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*Chairman
David Martin*

Chairman's Chat

I hope I am not speaking too soon but is it really February?

Here in Weymouth people are starting to dress as if it is mid summer with a quick change, around six pm, back into winter clothes.

At least the ones with a camera would have got some wonderful sunsets.

On a more serious thought, Phil Marshman reminds me the Frome Five Minute Festival is on the 30th of March 2019 at 3pm on (Saturday) for a 3pm start.

It's not only famous for the many films shown each year but it has a five star rating for the Buffet, so come early.

During the coming months many competitions around the region will be taking place so dust off the camera and make that award winning film. I for one will be looking out for them.

The SOCO Initiative; I feel you would have been informed already, if not contact: tonycolburn.soco@gmail.com

My regards to you all.

David Martin, Chairman

davidmartinsoco@gmail.com



*Pip Critten
Writes...*

Editorial

Well, I have to say a thank you to Mike Szewczuk for his letter in the last issue regarding competitions.

Never before has a letter expressing an opinion raised so much interest from other readers.

Whatever your view point, it's good to have a debate. The letters of response are included in this issue.

There has always been controversy around competitions regarding the rules; who can and can't enter, what constitutes an amateur and even is "amateur" the right word in the first place.

Mike posed the question of whether there should be a handicapping system as certain clubs seemed to top the leader board in competitions.

Others oppose this view thinking that it is already a level playing field and all you have to do to compete and win is make better films.

Valid arguments are put forward that, regarding kit, there is little between the professional and non professional.

Tom Hardwick's article praising a 4k video camera with stunning results, that

sells for less than £125, seems to back this up.

As someone who is asked, on occasions, to judge films I would always put a film that tells a good story but with flaws in technical skills over the technically perfect film that cannot hold interest.

So, one could argue that the playing field is level as we all have the potential to tell a good story that holds peoples interest.

I believe that competition entries that include the skills of as many of it's members that it can are to be celebrated and not knocked.

Bringing people together who have a common interest were they can learn and develop from one another should be what film clubs have at it's centre.

Yes it's great if you win. But, if you don't then look to see what you can do to move up the rankings for your next entry.

What do you think?

Keep Smiling, Pip

pipcritten@googlemail.com



Readers Letters

Dear Sir

I just love letters that start off, "this is not sour grapes but..." which immediately tells you it is going to be sour grapes about something. (letters Dec issue).

Mike Szewczuk churns out the old chestnut about "retired TV professionals" who are club members, always seeming to "walk away" with all the prizes in local competitions. He also thinks those clubs should be handicapped in some way. What utter rubbish.

I have heard it all before. This is the argument of the lazy, - of the untalented, - of the, can't be bothered brigade. It is such a tedious and cowardly argument.

To every one reading this that thinks the same way as Mike, I would like to say, that in this day and age, there is absolutely no excuse for not knowing how to put high production values to your film. None! Whether you can make the effort to learn, is another matter.

You Tube, Vimeo, Google etc are jam packed with "how to" videos from very talented individuals that can teach you everything you need to know to make a quality film, if you can be bothered to spend the time.

How many remember the old moans - "they have better cameras than us", - "they have better mics than us", - "they have better editing systems than us". Yada yada yada. Those arguments can't be used now can they? Why? Because you are probably using the same kit as most of the production companies out there.

So what's the problem? It's the easy way out to place the blame on others, when it is ones own lack of talent and effort that is the real issue here.

A ban is not the answer. A handicap system is not the answer either. To all the Mikes of this world I say this. Improve your skill set. Improve your technique. Lift your production values up to a higher level instead of trying to drag everyone down to yours.

If you can't stand the heat...

Sincerely

Stewart Mackay.

Lighting Cameraman.

Life member of [BFVS](#)

Dear Sir,

[Bristol Blues](#)

Whenever a letter starts off with the words "this is NOT sour grapes", then inevitably it is. Mike Szewczuk's letter (SoCo News 2019 Jan/Feb) is one such case.

Everyone who has come up against Bristol in past competitions will agree with most of what he says. However, he has adopted the very English trait of suggesting that the good should be penalised to make the lesser entrants look better. He has dipped his toe into the murky waters of professionals versus amateurs.

Throughout our lives we will come up against others who are better than us. The kid at school who ran rings round us on the football field was not a professional. Nor was the good looking youth who got all the girls. The first had talent, and the second had charm (and a motor-bike).

We all have an idea of what a professional is, but do we know what an amateur is?

The dictionary describes an amateur as "a person who does something without professional skill". I, and most of the SoCo members reading this, would not like to be classed as an amateur based on that premise. We have all developed our skills over the years in the field of film making, and although we have never received a penny for doing so, would class ourselves as doing so in a "professional" way.

There is only one way to beat Bristol and that is to improve our film making skills.

Don't try and drag them down to our level, but rise up to theirs. See what they are doing differently and try and emulate them.

Lets forget about the "sour grapes", as they only produce "whine" and not "wine", lets forget about the "level playing field" as the best grapes are grown on the side of hills.

And finally, lets shake off the "Bristol blues" and drink a toast to every club, and their members, who get so much pleasure from making films to enter into these competitions.

Will Dallimore

Chairman, [Tewkesbury YMCA Movie Makers](#)

I totally agree with Mike Szewczuk when he wrote in the last issue of SoCo magazine explaining how he discovered that many members from the Bristol Club are or were professionals from BBC Bristol, ITV, and Independents etc, and how they once entered a film which featured the actor from "Heartbeat" - Derek Fowlds.

That film, by the way, won four awards at BIAFF in 2012, including one for Best Actor! It also won the Teign Cup that year, much to my dismay, as my entry didn't...

As for whether this would result in fewer people entering competitions due to the unfairness of it all is open for debate, but the previous profession of Diane Taylor also mentioned in Mike's letter, didn't help her win the Teign Cup in 2018 with her film, "Masha And Dasha Two Hearts In One."

This is a wonderful film which Diane filmed and edited, and in my opinion should have won, even though she is also a member of the Bristol Film and Video Society.

The point I'm making is that on the one hand I agree with Mike, but on the other hand, doesn't it all comes down to who is judging the film at the time as to how well it does?

Don't forget that in the SoCo region, club competition organisers invite people to judge who are not professional and in some cases aren't even filmmakers. So you will never get a balanced view.

So Mike, keep on making films and enter them, and prove the system wrong.

Susie Walker

soozee@gmx.com



Readers Letters

Many thanks to all those who have supported and adjudicated fairly the endeavours of the Bristol Film and Video Society over the years.

Unfortunately, we are aware that some people have started to snipe at us because of our apparent success in competitions. This is not only destructive but also unfair.

It reached a crescendo in the Jan - Feb 2019 edition of SOCO news, in SOCO committee member Mike Szewczuk's letter to the editor. It is based on a collection of misinformation and half-truths, which need to be corrected.

In his letter, Mike said; *"films from the Bristol Club entered in the SOCO Region area "walk away" always with the Top or Winning awards."*

No! The Bristol Film and Video Society does not walk away with anything. We work very hard, very methodically and very long on every club film that we create. Sometimes we win competitions. This is down to sheer hard work and application.

"...that many members are or were professionals from BBC Bristol, ITV, and Independents etc..."

Bristol is a media city. In our ranks at any time we tend to have a sprinkling of members who are retired film making professionals and some who are aspiring professionals. Do you expect us to turn them away for knowing what they are doing? That would be absurd.

In fact the vast majority of our members have never worked in film. Most of us have come to it later in life with no experience. We are simply passionate about it.

"Once when visiting, a colleague was once approached by three of them in one evening with an offer."

This is a meaningless comment. When people visit the Society, we make them welcome and enquire if they would like to become members. How do other clubs treat visitors, and, potentially, increase their membership?

"They once featured the actor from "Heartbeat", David Fowlds. When questioned at the time their reply was "He didn't get paid" – so what! A Professional actor in a supposed "amateur" production!"

The film in question (Pigeon Post) was an independent non-commercial production by a group of professionals and amateurs, produced by a lighting cameraman, who happened to be a club member at that time, and who has since retired and emigrated to Tasmania. It has never been entered into any amateur competition in the name of our club.

In the summer of 2005, our club members were offered the opportunity to work alongside Stewart Mackay, producer of 'Pigeon Post' (which featured Derek Fowlds, not David) and his professional crew on this production. We leapt at the opportunity so that we could observe and learn from the experience. A number of members attended the shoot, and a few were used as runners, or 'gofers' Stewart also extended the invitation to participate to other clubs as well as ours.

It doesn't stop there either, as has been stated in the November / December 2018 issue of SOCO News in Pip's Editorial; "Were of broadcast standard", and another "could be broadcast on the History Channel" etc. etc!

Proves my point?

It proves nothing, Mike. Both the comments refer to one film only, that being 'Why is America called America?' We were delighted to find an up and coming young presenter. There is nothing random about this. We have long learned the value of using good performers in our films. How do we do this? We seek them out, and audition them. The young woman in question has ambitions of being a professional performer. Good luck to her!

We also use good local amateur actors extensively in our films.

This is a film of passion, researched, written and filmed by talented individuals who do it for the love of it. We are delighted that Pip Critten thought it **"looked professional."** That is what we always aspire to.

Also in the same edition of SOCO NEWS page 6 with reference to contributor Diana Taylor, she states that she "was working on the BBC programme "Newsnight" as a film editor".

Yes, in the 1980's! This was stated extremely clearly in her contribution to the November / December 2018 issue of SOCO News, but conveniently ignored. She retired years ago.

Would anyone like to know what makes our members different from the misguided individuals who think that learning from the best is the same as professional assistance, and that **amateur** must mean **amateurish**? Read on.

Over its 85 year history, the Bristol Film and Video Society's culture has become steeped in an understanding of the value of learning and improving.

In the 21st century we use the internet extensively to help develop our skills.

In addition, we seek out opportunities to invite professional and ex professional speakers to talk to us several times a year to inspire us and educate us in as many aspects of film making as we can. We study film making best practice from talented and experienced members of our club. We practice film making. We apply feedback and self-criticism to all our club films as part of the production process, and we use the best equipment that we can afford.

We also make a point of inviting all members of the club to participate in club films. This often results in a large crew who are very focused on the result, and it give less experienced members the chance to get involved, and to shadow and learn from others.

We don't do anything you could not do if you chose to.

What we don't do is cheat.

FACT: We never pay anyone in any capacity in any of our productions. We do it for love of it. We are amateurs in the most literal sense.

Do you think we should be **handicapped** for taking film making seriously? For using the resources available to us? For aspiring to make the best films that we can?

I don't think so.

Tim Smart

Chairman

Bristol film and Video Society



WEYMOUTH MOVIE MAKERS

“PENNY CUP” 2019

Results and Winning Films Show 7:30 pm Wednesday
3rd April 2019 t Centenary Club, 21 Jubilee Close,
Weymouth, DT4 7BG

Entry cost £5

COMPETITION RULES

- Any film on DVD, HD, Blu-Ray disk, maybe entered into this amateur competition. It can be entered by an individual or a club. Young people and Students are welcome to enter.
- The winning entrant will receive a £25 cheque and hold the Penny Cup for one year if they so wish or a Photograph of winner being presented with the Cup together with a certificate. If the winner does wish to hold the cup for a year it will be their responsibility to pick it up from Weymouth Movie Makers and return it. Certificates and encouraging comments will be given to all participants.
- The overall winner will be the winner of the Penny Cup. Films will also be judged in categories, Drama, Comedy Drama. Documentary, travelogue, etc.
- The number of entries from any one club or organisation is not restricted.

- **All entries, together with entry forms and fees, must be received by Monday 4th March 2019**
- In the event of there being insufficient entries received to run the competition by the closing date, the competition will be deferred to a later date.
- No nudity, swearing or cruelty to animals in the films please. Films may use up to 10% of other peoples stock footage if you have copyright clearance.
- The committee of the Weymouth Movie Makers will rule on all matters concerning the competition. Their decisions will be final. A film may only be entered once in the Penny
- Maximum running time fifteen (15) minutes - including titles and credits.

Please send entries to:

John Simpson, 9 Ford Down Lane, Henley, Buckland
Newton, Dorchester, Dorset, DT2 7BW

WEYMOUTH MOVIE MAKERS “PENNY CUP” 2019

Results and Winning Films Show: 7:30pm, Wed 3rd April 2019
Centenary Club, 21 Jubilee Close, Weymouth, DT4 7BG
Closing Date Monday 4th March

Title of Film

Name of Film Maker

Address and Postcode

Telephone Number

E-MAIL

Are you a member of a Film Club or other media organisation? If yes which one? (just curious!)

Format (Please Circle) DVD HD BLUE-RAY Aspect Ratio 4.3, 16.9

If film is on YouTube or Vimeo please write and URL below

Running Time: (Max 15 Minutes)

DECLARATION: I accept the conditions of entry to this competition and understand that all entrants are responsible for copyright clearance on all sound and visual material used in their entries

Name:

Signature:

Fee per entry: £5.00 Please make the Cheque payable to WEYMOUTH MOVIE MAKERS and forward cheque and film and Completed Entry Form to competition Organiser

John Simpson, 9 Ford Down Lane, Henley, Buckland Newton, Dorchester, Dorset DT2 7BW



STONEHOUSE & STROUD VIDEO
UNIT
[Youtube](#) and [Vimeo](#)



Gloucester Film Makers

So Guys and Guyesses what do we find to do during this "closed season" for film making? Well, closed in the sense that twiddling about outdoors once Christmas is over with a lack of snow in our area, to provide more interesting backgrounds and action.

We have been viewing films from the past, even cine 8mm converts, - applied some re-editing and sound etc, then uploaded the results to YouTube and Vimeo. At the same time comparing Video Quality from the old production equipment with "today's" whiz bangos!

Now to the immediate future. Mike Szewczuk, our now noted Writer and Director, is (still) working on an idea and scripting for a new production. We have also managed to retain the interests and promises of our noted teenage "Star" Brad Christy, not-with-standing his totally necessary and immersed involvement in his Electrical Engineering apprenticeship where he is doing exceptionally well. So pleased to state that Brad is and has turned out to be an excellent Young Man in all senses.

We like to think that, (and I'm sure we're quite correct), in believing that his involvement since the age of 12 years in film making with us, the technical disciplines, meeting various people and making him THINK, has provided him with a positive outlook and view into his future. This I am sure, is an unrealised effect of film making and our "hobby"! Currently we are trying to gain the interests of some other teenagers and youngsters.

To conclude: Once again Mike and I have been asked and have accepted to Judge in the SVM Australian Competitions. One effect of the modern digital "on Line" availability is that it saves us the 24,000 round miles trip. Shame in a way init?

Lee Prescott

We are well underway with our 52nd year as a club and to date we have had four competitions with the members entering 17 films.

Our programme shows another 7 competitions on various themes ahead of us.

The Video Road Shows continue to keep us busy with two done so far and seven planned for the rest of the year. The are an important part of our income and enable us to hold our annual subs to £1.00. Yes £1.00. That's not a misprint!

At this point I must record, on behalf of the club, our sincere thanks to Helen and Arthur Barry for their input to the Road Shows for many years . Sadly they have decided to leave us and we shall miss them and their friendship very much.

On March 16th. we host The 52nd Annual Gloucester Inter Club Competition with five clubs taking part this year. I do wonder how many other competitions have been running for this time?

We are very grateful to Phil Marshman from the Frome Club who will be fronting the panel of 3 judges on the day. Not an easy task with nine films to view and all on different themes.

Last evening we enjoyed seeing a selection of films from The Teignmouth Video Film Making Group and we have prepared a Programme for them to view at their meeting in late March.

Hopefully they will enjoy ours also!

John Greene,

[Gloucester Film Makers.](#)



Hi Pip.

Our grandchildren will have no interest in our hobby as we did. Hollywood will not be the capital of movie making as we are slowly reaching the stage of making our own videos without the help of all the supporting people.

Credits will be smaller.

Video clubs will be a thing of the past.

Youngsters don't need the long winded process of learning the art of movie making. A more powerful image device will come along like 3D and hologram images.

Looking back at the amateur moment of making films to the present day, films were exciting to produce with all the hard work we had to do.

The 10 best Movie Maker competitions was the highlight of show casing your film. Like the OSCARS.

All this three minute here, or five minutes media format entry at different video clubs is not a rock my boat showcase for one's work.

Today's want to be filmmakers use their iPad or phone and make longer videos on science fiction material. Also they go to college and take a course on media.

As we get older, we try and put our past film material on a format which our next generation can view. With the constant upgrade on computers our old format such as film or VHS becomes more difficult to transfer.

Over the years I have been putting on public film show with my projector and the audience are appreciative that the past can still be created without modern technology.

The human race will always want to capture images from birth to marriage. The devices will get smaller and slicker and very dangerous as more people's private lives will be invaded.

The one final question to answer....

Will earth still be functional as it is today?

Frank Maxwell



The year 2019 started for Teign Film Makers with a celebratory lunch on Friday 4th January. Once again members were made very welcome and had a great time at the Livermead Cliff Hotel.

On the following Monday, at the first official club meeting of the year, members gathered for a visit by locally based film maker, Danny Cooke.

Since his first visit to the club Danny has been affectionately referred to as "the drone man" but this visit emphatically demonstrated that Danny is a man of many talents.

Living in Torbay, Danny has travelled the world for his work and has covered many different filming types, styles and techniques. During the evening we were shown the results of several shoots including promotional films, adverts, documentaries and even a personal video of his young son.

Before we knew it the evening was over and, host for the evening, Roger Western thanked Danny for a most entertaining and informative evening.

During the interval, after the draw, Danny chose one envelope from three to establish which mandatory item was to be included in the "28 day challenge".

The item this year was "a tea towel". In this challenge (it isn't a competition) productions are required to be completed within 28 days, hence the title!

The following meeting, on Monday 21st January, was an exchange evening when members viewed films from Wimborne Movie Makers and gave their comments which will be sent to the Wimborne club. Due to the number of films on the disk, we shall be viewing the second half at a later date.

The 28 day challenge films were screened on Monday 4th February and this, once again, brought a varied and entertaining mixture of productions. The second half of the evening was spent watching a film by Jim Gill which illustrated many variations of recording dialogue in different situations. This neatly led the members on to a practical session of trying out various microphones with a recording device.

The meeting of Monday 18th February was designated a technical forum in the programme and during the first part of the meeting host, Peter Hiner, gave an illustrated presentation on editing, including the do's and don'ts of the process. During the session members were given the opportunity to participate, give opinions and to ask questions about what they had seen and heard.

A note of optimism for the new year in that the club has recently been gaining members and we look forward to their input and participation.

Finally another reminder that there will not be a Teign Cup competition in 2019. It's not the end but a change in the timing and it will return in the Spring of 2020. It is hoped that this change will result in better travelling conditions for those attending the event.

Our club welcomes visitors both local and not so local and if you want more information about the programme, events and updates please visit the website:-

<http://www.teignfilmmakersclub.org> or visit the [Facebook page](#).



WEYMOUTH MOVIE MAKERS "PENNY CUP"

Open Competition 2019

Results and Winning Films Show

7:30 pm Wednesday 3rd April 2019

Centenary Club, 21 Jubilee Close, Weymouth, DT4 7BG

Closing Date Monday 4th March

This is an open competition open to anyone anywhere, please enter.

It will be the second year I have had the privilege of running the Weymouth Penny Cup Competition.



Last years competition was a huge success and thoroughly enjoyable. I make films and do creative writing for our local magazine, so I know some of the highs and lows of being creative.

Films can take over 100 hours to plan shoot and edit and if you do go to all the trouble of making a film it is a real pity if it's not seen by as wide an audience as possible.

Watching amateur films inspires others in their film making and you may not know the good effect that your film has had upon those who have seen it.

The judging of the films will be sensitive and the comments will be positive, we don't want to upset anyone, what would be the point of that!

The results and winning films show will be at 7:30 pm on Wednesday 3rd April 2019 t Centenary Club, 21 Jubilee Close, Weymouth, DT4 7BG.

Free admission, free parking and a warm welcome from club members. If you come we will be sure to show your film.

Please encourage as many as you can to enter the 2019 Penny Cup so that we have another great competition. - John Simpson

Please send entries to:

John Simpson, 9 Ford Down Lane, Henley, Buckland Newton, Dorchester, Dorset, DT2 7BW





I'll be Dog-Gone

Lee Prescott
FACI

Shares his views

It's said that you need intelligence to be an actor, (could've fooled me), unless you've got four legs and a collar. I turn my spotlight away from the 2 legged mumbling variety and focus on the none English speaking four legged actors, Dogs.

Dogs were first "domesticated" from Wolves around 40,000 years ago, yes, when our primitive ancestors needed hunting assistance. They discovered an unrealised level of intelligence in the animals enabling them to train them. That level of intelligence improved over the centuries is quite apparent in Dogs today. I've had Dogs, all rescued, most of my life and have actually found that, at times, a dog is in some way telepathic. When my younger son was in Iraq and Afghanistan my wife and I looked after his dog Jack – a black Labrador - he was quite able to read my mind minutes before I spoke and sometimes it would happen the other way around. Silently he could communicate.

Dogs and films have gone together since the beginning of the cinema. Charlie Chaplin knew instinctively that a Dog would bring more laughs. Hollywood still banks big on canine stars. Whether they star in a Disney Dog Movie, an Art House tearjerker, or just steal a scene here and there.

Here are some of the best films featuring Dogs that we'll always remember:-

"Lassie Come Home" This was the first of many films starring Pal, a rough collie who took on the stage name of Lassie. Metro Goldwyn Mayer made a fortune from this film. The dog's owner also made it lucratively.

"Greyfriars Bobby" A Skye Terrier called Bobby is the pet of a Scottish farmer but the dog loves and old shepherd, Auld Jock. Money becomes scarce so Auld Jock is dismissed. He goes to Edinburgh – Bobby follows him. Auld Jock dies in poverty and is buried in Greyfriars Churchyard. Bobby returns to Auld Jock's grave every night to sleep. The film sets out to melt your heart which it achieves successfully! The little dog is irresistible. Brilliantly trained Bobby achieves the stellar honours for himself. Laurence Naismith gives a strong well balanced performance.

"Benji 1974" He's a canine icon! This DOG has been in eleven feature films, two documentaries a TV series and a video game. Benji was a rare dog film earning an Oscar Nomination! The film received a lot of praise for the ability to tell the story through the eyes of Benji, the dog. The mixed breed Pup, real name Higgins who played Benji became one of the most famous dog actors of all time.

"The Hound Of The Baskervilles" (1959):- There's nothing supernatural in this Hammer film but the atmosphere created is fantastic including Peter Cushing as Sherlock Homes. The story concerns the predicted death of the last of the Baskerville family played by Christopher Lee. Sherlock Homes however uncovers the fact of a local family feud and the hound dog is just a Great Dane fitted with a hideous mask

"Hachikō Monogatari" There are a large number of emotional dog films but this one just might be the most heartbreaking. This film tells the true story of an Akita who waited at the railway station for his master Hidesaburō Ueno for over nine years after his master's death in 1925. Akita the dog became an absolute icon of loyalty in Japanese culture. A bronze statue of Hachikō

stands watch over Shibuya Station in Tokyo to this day and will always do so.

"Beethoven" 1992:- This film is a classic family comedy and stars Charles Grodin and Bonnie Hunt. Beethoven brought a lovable St. Bernard into our lives which, it turned out, became an incredibly lucrative franchise. Altogether eight more Beethoven films were produced.

"White Fang" 1991:- Based on Jack London's novel stars a Wolf dog called Jed who also appeared in a number of other films like "The Thing". The story is about an explorer and gold hunter (Ethan Hawke), who befriends a half Wolf half dog which a native American tribe has named White Fang. The film was successful both financially and critically. Consideration has been given to a remake.

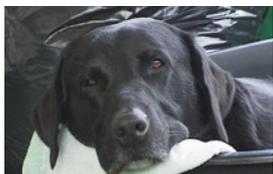
"Homeward Bound - The Incredible Journey" You may recall watching the first film in which a cat and two dogs are left on a farm while the family goes to San Francisco. The pets think that they have been abandoned and decide to go and find their humans. Their journey is truly incredible. The story is narrated by Michael J. Fox as the American Bull Dog "Chance". He and the other animals – "Shadow", a Golden Retriever and a cat called "Sassy" speak to each other throughout the film. Everything about this film is handled beautifully from the plot to the animals' voice over's. Through to its happy ending. Due to its critical box office success it was followed by a sequel...*"Homeward Bound II – Lost In San Francisco"*.

"101 Dalmations" Glen Close was very good in the live action re-make but the original animated film is a classic. The film is based on a novel by Dodie Smith and produced by Disney to enormous financial success. It has been re released four time since originally and remains one of the most popular films from the Disney Studio.

"Old Yeller" 1957 Probably the ultimate dog film teaching us the true highs and lows of owning and loving a dog, the responsibility they put on you. The story is in Texas in the late 1800s. The dog "Spike" a Labrador Retriever – Mastiff cross breed is found by a boy, Travis, on the farm. This is another film that's become ingrained in popular culture. The film received critical praise on its release and it still tugs at the heart strings.

"White Dog" 1982:- A controversial film by Sam Fuller and based on the book of the same title stars Kristy McNichols an actress who takes in a stray white Alsatian dog not realising that it has been trained to attack black people therefore making it a "White Dog"! She has ended up with a four legged time bomb but she refuses to give the dog up. She finds a Black Dog Trainer, (Paul Winfield), willing to retrain the dog. Five white Alsatisans played the unnamed dog whose performances range from loving with McNichol to a hound of hell at the sight of any black person. This film had to be ultimately withdrawn and shelved by Paramount after pressure from NAACP!

There are so many more films in which dog stars steal the show from an actor and these quite adorable dog give quite unforgettable performances from brave to and including intelligence. These dog have warmed our hearts throughout film history. In the matter of declining Oscar viewing figures a new award "Best Dog" just might 'save the day'! The need to adapt the stage wouldn't be any problem and a sure thing it would avoid perhaps the more succinct acceptance speeches! "Wuf Woof"!



See us at:

<https://vimeo.com/139449141>

FROME FILM & VIDEO MAKERS

Present

THE 2019 FROME FIVE MINUTE FESTIVAL

The show will be on

Saturday March 30th 2019

at the Catholic Hall, Park Road,

Frome, Somerset BA11 1EU

starting at 3 pm

Award Sponsored by

The logo for 'akm MUSIC' features the lowercase letters 'akm' in a stylized, orange, cursive font, followed by the word 'MUSIC' in a bold, orange, uppercase sans-serif font.

[www: fromevideo.webs.com](http://www.fromevideo.webs.com)



Tom Hardwick

Kit review.

Is the Yi 4K good value?

I've had a lot of action cameras in my time, all bought on eBay, and I've often enthused about them in my Positive Image articles in Film and Video Maker magazine. My first of this ilk was the waterproof Extreme Cam (2011) that filmed HD in 1440x1080 and still works well to this day. I followed this with an SJ1000 (1920x1080, 30fps) that I used underwater in its supplied underwater housing, and it served me well as a fit-and-forget dashcam for 5 years, giving great audio and sharp pictures.

Prices have dropped year on year so I replaced this in the car with an £18.48 Qumox, a clone of the SJ5000, and it too performs beautifully. I bought two SJ4000s because they were absurdly cheap (less than £30 each), and after testing them for the mag, gave one away. Both were excellent performers. I then bought a VTIN (another SJ4k clone) but that failed and I was refunded. I then went for another Qumox and used it below water and in fresh air, held in a gimbal, on last summer's Croatian holiday. The footage on my 65" OLED TV has to be seen to be believed.

Get the picture? I've used a lot of these little action cams, including the original GoPro, which for some silly reason didn't have a viewfinder and wouldn't shoot sharp footage under water.

We move on. I was getting a bit tired of the barrel distortion that these little action cameras give, so I thought it time to move up to a Yi 4k. This is one interesting Chinese camera, and is by far the best action cam I've ever used. At £122.50 including its dedicated underwater housing, it's the most expensive action cam I've bought.

A quick rundown shows it's beautifully made, has an excellent 2¼" rear touch screen, takes genuine 12 MP stills and has a top movie resolution of 4k (3840x2160) at a proper 25 FPS. It shoots timelapse and slo-mo, it records stereo through two tiny onboard mics, has a built in loudspeaker, a tripod socket, spare batteries are less than £6 each and they're charged in situ via USB.

It has all sorts of other tricks up its sleeve, but for me the biggest selling point (do I actually NEED another action cam?) is the fact that you can film and shoot stills in a genuine undistorted picture mode. So bye bye barrel distortion with all its bendy telegraph poles and curvy horizons, and hello to the very wide angle rectilinear mode.

I use this all the time. OK, it doesn't see quite as wide as when filming in the barrel distorting mode, but isn't a 17mm field of view of 104° (35 mm equivalent) wide enough for you?

The picture quality is nothing short of breathtaking on a 4k TV, very sharp indeed. Look at my handheld shot taken inside King's Cross station, and then look at the untouched central blow-up, where every sign can be read. Then there's a couple of comparison shots, taken seconds apart from the same place, showing the different field of views when the distortion is dialled out. All the photos are unretouched, taken straight out of camera.

I am very impressed indeed with this Yi 4k, and have done some pixel-peeping in Photoshop to see if the non-distorting mode sacrifices resolution. I'm pleased to say it doesn't, the only loss is in absolute field of view coverage.

[Editors Note: Pictures here are not shown at full resolution due to restrictions of publication.]



Max wide angle barrel distortion mode-3400x2550



Rectilinear mode Amsterdam-3400x2550



Yi 4k Action Camera



Big bright rear LCD screen



Houses of Parliament
1/500 sec, 3400x2550



St Martin's crypt, 1/13th sec, handheld



Action cam comparison



London's King's Cross station-3400x2550



King's Cross centre screen blow-up



During my time at RFVM, I introduced the idea of hiring a different venue each season, where a group film could be made. It offers incentive for the script writers amongst us to come up with a script, knowing the venue we have in mind. This year, we had use of the Shinfield Players Theatre, which offered a stage, auditorium, as well as cafe area and other areas such as backstage, dressing rooms etc. (We were also able to hire a few costumes too for a very reasonable £5 per costume)

Our filming date was to be Saturday February 2nd. We dedicated 3 evenings to planning this, as part of our programme, the first being early November, week 8 of our 32 week programme. It was very encouraging when 3 of our members presented a synopsis at the November meeting, each pitching their idea. All were solid stories, however two of them were still a little sketchy in detail, and therefore difficult to compare one against the other, as to the practical aspects of the script. We decided to give a little longer to develop the scripts and pitch again in December. As well as the members voting for which script they preferred, they also had to bear in mind if they felt it could be filmed in a day? Ideally 4-6 pages max.



Oli with DOP David

The winning script was chosen. "Stage Struck", written by Oli. Over the Christmas break, Oli then worked really hard on tweaking the script, preparing storyboards, and at a meeting in January we were ready for actors rehearsals as well as blocking for camera positions, hoping to save time on the day. Oli asked David if he would take on the role of DOP, whilst Oli took care of Directing the actors.

Friday February 1st, the day before our shoot..... It snowed! Quite a lot!! One actor was ill and one of the camera crew was seriously snowed in at Newbury.

But the rest of us made it to the theatre, where the car park was like a skating rink. We took 90 minutes to set up,

then filmed until 6pm on the dot. Unfortunately we didn't get finished, but we did finish all the scenes which were set in the theatre auditorium. (the stage settings were due to change the following morning, so not finishing was NOT an option. Continuity would have been a disaster)



Talking of continuity..... As we packed up deciding that we could film the "cafe" scenes at our club one evening soon, we learned that one of our actors was leaving the country to live abroad.... in two weeks time. So, the following Tuesday it was all hands on deck once more to get the film finished whilst Gillian was still there.



We did it, finishing at 10pm on the dot. Phew! Now over to the editor to attempt to get it ready for our Fiction Competition night on 19th March, when "Stage Struck" will be up against other entries from members who may have made their own fiction films over recent months. If it turns out well, SoCo clubs may well see it in external competitions next season. But mainly it was fun to make, and Oli, script writer and director, commented that he now had a lot more understanding of just how long it takes to make a very short film.

Great team effort everyone. Well done.

Anne Massey

CHAIR



Diane Taylor has one yet another award for her fascinating and movie documentary "Sasha and Dasha".

The documentary, which tells the story of Russian conjoined twins, has now been in 21 International Film Festivals and won a raft of awards.

Our congratulations go to her.

Watch it here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y-q8JvI3edw>





Don't forget the audio

The new video camera I bought recently ticked all the right boxes. Viewfinder, (an electronic one, capable of tilting). A fast f1.8 lens with a 25x zoom. Manual control lens ring and manual control wheel. Not too heavy for carting around. It even had a socket for an external mic.

Looking at the specification, it's typical of a camcorder at enthusiast level. It includes the sensor size, recording formats (aspect ratios), frame rates, lens or mount type, iso range, image stabilisation, screen size, shutter speed - all to do with the picture.

By contrast, audio seems very much to be the poor relation. The file format for recorded sound was listed in the spec but there's no mention of the frequency response, or analogue to digital sampling rate, for example. (Arguably it's similar with TVs, where people put improving the picture before improving the sound.)

Evidence of audio being an after-thought permeates from the specification listing to the actual operation. The manual reveals pages about changing visuals - different settings, effects and so on - but audio? Come again?

Most enthusiasts know that using the camera's AGCs and built in mics is not going to produce the best sound, and would look to manual settings. Okay, so the first thing is, you need to pay extra - for an external mic. First design problem: the camera is held by inserting fingers under a strap on the right hand side and hooking them over the top. Thus the zoom control falls under the index finger. But where's the flash shoe/external mic mounting? Yes, on top of the camera. And to reveal it a flap swings open to one side. Not so much room for the fingers now when an external mic is mounted.

My main bugbear though, was the method of setting the microphone recording level. Knob and meter anyone? No chance. The built-in control wheel should do the job,

so I thought, but no. It would manually adjust picture settings, like white balance. Not something altered too often, but though it seems a pretty frequent adjustment, it required swinging out the screen, going into menus, tapping, and confirming in software to set the manual sound recording level. Certainly not something that can be done with the eye to the viewfinder. And not as quick as it could be. Menu mentality rules again.

The level meters appeared on screen and in the viewfinder - a few histogram-type bars which strangely had the peak sound at the bottom of the pile, not as might be expected for a peak, at the top.

Ironically, the in-camera *playback* of video allowed slightly better functionality. The volume could be easily adjusted via the Tele-Wide zoom lever, and even some form of equalisation was available via those tap-tap screen menus. But of course the built-in speaker for playing back the sound was mono and minute.

I had thought of using a separate digital recorder for sound and sync it up afterwards, but that's a pain, especially for dealing with several short shots of lip-sync. What would be more useful would be a passive inline level control, either a knob or a slider - like the ones often found in headphone leads for lowering volume, but suitable for fitting between a condenser mic and a 3.5mm socket. Does anyone make such a thing?

Perhaps I've got the wrong end of the stick. Perhaps I expect too much from audio built into a camcorder, but I couldn't help thinking the camera I'd bought was little more than a still camera in a different form. So little did it offer over the bridge camera I use for video I returned it - I guess for most people it's not a deal-breaker, but it was for me.

Happy filming, Melvyn Dover.

Melvyn Dover
A word of warning when buying a video camera



Confusing

After reading my last piece, I expect some of you were wondering why I was using cine in 2008! Surly it was a mistake and yes it was, so I owe everyone an apology for a confusing article.

When the article was submitted to Pip, the year was 1998 so the story made sense, but at the last minute I received an email that showed that it was actually filmed in 2008! How could I be ten years out! Well I thought it was too long, but all the information pointed to that year.

The date was changed just before the newsletter went out, but unfortunately I failed to change the rest of the article, so all that about cine and Hi8 should be ignored.

The good news is that a copy of the film about Cecil Gordon Vokes and his gun collection is now in the hands of the 'Friends of the Curtis Museum' in Alton where some of the guns were displayed before it all went to Havant. There are quite few people who live in Alton area who still remember the C G Vokes, so putting the film together after all these years has made the effort very rewarding.

That leads me on to entering films in competitions. It's not something I do that often, mainly because I feel my films are not worthy of being in the competition in the

first place and I don't want judges to complain about something in the film I had no control over.

Another reason I don't enter, is because nearly all my films contain a lot copyright material that has been used with permission, but only if I keep the only copies. That always rules me out of 'The IAC British International Amateur Film Competition', although films with just a few copyright images are usually okay in the smaller competitions.

That brings me onto another issue. What rules do clubs have regarding the use of cine film when it comes to their competition's. I must admit that I have been very fortunate over the years to have obtained cine film from people who have taken it in the first place.

This obviously gave me a distinct advantage when making a film, but it did fall foul of one of my previous club's rules that only allowed a percentage of film to be used. That meant most of my films were ruled out.

I would like to hear the views of other members/clubs when it comes to cine film and should a cap be used in competitions?

Alan Wallbank

Muses...



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White Balance

Alan W in his Jan/Feb 2019 article raises the question of White Balance (WB) and its affects/effectiveness with a view to compensating for differences in WB from room to room, whilst each shares the same source of light. Worthy of note is that the inexperience videographer wouldn't have noticed this.

Although it is better than nothing, if the truth be known, the camera's WB doesn't balance everything perfectly, simply because, it can't. It always has a problem in areas of shadow. In one's video camera, white balance is dependent upon gain applied to the component parts of the image's colour, subsequent to exposure. What we are dealing with here is spectral radiance, which means that each scene has its own spectral power distribution dependent upon the light source/s. In a nutshell, when light sources are numerous, WB becomes complex and we are forced to resort to Eigenvectors for a solution ... it is worth bearing in mind, that we are trying to produce exactly what the human eye perceives. The only way to do this, is to copy exactly every hue that the subject displays, accurately, and this includes the reflections from other items in the room, even those out of shot ... e.g. a ceiling, all objects influence WB from room to room.

Psychologically, when we perceive a picture as possessing overly saturated colour, providing it isn't extreme, we quickly switch that part of our consciousness off and become involved in the subject matter.

What arises from Alan's question is that, whilst our engineers aim to give us beautifully accurate colours, we have a film industry that employs a set of brilliant people who are known as colourists, and dependent upon the

film, its story, mood etc., the colourist will create a colour cast befitting the film's genre. Within moments, we stop noticing it. However, subconsciously, it is believed to have an affect on our senses. I believe that our "switching off" is due to eye/brain blindness through adaptation, in like manner to that of wearing dark sunglasses.

Eigenvectors, matrixes and gain factors will prove that adding a fill light results in our window light not being pure daylight any more and is likely to adversely affect our camera's WB, but that is what editing is all about. Nobody complains about an orange gel or a blue gel. What I find odd is, I've worked with people who add a gel and don't rebalance the colour, as they see the affect of the gel as doing its job.

Another of Alan's question was, when he shows his film at the club, will they notice the difference in colour between two shots, one closely following the other? I doubt they will. In most cases, unless colour is really screwed up, nobody gets overly concerned.

People of Alan's calibre, however, are quite fastidious about colour and to whom I doff my hat, as the world at large relies solely upon AUTO everything and if it looks wrong, they simply blame the camera ... welcome to tomorrow's world!

Dave Jones, IWF&VC

P.S. A tip for the AUTO users. By placing your hand in front of the camera for about five seconds, it will AUTOMATICALLY compensate for both colour and exposure. All cameras are programmed to do this when switched fully to AUTO ... except mine.

Dave Jones

Shares his thoughts



Hi Pip,

Sorry I have not written much lately. I spent Christmas and New Year in the Cook Islands, Flying my Karma Drone and playing with my new GoPro 7 camera and my new Suptig WiFi remote camera control to capture nature close too.

This clip is a short demo of what can be done:

<https://youtu.be/Sq7iloSjmwQ>



Next month I will reach the last of the 80's! I also love my new found joy of piloting a drone to get a new birds eye view of things:

Of how to hover:

https://youtu.be/zqUS_AhODXg



Then to take a trip over our holiday location of the Muri Beachcomber on Boxing Day:

<https://youtu.be/l9vf92s1qVM>



Regards,

James Hatch

James Hatch

Hi Tech Kit



Exposure - a compromise

Ian Simpson

Wollongong
Camera Club Movie
Makers,
Australia

Many of the readers of this article, like me, have either come to movie making via the route of still photography or current shoot both still and moving images. Even though I have had almost a decade of practice with videography, my thinking is still locked into the exposing of transparency film. That is, don't over expose the bright areas, even if that meant that the dark areas may go a featureless black. Also I believed that each scene, if well lit, averaged out in tonal values at 18% grey.

So if you exposed correctly for 18% grey, which all lightmeters are calibrated to advise you, then you got the correct exposure. If some important highlights were very bright then you just made a small adjustment for them, then all was OK. Everything in the video and digital world seemed to be just a simple extension of the film world. Then I started reading some comments and articles on the internet about sensors and digital exposure and this simple exposure world became confusing.

Firstly I had to learn that the response to light by an image sensor is different to film. The sensor is a scientific instrument which can only have a limited number of fixed responses. If the light is too bright or too dark the sensor cannot assign a number to the tone and so is said to "clip."

By contrast film has a more gradual approach to being either saturated with light or not having enough light. So a video sensor has to be treated with more care in determining exposure than the traditional bad boy of film, transparency film.

So, taking these two design constraints of the video sensor in mind, I did a few tests on my Sony RX10 MkII. It has a 1 inch sensor, so is an improvement over the 1/3 inch sensors but a long way from the size of a sensor equal to a 35mm film frame. To guide me I read a few articles and soon found there were differing philosophies on the method of getting the correct exposure. (See: <http://prolost.com/blog/2008/3/2/exposing-to-the-left-vs-exposing-to-the-right.html>)

One group believes that you should set your exposure so that you are near clipping a highlight (termed Expose To The Right; ETTR), whilst the other philosophy (termed Expose To The Left; ETTL) sought to raise the exposure to add more detail to the shadow areas.

Both methods used a graphical presentation to aid setting the exposure, a histogram of the brightness levels in the scene to be photographed. Many of our video cameras have this shown in a histogram, where there are no spikes at either extremity; rather just a gentle rise from the base line in both cases. Unfortunately, nature and the activities we choose to video do not always provide such ideal conditions and so we are often forced to make a decision; do we expose for the highlights and lose detail in the shadows or vice versa. ETTR or ETTL?

Automatic Exposure

To begin, let us look at what the camera's automatic exposure system's best compromise exposure.

My test scene has the extremes of white paper on top of the scanner—bottom right and cameras behind dark glass on the left. Referral to the histogram shows a large spike on the right, the highlights have been clipped and a small spike on the left which implies some detail has been lost in the darker areas.

ETTR—but avoid clipping of the highlights

In this instance I decreased the exposure by 1.33 stops from the automatic setting and now the print on the paper appears, but the cameras are lost in the shadows. The histograms show no highlight clipping in the red and green and the hint of something in the blue. However at left side, all of the histograms are showing loss of detail as confirmed by an examination of the photograph. Sometimes the histogram display on your camera's LCD screen is small and it is not easy to discern when clipping starts to occur. So another way of ensuring no highlights have been clipped is to use the *Zebra pattern* built into most video cameras.



The photograph has been taken of the LCD screen of the Sony RX10. The zebra pattern is clearly observable and shows areas of the image which are at 100% brightness, that is, it

shows the highlights that have lost their detail. So to achieve the ETTR setting you adjust the exposure setting until all the areas with a zebra pattern have disappeared.

ETTL—Delving into the Shadows

When it is the detail in the darker areas of the scene that are important, then you must increase the exposure and wear the consequences in the highlight areas.

As expected with an increase of 1.33 stops over the automatic setting, the cameras can be seen more readily but at the expense of the highlight areas (which were clearly defined in the above photograph of the zebra pattern). The histograms show the clipping of the highlights and gentle rise from the base line for the darker parts of the image. So where the scene contains an extreme range of tones, you have to tell the automatic exposure system on your camera that you are not interested in its effort to expose for the average, 18% grey tone. You have to take control and either ETTR or ETTL.



Can you find an exposure setting that looks after both the highlights and dark areas? Well yes and no. The "yes" is that some cameras now come with special settings that capture the image as a "RAW" type file. That is, as a file that will allow extensive modification on your computer. The setting on my camera is called *S-Log2* and it produces the flat image on the right. Manipulation with editing software can restore the brightness and contrast without crushing the highlights or blackening the shadows. The "no" is that the shadow areas are noisy as the scene is shot at a minimum ISO of 800 and this camera has small sized pixels. It just shows you that "you can't always get what you want."



Robert Paget

Poses a few questions

Dumbed Down Competitions

Do I want to take part in any “dumbed down” version of any competition, be it for poetry, music, athletics or film making? Not really thanks! But I would love to be in 2nd or 3rd place to the best films ever made.

When competing in any film competition, however carefully the entry rules have been devised, it appears to be (thank heavens) the wider accepted norm. of “not made for profit” which is the deciding entry qualification.

I once heard the words “*I’m not making another film until I can do it in 16mm.*” Well, see where that gets you now! The search for image quality will always continue, for some it is the only goal, but may not make your film any better for an audience whose eyes do not even function in 4K. My most recent film incorporates some 1973 Standard 8 shots (which I had not even digitised very well), and on a 10feet wide screen they looked fine.

Amateur Film makers often feel at some disadvantage because of the equipment they use, the resolution of their cameras, the subjects they film, or their individual personal editing skills. Even worse, what if they came up against a better film from somebody whose great grandfather was Cecil B DeMille? Surely that would be totally unfair? They may have some obscure genetically inherited skill, or have been handed down some professional advice. What if the entrant attended a Club with a larger membership, and could therefore have their films appraised by a wider or more skilled audience? What if they attended a lecture by a professional presenter and picked up some ideas they could copy? Well, the whole argument and protestation becomes foolish beyond this, and fortunately for the whole amateur movement, sanity does rule, an example being the incredible animation films of Sheila Graber competing and winning national amateur film competitions.

Examine the rules of many Club’s internal competitions and you will find that Steven Spielberg could enter (if a member) but that he would now struggle because his skills are at their greatest in Direction and production, and that he would have had to do the bulk of the filming and editing to comply with some competition rules. Further complications could arise where you interview a “media professional or presenter” (for whom you may have to script their words) as compared to an eloquent lecturer or subject specialist.... And all of this enveloped in a copyright free music track which was written and performed by a professional musician.

I consider that the “not for profit” film maker has a great advantage over the so called professional, because of the absolute freedom to film what he or she wants, Being able to edit it on modern editing equipment, and to have no time constraints on length of finished product or project completion date, must surely improve the creative possibilities.

There is nothing better than seeing films which are better filmed and edited than your own. It enables you to identify how you can improve your own film making skills.

When I read the words “*looked professional*”, I may look at that film possibly a second time, realising that perhaps a judge, in one screening, had not spotted a glaring editing or audio image issue.

Stuck in a rut

For any modern film maker “stuck in the rut” worrying about competing with the skills of “professionals” or those with better cameras or editing equipment than yours – my advice is “get over it”. We all strive to improve our film making skills towards those of the current professionals and the ever improving filming and editing skills and techniques. Revisiting and challenging all areas of your film making, from titles and style right through to editing, learning how to edit using “J” cuts, creating far better ambient and atmospheric audio tracks, filming “pieces to camera” or “dramatic films” in at least “two shot” and improving camera skills, have surely to be some of the routes to this.

When making cine films, I knew that one further edit could either ruin or improve the film. So they often sat on the shelf for months before I gave them a final review and started building the soundtrack. The excitement of completing the film can mean that you miss some of the flaws in the finished product. Entering it immediately into a competition can then lead to disappointment when others spot your camera and editing glitches. I already leave at least the last twelve months of completed projects as live projects in the computer, simply in case I have a further idea for any of them To improve how I review current projects, I recently experimented with uploading a completed first version of a film to youtube, and asked various respected film makers to identify just where they thought my film was lacking or needed changing. The valued comments received led me to produce a further version, which was cut by one minute, had at least half a dozen tiny alterations, including font size of subtext in Astons, contrast and brilliance tweaked in one shot, and more time to read the closing credits.

Three Screens

I had always wanted recreate, in digital form, a three screen presentation I had made in cine film twenty years ago. Some friends called it a “Tryptych”, but I was not worried about the name, I just knew it was a “difficult” to project single handed. It ran with a Super8 Elmo G800 for the centre screen (including 1 minute of opening direct sound film), a Eumig S710D running Standard8 for the left screen, plus a silent Bolex standard 8mm for the right hand screen. Added to this was a Phillips reel to reel tape recorder for the main music soundtrack, and all had to be started up using correct film start positions and on screen cues. The films and audio tape normally sit in an old biscuit tin in the loft, with a hand written list of instructions to remind me how to project them. (quite apart from needing three large screens and three projection tables, speakers etc.)

The reason it had been made was that I had foolishly promised to make a commemorative film to mark 25 years of a charitable organisation, by using all of the relevant film offcuts which I had left in a large cardboard box. When I started to view the material, I had to splice together many dozens of short sequences (some just two or three seconds), just to be able to view them. In the



Robert Paget continued

early hours of the morning, my wife complained about the repetitive cutting and scraping noises from the cement splicer. I only had a Super8 editor, so the Standard 8 had to be projected, and there were two 200ft reels to view. I realised that I was getting nowhere in terms of editing and thinking out a plan, so I set up a second projector to speed things up and screen two images side by side on the kitchen wall. As it started, I immediately realised that a completely different story was there, a sort of montage, and that a third reel, the Super 8 offcuts, being projected in the middle would work. The projected film was only shown three times at 24 feet wide. Two of the audiences numbered over one hundred.

So what could I now do with these films: I captured, but not very well, the three cine films in full HD, but could not decide how they could be edited into one single extreme widescreen 12:3 image, which would obviously lose a lot of the captured resolution. The original soundtrack would be a copyright problem, and I had not yet worked out how to split the screen in my editing software (although I could now fractionally improve the images in colour and contrast and remove on screen splices).

A youtube channel demonstrating how to produce a film with a ferocious Lion on one side of the image and a human on the other side of the screen was the clue. Going into "track motion" in the film maker's software, he divided 1920 by 2, to give the position of one half of the screen, and reduced the frame dimensions by half. "Lightbulb moment", I rapidly grabbed the calculator and divided 1920 by 3. Yes, I had the answer for the width and central positions of each track.

The following week I edited my first three screen video using a one minute music track to which I had been given copyright clearance many years before. I pencilled some notes of the types of video clips needed to import which best reflected the words in the very short verses in the music, and were already in folders on my second hard drive. My only version of the audio track had been a third generation copy on reel to reel audio tape, however, friends had a near pristine LP containing the music track. I captured this on my 1977 Sony turntable, and then worked on it in Sony Soundforge software to remove and modify any "clicks".

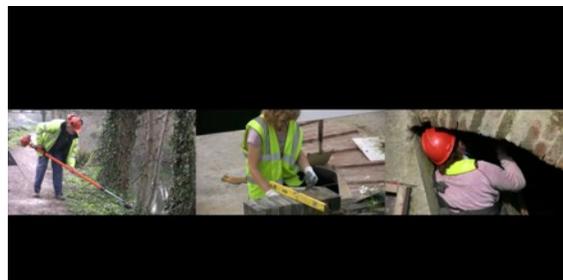
I consider that this short film improved my speed of editing, and of whether ripple edit was switched on or not. It made me think a little more out of the box, because I was editing essentially three films at the same time, repeatedly reviewing the progress of the edit in real time and making lots of editing changes. I have subsequently produced a couple of amended versions of *One May Morning* which tells the story of a day in the life of an 18th century Navy, sung by Mikron Theatre Company, and interpreted visually by modern day canal restorers. Initially it had no title, and it has some sixty edit points in the main 60 seconds (the opening and closing titles double the length of the final film). With a format of 48:9 it looks best on at least a 10ft wide screen.

It had an extended period of showing in canal visitor centres, and is a useful short film in a public show, giving a change of tempo in a screening to a large audience. As a BIAFF entry it scored badly, with the judges not understanding its purpose (although I had clearly written

that on the entry form): they thought it looked like a promotional video – just what I had said it was.

It can be found at

https://youtu.be/ZTj1pNb_yZs



With varying levels of success, I have used the 3screen layout in at least four other films, finding that it is easy to show other events happening on a construction site around a "piece to camera" in one of the thirds. If it needs a second or third viewing to really "get" the full content, so much the better... that can really suit a continuous display. The big lesson comes when you realise that you need three times as many cutaway shots as you would normally take to have any chance of continuing as "3screen" throughout a complete film, especially when you are the sole cameraman. I ran out of fresh cutaways in a more ambitious film, and then had to awkwardly switch to full screen. In making it, I became aware of the various patterns and sequences of changing each of the three images has on the production.

As an example: "Ham Mill update" can be found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rCs1pPfmnz&t=4s>



The original 3screen Cine film has not been recreated as yet, but it has taken me to other ideas for improving the presentation of films.

Robert Paget

If you have any video equipment for sale contact the editor to feature it in this magazine:

Pip Critten

pipcritten@googlemail.com



One To Watch

A Few from Lee Prescott

Alaska (atmospheric)

<https://vimeo.com/309872210>



South America

<https://vimeo.com/305431535>



Singapore

<https://vimeo.com/306420793>



The Bible, quite different!

<https://vimeo.com/310057504>



I tried to produce a film using the Google Earth software which is free.

I gave up after a day struggling, but the **Lichfield and Hatherton Canal Trust**

have worked wonders, showing the canal route flying from the Staffs & Worcester canal junction in the west to where it joins the Coventry canal at its eastern end. Plenty of railways, motorways and challenges plus the amazing new David Suchet aqueduct over the M6 toll road. This really is armchair film making.

Regards

Robert Paget

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qr2rPopdzX8>



The IAC Recommends:

Here's one to make you smile on a cold February afternoon. Simple idea, very low budget and great fun. I suspect Bob Lorrimer blew most of his budget just to get to the filming location. 5 stars at BIAFF 2010. Not long now until BIAFF 2019.

<https://vimeo.com/7556112>



Police arrest Duke of Edinburgh for dangerous driving.

hueywalker@gmx.co.uk

<https://youtu.be/66sDb7DgX4c>



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