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Pip Critten
Writes...

Chairman's Chat & Editorial

You have just one month left to complete your entries for the Soco Film Competition 2022.

The main competition is for all the films that have been entered with a maximum length of 20 minutes including credits.

The national Mermaid competition has not run in the last few years but SoCo Council decided to keep those categories in our competition. These are short "light hearted" films of one minute or ten minute maximum duration.

As they say you have to be in it to win it. Even if you are not placed you will still get an objective critique from our experienced judges Tom and Tim. [sounds like a double act from the seventies!]

They both have extensive experience in judging and are regular judges in the BIAFF international competition.

I am delighted that they have both kindly agreed to judge again this year and the Council is so grateful for the

many hours that they put into their decisions and written reviews.

Even if you hadn't thought of entering you still have time to film and edit before the end of the month

SORRY

You can only enter if you are in the SoCo Region, sorry out of area readers.

So here are the links you will need:

The Rules (also on page 3)

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AkZl58orC7vUzs6H50v4A-zTZVvKHA0/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=102468290246160041191&rtopof=true&sd=true>

The Entry Form

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSesq0SVo2KuavZ3r8fLLBstlgzafB3TrK72VI5FN2bgrgxOwQ/viewform?usp=sf_link

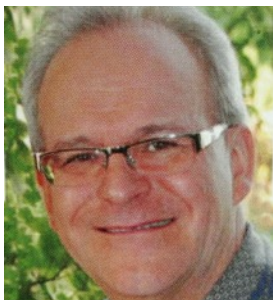
Meet the judges



Tom Hardwick (FACI) has for many years been a member of BIAFF's judging team, and has often been called upon to judge local film competitions.

He has had his Positive Image articles published in every edition of Film and Video Maker magazine for the last 22 years and is a regular columnist in SoCo News

He teaches photography and filmmaking and ran a successful filmmaking business for 15 years.



Tim Stannard AACL bought his first camcorder in 2005 to film his new daughter, Elise, and he hasn't stopped filming her yet! He quickly developed a particular interest in editing. After joining Stains Video Makers he directed or edited several club films.

He is perhaps best known in IAC circles for his light hearted films at BIAFF usually featuring a cast of youngsters in historical costume singing lyrics written by his wife.

Tim has given talks to many clubs and IAC Regions from Southampton to Edinburgh and enjoys critical analysis of short films as well as discussing film making in general.



Video guide to WeTransfer

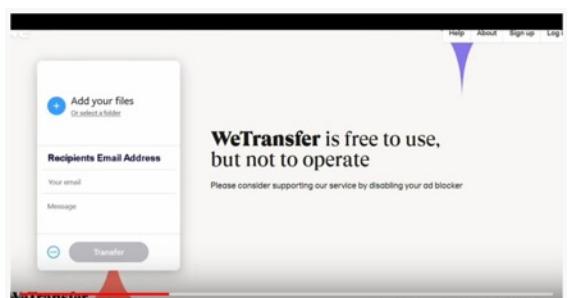
Entering your film

If anyone is concerned about using WeTransfer for sending films as you have not done it before, fear not as there is a very easy to follow video tutorial you can follow.

It really is easy and there is no sign up involved.

Follow this link <https://youtu.be/fdQvTxIz9Jg> to see just how easy it is.

Thanks to Tony Colburn for creating this.





SoCo Regional Video Competition 2022

(Incorporating the SoCo Baby Dolphin
and Dolphin Competitions)

Rules

This year's rules of entry.

1. Entry into the "The SoCo Regional Video Competition 2022" is open to:
 - 1.1 Individual members of the IAC within the SoCo Region
 - 1.2 Individual members of an IAC Affiliated Club within the SoCo Region
 - 1.3 Club Entries from an IAC Affiliated Club within the SoCo Region
2. Films must have been made since January 2021 and have not previously been entered into a SoCo Regional Competition.
3. There are three categories in the competition:
 - 3.1 Main competition: Films on any subject with a maximum length* of 20 minutes
 - 3.2 Dolphin Competition: Films of a light hearted nature with a maximum length* of 10 minutes
 - 3.3 Baby Dolphin Competition: Films of a light hearted nature with a maximum length* of 1 minute

* Maximum film length includes all credits and any lead in's and out's
4. There is no entry fee.
5. Entries will only be accepted into the competition electronically via:
 - 5.1 Preferred Method: The entrant providing a link (and password if needed) to an online version (such as YouTube, Vimeo, or via a google drive)
 - 5.2 Alternative Method: WeTransfer, using www.WeTransfer.com sent to pipcritten@googlemail.com. The entrant agrees that the film can then be uploaded to the SoCo Competition Public YouTube Channel
6. The closing date for entries is midnight 31st July 2022.
7. Each entry must have a completed Online Entry Form that can be found here:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSesq0SVo2KuavZ3r8fLLBstlgzafB3TrK72VI5FN2bgrgxOwQ/viewform?usp=sf_link
8. Entries into the Dolphin and Baby Dolphin competitions will be automatically included in SoCo main competition.
9. The competitions are for films made by individuals or clubs for pleasure and not for commercial gain, other than for the benefit of their club or a charity. Members of the production team, including actors, must not have been paid for their time.
10. Copyright clearance of all material, both sound and vision, is the sole responsibility of the entrant.
11. Name(s) on the entry form will be used on any certificates that may be awarded.
12. Entries will be assessed by a judging panel. Their comments will be sent to entrants by email in early September.
13. Details of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd in each of the three competitions will be published in SoCo News.
14. The SoCo Regional Council reserve the right not to accept entries that are deemed offensive or in bad taste and will rule on all matters concerning the competitions and no correspondence can be entered into.
15. Submission of an entry confirms acceptance for award winning films to be uploaded to a public YouTube channel.
16. Submission of an entry confirms acceptance by the entrant of the above competition rules.
17. Submission of an entry confirms agreement to process personal data for administrative purposes.



Tom Hardwick
FACI

This month Tom answers the question, "File transfer and compression - should it worry us?"

File transfer and compression

File transfer and compression - should it worry us?

I've had a query from a client, asking if the **MP4 video files** I'm sending him using WeTransfer are the same as the files I'll be supplying him on a **USB stick**. He asks if there's a quality drop at all, or any other subtle disadvantage.

I've reassured him that a digital file is a digital file, and transferring that file on a hard drive or a USB stick or an SD card or via WeTransfer is just that - a transfer of that actual file. It's not changed or modified or corrupted in any way, it's *exactly* the same, and arrives as perfect as the day it was created.

But what about DVDs?

What's set up this worry in people is the thought that when you burn a **DVD**, say, the full HD timeline is compressed to 768x576 using **MP2**, downgrading the original hi def in the process. But if you copy this DVD onto another DVD, the copy will be a pixel-perfect DVD copy.

And photographs?

Another thing. If you send a photo as an email attachment your 10 MB image will arrive as that **10 MB** image, unchanged. But if you send that image to someone using **Viber** or **WhatsApp**, it'll be compressed by your phone before sending, to something like **200 KB**. This will save bandwidth and storage space and data costs and transmission time, so the only loss is image quality.

Have a look at my gravestone photos. The original was shot on a **Samsung** phone and is a healthy 2.65 MB **JPEG** image, meaning you can easily zoom into the picture to read every word. If you send this image to someone using WhatsApp, the app will automatically reduce the file size down to 176 KB. That transmitted photo is **1/15th the size** of the original, yet on any phone you care to view it on it will look for all intents and purposes exactly like the original.

Zoom in to reveal all



This is the original 2.5 MB phone camera photo



This is the same photo having been sent via WhatsApp, using their automatic file compression. It's now 176 KB

If you zoom into the picture you can see that however clever the compression algorithms are, there's no escaping the fact that compressing JPEGs results in us having to accept irretrievable losses.



A blowup reveals all; compression has side-effects and detail is lost forever



Tom continues

It's the same with the **Canon EOS 600D** photo of the front of my car. The camera produced a 5.43 MB image that is capable of withstanding great enlargement as you can see. I could send more than 22 compressed versions of this picture using the same storage space, yet to my eyes, on a big phone screen, there's no noticeable difference in picture quality. Of course the blowup reveals all - there's no such thing as a free lunch, and something has to give.



A blowup of the original 5.43 MB file shows impressive sharpness and detail



The blowup of the compressed image dramatically shows the loss of resolution



The Canon 600D original is a 5.34 MB file and looks pretty good...



What's with RAW?

Some people shoot pictures in **RAW** format, and this saves huge files for processing later. My **Sony A7** shoots 82.3 MB raw files and converts these to 15.5 MB **JPEGs**, saving tons of disc/card space. Of course you can't "see" a raw file as it's simply a digital file that contains all of the information that goes into making up the image. If you set your camera to only shoot in RAW then the camera converts it into a JPEG anyway, simply to show you the picture on the camera's rear screen.

What about compressing video?

Video files are notoriously huge, even when filmed using H264 compression upfront. As a test I've filmed a 30 second clip in **UHD (4K) 60p** on my phone, and it takes up 261 MB of storage space. Of course I could go to all the trouble to load this onto my computer's timeline and output the film at a lower resolution, but how quick and easy it is to send using WhatsApp! There's no labour involved, the automatic compression takes about a minute and the video ends up being a very watchable 640x352 MP4 that, at 8.68 MB, is over 30 times smaller than the original.

Tom Hardwick

tomrhardwick@gmail.com

[ED: some loss of detail may occur in rendering this magazine for publication. Rest assured that Tom's original files clearly shows the effects he is talking about]



Suzie Topolska

Making a comedy western short film

Making "The Adventures of Cowboy Kale"

After a year of resorting to toys and puppets as actors for my short films, I was very keen to film with live people again during the summer of 2021. In order to create a feasible short film on zero budget, the story needed to be fairly short, only consist of a few of my friends as actors, use a public location, and have limited props and costume.

I then remembered watching a low-budget western short film on YouTube which only featured 2 actors and it was set in a national park (since it's very difficult to have access to a desert for filming). This then gave me the idea of writing my own western film set in Dartmoor since the grasslands and open plains would create an excellent version of the wild west.



I love using fancy dress in my films, so I was instantly drawn to the idea of using wacky cowboy and horse costumes. Since my acting friends are from a girl's school, I also liked the idea of having female leads for a western film, since this role is played by men 99% of the time.



After the initial concept, I came up with a simple idea of a cowboy crime fighter and her horse best friend who are on the search for a notorious bandit. The film would then end with the cowboy killing the bandit in a shoot-out fashion, but I needed to come up with something different because this was a way too predictable and boring ending. I also wanted the film to be a family comedy, so maybe a character death

wouldn't be the best idea.

I then thought it would be nice if we find out that it was all a ruse because the bandit actually wanted to ask the cowboy out on a date, and then it ends with them on a picnic together. This unusual happy ending was a much better choice in my opinion, and it would allow me to represent LGBT+ characters (also heavily underrepresented in western film... apart from Brokeback Mountain of course).

When writing the script, I made a little checklist of cowboy phrases I could include such as "the jig is up" and "what in tarnation". I also wanted to include some popular tropes like letterbox framing, country music, western accents, a wanted poster, titles announcing character's names, as well as a dramatic shoot-out scene with extreme close-ups on character's eyes.

The script was only about 5 pages long because I knew we would most likely have one day on the weekend to shoot in Dartmoor.



I then had to draw a rough storyboard of the shots in order to save time when filming. The crew would only consist of myself, so I would have to get one of the actors to hold the boom pole when it's not their scene and plug the mic directly into the camera to avoid any audio recording mishaps. We would just have to be lucky with natural lighting.

As for costumes, I would need to find the cheapest options since it would be coming out of my own pocket. When making amateur short films, you most likely end up losing more money than gaining it. Luckily, I already owned a bandit costume and horse mask, so I just needed to purchase a few pieces for the cowboy costume.



I was under the impression that I could film on Dartmoor for free, but after doing some research and contacting the Dartmoor National Park Authority, it turned out I would need to pay £300 to film on Haytor for 5 hours since it was owned by them. Their drone guidelines were also very strict, so I ended up buying stock footage of Haytor from a professional drone pilot.

The budget ended up needing to be a lot bigger than anticipated, but that's entirely my fault for not realising that good locations will most likely always cost you the most when working on low-budget films. I probably should've also researched filming permissions a lot earlier in pre-production because I was already very committed on using Dartmoor.



The shoot day was a bit chaotic as usual. We had to do a lot of walking around Haytor and take long trips to the toilets which were back down at the bottom of the hill (my deepest apologies to the actors who were doing all of this



Suzie continues....

for free). I was lugging around a tripod and boom pole the entire time and the weather started getting a bit too warm. Haytor wasn't too busy, but we still had issues with members of the public being in the background of certain shots.

The wind was a big problem and ended up knocking over my camera at one point (only 1 cable ended up getting broken but thankfully nothing happened to the camera). The wind was also a huge problem in post-production and made all of the audio sound terrible. That's my fault for not monitoring the audio on set because my DSLR doesn't have a headphone jack. This meant I had to meet up with the actors again and record ADR in hopes of salvaging this film which we had already put so much effort into.

I had just started my first year of Filmmaking at university after the summer we filmed, so I kept pushing back editing and foley recording due to uni work and several other personal projects I was trying to balance at the same time (as always). I unfortunately didn't manage to complete the film until April 2022.



I'm so glad to have finally released the film after almost a year of it sitting on my hard drive. I definitely realise the film's flaws (probably more than anyone else), but I'm still proud of it and feel very flattered that people are actually finding it funny. Fingers crossed it gets selected for at least one or two film festivals.

You can watch the final film here:

<https://youtu.be/MHKka3cn-fo>

Thanks for reading!

Suzie Topolska



"Hardy's Regrets"

Filming has been on weekends on Portland, Dorset, starting at the end of April. I have been actor and film crew. The project is being headed up by Rose Goldthorp who is a member of Weymouth Movie makers, she has been filming and directing.

Hardy's Regrets is four of Hardy's short stories made into films, and then the four films will be put together to form one feature film.

Three films have been shot so far and one more to go this year. This is a no budget film but filmed in a professional style.

The provisional showings for the film are:

July 13th, 2022: The first two films of the short stories will be previewed at The Hardy Society conference.

November: The whole film will be given a preview premiere at The Royal Manor Theatre, with the mayor (all profits to theatre)

December: UK Premiere of feature in Dorchester hosted by The Hardy Society as a screening event comprising the film, a hog roast and a ceilidh/barn dance... all in C19th fancy dress (with prize!)

There are a couple of other premieres planned for Jan and Feb (2023), in Weymouth and Bridport.

Then film to be exhibited for free on YouTube. Clips from the film will be available for the actors and film crew to use in their portfolio's and show-reels.

Here is a link to Rose's website

<https://thedailydilettante.com/features>



Gary Adams - Langton Photography

John Simpson
Club Chairman on
filming
Hardy's Regrets



John Simpson

Gives us food for thought

Where are the Film Makers 2022?

Film making and media studies are popular subjects with students.

Students in the final year of film school are encouraged to produce a film using crowd funding, the budget required would normally be about £5000. Funds to make a film may be needed to pay for hire of filming equipment like cameras, sliders, cranes, set locations, catering, transport etc. My suspicion is that it is often friends and family who help out.

There are various internet crowd funding sites such as Kickstarter and IndieGoGo. Once the film is made some of the film budget may be used for subscription fees to enter Film Festivals, because that is the way students get their films shown and gain recognition. If the film turns out well the film makers, actors and crew will want to reference it in their portfolios.

Although these student films are made with a budget they can still be seen as amateur, as long as participants only get their expenses paid. Making films like this is good preparation for a full time career in TV or film. Most professional film work is freelance and posts are advertised on the internet sites Talent Manager and Mandy. Facebook groups is another place where film work is advertised.

Networking has always been an important aspect of working with other people in whatever field of interest;



but over the last twenty or so years, with introduction of the internet, networking has really come into its own.

For film making clubs the internet site Star Now is a good place to find non professional actors for films. If someone is advertising a project words like low budget, or no budget can be included so that people applying know not to expect anything except experience and an entry into their portfolio.

There a huge opportunities and possibilities for film makers, we just have to grasp them!



We have been meeting every two weeks since last autumn.

There are about 15 members who make and show their films.

We have Challenges now rather than competitions and this creates a very relaxed atmosphere.

Club films have been made and we are open to be contacted by any actors or film makers with ideas.

A new autumn programme is now being made.

Here is a link to the club website:

<https://bhvideoclub.com>

A link to a film made on one of our filming evenings:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFRktUEd0B8&ab_channel=JohnSimpson

John Simpson





Lee Prescott
FACI

John Williams and
Stephen Spielberg.

Re-searched and by

40 plus Years of Collaboration

Since meeting for lunch way back in 1972 Steven Spielberg one of the greatest if not the greatest film Directors and John Williams, Composer, have collaborated on over 20 films.



John works completely alone at the keyboard of a 90 years old Steinway grand piano accompanied alongside with stacks of composition paper and a myriad of pencils. Well worn books of poetry by such as Robert Frost and William Wordsworth lie on his coffee table.

John Williams remarking on his relationship with Steven Spielberg says "it is successful because of a lot of acceptable dissimilarities"! "Steven works with large numbers of people and is internationally known. It is the environment I need. I do not use synthesizers and computers like my younger colleagues do. "Such are a much more later development! When I started such things did not exist. Mine is a very labour, solitary, intensive all on your own job".

John Williams is now over 90 years of age and has written the musical scores for at least 25 of the feature films that Spielberg has directed. His work is a musical mixture including "Jaws", "Close Encounters of the Third Kind", "E.T.", "Raiders of the Lost Ark", "Schindler's List", "Saving Private Ryan" etc.



The remarkable thing is that it's all stand alone "listenable music". The intensive remarkable partnership between these two men of film production who only met during a lunch date has resulted in 13 Oscar Nominations for original score and much of the very recognisable films music.

Unlike the "giants" of composers who preceded him like Bernard Hermann, Dimitri Tiomkin, John Williams doesn't have any discernible "tells" as a composer other than an emphasis on accessible melodies. Spielberg says that this stylistic versatility is the foundation of their

partnership adding "John really is much more of a changeling as a composer". Spielberg once said, speaking from the Set of "Lincoln". He reinvents himself with every film. i.e. his score for "Tintin" could not be more different to his score for "War Horse", fitting his music to the characterisations. The music for "Tintin" is a rollicking adventure whereas his score for "War Horse" is of the land evocative of the early 20th century wherein the film is set.

John Williams was born in New York, the son of a jazz percussionist. The family moved to Los Angeles in 1948 as his father got employment in the Columbia Pictures Orchestra. When a child, Williams commenced learning the Piano. All he knew were musicians and friends so he thought "that's what one did when one grew up", he said! It proved to be inevitable that he became a musician.

John attended UCLA and the Julliard School. He worked as a studio pianist on scores by Jerry Goldsmith, and Henry Mancini and the like. He is actually credited as Jonny Williams, playing the jazz riff on Mancini's 1958 "Peter Gunn Theme".

When Spielberg and Williams met in 1972 the composer had just on 20 years of film and TV musical experience and composing behind him. He'd got an Oscar for adapting "Fiddler On The Roof" for the screen and had scored an enormous hit with "The Poseidon Adventure".

Spielberg was then a 25 years old TV Director just about to shoot his first theatrical feature. The young Spielberg had listened to a record of an Americana style score Williams composed for "The Reivers" so many times he'd worn it out. He wanted a similar sound for his feature debut, "The Sugarland Express". At Spielberg's request they met.

Williams, impressed by the script and enthused by Spielberg's enthusiasm, agreed to work on the film. The most rewarding and successful film music partnership in Hollywood history was born.

Steven Spielberg is, without any doubt, one of the very best Directors of all time. Partnered without any doubt with the greatest film composer ever, John Williams.

"ALWAYS": Not a strong Spielberg film. Overly sentimental perhaps with a similar comment of the musical score. One of the weaker compositions with a Spielberg film. As with the film, a little dated!



"HOOK": Williams' sound track for Spielberg's film about Peter Pan returning to Neverland exceeds the quality of the film itself! In fact, this musical score is amongst the finest of William's career. The film itself



Lee continues

comprises one of Spielberg's weaker efforts. The music is considered to be a masterpiece of film scoring. As it features different theme for each of the characters.

JURASSIC PARK: Some people do not regard this as being amongst William's better work. For a lot of people, especially younger ones, this film enthralled them. There is a sense of wistfulness about some of the themes that are used to make up the score. The third theme that accompanies the scenes where the characters are under threat is very effective, even creepy. Similar in a way to some of the music in "Jaws".

"RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK": Rather taking inspiration to 1930's and 1940's matinee styles Williams gave Spielberg ideas for two different title themes. When asked why both couldn't be used, Williams reworked them together creating one of the most recognisable themes in film history.



In performing the music John Williams called up the talents of the London Symphony Orchestra with whom he'd previously worked with his Oscar winning music for "Star Wars Episode IV".

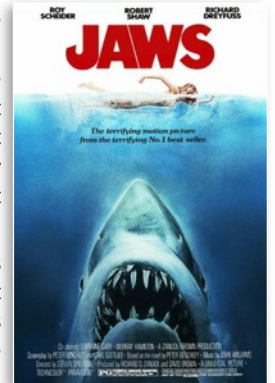
"E.T. THE EXTRA TERRESTRIAL": This comprises one of the more subtle, restrained pieces in Williams' back catalogue. It did however earn him an Oscar for the best original score. It's not a great stand alone piece but it is very effective within the film conveying a child like sense of wonder. It also manages to handle well the more dramatic moments with great skill. There are many beautiful scenes that thoroughly justify the Oscar win.

"INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM": As with the film itself, Williams' score for this second instalment in the Indiana Jones set moves into much darker places but still keeps the iconic theme. A heightened sense of threat and adventure as Williams ramps up his efforts making it an engaging and important exciting action scores. A mixture of classical standards the score is very much a dramatic piece almost gaining him an Oscar. It is a great addition to any record collection.

"INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE": For this closing instalment of the series Williams favoured the playfulness with a sense of adventure of his first score over the threats and darkness in the second film. It's also another classic piece. There are moments of suspense but there are more moments of comedy than previously. Williams is obviously happy with the characters and is theme. Williams does recycle motifs previously used but giving them an interesting twist.

"JAWS": Ignoring the iconic theme, this work is a highly accomplished score right through. Whilst it's not the most complex piece that he would compose over many years it is one of his most effective.

It's a master class covering tension and action. It might be said that this music is possibly more iconic than the images in this brilliant film. Frankly it can be considered a near perfect work that put Spielberg and Williams together on the "blockbuster stage"!



"CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND": John Williams work here is quite beautiful. The five note – yes just five notes – main theme raises a great deal of praise and quite rightly. In fact, considering the subject it can be said that these five notes – original thinking – are a touch of genius. The score is full of emotive pieces. The album of this music is widely available and is really excellent. Williams got an Oscar nomination for this work – BUT – lost out to another of his compositions, that for "Star Wars Episode IV – A New Hope"!



"1941": At the time this film was released the music was considered as one of William's most forward thinking of his then career. In it there are grand military marches and rousing pieces. There is however an underlying playfulness to the whole score in that Williams tries to, sets out to, subvert the grand traditional scores of some of Hollywood's super war films. He endeavours to achieve this by highlighting some of their ridiculous over the top patriotism!

John Williams is the most respected prolific composer working today! He has received more Oscar nominations than any other composer with more than forty nominations and 5 "wins" – at least.

It is really somewhat of a disservice to endeavour to write about him and his co-operation with Spielberg in just one article! –

This is just a brief look at his / their long working relationship and the feature films in which they have collaborated.

Lee Prescott



Script Ideas

An Anonymous writer is kindly offering up a few ideas for scripts.

An anonymous writer has offered up some ideas for scripts to be used, adapted or to spark off your own ideas for club or solo projects.

A one minute film maybe.

DIMITRI - drink your coffee up!

Scene; a man working switches and looking at dials.

The title words are spoken three times, getting louder and more demanding each time.

Followed by "Dimitri, your coffee is getting hotter!

Camera tilts down (or up) to a sign "Control room for reactor number 4."

Twist on an idea.

A "take" on the TV series 4 in a bed, where hotelier competitors examine the room cleanliness, bathroom, toilet and the served breakfast for defects. They take this to an extreme with a vacuum cleaner and microscope, with "impossible" and successively larger items being pulled out of an armchair. Final shot of the distraught presenter outside a scrapyard.

"Well this was one of the toughest groups of competitors we have seen. But the rubbish and scrap materials traced in the hotel have managed to secure them hundreds of pounds of funds from scrap metal disposal.

Next week's competitor hotel is already planning to build a minefield under their hotel tennis court and booby traps under the toilet seats. Join us for more fun in next week's episode of "Hotels at War".

The Mask

A film created to explore misdirection of the audience."

Female eyes looking toward camera., and then via mirror.

Side view – applies makeup.

Contre Jour close ups: Veil or shop window of bridal wear. Is it her plans or memories?

Clock face/wristwatch. Time is checked.

Closeup of black car – wheels moving.

Closeup she holds the fingers of her left hand. It does not reveal whether there are rings.- and so is a false clue.

Two second shots of flowers and combing hair/wristwatch/wipes a small tear away.

(all to make it seem like a funeral but is actually a wedding)

Close up – blurred background – possibly slow motion - Outstretched fingers – as though parting from someone. (or is she extending her hand as a gesture?)

Organ music - Organist strikes a first chord, the hands shot becomes hands joining together.

Camera/drone rises over church.

End title

Yes, it was a wedding and not a funeral

A possible Christmas animation

A family return home from Xmas shopping and drive past homeless refugees living on the street.

A Christmas style pullover is coming to the end of its days. It has been ripped when sawing up logs and hanging up fairy lights.

It is pushed aside in the wardrobe when a new one is lifted out of the shopping bags. The old one looks sad with the snowman on the front looking unhappy. Thrown into a pile of rubbish, cardboard and leaves for burning. The camera pulls back to reveal the snowy evening scene with lights from houses glowing.

The family go to the balcony to see a firework display, and the male remembers happy times being given the first pullover by his parents. He sheds a tear, as he sees a bonfire of garden rubbish.

People walk past the house, look up and smile. One is wearing the old pullover which has been mended and the snowman is smiling.

From anonymous

[ED: Actually, I know who it is but I'm not telling you. If you have any script ideas please email them in and we can print them in SoCo News]



Ian Simpson

Wollongong
Camera Club Movie
Makers,
Australia

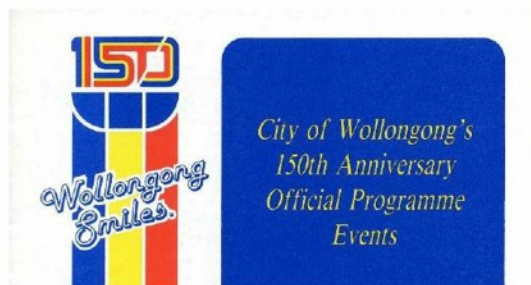
Looking back

Wollongong's 150th Anniversary Remembered

The Year 1984

George Orwell's view of the world in 1984 was that of a dystopian society. Many living in Wollongong in 1982 would have felt the bleakness of this prophesy had arrived early. With massive lay-offs at Wollongong's two major industries; coal mining and the steel industry; shop shelves became bare, many families moved away, whilst those who remained felt under siege and protests boiled over in Canberra. So, when 1984 finally arrived the city needed something to smile about. The medicine was the year-long celebrations for the city's 150th birthday.

The then cine club, the Wollongong Movie Makers, decided to get its members involved in the yearlong activities by capturing on film some of the major events. Members formed teams and selected some key events on the Anniversary calendar. As members had Super 8 cameras that used silent film (non-magnetic striped film), to aid the development of the soundtrack, radio news broadcasts were recorded as well as onsite, live recording.



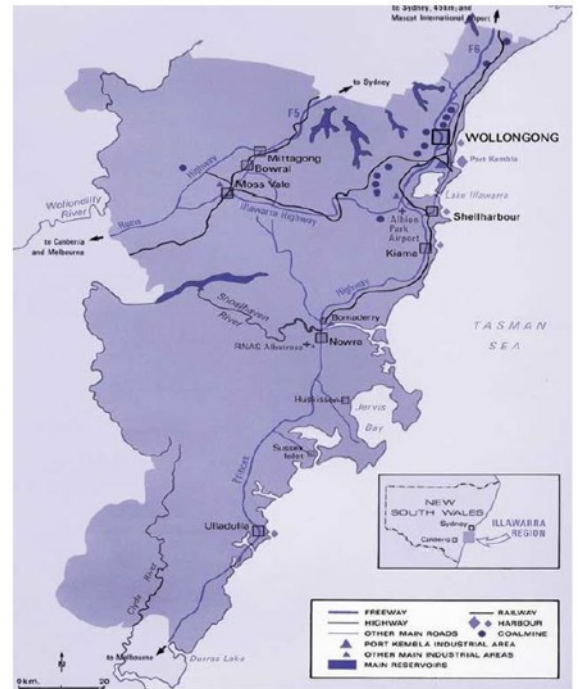
Although many members shot the different events, only one member was given the task of making a compilation film of the year's events.

WOLLONGONG

Located 82 Km south of Sydney is NSW's third largest city, the City of Greater Wollongong. Situated on a narrow but variable width strip of land between the Tasman Sea and the Illawarra Escarpment, the Illawarra region is home to over 300,000. Originally settled for its cedar forests and highly fertile land, Wollongong became noted for its coal mines, its heavy industry and finally as a university city. Its natural beauty extends from therainforests of the escarpment to its almost continuous chain of glorious sand beaches.

The steel industry arrived in Wollongong's suburb, Port Kembla, in 1928 and has grown to become Australia's major steel producer until recent hard times cut the

annual production capacity in half. Wollongong has a world class university which grew from its initial form as an offshoot of the University of NSW.



Fast Forward to July 2021

With Wollongong and surrounding areas now classified as part of Greater Sydney region for purposes of COVID-19 restrictions, there was plenty of time available to re-look at the 1984 Club film and see what could be used for the Yesterday Stories app.

Yesterday Stories is the brain-child of Sandra Pires, where travelers can use their mobile phone's GPS and the Yesterday Stories app to give them short videos of historical events and people's stories relating to the very spot they are visiting.



<https://documentaryaustralia.com.au/project/yesterday-stories/>

To suit the location requirements in the Illawarra, some of the 8 events covered in the original 16-minute-long film were prepared as separate 2- to 3-minute-long videos. These were:

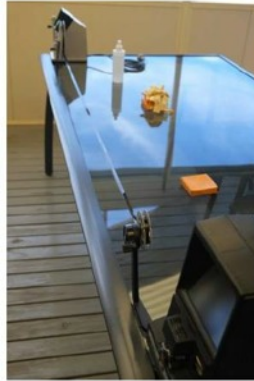
- the Official Opening of the celebrations by the Governor General on the 29 of January.
- Stanwell Park Hang Gliding International Competition on the 28—30 of January.
- the Blessing of the Fishing Fleet on the 29 January.
- the NSW State Surf Championship on the 9—11 March.
- the Festival of Wollongong parade on the 25th of August; and
- the Back-to-Wollongong parade on the 3rd of November.



Continues...

Cleaning

The first step was to clean this 37-year-old Kodachrome film using 99.8% alcohol. Two old film editors were set up at either end of a dining room table and the strip of film that lay between them was cleaned with a cloth sprayed with alcohol. The film was progressively wound onto the receiving reel with a piece of cotton thread through one of the sprocket holes as a marker for each section of the cleaning process.



Scanning

The Super 8 film scanning was done using MovieStuff's Retro 8 scanner. This model is an earlier development of the present more sophisticated and very expensive models that MovieStuff sells.

<https://www.moviestuff.tv/>



Although the Retro 8 does a reasonable job of scanning Super 8 and Standard 8 films compared to the telecine method I previously used, it has a few idiosyncrasies. Chief of them is the mode of tracking each frame to be scanned and the practical consequences of this method.

Close attention is required of the "exposure" setting, which is controlled by an ungraduated knob. As frame registration depends on correctly identifying the film sprocket holes from any clear film, there is a limit to how high you can turn up the "exposure" or you will drop frames.

However, even repeated runs of the same film through the Retro 8 at the same exposure setting will often result in markedly different frame counts. One to nine frames dropped in 8000 to 21000 frames may be imperceptible if they are spread throughout the film. However, when 13 frames are dropped in the space of 230 frames then there is visual jerkiness in the video.

Digital Processing



The output from the scanner is a file of sequentially numbered uncompressed TIFF images of resolution 1280 by 720. When imported into DaVinci Resolve editing software the sequentially numbered frames are converted to a movie with a preset frame rate – in this instance 18 fps. The footage in some respects is like raw or log footage, it needs to be post-processed to achieve the well-known Kodachrome look.

DaVinci Resolve's Colour Page

The image process firstly requires, where necessary, the expansion of the luminance range using the wave form as a guide. Often a scan will need to be broken up into separate scenes if scenes or sequences show marked differences in lighting and exposure.

Once the full brightness range is achieved without squashing the dark areas or clipping the highlights, then checks are made for colour balance and finally the saturation is increased to about 60 to achieve that bright Kodachrome look.

Finally, the film was scanned with no sharpening applied in the scanning software (to avoid emphasizing the film grain), however, some film grain and electronic noise will be still present, especially in scenes shot in low light. To further minimize the scanned grain, a software plugin for DaVinci Resolve was used – Neat Video – <https://www.neatvideo.com/>

This software treats the film grain like electronic noise and can minimize it. The effectiveness of the software depends on getting a good profile of the "noise" that is present on a featureless area of the film frame. Many adjustments are possible to minimize any loss of fine detail in the image. All that is then left to do is to apply some sharpening to the image in Neat Video or DaVinci Resolve (41 to 38 is usually sufficient).



Sound Track

The soundtracks for the videos were newly created as none of the original Super 8 cameras could record sound. On the day, "live" wild sound effects were recorded on either reel-to-reel or cassette tapes. The commentary was prepared using, as a reference, excerpts of 1984 broadcasts from the local radio stations. The final soundtrack, therefore, consisted of a mixture of commentary and sound effects.

Yesterday Stories

The final step was to upload each 2-to-3-minute video to the Yesterday Stories website and assign a location marker which best represented where each video / film was shot. You can view the full version of the Blessing of the Fleet here:

<https://vimeo.com/619564493>

This event was shot both from the shore and from one of the fishing boats.

NOTE: The videos on Yesterday Stories are designed for the smartphone on location, access from the website only plays the first 1 minute 10 seconds of each video.

Ian Simpson



Despite including two bank holidays, when the club does not meet, it has been a busy time for TFMC members over the last two months.

Zoom meeting topics included advice about using stock footage from Pip Critten, the screening of Geoff Hodgkinson's film 'Roofus' that supported a successful application for lottery funding to improve the Village Hall of Sampford Courtenay and films made by people with disabilities, again with Pip.

The first of two face to face meetings at Bitton House was how to make your own sound effects with Alec Ball that included audience participation and was an entertainment in itself.

The final face to face of the season was taken up with filming scenes for the first of this year's club projects and there followed, during June, two more day long shoots that completed the majority of the story, written and directed by Keith Rossiter.

The Film Of The Year competition was held on 20th June and, following the screening of the pre-judged entries the winner was announced as Alec Ball with "The Devil Takes All".

The final Zoom meeting of the season, the AGM, was held on Monday 26th June and Chairman Ivan Andrews thanked everyone for their enthusiastic participation and support throughout the year.

Club meetings resume on Monday 5th September with a Zoom meeting which is followed by the first face to face at Bitton House on Monday 12th September.

Details of the programme for the 2022 - 2023 will be published on the website following the next committee meeting in July.

Meanwhile members look forward to the completion and showing of Keith's project, the commencement of one by Roger Western, as well as getting out and about with their own cameras.

Anyone is welcome to attend both the Zoom and physical 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.

Both the website and Facebook page are normally updated on a weekly basis during the season and on a casual basis during the Summer break.

<http://www.teignfilmmakersclub.org>

Since my last report we have held a further five competitions, these were Animation, won by Henryck Jachimczyk with 'Aircraft 2-On board safety', Chris Wheatley's film 'Know your onions ' won the Impact Competition. I was fortunate to win the Documentary, Music and How to Competitions with 'The arrival of the tall ships', then 'Signs of Spring' and finally 'How to remove a fallen tree'.

The Tewkesbury club hosted the Gloucester Annual Inter Club Competition on Zoom in March which we won with Robert Paget's film 'Stroudwater Restored and Connected'. This film also won Best Sound.

A great result for us in this our 60th year.

The film 'Damaged, ' by the Bristol club won the Cheltenham Trophy for Best Cinematography.

Looking ahead we still have another 3 competitions to complete our programme. They are Holiday/Travelogue, Drama and The Ron Turner Trophy. Details of these can be found in our website.

As this is our 60th year we invite entries from other clubs to make a film, titled '60,' with £60.00 going to the winning film based on an open theme. Our website will give more details.

The Video Road Shows continue with 2 more to do in the near future. Thanks to Mike Morris and Chris Wheatley for their input and also to Chris for his work in setting up our Zoom meetings.

June 27th sees us off to celebrate our Diamond Anniversary at a local hotel with current and former members and friends. Finally to record the recent death of a former member, Mary White. A keen supporter of the club who appeared in many holiday films made all over the world by her husband Ken. Mary will be missed by her many friends at the club.

www.gloucesterfilmmakers.org.uk

Keep on filming.

John Greene, Gloucester Film Makers

still deciding

Not sure whether to fund a block buster movie
or fill my car up with petrol!

*Keep Smiling
Pip*



Taking photographs in a public space

The Police say...

"It is not illegal to take photographs or video footage in public places unless it is for criminal or terrorist purposes."

The following is taken from Devon and Cornwall Police website:

<https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/support-and-guidance/your-community/taking-photographs-in-a-public-space/>

The same advice should apply throughout the SoCo region.

The police advice

"There will be places where you have access as a member of the public, but will have to ask permission or may be prevented altogether from taking images. These could include stately homes, museums, churches, shopping malls, railway stations/airports and council/government buildings.

If a person is seen taking photos outside a police station/mosque/chemical factory/facility/military base then this should be reported to the police. Call 101 while it is happening or complete the 101 non-emergency form with a description of the person, time and date and why you think it was suspicious if it happened in the past. All calls/information will be taken seriously.

Freedom to photograph and film

Members of the public and the media do not need a permit to film or photograph in public places and police have no power to stop them filming or photographing incidents or police personnel.

There is no law preventing people from taking photographs in public. This includes taking photos of other people's children. However if you take photos of other people's children and it is reported to us we may treat this as suspicious behaviour and depending on the circumstances would create an incident log.

It is an offence to take indecent photographs.

Obscene Publications Act 1959 section 1

"For the purposes of this Act an article shall be deemed to be obscene if its effect or (where the article comprises two or more distinct items) the effect of any one of its items is, if taken as a whole, such as to tend to deprave and corrupt persons who are likely, having regard to all relevant circumstances, to read, see or hear the matter contained or embodied in it."

Be considerate of others feelings when taking images

If you are taking photographs from private land, you need to have the land owner's permission.

Taking of a photo of a person where they can expect privacy (inside their home or garden) is likely to cause a breach of privacy laws. It would be appropriate and would avoid unnecessary complications if you ask the person for permission.

The taking of photographs of an individual without their consent is a civil matter.

Photography and Section 43 of the Terrorism Act 2000

Officers have the power to stop and search a person who they reasonably suspect to be a terrorist. The purpose of the stop and search is to discover whether that person has in their possession anything which may constitute evidence that they are a terrorist.

Officers have the power to view digital images contained in mobile telephones or cameras carried by a person searched under S43 of the Terrorism Act 2000 to discover whether the images constitute evidence that the person is involved in terrorism. Officers also have the power to seize and retain any article found during the search which the officer reasonably suspects may constitute evidence that the person is a terrorist. This includes any mobile telephone or camera containing such evidence.

Officers do not have the power to delete digital images or destroy film at any point during a search. Deletion or destruction may only take place following seizure if there is a lawful power (such as a court order) that permits such deletion or destruction."

Report it

To report your concern about someone taking potentially indecent photographs fill in the 101 non-emergency form or visit your local police station. If you witness or know indecent images are being taken of children call 999.

Pip Critten



Dave Jones

Shares his
thoughts

xxxxxxx

Is it something to do with culture?

In the latter part of 2019, one filmmaker, working alone, decided that he'd had enough of walking around like a pack mule and finally sought help. This led to his deciding to start a film company. He was in his twenties and had a lot of friends from school and college, all around the same age. Eight other Scandinavians joined in his quest and a film company was thus formed. To me, this sounds something like a fairy tale. The next thing that happened was even more unusual, they had an incredible amount of professional equipment like, remote focus pulling, remote pan, remote zoom, a crane, lighting, an expert editor person and a vast amount of experience ... especially for people in their twenties and thirties ... and they really knew how to use it.

I remember practising with a camera and tripod, practising to get smooth movements with a fluid head on the tripod, and was told to use an elastic band to get that touch of perfection when panning. There are all manner of panning methods; Some hug the camera closely and swing the camera whilst transferring body weight from one leg to another. Other's move the camera at arm's length. Whichever way one adopts, it takes a lot of practise to get an aircraft near to stationary in the frame, when it is doing 600 mph (965 kph) and you are shooting through a telephoto or powerful zoom lens. This can be done to perfection by a computer today.

We would all like to be able to turn out a film with amazingly smooth tracking, panning and dollying, but it is no longer the skill of the professional that we are up against, it is more about money ... to buy the kit. Electric motors do the panning, the sliding etc., not mankind.

However, in the latter part of May 2022, a request was put out in Europe for an emergency funding of filmmakers who are risking their lives in Ukraine, and within a very short time, just three weeks, 108 filmmakers came forward to risk their lives to record the war with a view to sharing that funding. No remote focus pulling for them, each and every one of them works alone in appalling conditions, sometimes tired and hungry with their eyes hanging out of their head. What drives men to do this?

In Scandinavia, there are seemingly no video clubs or film societies, none in the States, none to speak of in Canada, but, if you follow the genetics, you will find a few in Australia, but none in New Zealand. We in the UK are alone when it comes to large numbers of video clubs and societies ... we are out there, on a limb, nowhere near the trunk of humanity, seemingly, the rest of humanity are different from us, save one nation ... Australia. UK video clubs and societies, we lost a good few during the plague, still number near to a hundred and Australia has a fair few. Is it something to do with culture?

Most of us old 'uns are real stick-in-the-muds, preferring to handle cameras manually, pressing the buttons and moving the handle, even setting the exposure and leaving it on MANUAL, not wanting to lose control. Many of us have undergone a type of inurement when it comes to the contemporary style of filmmaking. It's probably a sign of age, but, if it doesn't look natural, it doesn't look real.

I once used a colour cast and when it was shown at the club, a chap sidled up to me and said, confidentially, "If you bring your camera in next week, I'll show you how

to set up the white balance." I thought it better to say nothing and just nod. To the elderly colour cast is something like trying to tell somebody to drive on the wrong side of the road.

This brings us to the point of, how much of our editing power do we actually use? I use an amateur editor called VideoPad, because it turns out good DVD's and if you load it with 4K it will download the sound track ... that's it. If you want it show the pictures, then you have to convert it to 2K, when you can have 4K sound with it ... I have a sense of humour too. One day, it will get there. It was over a year before I could view the Timeline with large pictures. It has 92 picture FX and I use about four or five.

The old school had it drilled into them, editing should be invisible, meaning, anything that draws attention to your editing is bad practise. Due to the slowness of film, we used a spotlight or two ... some habits die hard. Now, they are hardly ever used without a diffuser.

There are now three groups of filmmakers and it is age dependent. The very young use just an iPhone (I can't even afford one). Then we have the serious filmmakers who use a 4K camera which is, or is very near to, professional. Finally, we have the prosumer 2K group, who turn out excellent footage, use old editors and know their kit backwards. All that remains are the "snappers" who upload something nearly every day to Instagram, including their dinner.

It has long since been a mystery to me, as to why our clubs find it so damnably difficult to get hold of the younger generation as members. It has been theorised that the younger generation today know it all, but if you go back 70 years the younger generation was far more subservient through receiving corporal punishment. Back then, if you wanted a job done, you'd go to an expert. To become one, you'd serve an apprenticeship, so it followed that to use a camera properly, you would need to be taught and the cheapest way to get tuition was to join a club, to be taught by older, more experienced members. Today, of course, the skill is in becoming a slave to a computer.

A few years ago, I joined an engineering society, and being more interested in filmmaking than engineering, made a film of club activities every year, which was shown at the last meeting of each year. These were the easiest films I ever made. Every man-jack was known and willing to assist. There were no complaints and the audience was them, so they would sit there thinking "am I in this ... where's me"?

It became very obvious, that we have a new society today. It has very little skillset except to read from a computer screen and click on fields. This goes from mathematics, to operating machinery, so how do you attract younger members?

"How would you like to make a film?"

"What about?"

"Any subject of your choosing."

"I do that already."

You won't get past this very easily. 'Their world' is clutched in their hand all day. "Oh ... my dinner got over a hundred hits." This may puzzle some middle-aged people.



Dave continues...

It would seem that the only way you can find new, younger members is to find them on Instagram, Facebook etc. and let it be known that their local video club is very keen to gain new members and show them how to make real films and edit them ... to see how many hits they can get on YouTube ... sorry ... that's the way it is.

In America, where there are no clubs. A number of serious filmmakers organise a meeting about once a year in cities like New York, and they may meet for a few days, to show each other their work on a silver screen and discuss technique, ask questions of each other and then disperse. They number about 30 individuals.

The world is moving on rapidly. Choices are getting ever greater and kicking and screaming, some of us are being dragged into a new era, the feeling being, not one of choice ... but there is a choice. You can carry on in the old way and stick to the proven methods, or you can branch out and investigate – meaning experiment with – a whole new world of colour and FX.

Music is a well-established way of creating mood in a movie, but ask yourself, does colouring and hues complete the circle? This is an extremely complex subject. If you use two cameras of different makes or models, they will likely portray a different registration of colours. If you now use a colour cast, it doesn't swamp that difference and if you use three cameras, all different, then you'd better learn how to correct colour using colour wheels etc ... which is really fundamental to the presentation of your club or society's work. One still rarely sees people using a 18% grey card to establish both colour balance and

exposure, when held near to the subject sharing its lighting. Incidentally, cameras are set up to present skin tones to balance the whites, just hold your hand in front of the lens and wait for the 'magic'.

There are many things about exposure that are little understood or studied, namely, if you go up to a subject and take an exposure reading, then back away some several metres and take another exposure reading, it will be quite different. Which is correct? The answer is ... both ... respectively. However, when it comes to colour, the answer is ... neither. The reason is, there is an interaction between all objects within a room, each reflecting light onto its neighbouring object, even modifying the reflected light's wavelength of each object. Cameras use techniques to fool the human eye, so the laws of physics per se are not the same for the human eye as they are for the cameras, one being biological, the other being electronic. This is the world we have been dragged into ... people can't be bothered to study in depth, so the manufacturers provided a little switch, which reads AUTO.

I once stood in a forest in NZ and everything was green, namely, all the reflected light was green. The camera registered it correctly as being green. When shown on a big silver screen, it was utterly unacceptable, yet, when standing in that forest, it seemed quite natural. There are no set rules, no guidelines, no rights and wrongs, it is simply one's personal choice ... and that may even have something to do with culture.

Dave Jones



**Why isn't your club
represented in this
magazine?**



Alan's Ramblings

Alan Wallbank

Shares his thoughts

Some years ago, I was invited to show my films at a video club. I appreciate that short films are preferable to suit most audiences, but on this occasion I decided to show a longer film as it had received a great deal of praise at previous showings outside the video club umbrella. The documentary film took about three years to make using quite a lot archive material including cine film that was complimented with around seven interviews resulting in a piece work that would be difficult to repeat if someone else were to start the same project today.

Down to earth

Riding high on past adulation, I was soon brought down to earth with a thud when on the films conclusion a club member summed up my presentation in just five words by saying 'It was a bit long'! To be honest, I suppose most of us have a tolerance level on subjects we have no interest in and in this case I seemed to have pushed someone too far, hence the comment received, but that's not the end of the story.

For almost twenty years, I relied on a Portsmouth Video Club member, Stuart Egbeare to help me with my films as I quite often need to do pieces to camera and carry out interviews. He continued to help me after the club closed, but in recent years his health has deteriorated so he can no longer assist me, but an ex club member who I kept in touch with has come to my rescue.

He always gives me a positive comments on my films, but a recent hour long film brought the same response as the earlier individual, so all I can say is that you cannot please everyone all the time!

In my last ramble I mentioned that one of my projects about a church, had to be carried over from last year, but had stalled as the person doing pieces to camera had grown a moustache for a stage appearance and wouldn't be shaving it off until early July. He now tells me that he will appear in another production so that means I will have to wait until August! If that wasn't bad enough the fields around the church are farmed and last year they grew a cereal crop. What I failed to take into account was that the crop would be different this year and now find

that the fields will be full of sunflowers! This means all the outside scenes will need to be redone, but thankfully we were not able to do that much last time anyway.

David Jones

In a recent So-Co News, David Jones mentions that it is better to work to script that to film ad hoc and hope for the best, as it's hard work trying to find the right scenes to complete a project. While David is probably right, I have always gone in head first in the hope there is enough footage to cover every angle. I appreciate its a chaotic way of filming, but it really sums up my outlook on life, where Davids has perhaps been more orderly.

Recently, he took the trouble to provide me with a detailed filming sequence of on interview I hope to conduct on the Isle of Wight, even providing the state of the tide and the suns position on particular days. I am much indebted to David as his knowledge far exceeds mine, so I hope to meet him on the Island in the hope we can go through his scripted scenes.

A while ago I mentioned that I was hoping to complete my present projects and call it a day on film making, but other ideas are always cropping up with another only yesterday. Once again, it was under my nose all the time so if you are looking for a new project think closer to home even something you do on regular basis, or perhaps a friend who had an interesting job that links in with a local museum. There must be many people still around who had trades now lost in history, so why not seek them out and excite your audience with refectons from the past.

That brings me to a statement on tv, when someone said "all our brains are wired differently", so what I like to film is is not everyone's cup of tea which is usually transport related, although I do diverse at times.

I would like to finish by saying how much I enjoyed reading Ian Reeds article about microphones in the June 'Film and Video Maker'. Although the subject often crops up in the pages of this magazine, I find these pieces are a good reminder on how to maintain good sound quality.

Alan Wallbank



Gloucester Film Makers

Since it is a 60 year Jubilee for the Gloucester Film Makers, I attach a link to the film "Kit and Helen" made by Tony Smith (who joined the Gloucester club in the mid 1980s,) and Clifford Smith, both originally of Cotswold Cine club - which I was a member of. Both Tony and Cliff are no longer with us.

I had last seen it over 40 years ago, and amazed it ended up with me.

It was only ever entered in one competition.

I have spent the last couple of days working on the audio which I had to capture from the stripe track, and had to add a Bezier mask over one scene in this version.

(because of partial nudity but which was for artistic purposes)

It can now be viewed by all.

<https://youtu.be/s7O8rizvIbg>

Robert Paget





Robert Paget

Tips, advice and
chit chat.

This and That

I have never made films just to enter into competitions. Years ago at an Inter Club competition “rules” meeting, I had proposed extending the maximum length of films entered. I had an ulterior motive, in that I had just completed a far longer Super 8mm film, and would have liked to have entered that film. I was shot down, encountered anger and thumping of the table. When told that no film over 15 minutes would ever be any good, I responded that it was a shame that nobody had told that to David Attenborough who was just making the “Life on Earth” series. That went badly, proved that some were only entering to win, but did amuse everyone when I reported back to my club.

In the days of cine, there was often a member who would ask at the end of a meeting “could you just put this on screen for me please - if you have time?” Whatever the main content of the evening had been, this always added interest.

I am certain that it sometimes moved that member on with their skills and ideas, and those with a poor projector could see it projected at its best to a medium sized audience.

Following the advice emblazoned on a local haulier’s heavy duty vehicle of “always paddle your own canoe”, for many years I have ignored the restrictive times of some minor competitions. When you have an idea or project under way, the last thing you want is the whole ambitious thing cutting down in size before you start.

Limited spool size



Those of us who have managed to sit through the most lengthy of films which needed comprehensively editing, will remember that the limited size of the Cine projector take up spool was often a grateful mercy. Experience tells us that as you make the film longer, the risk of adding audience boredom increases exponentially, but it can already kick in at just a few minutes.

That even happens when you have judges watching so many films that they become “shell shocked”. Their boredom can sometimes show through in their comments on a film or their lack of understanding of a film. Large competitions are bound to suffer from this. It becomes akin to “binge watching” the latest upmarket TV drama, when you know that watching just one more episode that evening would be a binge too far.

So, what about those longer films?

I have just digitized a 1995 Super 8mm film which runs just under 23 minutes, cost a lot to film, and as a documentary featuring several craftsmen with each of them talking about their work. It stands up well to time, and if I tried to trim down the digital version now, would probably remove no more than 20 seconds. Had I made it yesterday in 4K quality, I would still have been pleased, although it does need a small amount of Foley sound of drills and woodworking lathes.

The edit still looks reasonable, and what now comes through to me far more, are the personal stories of how their particular craft skills and interests were starting

when they were only eight or nine years old. That film has never been in any competition. Projecting it reminded me of how Cine film always seemed to look far better the larger it was projected. I think the experience of watching it improved.

Three other cine films range from 21 to 35 minutes, with each having a lot of content, and proved to me that there was no “glass ceiling” or “no go land” barrier at say 15 minutes.

Sometimes there are moments or sequences within a film, which you sense have worked far better than you ever imagined or hoped for. It has given me an idea for producing a “compilation” film of more recent video projects, especially those I made as “music videos” using the sequences I am most satisfied with.

You’ll never know

If you do not attempt that “new film project” which you have been thinking about for ages, but concerned about your skills or the possible difficulties, you will never know whether you could do it.

I am certain that amateur film making may well be “good for your health”. Not just the active part of the shoot, but the mental agility of planning and editing. Achieving a completed film can be rewarding, irrespective of how many people view it.

I guiltily admit that most of my films are only partly planned. I find that the successes and failures of the day’s shoot can lead to fresh ideas or treatment of the subject, together with additional challenges and opportunities in the edit.

Having just re-watched a Michael Parkinson interview with Ingrid Bergman, I had never realized that the legendary “Casablanca” 1942 film was also largely unplanned, with the main actress not knowing whether she would ultimately leave on the aircraft with Victor Laszlo, or stay on the ground with Rick Blaine. The sequence of multiple shots of Paris, plus some back projection, always seemed far too condensed, and now knowing of the lack of a complete script, it was probably needed to explain and body out the story. A clip from the film’s famous piano sequence immediately showed a tiny continuity error of “eye lines” between shots. That was probably difficult to notice on the editing bench, but the film magic comes to life with the hint of repressed tears and a tiny glint of light reflecting off an earring. The cast of legendary actors also helped, and turning the “unplanned” into a good film is therefore possible.

Film in a day

When I set out to film a recent project, I made a personal challenge to learn something from it. That could be about the subject or more likely how I need to work on camera skills. The ambition was to “film it in a day”. A lot of it was unplanned, but there was a core idea to work around.

An interpretation panel had caught my eye, but I did not want to base the film around any of the facts shown, knowing of one interpretation panel in Tewkesbury which displays partly incorrect information.

Later that week I had started the edit, and remembered the images on the panel: The world’s first adjustable spanner was designed and manufactured near Stroud.



Robert Paget continues....

That factory was where my father was later apprenticed as an engineer, and worked throughout WWII, because they were producing important equipment for the Royal Navy. Thinking about that spanner, I realized it was the very same tool I had tried to mend an outside water tap with the previous week. Classically, I could not find the spanners I needed, so picked up a rusty old spanner from a pile of items in the shed. The screw which locates the thumb wheel immediately fell out and was nearly lost. I am now certain this is a "Ferrabee" adjustable spanner, and it makes a very practical and treasured paperweight on my desk.

Angles

Camerawork teaches you to look for multiple angles and ways you can photograph and film a subject. Just watch a section of Apple TV's remarkable "Tehran", and you will be astounded at how many camera angles can be used inside a passenger aircraft. The interest is often in the detail, and I always take as many close ups as possible. You can never have too many detailed shots at the point you start the edit.

Clearing garden debris, cutting back hedging and branches, I moved an old household stoneware sink, which I have used for "alpine gardens" and was in the family garden when I was growing up. It was something of a nuisance and had been lying upturned against timber which was to be thrown away.



Having looked at that item for most of my life, I read the name and location of the manufacturer with fresh interest. It came from Moira in Leicestershire, and I know that it had been the household "sink", certainly from about 1930, and had most likely been removed by my father as a major domestic upgrade in about 1947.



As a waterway enthusiast, I realized the possibility that it "could" have travelled from Moira on the Ashby Canal (completed 1804) to canal wharves at either Stroud or Dudbridge. It would all depend on the date of manufacture, and whether the railway boom had started. "If" I could ever prove this, it would become part of a film.

Clifford Smith

By a miracle I have been handed several cine films made by the late Clifford Smith. He had been chairman of Cotswold Cine Club in Stroud in the early 70s, produced some superb documentaries, and was the first to be involved with winning both the Gloucester Inter Club

competition and the Vale sound Trophy at the same event with the club film "Front Row Craftsman". He had several successes in "Best in the West", and one of his films, which amazingly never won any competitions, was "SIEGE".



I had not seen it for at least 45 years, but feel privileged to have been digitizing it, making it play at the correct speed, and managing to extract the audio from the stripe soundtrack.

The story of the Civil War siege of Gloucester is told through a "Sealed Knot" event, and historic locations around the city. Tight editing, inventive camerawork, a thin sheet of translucent orange plastic film held in front of the camera to simulate burning buildings, and a story which draws you in. By a handwritten note on the outside of the film container, it was filmed one June and completed that December.



In the days of Cine, members were often treated to seeing how new projectors performed, their lenses compared, and how good their inbuilt audio was. In a world where everything is portrayed as electronic, video projectors retain moving "mechanical" components of colour wheels and digital micro mirror devices. (is there sometimes a motorized iris?).

Upmarket cine projectors were expensive, and so too are the better video projectors, but it is a limited market, and always was. The opportunity to compare such products seems to have disappeared, both in retail shops and at Clubs.

For fun, one summer evening, I am planning to hang a screen on the outside of the garden shed and project a couple of films.

Robert



One To Watch

A few from Robert Paget

A few from Pip Critten

Selected
Movies
from
the
World
Wide Web

Send your
contributions to

pipcritten@googlemail.com

Beginner with \$30,000 RED vs PRO with \$600 DSLR
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zSxlbZFsn-g&t=17s>



The Black Belt Barrister (a real one on both counts) has an informative video:

<https://youtu.be/ZZ5d7TVNYUs>



Beginner with \$100,000 FILM Gear vs PRO with \$1000 Camera

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n1JkFZIEY_k



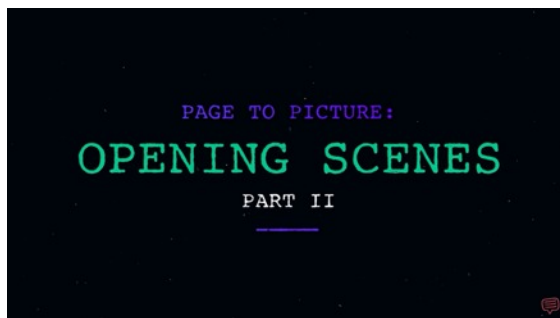
MOST FAMOUS Movies BEFORE AND AFTER Special Effects (VFX)f

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QNgv5vDYV7w>



Ways to Begin a Movie, From Scorsese to Tarantino

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r2vtbcfmFDY>



What is Frame Rate? — Ultimate Guide to Frames Per Second Explained

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7IUFluLOh-s>



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Council Members

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Lee Prescott – Stonehouse

Changes

New & Rejoined:

Change of address / contact:

Resigned:

Cancelled:

MRS ANNE MASSEY, Wokingham

MR D. BAILEY, Fordingbridge

MR IAN BATEMAN, Exmouth

Deceased:

MR PHILIP FOWLER, Trowbridge

Moved into SoCo Region:

Change of Name

The SoCo News Archive can be found

at either:

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

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