained from the club and what they could contribute. The results were revealing. The answers to the first gave some idea what a potential new member might need. The second was valuable in thinking up club programme evenings and the third what kind of commitment to the club they may be able to make. If this little lot is followed with humour and good will, and that is of paramount importance, you stand a better chance of gaining your goal.

These are difficult times I agree, but I get disappointed when people look at situations mucky side up rather than sunny side down. A genuine positive attitude is essential with publicity. Give it a try. What have you got to loose?





## Standards Conversion Conundrum

Being new to video, I have come across a piece of useful free software that readers might not be aware of, which I have found useful and thus pass the details on.

I am heavily into blues music and last year took a holiday of a lifetime in the USA for two months.

Taking a new Panasonic HDC SD800 I shot about 12 hours which was eventually edited down to two DVD's of 1hr 45 mins, copies of which I had promised to several American and Canadian friends made during the trip.

The problem now was that although I could burn NTSC versions for friends across the pond, I was unable to play them back to check them out first! I use Adobe Premiere Elements 11.

After much fruitless searching online, I got in touch with my local IAC rep Pip Critten, who referred me to a local guy who shoots wedding and corporate video et al, who has a multi standards editing suite. He then directed me to some amazing free software, namely **VLC Media Player**. This appears to be a complete player for most types of video and first impressions are good..

Go to; <http://www.videolan.org/vlc/features.html> for a complete breakdown of all the file and system platforms it serves and a free download! However, please note they do accept donations. With the recent machinations of Adobe putting all future software on cloud for overpriced rental only, this is a refreshing change.

Mike Owens. Plymouth.

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Hi Pip,

I was a member of Teignmouth Camera Club last year - this year I have been doing some judging for them.

On Saturday 27th July I am having a premiere screening of my new film at the University of Exeter. Anyone who would like to attend would be most welcome.

The film is called "The Red Hooded Girl" and is a gothic drama based loosely on the Red Riding Hood folk tale, but with some twists. At the event I will also be screening some trailers for other upcoming films from film makers based in the Exeter area, as well as two shorts from Wingless Films and the new film from Emberlense productions - a gothic comedy called A Dark Tale.

For more information on The Red Hooded Girl, there is a Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/TheRedHoodedGirl](http://www.facebook.com/TheRedHoodedGirl).

The trailer is available to view at <https://vimeo.com/65592944>

Feel free to use any photos from the Facebook page if you would like to. If you can publicise this event I would be very grateful. You are of course most welcome to attend. The event starts with a social session at 7pm. I'll send further details to people who would like to come.

If people would like their names putting on the list, please ask them to email me, at [mark@viewfindervideo.co.uk](mailto:mark@viewfindervideo.co.uk)

Thanks,

Mark Norman

## SALTASH VIDEO GROUP



Hi Pip,

Saltash Video Group is about to celebrate their 50th Anniversary.

Strange thing is. we have never had more than twelve members all through the years of being formed. With the population of over 18,000 you would think that we would have got a few more members interested wouldn't you?

It always amazes me that where ever we go to any event in the town, you always see lots of people with video cameras, or is it iPods now? The mind boggles with all the latest technology!

Reading the I.A.C. Mag, it does seem that we are not the only Group or Club with this problem. Just go along to any Club now and most members are getting on a bit! True or false?

Ah well, that's life, they don't know what they are missing, at least the members that we do have are keen and we have a lot of fun when we go filming on a project. It's a great hobby and it would be a sad day if it all came to an end through lack of interest or joining a Club.

Our Group have won many awards through the years and will keep on filming till we all drop, that's for sure.

We will be celebrating our 50 years by having a Dinner. We wish everyone in SOCO out there, keep filming, and as Pip always says, Keep Smiling.

Alan Barrett, Chairman

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Hi Pip.

I rather like the snippet below summarising pretty well just what is wrong with Oz and the UK right now. Yes, Ayn Rand got it right in 1950, so maybe it has always been the same and she saw then the way we were destined to always be screwed whatever we did!!!! Pretty dismal outlook, but Nil desperandum, we still have our much-loved hobby and your great SoCo News to talk about it all and pass on those gems which helps each of us enjoy it even more!

On February 2, 1905 was born in St Petersburg, Alissa Zinovievna Rosenbaum, the Russian-born American philosopher and writer better known in the world of letters under the pseudonym of Ayn Rand .She died in March 1982 in New York. Never more appropriate to today's world were her words penned in 1950:

"When to give what you produce, you need to get permission from those who produce nothing;

When you see that the money flows to those who do not traffic with goods but with favours;

When you perceive that many rich are produced by bribery and influences rather than by their work, and that the laws don't protect you against them, but on the contrary, they are the ones that are protected against you;

When you discover that corruption is rewarded and honesty becomes a self-sacrifice, then you can say, without fear of being wrong, that your society is doomed."

Ayn Rand 1950 (Translated from Spanish)

Cheers. Noel Leeder



## Alan Creamer FACI

reports

### Westbury on Trym

#### Photographic and Movie Club

We're sad to announce that the Westbury on Trym Photographic and Movie Club have had to close their doors after 49 successful years as a club. They were hoping to continue a little longer to reach the 50th, but sadly this was not possible.

As they are now down to just a small handful of members it was regretfully agreed that they finally call it a day - and this they did just a couple of weeks ago.

Most - if not all - of their members supported SoCo for many years visiting the various events that were organised - and in particular the SoCo Weekender - which again has had to go by the board for the time being.

They made their final decision because most of them are now - as they politely put it - "in their declining years" (the oldest member is a 98 year old lady) - therefore one can understand why they made this decision.

On winding up the club, they decided that what was left in the club funds should be donated to SoCo as a gesture of their goodwill and thanks for the help and support they have received over their many years. We are pleased to let you know that just a little in excess of £50 has been donated and sent to the treasurer of SoCo. We thank them very much for this kind thought and wish them all well in the future.

I strongly suspect that we shall see one or two of them at future SoCo events where they will be made especially welcome.

Once again a very heartfelt thanks to you all.

Alan Creamer FACI

**48 hr**

The Reading Fringe

**48 HOUR FILM CHALLENGE**

**& NETWORKING FILM NIGHT**

**A beginning, middle and end. 5 minutes long. Made in 48 hours**  
**Are you up to the challenge?**

A night of films by local film makers with a chance to meet and network with actors and directors or just enjoy the show!  
 Complete with a complimentary glass of bubbly!

**For more info or for tickets to the Film Night, visit...**  
[www.readingfringefestival.co.uk/team-tv-48hour-competition/](http://www.readingfringefestival.co.uk/team-tv-48hour-competition/)  
 Or  
[Facebook.com/Reading48h](https://www.facebook.com/Reading48h)

## Rob Catt writes....

### DEVIZES VIDEO CLUB TRI BATTLE COMPETITION

We were a bit short of videos that members would be prepared to enter in the Devizes Competition.

Under pressure from the secretary I reluctantly agreed to enter my video about the St Paul's area of Chippenham. I am the first to admit that it is not competition material.

I feel that competitions can frequently be destructive in their tone. I have since been passed the judge's comments and my reservations have been fully justified.

The three judges all seemed to find the piece interesting to a wildly varying degree, but whereas one found the structure of the piece 'good', others found that the video 'jumped about a bit'.

One said of the editing 'Fine coordinated flow around the subject matter' whereas another wrote, 'shot sequencing confusing'. I could go on but the question arose in my mind, were they all watching the same video?!!!

I was handed three pieces of paper containing the judges comments. One was neat and clearly legible. Strangely this person gave the highest score!

They said that the video had good structure and that the photography was good. The next wrote in rather uneven block lettering which over spilled the space available, making some of the comments difficult to read.

This person also insisted, in large letters, that I should have used a tripod. (My video was all handheld - fly on the wall stuff) and the last one found the video grainy in places and that the video did not flow.

See, what I've done is to criticize the judges writing and comprehension as if I were judging them.

It takes into no account the surface they had to write on or their ability to compose anything resembling encouragement in their comments.

Just what the judges intended to achieve, or the competition organisers intended, I have no idea.

Candidly, I couldn't care less. But there are newer members of the Chippenham Club who are keen to enter competitions in order to get constructive comments to help them develop their video making. On this showing - fat chance. New members need encouragement, but then, don't we all?

And if you think that this is sour grapes, my little film has been snapped up by the local museum and described as a 'capsule in time' of the development of part of the town and they have offered help and information for the making of a similar video of another part of the town.

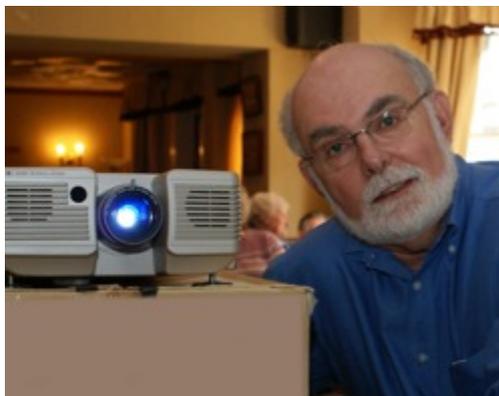
See, that's where my satisfaction comes from.

Competitions? Pah!!

Rob Catt

# Phil Marshman on ....

## Annual Regional Film and Video Competition



It time to draw your attention to our Annual Regional Film and Video Competition.

I see this competition as a way to try out your news films on judges from another IAC region in possible preparation to enter BIAFF 2014. I

t's also a way of gauging your efforts against other SoCo members and get some, hopefully constructive advice in the process.

Closing date for the 2013 SoCo Regional Film & Video Competition is August 26th.

Only open to Members and Affiliated Clubs in the SoCo Region.

On Thursday September 26th the Weymouth Club will be hosting 2013 SoCo Regional Film & Video Awards Show starting at 19.00 (7pm) at the

Wellworthy Sports & Social Club, Dumbarton Road, Weymouth, Dorset.

Further details will be on the Weymouth Club [website](#).

In the last edition of this magazine there was an entry form for the Mermaid and Mini Mermaid competitions which was put in by mistake.

The forms should have been sent to me as Huey Walker and the Bournemouth Club will be representing our region in those competitions.

Their films were judged as our entries at last years SoCo Weekender.

This year as we are not having the SoCo Weekender, I will announce the arrangements for the Top of the Clubs, Dolphin and Baby Dolphin competitions shortly.

Phil Marshman

## Rules for SoCo Annual Regional Competition 2013

1. All entries and forms must be received by **August 5th, 2013**. No entries will be accepted after that date.
2. The competition is open to Members, affiliated clubs and all schools in the SoCo IAC Region.
3. Entry fee is £5 including 2nd class return postage. All cheques and postal orders should be made payable to IAC SOUTHERN COUNTIES REGION.
4. A **Club** entry must indicate in the credits that the club was involved in the production of the film/video.
5. The category for **Individual Professional/ Semi-Professional Members** who earn an income from producing videos. Entries must not be an example of their professional work. **Film-Media Student** entries are those made as a sponsored student project. The spirit of Rule 7 still applies..
6. All films and videos should be clearly marked with the owners name and address. Please do not stick labels of any kind on VCD, DVD or Blu-ray discs.
7. An amateur film/video is deemed to be one made for love, with no financial reward, and with out professional assistance other than processing, copying or the physical process of sound transfer.
8. Copyright clearance is the responsibility of the entrant. Members of clubs are reminded that they are NOT covered for use of copyright music under their club licence, only club productions are covered. This does not of course apply when the maker has his/her own licence.
9. All entries must be capable of being used on standard equipment, and at standard running speeds.
10. Entries must have be made in the last 5 years.
11. High Definition entries can be on Mini-DV tape, AVCHD file or Blu-ray disc.
12. Only one entry per reel, tape or disc with at least 10 seconds of leader and trailer.
13. There is no limit to the number of entries, but each must be entered on a separate entry form.  
Extra forms may be photocopied and completed IN FULL.
14. Every care will be taken of the entrant's property, but neither the IAC or IAC Southern Counties Region can accept responsibility for any loss or damage. All entries will be returned as soon as possible.
15. Entries will be shown on a widescreen in the orgiinal aspect ratio.
16. Entries will only be acknowledged if a stamped addressed envelope is supplied with the entry.
17. The decision of the judges is final. Judges comments sheets will be returned with the entry.

Entries should be sent by **August 26th, 2013** to:

Mr. P. Marshman FACI., 115 Dursley Road, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 0NR

Please mark your package **SoCo Competition Entry**.

The Awards Show will be on

**Thursday September 26th**  
**starting at 19.00 (7pm)**  
**Wellworthy Sports & Social Club,**  
**Dumbarton Road. Weymouth. Dorset.**

**Entry Form for SoCo Regional Film and Video Competition 2013**  
**One form per entry**

Title: .....

Running Time: ..... minutes

**VIDEO Entry Format**

Soundtrack (delete as appropriate) Linear or HiFi Mono or HiFi Stereo  
 Picture (delete as appropriate) Colour or B&W or Colour & B&W

**Screen Format** (All) (delete as appropriate) Standard or Widescreen or Letterboxed or Pillarboxed

Your Name: .....

Club Name (if appropriate) : .....

Address: .....

.....

Post Code: ..... Phone No: .....

E-mail: ..... IAC Membership No: .....

**Copyright Declaration**

The music and visuals used in the movie titled .....  
 is of a non-copyright nature, and that the movie is a bona fide amateur production.

Signed (film maker) .....  
 or (for music) M.C.P.S Licence No. ....

**Showing Notes** We wish to present your entry in the way you would present it yourself. Does the sound start before the picture? Will we know when it has finished?  
 .....

The competition is an open one, but some awards are only awarded to certain types of films—please circle any of the following if any apply to your entry.

**Individual Professional/ Semi-Professional/ Film-Media Student (See rule 5)**

**Club Entry**      **Novice Entry**      **Youth Entry**  
 (See rule 4)      (Maker not won an award above club level)      (Maker under 18 years of age)

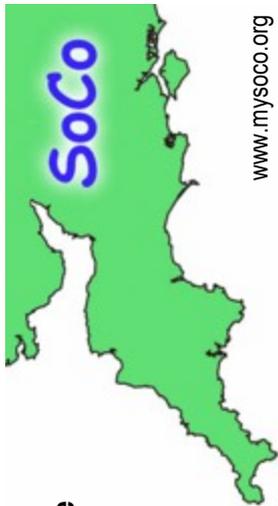
Winning entries will be featured on the SoCo Roadshow discs if you agree by ticking the box

Camera(s) Used \_\_\_\_\_  
 Edited on \_\_\_\_\_



The Film & Video Institute

**Southern Counties Competitions**



www.mysoco.org

**Weymouth Video Club**  
 will be hosting the

**2013 SoCo REGIONAL**

**FILM & VIDEO AWARDS SHOW**

**on Thursday September 26th**  
**starting at 19.00 (7pm) at the**  
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Last year I was involved in BIAFF which involved making up programmes of films from all over the world. This allows me with confidence to say that we can now deal with HD entries. However, if you do not make films in HD don't be put off because it's the content that counts. Rubbish is still rubbish in HD but sharper.

Don't forget that there is a vacancy for Competition Officer as I am retiring.

Phil Marshman FACI

# AUNTY MAGGIE'S REMEDIES

## LEE PRESCOTT FACI.



No matter what you think or think not, the recent demise and funeral of Lady Margaret Thatcher P.M. re-elected for three successive terms raised emotionally everything between laudations and hackles!

Amongst these for everyone were memories both good and bad....



Leaving politics completely aside and totally from the stand point of a film maker, that is myself, I would take you back to the Summer of 1984 AD. (Now there's a subject year to conjure with)!

That Summer I motored with a colleague from wildest Gloucestershire via Calais, the Paris Periferique, (madder than the M25), the Autoroute du Soleil to St. Raphael, Frejus, Cannes, Nice and Monte Carlo on the Cote d'Azur. All of these places were of mesmerising interest, particularly film wise.

Along that sundrenched coast were many sights of abiding interest not the least of which were the multitudinous sun bronzed athletic almost "beach dressed" wannabe look alike Bridgitte Bardot's. The constant wearing of "shades" in the daytime was an obligatory fashion accessory if one was to see the magnificent sights and film clearly and in focus!



We motored to and spent time in all of the places named above, also inland exploring "The Massive" and the French villages way off the beaten tourist track. In these we were always "greeted" with more suspicion than a Gloster visitor to The Royal Forest of Dean! No one spoke les Anglais. Ordering local (terrible) wine and food in village "hostelries" – most not above the bare boards, sawdust and spittoon variety - proved somewhat difficult with our "Pidgin French". The village dogs were all voracious and best ignored. The children, as always everywhere, treated us with glee, curiosity as if we were aka The Pied Piper(s) of Hamelin.



We always obtained our shots but as soon as the camera appeared, the adults disappeared behind slammed closed doors. Not so the children, who, as untainted Kids everywhere

do, clustered around and even on the car – until gathered up by a few glaring pub customers and ushered away. Looking at some of them the thought did enter my head just how simple it would be to disappear down one of those atrocious French pisse trous! We returned to the coast.

A decision was made to travel by train along the coast from St. Raphael across the Franco / Italian border to Ventimiglia the Italian town which sits thereon. This was also of much interest more so to see, from the SNCF train, the mean back streets of the towns featured in the glossy brochure pages!



I had decided to start filming on arrival at the Ventimiglia Rail Station. Stepping from the train I brought my camera up to eye level. I had just pressed to button when my colleague uttered a four letter expletive as my arms were grabbed, both sides, from behind by two gesticulating, jabbering, armed Italiano Carabinieri.



They tried to grab my camera but unfortunately one of them suddenly found himself hopping around with a rather painful shin! To the accompaniment of what was probably, in English, unprintable utterings we were arrested and marched off to "The Office"!

This room was divided in half by a white line painted across the floor. The "Western" half was French, the "Eastern" half was Italian! Twice more the "shin boy" tried to take my camera from me but I hung onto it and told him to "go away" in a brand of English understood the world over! Not understanding them nor they us, (my Italian being limited only to words sung by Pavarotti and Co.), one of them stomped out, the other drew his pistol no doubt for self protection! Stomper returned with a French Gendarme. He addressed us in Franci lanuage. I replied – then he re-addressed us in perfect BBC Oxford English. Apparently we were in the Customs Office. M. Gendarme said: "Do you not know that you have committed a criminal offence under Italian law"? I replied: "No, what offence"? M. Gendarme said: "It is a criminal offence to photograph or film an Italian Railway Station, as it is in England"! (This was before the current terror campaigns). He added: "Your camera is forfeit and you are liable to a fine for injuring the Carabinieri Officer and a possible gaol sentence"! I said: "You must be joking I did not touch the officer, his long legs got in the way"! I suspected my colleague needed a change of underwear at this stage)!!!

Suddenly M. Gendarme asked for our passports – the old blue ones with the gold coat of arms on the front. We handed them over, he glanced through them. He Said: "Queen Elizabeths' Coat of Arms, do you know Margaret Thatcher your Prime Minister" and winked? I said "yes, of course"! He held up our passports, tapped them, jabbered to the two Carabinieri a la Italiano.



Suddenly they bowed to us and literally ran from the office! I asked what he'd said, he replied that he'd told them we were we friends of Margaret Thatcher and added "thick twits, I wish they'd stick to their spaghetti and ravioli, oh, and do not film on the Railway Station". I thanked him and offered him some "notes". He said "bribery and corruption too" We shook hands and he performed that French act of "kissing on both cheeks" and the cash somehow passed into his hand. He laughed. I still got some footage by holding the camera by my right hip! We went into Ventimiglia, but that's another wild true story.

Lee Prescott

# Ian Simpson The Frustrations of the Amateur Videographer



**Ian Simpson**  
(Wollongong Camera Club  
Movie Makers, NSW, Australia)

In this hobby of movie making have you ever created a video that you thought, at the time, was really good only to find that your teenage children or grandchildren ridicule it, or that in your club competition, the judges mark it down? I have.

Aside from the disappointment, there is the realisation that either your technical standards or your creativity or both are not up to that of your peers. This realisation can come to you as a shock after a poor performance in a competition or it can come to you, as it did to me, over a period of time.

In my case, for years I reconciled my poor performance in competitions as being a consequence of the genre of videos I like to make; documentaries. I rationalised that comedies, animations and dramas if well-made would always beat a well-made documentary. I fooled myself for years with the argument that audiences like to be entertained first and informed second.

This self-deception can go on until something pierces this deception balloon. In my case it was an article in the electronic magazine *f11 Magazine*. This is a web based monthly magazine that originates from New Zealand for the still photographers. One article in the September 2012 issue caught my eye. It was by Tony Bridge and it was entitled, *Clarity and Megapixels*. <http://issuu.com/f11magazine/docs/issue14-september2012?mode=window&backgroundColor=%23222222>



In this article Tony began with a similar question to the one I posed above; why, with the same equipment, couldn't he produce the same startling images as a fellow photographer? His answer to this question was that he did not have the same

"clarity of vision" as the other photographer. Tony then went on to say what was NOT *clarity of vision* but he wasn't too clear on what was *clarity of vision*. Translating his concept of what is not *clarity of vision* into the moving image domain, clarity is not the content of the video; nor is it the freshness or originality of the movie; nor is it its use of special effects, nor the slickness of editing; nor how well integrated the sound track; nor is it the quality of the images; nor the power of the non-linear editing software; nor even the number of awards the movie may have won in competitions.

For Tony *clarity of vision* is when the photographer captures an image that "resonates" with the viewer; where the image creates an emotional experience in the viewer. All of this is very subjective; evoking emotions, spiritual resonating, speaking to the inner soul, communicating to the individual "clearly and honestly." Can there be no quantification of this subjectivity?

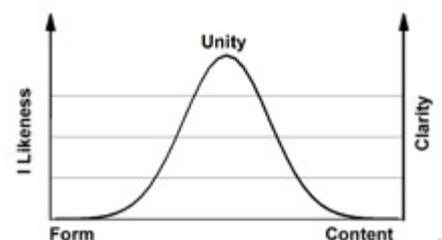
## Does Clarity of Vision mean Unity of Content and Form?

We, like our still photography brethren, often approach the hobby of photography and movie making from the wrong end. Encouraged by advertisements, we blindly hope that good movies will come from the best equipment or the latest editing program or the best collection of special effects. We subconsciously hope that good equipment will make up for our poor creativity. But deep down we know they won't and the results of each competition confirm this.

Ralph Hattersley in an article in *Popular Photography* many decades ago used the analogy of what makes us human to try to explain how a good photograph is achieved or in our case how a good movie is made. He said that although you may have all the parts that make a human being it is only when you put them together in the correct way than you have a person. Thus for Hattersley, a great picture happens when form (the correct 'composition' of the human body) is perfectly matched with the content (the parts of the human body). When this perfect matching of *form* and *content* occurs then according the Hattersley you have "unity." So perhaps this "unity" of Hattersley is the same as Bridge's "clarity of vision"? The Figure 1 presents this idea diagrammatically.

For us videographers *form* is what is assessed in most club movie judging sheets with the final video mark often the sum of these *form* categories. So what are these *form* categories? Well they can be camerawork, effective use of sound, editing and titles. The *content* of the video, however, rarely gets attention. Whilst the successful mixing of *form* and *content* elements in a movie to achieve *unity* is never assessed or quantified. However, it is this *unity* that gives meaning to a movie. It is what makes us viewers say, "now that was a great movie!"

However, according to Tony Bridge *clarity of vision* does not come from *form* or *content* components per se, but *clarity of vision* requires simultaneously a clarity of approach, a clarity of content, a clarity of technique and a clarity of expression. In other words, *clarity of vision* is the *unity* achieved between *form* and *content*.



## How can Videographers improve their form?

As *form* is skills based, the question becomes how can videographers improve their skills in this hobby? One intriguing answer comes from the work of psychologist K Anders Ericsson who, from a study of young violinists and pianists, found that those who succeeded in later life were those who practiced consistently for years and years to develop their playing technique.

He found that all of the elite performers had put in 10,000 hours of hard work in developing their skills. Then Malcolm Gladwell in his book, *Outliers: The Story of Success*, generalised this finding to other skills by stating that if you want to be an expert in your field (or hobby) you have to have enough drive, passion and endurance to put in at least 10,000 hours of learning and practice of your hobby. So to consistently achieve greatness in the hobby of movie making you have to spend at least a decade developing the required skills.

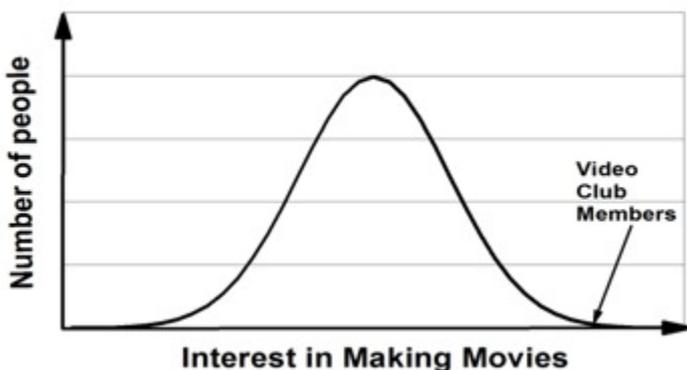
How do you fill in those 10,000 hours? Matt Bloom in an article in the new UK magazine, *Film Maker* April 2013, has a suggestion. You set yourself the task of making one video per month for 2 years. He advised that you show these videos to only people you can trust, that you don't put them in competitions, just learn from each one. You will make lots of mistakes but then you will learn from those mistakes. You aim to improve your skills with each new video.

Another way of improving your skills is what David Fuller has pointed out in a previous article in SoCo News. That is, to get involved in club movie making projects. I have found that often these activities take you far away from your comfort zone and dump you into new environments. These environments often require new skills to overcome the challenges faced. Such challenges maybe the use of a green screen; the setting up of artificial lighting; of running your camera on manual; of setting the correct white balance; of pull focus; etc.

## How can Videographers create creativity?

Also in the April issue of *Film Maker*, Ian Hunt in the article, *The Student Perspective*, had a suggestion for developing the *creative* side of movie making. He advised every serious movie maker to have a scrapbook (real or virtual) where you jot down, "things that interest or inspire you. This can be anything, examples could be photographs of people, materials or just ideas for colours." Others argue that creativity requires the brain to be fully disengaged and relaxed. Further it is suggested that when you do mundane activities, such as mowing the grass or taking a shower, then great ideas can suddenly surface in your consciousness. Another way of stimulating creativity is the challenge of making a video to a set subject or theme; as used successful by many video clubs.

## The Normal Distribution of Movie Makers



Now let's consider who are the kind of people who would consider putting so much time into a hobby. The graph below shows the distribution of people who are, to some degree, interested in shooting moving images.

On the extreme left are those who would capture the odd few seconds of moving images on their smart phones. Such footage is only intended to be viewed a few times then deleted or is sent or used on a social media site.

The middle group has the highest number of movie makers but they just capture footage on anything from a smart phone to a digital camera for viewing on the TV screen at home and possibly for storage on their computer or tablet. This group considers editing of footage to be, at best, sorting into birthday and Christmas files on their computer.

Finally there are those movie makers on the extreme right of the graph; these are the people you find in video clubs or are media students or are trying to become semi-professionals.

The interesting point to note is the small number people at this end of the graph compared to those in the middle of the graph. As a club, the Wollongong Camera Club Movie Makers, we learned this sobering fact when we held a beginners course in February 2009. Although many of the general public were interested in making movies and wanted to attend the course, only about 4% of the total attendees wanted to develop to their skills further by joining the club. That is, it is only those in the extreme right of the graph who have sufficient devotion to the hobby to put years and years into developing their skills.

The implication of this for video clubs is that; *long term club membership comes from that very small proportion of interested movie makers in the right tail of the distribution and NOT from the high numbers of people in the middle of the graph. Club membership will always tend to be small but in proportion to the size of the local population.*

Ian Simpson



# Phil Marshman on ....



## The Media Player

Starting 2012 the Frome Five Minute Festival has been presented using a media player. This year we had 44 entries and they were all shown.

This is not so daunting as it might sound. Getting the films in the right order helps a lot. The programme is usually arranged and fixed before the judges come up with the results. The films are simply arranged to produce what we think is the best show.

It was Fromes Chairman who wanted us to have a media player. He thought that it would be handy to have one to put the clubs archive on and then we would have access to all of our films in one place. The Winborne club had the same idea and until 2012 they were the only locally that had ant experience of using one, and they had realised that storing a video collection wasn't the only thing you could do with them.

Things moved forward with BIAFF 2012. This was to be the first time that the Southern Counties region had put this event on. BIAFF is a weekend event and on the Saturday four cinemas are required. There are four programmes in each of about 45 minutes duration. Winborne, Bournemouth, Frome and Weymouth were each to operate a cinema and had to prepare each show themselves. Winborne hosted a meeting to decide how we were going to achieve this. By this time Bournemouth had acquired a media player, but I don't believe that any of us had put on a show with one at the time. We decided to make up each programme complete. but in the light of experience this proved to have been the wrong way to go.

BIAFF was in April, but before that we had the opportunity to gain some experience of using the player presenting our 2012 FMF. Frank Lake had been studying our player and had discovered that you could make up a play list instead of making up one file for each programme. So we experimented by setting up part one as a play list and part two as a single file. In

making a single file with a programme over 45 minutes you can start running out of memory.

If the programme has a mix of HD and SD it has to be in HD. Making up a play list avoids these two problems straight a way. Although you may have to convert a film to a format the player can read, ours will not read AVI files, memory is not a problem. Faulty files are easily replaced and if you wish you can easily rearrange the running order of the files if required. As each file is read as it plays SD and HD can be mixed together and if something should go wrong the programme can be easily restarted from the desired point.

The BIAFF programmes had animated inserts between the films that were paused. This method makes it suitable for the Teign Cup, or Tivertons Challenge Shield where there are pauses to allow the judges to make notes. Each film has to be trimmed up with about two seconds of leader and none at the end as the player will put in a black gap whilst it finds the next film on the play list. This will allow about five seconds clapping time, but this can be adjusted by varying the leaders and trailers. This year this method was used to present to Five Minute.

The play list is organised by making a folder on your computer into which are placed the films. You have to name the films so that they will play back in the right order - numerical or alphabetical - so that if you do alter the running order you have to rename the films affected. These folders are then dragged and dropped onto the players hard drive, but this where our player is different to Wimborne and Bournemouth's because the plug in a hard drive into theirs whereas ours has one built in.

We still make up a backup DVD - JUST IN CASE, but so far our player has proved to be pretty reliable. It's about the size of a set top box and has all the same connections as a DVD or Bluray player, so all you have to do is plug it in. At competitions you can have all the entries packed up ready to give back to the attending entrants.

So at Frome we can recommend a media player as a means of putting on a show. Clubs that go out to do shows in other venues will find it ideal especially as you can put several programmes on it and be ready for any audience.



The Reading Film and Video Makers, now in its 55th year, has for the first time in its history appointed a lady Chairperson.



Karen Cripps has been a member of RFVM for several years. Her particular interest is in script writing, and until her recent appointment as Chairperson has also been the programme co-ordinator for the film club.

Karen will be assisted by a new Secretary as David Goddard takes over the role from Francis Crossley who steps down after many years.

The members would like thank Francis who did an amazing job as secretary for many years, and thankfully will still be around to advise.

Karen's role as Chair is traditionally a 3 year commitment, and members look forward to her keeping the club fresh with new ideas over the next 3 years.

Anne Massey who takes over Karen's role as Programme Co-ordinator, as well as the promotional side of things, has produced a new promotional film which features on the home page of Readings award winning website.

The short film provides a visual insight into what goes on at the film club, and Anne's aim was to represent the mix of ages who attend the film club.



<https://vimeo.com/67158720>

Both Karen and Anne hope to see many more female members join the club this year in what has traditionally been a male dominated environment.



## NORTH V SOUTH COMPETITION 2013

This year, the North v South Competition celebrates its 39<sup>th</sup> year.

Unfortunately, there is a real danger that this could be its last year unless we get more support in both the number of entries and the number of people attending. The past 3 years has seen a substantial decline in both.

The organisers are determined that this will not happen and to this end are introducing some changes in the hope that these will reverse that trend.

The major change is that there will no longer be a Northern or Southern Heat. Instead, there will only be a Grand Final hosted simultaneously by [Altrincham Video Society](#) and [Orpington Video & Film Makers](#) on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> November.

Judging will remain the same with the top 5 Northern films competing against the top 5 Southern Films for the 'John Wright Trophy'. The 'Harry Adams Trophy' will be presented to the runner-up. All entries will receive judge's comments. This year, the final judges will be asked to put **all** of the top 10 films in an 'order of merit'.

In addition to the top 10 films being screened at both shows, the remainder of the Northern entries and as many Southern entries as time permits will be screened at the Northern show. At the Southern show, the remainder of the Southern entries and as many Northern entries as time permits will be screened.

There will be no announcement prior to the show as to how any film has fared in the competition and the program on the day will simply list the films entered.

At the Southern show, the first session will be a screening of all the Southern entries that did not make the top 5 alternating with as many Northern entries that did not make their top 5 as time will allow.

It is only once these have been screened that entrants will be aware if their entry has made it through to the final 10. After a refreshment break, the top 10 films will be screened in the 10 down to 1 'order of merit' as decided by the final judges.

creening the films in this manner will ensure that the suspense of who has won will be kept going as long as possible.

The entry fee remains at £10.00 per film and there is no limit to the number of films you can enter. Don't forget...each entry entitles you to 2 free tickets for the Grand Final itself.

It is hoped that having only one festival day, a guarantee that your film will be screened as well as a new format for the show itself will encourage you to enter a film this year and to attend on the day.

The theme for this year is '**REVOLUTION**' and an entry form and full rules can be found on our website (Please click on the link below).

[www.n-v-s.co.uk](http://www.n-v-s.co.uk)

**The closing date for entries is Friday 11<sup>th</sup> October.** I look forward to receiving your entry(s) and to seeing you in November.

Thank you for your support.

Mike Coad (on behalf of Orpington Video & Film Makers)

### NvS Rules

1. The "North v South" competition is for amateur/non-commercial movie-making groups or clubs based in the UK. There will be two sections, one for the north and one for the south. The boundary is an east-west line drawn through Stoke-on-Trent.

2. Groups are invited to enter an original film to a theme selected by the previous year's judges. Entries may be the work of one group member but must be entered by a named, established club or group. Multiple entries from one group are acceptable but a film must not have been entered into this competition before.

3. The host club for each section will be responsible for collating the movies, arranging the venue and choosing judges for the pre-judging to select five entries from each section to go forward to the final. The ten selected movies will then compete for the John Wright Trophy, with the runner up receiving the Harry Adams Trophy. The result will be announced at simultaneous final presentations on a mutually agreed date.

4. The organisers retain the right to make copies of any entries for distribution to other amateur clubs and to provide

copies for the IAC library. The copyright of all entries remains with the producers.

5. It is the responsibility of each entrant to clear all copyright material. The organisers reserve the right to request proof of such clearance.

6. Entries must conform to the set theme and must not exceed twenty minutes running time (black to black). Each entry must be on a separate disc or tape and be preceded by ten seconds of black and silence.

7. Entries must be the original work of members of the submitting group. Use of actors who are not group members is acceptable.

8. The final judging will be arranged alternately by the northern and southern host clubs. Final judging will be by an independent panel of judges who will be asked to provide written comments on each entry.

9. Submission of an entry will be deemed to be an acceptance of these rules. Any queries should be referred to the organisers

# Talking Point



## LEE PRESCOTT FACI. Writes...

Currently the present Chairman, Mr. Ivor Rose is attempting to undertake an exercise designed to increase the IAC membership and seeking suggestions and thoughts thereon.

All grist to his elbows but there's nothing new in that. It is however more important now more-so as membership continues to fall, due also to the major age range and demise of, I would suggest, the membership generally.

As I see it there are at least five main problems:-

1. The existing "Bus Passes", "Winter Fuel Classes", do make up the majority of members. This, coupled with the attitude of some of them, puts some / many people off, certainly Youngsters. So, as it stands, the IAC dying out is inevitable.

2. Some members publicly express themselves as if we are all in receipt of "bankers bonuses", thus giving the wrong impression that this is a necessary adjunct to being a member!

3. Whilst some older or established folk might have such an "income", cameras and equipment, many such people are just not interested in the set up of the IAC. (i.e. "no, it's not the sort of thing for me"! In other words as two very well known past members said to me.... "It's Irrelevant")!

4. Amongst many however who might become interested, the foregoing attitudes leave our "penniless" (media) Students and other people as a possible recruiting ground but with particular reference to paragraph 2 above and to the fact that where Students are concerned, virtually all their places of "education" provide everything for FREE, means perhaps the word "irrelevant" is applicable. Independently or otherwise they just do not need the IAC.

5. Again and again: As to the IAC's ideas of judging / commenting on people's work, is often below par and at times still flagrantly insulting to film makers. **Yes it is.** Further on this subject, listening too one recent "team member" involved and about "the procedure" and looking at some results of the IAC's "flagship" BIAFF – or whatever its name is changed to – only shows a lack of co-operative thinking and judges abilities. Proof:- This is often borne out by audience's major reactions severally, to many films. NOTE: Any individual in any Team cannot think other than as part of the Team! (Also read the term Jury in place of Team)!

So before any thoughts at all are given to any moves to increase membership I suggest that all of the foregoing are CORRECTED! In simple words the hierarchy needs to get the IAC house in order first.

Finally:- AFFILIATED CLUBS:-

Do these decrease or affect reductions to individual membership?

I know of clubs with memberships varying (apparently) from 70 to the more usual 12 or so.

Consider the following:-

I am independently told that the current Affiliated Club Membership is 247.

Therefore:  $247 \times \text{£}40.50\text{pa fee} = \text{£}10,003.50.$

$247 \times *12 = 2964 \times \text{£}37.50 \text{ fee} = \text{£}111,150.00$

If then the lower figure of say \*12 members per Affiliated Club were prevailed upon to individually join the IAC, (obviously the interest is there but I've often found that few are individual members as their attitude is "what's the point as the Club is Affiliated"), the IAC would not only increase its membership but also its income, based on the above figures, by approximately  $\text{£}101,146.50\text{pa}!!!$

"\$64,000 Question":- Is it time to do away with the Affiliated Club membership class – or is the risk too great?

Impossible you say? Well, so was the bouncing bomb in WW2 until it was MADE to work!



Web cam footage reveals why one man in Gloucester received four hundred extra cans of tuna in his online shopping delivery.

Picture via Lee Prescott



We hear, "Health & Safety gone mad" all the time now a days. Here we see an Indian cameraman reducing the risk when trying to film a snake. Clearly done his Risk Assessment.

Picture © IndianFunnyPictures.com

# One To Watch

## Selected Movies on the WWW



Hi all.

WHAT A PLAYMATE! I've seen rather sad performing bears strolling around the streets in Turkey and in a few other countries, but never a totally untethered and very large bear seemingly so happy to play intelligently with a human buddy like this! Amazing footage!

Click on the url below – and be astonished!

<http://wimp.com/awesomebear/>



This is quite astonishing computer animation! Giraffes in action - diving & swimming.

Noel Leeder.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o8Q-bnK7SJE>



Sistine Chapel

Use left mouse button and drag your arrow in the direction of the part you wish to see.

In the lower left screen, click on the plus (+) to zoom in, or on the minus (-) to zoom out. (or use wheel on the mouse)

The choir is thrown in free!

Move the arrow and you will see every part of the chapel.

[http://www.vatican.va/various/cappelle/sistina\\_vr/index.html](http://www.vatican.va/various/cappelle/sistina_vr/index.html)



New York Painting

Necessary to watch to the very end.

[http://www.youtube.com/embed/23bA\\_5yadx](http://www.youtube.com/embed/23bA_5yadx)



Here's an interesting proposition if you're filming wild life – birds especially. Laser gun sight!

Can be adapted to mount on a video camera - not one of those pidgy little things though I don't think.

Should be better than waffling about with a viewfinder or LCD fold out screen - especially in bright sun. I have to confess I haven't yet tried it.

[http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B003NFI092/ref=pd\\_lpo\\_k2\\_dp\\_sr\\_1?pf\\_rd\\_p=15](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B003NFI092/ref=pd_lpo_k2_dp_sr_1?pf_rd_p=15)



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## Membership Changes

**New & Rejoined:**

**Change of address:**

**Cancelled / Removed:**

Mr Peter Phelan, Truro

Mr P. Wooding, Ashleworth

**Resigned:**

Mr James Gracey, Reading

Basingstoke Video Film Makers

**Struck off:**

**Deceased:**

**Moved into SoCo Region:**

**Please note:** Articles and opinions published in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Editor, SoCo Committee or the IAC. The Institute of Amateur Cinematographers is a Company Limited by Guarantee, incorporated in 1932, registered in England No. 00269085

# SoCo Diary Dates

To have your event featured here, drop an email to [pip@pipcritten.com](mailto:pip@pipcritten.com)

For a full list of national and international events

[Click Here](#)

The [mysoco.org](http://mysoco.org) site has  
closed down.

I  
The

SoCo News

Archive is now hosted by

Bournemouth Video Club

Go to

<http://bhvideoclub.com/latest->

[news/soco-news-letters/](http://bhvideoclub.com/latest-news/soco-news-letters/)



**Copy Deadline** for Sep - Oct 2013 Issue

To reach Editor by 15th August 2013