

North Thames Region



NEWSLETTER

January—February 2016

HAPPY NEW YEAR!



Ken Mills OBE FACI

1927 - 2015

(p.3)



Congratulations to
Tim Stannard (l)
and
John Astin (r)
for taking the top awards in
the NTR Festival *(pp 6-8)* and HACCA *(p. 12)*



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Chairman's Chat

John Howden joined Colchester Film Makers in 2004 and took over as Chairman in 2005. He has served as Competitions Officer and is currently one of the Club's projectionists. He joined the NTR Council in 2012 and now also serves on the National IAC Council. He has judged at local, regional and national level and was a Final Round Judge at BIAFF 2015. He is an active film maker, regularly receiving 3 and 4 Star Awards at BIAFF.



A Happy New Year to you! Now is the time to take out those new film toys found in your Christmas stockings and get some great new footage for this year's films.

Retrospectively congratulations to Tim Stannard for his winning film, 'Greece is the Word' at the NTR Film Festival in November. It was a very good day with 28 films being shown and of course the AGM being held. The turnout was not huge but it was enthusiastic. Thank you to all who came, to those who showed the films, did the sound, made the tea, sold raffle tickets, took money at the door and presented the awards.

A particular thank you to Christine Collins who organised the competition and kept a cool head throughout!

There is still time to enter your masterpieces into BIAFF 2016. The closing date is January 31st. Last year we had quite a poor showing from North Thames and normally we are amongst the biggest group of entries. So go to www.theiac.org, and fill in your forms right now on line or as a print out. I look forward to seeing those films in Harrogate in April.

Which reminds me – have you booked for BIAFF 2016? How about coming this year? For those who have never been it really is a great weekend and you get to see some of the best amateur films from all over the world. Once again you can download the booking form from the home page of the IAC website.

But now to another matter. Over the last couple of months, I have been taken to task about crediting the music I use in my films. The reason being, I was told, that if we held the IAC music licence from MCPS and PPL, we were not permitted to credit the music, musicians and musical source on our films.

Puzzled by this since I have had long experience of MCPS in my days on BBC Radio, I went back to the licence as issued and I read the small print.

I found that if, as has been my custom, I included the details of the CD used, I had to get the permission of the record manufacturer. This was contained in the supplementary information on the MCPS licence.

Under the BPI and PPL licences that are also issued via the IAC, we are specifically told NOT to identify groups, bands, orchestras, players, soloists, instrumental groups, and/or performers on these recordings.

So there you have it. I shall have to go through my films and remove any mention of these. I shall, however, carry on identifying the titles of the pieces played. One thing is certain: it is a good idea to read the small print – and this is available on the IAC website – and it is an excellent scheme that has been negotiated on our behalf.

Here's to a great years filming and some spectacular results for 2017. See you at the heats of the Knockout Competition and book the final in your diaries – it is on May 14 2016 and is hosted by Colchester Film Makers. Details to follow.

John Howden LACI



Ken Mills OBE LACI passed away on December 6th 2015, aged 88

Ken was one of the earliest members of what is now Harrow Film Makers in the 1950s, and remained a staunch and enthusiastic film maker all his life, picking up many trophies, stars and awards along the way.

Always keen to embrace the latest technology, and with an unquenchable thirst for knowledge, he was unstinting with his time and practical advice for newer members of the Club.

A man with a great sense of fun and full of life - he tried abseiling for the first time to celebrate his 87th birthday just 18 months ago!

He was the backbone of the Club for over 60 years, somehow seeming to find endless time and energy to fulfil many functions, and to provide encouragement and support to others, always with a welcoming and cheery smile.

He will be sorely missed not only in our club, but also by the North Thames Region, where he served for many years on the Committee, only retiring last year from the post of Competition Officer, and by everyone who came into contact with him in every sphere of his life.

We are thankful that he was part of our lives, and our thoughts go out to Anne and all his family.

Judy Long, Harrow Film Makers

Ken stepped down from the post of NTR Competition Officer earlier in the year and I took over from him for 2015.

I last saw Ken and his lovely wife, Anne, on July 9th. It was a hot summer's day and I arrived at their home at 10.30am. Ken was his usual gentlemanly self and had all the Competition paperwork ready for me.

He had run the Competition impeccably since taking over the job from Ken Seeger. I was apprehensive of the scale of the job but Ken put me at my ease and showed me the ropes, however daunting....and I promised to try to run it as he had done.

After he downloaded the records to a memory stick for me we joined Anne on the terrace of their house for a light lunch of cheese, fruit and strawberries. We sat chatting and admiring their most beautiful, large garden. Apart from flowers galore all looking so colourful and healthy and filling the air with perfume, there was a large extensive vegetable garden doing equally well.

Ken tended all of it himself except for the lawn which was bigger than my total garden. 'This is what keeps him so young', I thought to myself....

Both Ken and Anne belied their age and were enthusiastic on all subjects that we chatted about. It was so pleasant to sit there with the sun shining, the flowers blooming and the birds singing and in such good company. And this is how I shall remember Ken, the gentleman, the hard working Club member, the long serving member of the North Thames Region Council...the gardener.

When we said goodbye he was rushing off to yet another meeting.

Our thoughts are with Anne and his family....

He will be sadly missed.

Christine Collins, NTRIAC Vice-Chairman

Your Editor's complaint in the last Newsletter about the lack of voluntary Newsletter contributions fortunately did not fall on deaf ears:

Heather Palmer writes:

YES, there is someone out here reading the Newsletter and I would like to say that I agree completely with your comment about the general public being more responsive to our films than a video club audience.

I feel that club members have forgotten how to watch a film for pleasure— they only want to find fault. I'm quite sure the majority will disagree with me but at least this proves someone is listening (and reading). Thank you for the Newsletter, it is appreciated.

And thank you, Heather. Ed.

Nigel Longman is pessimistic about the future of Public Shows:

I'm surprised that there are still any public shows. I wonder what sort of show members of the public might be interested in attending. What programme would entice Joe Public away from his/her armchair and snug lounge out into the cold night to sit on a hard chair in a community hall and watch amateur films? I'm struggling to think of what it might be.

Certainly, as John points out, I can understand that those involved in the production of the films being shown would be interested in attending. And I can see that club members would feel duty-bound to attend and to cajole as many family, friends and neighbours to come along as possible too.

But as for members of the general public beating a path to a Movie Club film show - I'm sorry but I just can't see it.

When we made movies by cutting up cine film into clips, reorganising and splicing them back together, things were a bit different. People were impressed by the big brightly coloured Kodachrome projected pictures compared with the small black and white pictures at home on their televisions. They were curious to see what home-made films could be like and that curiosity led to successful public shows put on by what was then the new and emerging home cine clubs. I know because I was there.

The world has moved on and become more sophisticated with higher expectations. I seriously doubt that today a movie making club could put on a show that would meet those expectations unless it were to draw on the very best films available on the amateur and small independent film makers' circuit. Those films are already widely available to watch on the internet; so in a way technology, which has both enabled and liberated the film-making skills of so many people, has been responsible for the redundancy of the traditional movie club public show and, in a wider sense, the very existence of movie making clubs.

And Steven Mayfield looks at the wider, national scene, with words of advice for the IAC:

Never have the barriers to entry been so low for those that want to produce professional looking video content and then show it off to an expectant world.

Just spend ten minutes wading through YouTube and, after you've ignored all the cat videos, you will stumble across content that not only looks like it should be broadcast on TV, but which thousands of people around the world actually want to watch and recommend - this weekend I've watched a stunning documentary about a charity trying to help street children in South America, a short drama set in the future on top of a mountain, and a young Australian singer's music video.

But if instead you spent those ten minutes reading recent copies of Film & Video Maker, then you could be forgiven for believing that video making is in terminal decline and that hardly anyone these days wants to pick up a camera.

Articles refer to how club membership is dwindling and that many competitions are attracting fewer entries. There are also plenty of references to “our hobby” - and this is what I believe is the heart of the problem.

“Our hobby” makes the making of films and video sound an elitist activity - something that is the preserve of a limited number of people and thereby excluding the general public.

But search online for video training courses in London and you will quickly see that interest in video production suggests anything but an elitist, unusual hobby - from courses for those wanting an introduction to how to use their DSLR's to make a video, to more advanced film making courses as well as in depth training in editing (not just how to use video editing software, but how to develop an understanding of the grammar of editing). (See Eric Jukes' articles in the Sept/Oct & Nov/Dec 2014 and Sept/Oct 2015 Newsletters—Ed.)

The reason I know so much about the type of courses available is that for the last 18 months I have been signing up for any course I can find. I've been amazed at the wide variety of people taking these courses - from 18 year olds who want to develop their skills so they can become professional video editors in the future, to people who have recently retired and who want to express themselves through experimental art.

But following conversations with my fellow classmates there are two things they all have in common - no one on any of these courses has ever heard of the IAC and no one has ever considered joining a video club!

It's difficult for me to have strong views on why my classmates have never heard of the IAC as I don't know what the IAC have tried in the past to raise awareness and increase membership (I only rejoined the IAC in March 2015, after originally having been a member for a couple of years in the early 1990s).

But I would suggest at the very least an attempt should be made to ask those institutions offering video courses to the public to hand out leaflets and make sure the tutors are aware of the IAC. Or as a more ambitious approach, could the IAC consider launching its own courses (I've read in recent newsletters that some clubs have tried this approach)? Finally, could more be made of the IAC's back catalogue of video competition winners - with YouTube being a popular way for new film makers to search out new content, as they learn a style and develop a voice?

Could the IAC launch its own YouTube channel? This could be an ideal way to showcase past video competition winners (rather than circulating the films on DVD between clubs), or be an outlet for short training videos aimed at those that are new to film making (or even behind the scenes short films made by competition film winners explaining how they made their films and what they needed to consider).

Ultimately it would make the IAC appear relevant and would certainly help to raise the profile.

With regards to why none of my classmates has ever considered joining a video club I think that it just doesn't seem relevant for them for what they want to. They have all taken the classes as they have something specific they want to do with video - mostly to make a statement by making a documentary on subjects they are passionate about. With light, portable and relatively cheap equipment it is now easy to shoot solo when it comes to documentary production.

In addition, my classmates want as many people as possible to see their finished product so their voice can be heard - to them, this means uploading to something such as YouTube, where a wide range of people around the world can view it and feedback can be received instantly. They have no interest in having it projected onto a screen in a darkened room at a club so that a small group of people (who are unlikely to be the target audience) can pass opinion.

I firmly believe that video production isn't a pastime in terminal decline - I would argue that it has never been more popular.

The challenge for the IAC is to make sure that they remain relevant and keep looking to the future rather than spending too much time reflecting on the past.

Hear! Hear!

Many thanks to the contributors—let's have more!! Ed.

NTRIAC 2015 MOVIE FESTIVAL

As members descended on Northaw Village Hall around 10 am on Saturday November 21st, they were greeted with a cup of tea or coffee and a biscuit or two from cheerful Catering Manager Penny Love, ably supported by the equally cheerful Margaret Farrer.



The Awards & Trophies

A time to chat with old friends and acquaintances before the first film show.

John Jones from Colchester FMC was in charge of the visual side of the projection, and Alan Colegrave & Geoff Foord (Harrow FM) took care of the audio. Both pictures and sound were excellent throughout the day.

Competition Officer Christine Collins had divided the 28 films entered (3 more than last year!) into 3 shows, the first of which consisted of 11 films and started at 10.35 am.

After the AGM & lunch break, the 2nd show started around 2 pm with promos for BIAFF 2016 in Harrogate, and the 2016 AGM Weekend in Norwich.

The audience of 43 people then watched 8 more films before the tea/coffee break around 3.30 pm.



**(l>r) At the controls,
John Jones, Alan Colegrave
& Geoff Foord**

The 3rd & final show consisted of 9 films, and these were followed by the Raffle Draw, and then the announcement of the Awards & the Presentations. Every year, the judging for this event is done by members from another IAC Region in turn, and this year the job fell to the North East Region (NERIAC). Peter Dobing FACI and George Theaker FACI kindly obliged.

Christine began the Awards Presentations with a tribute to Ken Mills for all the work he had done so capably over the years as Competition Officer, and then, as an innovation, she produced a bunch of gold envelopes, and went around the audience asking individual members to open one each and read out the names of the winners. *(All the results on p. 8)*

As often, Documentaries and Travelogues seemed to predominate, and Comedies were few and far between. A few Films To A Record added variety.



**Tea Break
for the audience**





Ron Jones presents John Astin with his awards for 2nd place with "Tracks To Victory"



Tim Stannard takes 3rd place with "A Joy To Ring" and 1st Place with "Greece Is The Word"

The eventual winning films had been spread across all three shows, so an appearance in the final show didn't necessarily indicate an award. The awards together with the judges' comments were presented to the winners, all of whom, encouragingly, were present, by the Region's President, Ron Jones. The event ended around 6 pm, with people discussing, as usual, the rights and wrongs of the decisions!

NTRAC 2015 AGM

- The NTRAC AGM took place in Northaw Village Hall at 12 noon on Saturday November 21st 2015.
- Chairman John Howden thanked members of the Council for their help, and particularly Ron Jones for continuing to run the Knockout Competition.
- He congratulated Colchester FMC on winning a BIAFF Diamond & UNICA Bronze with "Ransom Note".
- Treasurer Brenda Granshaw thanked John Farrer for his success with the 100 Club—the Region's only source of income, and vital now that events were tending to run at a loss because of falling attendances. As the main item of expenditure was the Newsletter, she urged members to consider receiving it online.
- When it came to the re-election of Officers, there were no changes except for Eric Granshaw & Christine Collins standing down from their roles as Training Officer & Competition Officer respectively.
- There were no Members' Proposals.
- In Members' Voices, Nigel Lee (Enfield MM) said they were now required to take out Insurance Cover for their regular meetings. (*See p.10 - Ed.*)
- Alan Colegrave suggested there should be the option for people to enter competitions on line via Vimeo or YouTube.
- This led to a short discussion on the subject. Alan said he would write a relevant article for the Newsletter. John Howden asked the membership for their views to be forwarded to him—the issue would need full discussion & agreement before implementation.
- The Meeting closed at 12.42 pm.

NTR 2015 MOVIE FESTIVAL RESULTS

28 films were entered (and all shown) and the Competition was judged by **Peter Dobing FACI & George Theaker FACI** from **NERIAC**

Competition Officer: Christine Collins FACI

Commended:

"Tempted" – John Howden LACI

"Death Wish" – The A Team from Potters Bar FM

Highly Commended:

"Sing a Rainbow" - Ed Kinge

Very Highly Commended:

"Ayrag" - Andrew Tweed

3rd Place: The Kodak Shield + £20:

"A Joy To Ring" - Tim Stannard

2nd Place: The Ganderson Shield + £30,

The Kenneth Seeger Trophy for Best Editing

"Tracks To Victory" - John Astin FACI

1st Place: The North Thames Regional Trophy + £50

The Lesley Germany Trophy for Best Use of Sound:

"Greece is the Word" - Tim Stannard

SPOTLIGHT ON THE FUTURE



JANUARY 31st 2016

Closing Date for entries to BIAFF 2016

SATURDAY MARCH 19th

**East Anglian Audio Visual Competition
at Margareting Village Hall, Wantz Road, Ingatestone,
Essex CM4 0EP.**

**Judging commences at 9.45 am. Gala Show &
Presentation at 7 pm. Closing Date for Entries: Feb. 19th**

Contact: Dick Williams 01708 748580

dickwilliamsav@yahoo.co.uk

THURSDAY APRIL 14th—SUNDAY APRIL 17th 2016

**IAC BIAFF 2016 hosted by NERIAC in the Cairn Hotel, Ripon
Road, Harrogate, Yorks.**

Contact Derek Mathieson: *dereks07@gmail.com*

THURSDAY OCTOBER 20th—SUNDAY OCTOBER 23rd 2016

**The IAC AGM Weekend hosted by the NTR in the Maids
Head Hotel, Norwich.**

Contact: Penny Love (*see front cover*)



Welcome!



The Film & Video Institute

To our new member:

Dr. Beverley Peter—Middlesex

To join the IAC , contact:
IAC, The Film and Video Institute,
McCracken Park,
Great North Road,

Gosforth,

NEWCASTLE ON TYNE NE3 2DT

Tel.: 0191 303 8960

E-Mail: admin@theiac.org.uk

A Message from Brentwood Video Club

Unfortunately Julian Ryley - our past Secretary - is no longer with us.

I am now the Secretary and can be contacted - **Betty O'Neill, 28 Leafy Way, Hutton, Brentwood, Essex CM13 2QW.**

We are still going strong, though like many Clubs are mainly quite elderly, and struggle to recruit new members- we have had one this year and he was the subject of much rejoicing!

The Contact for Walthamstow ACVC is:

Roy Garner, Chairman: *Email: r.garner854@btinternet.com*
Tel.: 01992 577568

and for St. Albans MM :

Mike Cobert : *Tel.: 01727 853819*

In the last Newsletter, we welcomed Woodstock Video Club to the NTRIAC. Their website editor Nigel Batts writes:

We are a fairly small club with only ten members, but we are enthusiastic, and having watched some of the films on the IAC website, we hope to enter a few competitions soon.

Some of us were members of Oxford Video Society, which has now disbanded.

Contacts:

Website: www.woodstockvideoclub.co.uk

Contact: Brian Battrick, Club Secretary

Email: secretary@woodstockvideoclub.co.uk

Questions from Nigel Lee, Treasurer of Enfield VM

We are having to sign a new hiring agreement and have been told by the Hall's letting agent that we are now required to obtain Public Liability Insurance. If this is not obtained then we will not be able to use the church hall for our club meetings.

We find this a strange request as we regard ourselves as a private club who do not admit members of the public.

Neither do we now film outside with the danger of members of the public possibly tripping over tripods or cables etc.

What are other clubs' views regarding this request?

Do other clubs have a similar Public Liability Insurance requirement ?

If so could they kindly e-mail to me the name of their insurer, the type and range of the cover obtained and the cost of the current annual insurance premium.

E-Mail Nigel at: warerite@talktalk.net



NTR 100 CLUB

Contact: John Farrer

Tel.: 01462 434948 E-Mail: jffarrer@madasafish.com

Each of the following wins £12:

November 2015

37 Lorna Gill (Sarah Williams)

Wanstead & Woodford MM

62 Ted Bateman

St. Albans MM

31 Ken Gale

Harrow Film Makers

82 Pat Matthews

Enfield Video Makers

December 2015

7 Ted Bateman

SAMM

78 Ron Jones

Potters Bar FM

96 John Astin

PBFM

99 Michael Slowe

Finchley Film Makers

8 Margaret Farrer

PBFM

42 Enfield Video Makers

The NTRIAC 2016 KNOCKOUT COMPETITION

The Draw has been made — the Rounds will be held in March 2016 with the first-named Club as host.

Round A

Walthamstow ACVC v St. Albans MM v Staines VM

Round B

Enfield VM v Hemel Hempstead MM

Round C

Bourne End VM v Harrow FM v Potters Bar FM

Round D

South Essex FM v Colchester FMC v Wanstead & Woodford MM

The Winner of each Round goes through to the Final to be hosted By Colchester FMC on Saturday May 14th 2016 at 2.30 pm in the Hythe Community Centre, Ventura Drive, Colchester CO1 2FG

HACCA 2015

HACCA (The Hertfordshire Amateur Cine Clubs Association) appears to be the only surviving County Competition within the IAC North Thames Region, and the County now has just three clubs, Hemel Hempstead Movie Makers, Potters Bar FilmMakers and St. Albans Movie Makers whose turn it was to host the event on Saturday November 14th 2015.



John Astin receives his Trophy from SAMM Chairman Mike Cobert

Each Club is allowed 25 minutes of screen time, and the judges – this year Alan Colegrave and Judy Long from Harrow FM – are asked to comment on each film at the end of the Competition, and then choose the top three. The winning film is awarded the HACCA Shield for the Club to keep for a year, and a smaller trophy for the film maker to keep permanently.

St. Albans' Steve Game was in charge of projection, and around 25 people settled to watch the first show, from **Potters Bar**, who showed four films.

They were ***Sing a Rainbow***, Ed Kinge's colourful movie set to the Cilla Black record, ***Ayrag***, **Andrew Tweed's** short documentary on one aspect of life in Mongolia, **John Astin's *Tracks to Victory***, a documentary on one aspect of life in

World War One, and ***Death Wish*** by the **A Team**, a short comedy with a punchline.

Hemel Hempstead were up next, with five films. **Steve Ballard & Andrew Pennycook's**

documentary ***Regeneration of the Water Gardens*** (in Hemel) was followed by a **Club Comedy**, ***Fruit Cake***, two adverts – **Alan French's** animated ***Washing Up Advert*** and the **Club's *Roof Over Your Head*** (an ad for solar panels). Their last film was another **Club Production**, ***Bikes at Brands Hatch***, featuring ambitious coverage of a day at the races.

St. Albans also had five films. They were **Steve Game's *Manhattan Highline***, about an original use for an old railway track in New York, **Mike Cobert's *Hatfield House East Garden***, **Mike Murphy's *Fjord Focus*** – a holiday in Norway, the **Club's *Spaced Out***, an ambitious science fiction spoof, and **Steve Game's *Flow from the Wall***, the Tower poppies set to music.

After some excellent refreshments and some fulsome detailed comments, the judges announced their decisions.:

3rd: Fruit Cake—Hemel Hempstead Club Production

2nd: Ayrag—Potters Bar FM (Andrew Tweed)

1st: Tracks To Victory– Potters Bar FM (John Astin)



Judges Alan Colegrave & Judy Long from Harrow FM give their critical comments

Deadline for the next issue is Sunday January 31st

Please send all contributions by e-mail to:

john.astin1@ntlworld.com