

North Thames Region



The Film & Video Institute

www.theiac.org.uk

NEWSLETTER

May—June 2015



**Spring & Summer are just around the corner!
Get out your Camcorders, DSLRs or Smartphones!
Our Region needs more films!**

NTR & BIAFF 2015: Quality not Quantity

- Only 23 Entries from the NT Region this year (42 in 2014)
- But 11 of them gained Four Star Awards or above
- Congratulations to Colchester FMC on their Diamond Award

NTR CONTACTS:

Chairman: John Howden, 12A Back Road, Writtle, CHELMSFORD, Essex, CM1 3PD
Tel.: 01245 422023 E-Mail: johnhowden@talktalk.net

Newsletter Editor: John Astin AACI, 137 Perrysfield Road, CHESHUNT, Herts., EN8 0TJ
Tel.: 01992 426937 E-Mail: john.astin1@ntlworld.com

Membership Secretary & Regional Contact: Penny Love FACI
Tel.: 01707 656446 E-Mail: alystan@tiscali.co.uk

Chairman's Chat

John Howden joined Colchester Film Makers in 2004 and took over as Chairman in 2005. Now the Club's Competitions Officer, he joined the NTR Council in 2012 & also now serves on the National IAC Council. He is an active film maker, regularly receiving 3 and sometimes 4 Star Awards in BIAFF.



Hello fellow film makers, welcome to Chairman's Chat.

The Headlines:

- **Electronic entries on line proposed for North Thames Festival, what do you think?**
- **Entries from North Thames Region in BIAFF 2015 down by over 50%**
- **Congratulations to all who entered BIAFF**
- **Colchester Film Makers win IAC Diamond Award at BIAFF 2015**

It has been proposed that entries to our Regional Film Festival could be done on line. Use of this electronic method would cut down on administration and, if films were uploaded to a suitable host, do away with the necessity of DVDs. To alleviate the fears of some film makers, it is not proposed to get rid of the existing entry arrangements. Rather both systems would work alongside each other. What do you think? Would an electronic system float your boat and encourage you to enter?

Contact me: *johnhowden@talktalk.net* or phone me: 01245 422023.

At our last Council meeting, it was noted that entries from North Thames into BIAFF 2015 were down on the previous year by over 50%. Just over 20 films from our big region is shocking and a number of well known names were missing. Is this just a blip? Are the film makers voting with their feet and thereby asking the IAC Council to take a serious look at BIAFF and its future? Again what is your view? Do you even care?

Congratulations must go to Colchester Film Makers whose film 'Ransom Note' has won one of 8 Diamond Awards as well as Best Editing. 'Ransom Note' is an innovative whodunnit which relies on the audience's observation to solve the mystery. There is no dialogue, rather it has an intriguing use of sounds and images to engage and draw you in. The film is available to view on the IAC website and can also be seen at www.cfmclub.org.uk

As you set off on your summer film projects – remember our Regional Competition in November. More news and entry forms in future editions of the Newsletter. Meantime Happy Film Making – **AND GET IN TOUCH!**



In the last Newsletter,
**Alan Colegrave FAcI enlightened us
about Vimeo, and your editor thought
he'd follow Alan's article, and give it a go.**

Here's his blow-by-blow account of how it went:

I'd registered with Vimeo – motto: “Watch, Upload and Share Videos” - three years ago, so, once I'd remembered my password, I quickly found my own “home page”. “Welcome Home, John Astin” it said – a nice touch.

I'd not pursued Vimeo uploads previously because, unlike YouTube, you cannot upload directly from a DVD or BluRay, you have to upload the file. As the computer on which I edit is not connected to the internet, I didn't really know how to proceed, and lost interest.

I know more now! I have an external hard drive which I can connect to both computers, so I can copy material from one computer across on to the external hard drive, disconnect the drive from that computer and plug it into the other, and copy the material into the second computer, or copy directly from the hard drive through the computer to wherever on the internet.

But what and/or where is the file Vimeo requires?

Well, I'm not too technically minded, but when my Edius 5.5 Editing System downloads a finished production to DVD or BluRay, it saves a folder of material.

I selected the first video I wanted to upload, “Steaming Harz”, and copied that folder across on to the hard drive, which I then connected to the internet-connected computer.

When I clicked on the folder, I was offered “BDTemp” and “BDMV”, both the same size. Double-clicking on “BDMV”, I was offered “BDMV” and “Certificate”. Double-clicking again on “BDMV”, I was offered a list of folders, many of them empty. I double-clicked on “STREAM”, and there was my file!

My Vimeo “home page” was asking me to “Upload a Video”, so I clicked on that, then browsed around until I found the file described above. I clicked on that, and I was returned to my “home page” and invited to click on “Upload the selected video”, which I did.

Immediately, I was notified that my file was too large. I'd gone with Vimeo's free, Basic set-up, which allows you 500MB a week. There were lots of paths I could have taken to decompress the picture quality etc. etc., but I wanted my HD videos to go on display hassle-free in all their glory!!

So I looked for a shorter video, and repeated the procedures above with the two-minute “Anglesey Abbey”.

That uploaded successfully – but it's a slow process, and after being uploaded, it then has to be “converted” – from or to what, I'm not quite sure!

Finally, it was up, but the two minute HD movie had used around 75% of my 500MB weekly allowance. I would never be able with that arrangement to upload any of my 10 – 15 minute films!

So, I took the plunge, and upgraded to VimeoPlus, which gives you 5GB per week. It cost £49.95, but when I came to pay, another £9 tax was mysteriously added, so the total cost for the year was not much short of £60.

Continued on next page

However, I've now successfully uploaded four films. It remains a slow process – an eleven minute HD film took around three hours in all!

There are opportunities to write something about yourself (where you could mention your Club and establish a link to it), to give the film a title, to write a short synopsis about it, and add it to two categories (e.g. “documentary”, “nature” etc.), so that viewers could access it not only from your “home page”, but from a category folder.

Also, you can see how many people have viewed it, how many liked or disliked it, and who's “following” you(!).

I was concerned about possible musical copyright infringements. I hold all the relevant licences obtained through the IAC, and I understand there is some sort of agreement with YouTube, but not with Vimeo. It appears with Vimeo that checks are made on the film before it is displayed, and you are contacted should there be any perceived problems or issues.

There's lots, lots more to Vimeo than that, and possibly better, faster ways of uploading, but this has been my experience so far.

John Astin

And after Vimeo, Alan Colegrave FACI tells us about another film platform—IMDb

The **Internet Movie Database** (abbreviated to **IMDb**) is an online database related to films and television programmes including cast, production crew, fictional characters, biographies, plot summaries, trivia and reviews. It covers both fictional and non-fictional productions. The majority of entries are from professionals but not being a “pro” does not necessarily exclude the filmmakers.

Maybe the next question should be - is there any point? It is purely a database, you cannot upload your movies to it.

I think it depends very much on the production. Maybe not for

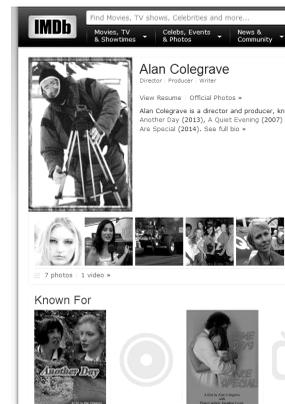
“Spanish Holiday” but for a serious production with several professional actors, it might well be worth letting the World know.

IMDb was launched in 1990 by Col Needham, and now in in 2015, it has in excess of 3.2 million titles and over 6.4 million personalities

on its database, as well as nearly 60 million registered users. It is an Alexa Top 50 site.

Each production featured must meet at least one of the following criteria: it must have

1. Been released in cinemas.
2. Been shown on TV.
3. Been released on video or on the web or Blu-Rays / DVDs have been made which are available to the general public.
4. Been listed in the catalogue of an established video retailer (e.g. Amazon.com)
5. Been accepted and shown at film festivals. (BIAFF is not one of the accepted festivals at present)
6. Been made by a (now) famous artist or person of public interest.
7. Been made for private home use only (i.e. like a home movie, which is of a strictly private nature).
8. Been made for local consumption by friends, family members and neighbours, the local school campus etc. (including "local access television").



IAC members' films, therefore, are definitely eligible for the database. So to the modus operandi - firstly upload your film to Vimeo or YouTube and copy (ctrl C) the URL (you will need it later when you fill out the IMDb form). Then go to Contributor Zone and to Adding a New Title. A form will appear. One warning - adding a film is not a five minute job. In fact it could take well over an hour to complete. The form is very comprehensive and designed for any production. Submit the form and in between two to ten days your production will appear on the database.



Some Days Are Special SEE RANK

(2014)

10 min · Short, Comedy · 1 November 2014 (UK)

Your rating: ★★★★★ (awaiting 5 votes)
Reviews: write review

Laura and Patrick have been trying to have a baby. Patrick comes up with suggestion. They go ahead but everything is not so straightforward

Director: Alan Colegrave

Writer: Alan Colegrave

Stars: Pippa Caddick, Angus Chisholm, Jonathan Coote

See full cast and crew »

[+ Watchlist](#) [Share...](#)

There are basically two types of pages. Those referring to the film and the other to the individuals, be they actors or crew. You can only add a new film. You cannot enter an individual. However anybody listed on a film will automatically get their own page. So you have your new film on the database – you may give it more of a “Pro” look. Add a Poster. These can be uploaded to the film’s page. However IMDb charge a sum of \$10 to add it to your page.

The basic IMDb is free. There are no immediate benefits. However it is the only database that is used internationally. It tends to announce that you are a serious filmmaker. It can only help if you are trying to engage a bunch of professional actors for your next production. My entry is on <http://www.imdb.me/alancolegrave>. Let’s see some more IAC members on it. Many students use it so why not the over 50s. See you there.

The NTRIAC K.O. Competition Final

Will be hosted by

Hemel Hempstead MM

On Saturday 16th May 2015 at 2-30pm

at

Leverstock Green Village Hall,

Leverstock Green Way,

Hemel Hempstead, HP3 8QG

between

Hemel Hempstead Movie Makers

Colchester Film Makers Club

Harrow Film Makers

and

Wanstead & Woodford Movie Makers

Admission including refreshments £5-00p

In the last Newsletter, your editor wrote about the making of his film “Steaming Harz”, which won the NTR IAC 2014 Movie Festival, and has recently been awarded Four Stars in BIAFF 2015.

Below, Staines VM’s Chairman Tim Stannard writes about “Tudor Rap”, Runner-Up to “Steaming Harz” in our Festival, and also a BIAFF 2014 Four Star Winner.



Tudor Rap! was a natural progression from two earlier films, combining characters singing on screen against illustrative tableaux from my ***Merry Xmas 2010*** family video and a child

presenting historical facts in an entertaining manner from ***The Great Fire of London***. As with the latter film, the subject came about simply because that is what my daughter, Elise, was studying at school that term. The Tudor period, especially the times of Henry

VIII, has always been popular with British audiences and the six wives gave us the opportunity to involve several children which not only kept the on-screen characters changing, but meant no individual had too many lines to learn. Another advantage was that the children already had Tudor costumes for a couple of school events. My wife, Martine, came up with the idea of a rap (“it’s easier for kids”) and I had the concept of topping and tailing it with lyrics to “*Greensleeves*”



to help place it in historical time. Martine wrote the vast majority of the lyrics and we worked together on ideas for the shots.

It was totally storyboarded although this was written rather than drawn.

I then set about producing the backing track using Sony Acid Pro DAW (Digital Audio Workstation) software and sampled instruments.

Whilst I have some musical understanding, none of this was recorded in real time; rather I entered the notes via a MIDI keyboard and edited them to get them perfect.

This included the obligatory drum beat, with some “scratching” and some heavily distorted guitar sounds for the rap section.

For the “*Greensleeves*” section I composed a counter-melody for a second recorder and added a bunch of arpeggios on a harpsichord sample.

I then spent a few hours with different children recording their lines. They had the backing track I’d created played into their headphones and I recorded their voices into my Zoom H2 digital recorder.

I then took the audio files back into Acid and mixed it with the instrument tracks to create the completed audio for the project.

Then it was just a case of persuading seven 8 and 9 year olds to perform in front of a green screen!





I'd already done a trial so they knew what to expect.

I converted our lounge into a green screen room with a screen and frame I borrowed from a fellow SVM member along with a couple of large lamps with softboxes. I placed the talent 8 feet in front of this and lit it using three tungsten lamps borrowed from a school I work at in the traditional three point setup.

As this had taken up most of our 16ft lounge, I had to set the camera up in the kitchen! This lack of space is why we see nothing wider than a mid shot in the film! The kids were great and I was ably assisted during the shoot by Martine and one of the other mothers.

We played the recorded audio and got the talent to sing along, as miming always looks fake.

When not on set, the girls seemed able to amuse themselves and "Henry" was well behaved so long as we kept feeding him!

We started shooting at about 10am and had finished by 4pm

I edited the film in Sony Vegas, which has some competent chroma-keying filters built in, but I found I got better results using the CK facilities in HitFilm Pro.



This integrates quite nicely with Vegas but, as I was soon to discover, each separate clip which had chroma-key applied added a significant overhead to the processing to the point where it became impossible to edit.

So, I split the project into several projects each

lasting 30-40 seconds, rendered the output of those and reassembled them afterwards.

The trickiest part of the keying was that there was quite a bit of green I wanted to keep (jewels in the crown, for example) so I had to spend a lot of time rotoscoping to make sure these were not keyed out.

The rest of the edit was pretty straightforward. The backgrounds were mostly photos of Hampton Court taken by my daughter (usually blurred slightly to give some sense of depth) and I threw in a few "gimmicks" like animating water in the fountains and Henry growing bigger and bigger and bi-bi-bi-bi-bigger.

Whilst it was to be expected that the parents and children would enjoy the film, I was by no means certain it would appeal to a more discerning audience. Fortunately I needn't have worried – the film won SVM's Unclassified Competition, received Four Stars at BIAFF 2014 (where it received a Sunday screening) and was Runner Up in last year's NTRIAC Festival.

I also know a few teachers who have shown it to liven up their history lessons!

Tim certainly needn't have worried, *Tudor Rap!* is a bubbly, creative & hugely entertaining film—but who could have imagined the time, effort & technical expertise required to achieve those effects!?

By the way, what's "rotoscoping"?

NTR 100 CLUB

Contact: John Farrer

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

Each of the following wins £12:

February 2015

1 Ted Bateman

SAMM

100 Joan Moody

WWMM

79 Norman Lewis

HFM

81 Wallace Jacob

HFM

March 2015

13 Lorna Gill

WWMM

30 Edward Catton-Orr

PBFM

76 Andrew Tweed

PBFM

80 Philip Beasley

Actionwide

Aivar Kaulins is "Calling All Collectors"!

From time to time Harrow Film Makers have received various donations of unwanted equipment, usually cine related. We have also received a large amount of film prints, Standard 8mm, Super 8mm, 9.5mm and 16mm, also spare spools and cans, splicers, tripods, screens, etc. etc.

We are very grateful to receive all these, for they can be resold to help with club funds, and contrary to popular opinion, there are still many film enthusiasts who treasure these items and are only too pleased to obtain them at realistic modest prices.

Just recently, a lady got in touch with us to say that she was clearing her late cousin's house, and were we interested in his films and projectors? Of course we were, and the next day two of us arrived at a house in Feltham in a large estate car with the back seats folded down. To say that we were overwhelmed with the amount of items offered to us would be the understatement of the year, and we had to make a second trip to recover all that was on offer.

The equipment is now being inspected and tested, and where necessary repaired. The films, not yet counted but certainly well over two hundred titles of all gauges, are being sorted, viewed and priced according to condition and rarity, then listed with comments: a labour of love, which will take several weeks if not months to complete. The biggest problem is colour fading, often to a bright red.

Come back Kodachrome, all is forgiven !!!

If you still collect film prints and would like to see the lists as they become available, please e-mail me on aivarkaulins@onetel.com, stating which gauge is of interest to you - perhaps all as above?

Alternatively, please send me several stamped self-addressed envelopes, and I will post the lists as and when new ones are printed. At this moment, there are three, two dealing with Super 8mm titles and one for 16mm. My postal address is 19 The Ridgeway, Stanmore, Middlesex, HA7 4BE. I look forward to hearing from you.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE FUTURE



SATURDAY MAY 16th
NTRIAC Knockout Final
see page 5

SATURDAY OCTOBER 3rd
Potters Bar FM Public Shows—2.30 & 8.00 pm
Details to follow

FRIDAY OCTOBER 23rd—SUNDAY 25TH
IAC AGM & Annual Convention
at Bournemouth
Details to follow

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 21st
NTRIAC Annual Movie Festival & AGM
Details to follow

2 Easy Steps to Winning Money!

Interested?!!!

Step 1: Enter a film into our NTR Festival Competition

Step 2: Scoop the First, Second or Third Prize



"simples!"

Here's How!!

Enter before 19th September 2015. (Entry form and details in next issue)

Pick up prize at:

North Thames Region Festival Day.

SATURDAY Nov.21st 2015

Northaw Village Hall, Northaw, Herts., EN6 4NW

P.S. There are lots of other Awards, too!

New Competition Officer: Christine Collins F.A.C.I

Staines Video Makers' Silver Salver Competition is a popular annual competition embracing clubs from more than one IAC Region.

Staines VM stalwart Graham Large reports on the 2015 Competition:

There was a good turnout of members and guests at the 42nd Inter-Club Competition hosted by Staines Video Makers at the end of February. Twenty four guests from competing clubs, as well as 17 Staines members, saw eight clubs battle it out for the privilege of winning the Staines Silver Salver.

The eventual winners were **Bourne End Video Makers** with their polished club film **'The Big One'**, in which God had his revenge on a mouthy pub atheist by delivering a bolt of fire unto him. It's possible that some members of the audience will be more circumspect in future about voicing their feelings too loudly about religion or anything else, for that matter, having seen the bearded man's fate in this film!!

The two judges – former television editor and director, **Jack Saltman**, and Staines member, **Graham Large** – thought the 'The Big One' well produced with some excellent special effects, all of which added atmosphere to the cautionary tale.



Judges Jack Saltman & Graham Large with SVM Chairman Tim Stannard (r)

Overall, the film was a worthy winner and Bourne End were delighted to receive the Salver for Best Film – their first win in more than thirty years, 1982 being the only previous year they had won the trophy. Runner up was an excellent documentary called **'First of a Few'** in which the maker, **John Gannaway**, took his camera to see the processes involved in casting his sculpture of a Spitfire pilot in bronze. Copies were then presented to his children. This was a study in how to make a very informative and entertaining documentary out of a potentially unexciting subject.

Third place went to two short films – **Orpington's 'More Steam Than Smoke'**, an impressionistic, slow moving film, about the romance of steam engines, and **Potters Bar's 'The Sound of Movement'** in which **Ed Kinge** married together a series of sequences involving moving objects and the sounds they make.

Other films shown included **Reading's 'Burma Sponsored Cycle Ride'**, which did exactly what its title said; **Harrow's 'Where There's a Will'** about a plot by a solicitor and his accomplice to cheat relatives out of an inheritance; **Surrey Border Movie Makers' 'Timing'**, a domestic comedy in which a husband wanting a divorce misses out on a lottery win; and **'The Bike'**, by **West London Film Group**, where a bike is stolen numerous times, eventually being ridden away by the true owner, unaware of the bike's recent history.



Bourne End FM receive the Silver Salver for "The Big One"

Geoff Rippingale for setting up the projection equipment and generally doing a very efficient job.

Staines Chairman, Tim Stannard, acted as master of ceremonies and did very well in lending the evening a light-hearted atmosphere with his brand of teasing wit. He was complimentary about the overall standard of the films shown, describing this year's crop as the best ever and hoping that the standard would continue to improve in future years.

All these films were of a good standard, although as Jack Saltman said in his preamble to the prizegiving, dialogue-based fiction films need something other than standard camera angles and slow cutting to make them come alive.

Unless the storyline is treated with visual imagination, the result can end up looking more like a stage play than a film. He also stressed the need for tighter editing; a shot had a natural length and often a third party editor was needed to define it. Few amateur film makers have recourse to an external editor, so it was important to develop a dispassionate eye and discipline to cut where necessary, even though the shot might be a favourite.

Congratulations should go to Sheila and Ken Harding for their efforts in providing excellent interval refreshments, and to Barrie Wright, Allan House and



A typical reasonably priced "drone"

Drones—Beware!!

Visitors to BVE at the Excel Centre in February could have been forgiven for thinking they'd inadvertently strayed into the Farnborough Air Show!

Yes – there were drones everywhere, in all shapes, sizes and prices. And with various models of the Go-Pro HD range to use with them.

It's ironic that in the old days, the golden rule of cinematography was to have a rigidly still picture provided by a tripod. Nowadays, the world is awash with gadgets to keep the camera on the move –

drones, steadicams, glidecams, sliders, skater dollys –the list goes on and on! In fact, a rock-steady picture seems to mark out a film as non-professional!!!

So if you are tempted to venture into the world of drones – and many of them are in some amateurs' price range – beware! The whole issue is surrounded by UK legislation, and the rules are very restrictive, with quite large fines for contravention. You can even acquire a Professional Pilot Qualification for Remotely Piloted Aircraft!

For further information, go initially to www.caa.co.uk, then in "Search", type in "drones" or "unmanned aircraft".

John Astin

Bourne End Video Makers Celebrate 50 Years!

On 25th May 1965 the Bourne End Cine Club was formed by cine enthusiasts following requests from the Bourne End Community Association to film local events, including the construction of its new building which is still used today. Local Carnivals and "Miss Bourne End" competitions were also filmed and digitised versions of the cine material are currently held by the club.

Sadly, as with many clubs, this is only a fraction of the original material, much of it going astray over the years.

The Club attracted support from a number of distinguished people in the early days, including Presidents Ernie Wise and Rupert Davies of "Maigret" fame. A founder member and first Secretary was George Warner, a local Cinema Manager. These names are carried by three of the internal competition trophies still in use.

Later, Roger Bennett became President. He was an early member of the Cine Club who became Group Manager of the Odeon Cinema chain which included Leicester Square, where one of his duties was to receive the Queen at Royal Film Premieres.

After meeting for nearly 40 years in the Red Cross Hut in Bourne End, the Club, then called the Bourne End Video Camera Club, was forced by closure to move to the Red Cross Hall in Marlow. Unfortunately the Club seemed to have a death wish on halls and returned to its birth town of Bourne End following another hall closure.

The Club took up residence in the Target Room at the Bourne End Community Centre and then changed its name to Bourne End Video Makers (BEVM). The Club has been an active participant in IAC Competitions, including the 'Triangle', '4X4', this year's 'Knockout' Competition and Staines Video Makers' "Silver Salver" Competition which we won this year.

Fortunately the Club has managed to maintain a steady membership over recent years.

We plan to celebrate our 50th Anniversary with a Public Film Show on Sunday May 31st at the Community Centre where we aim to put on an entertaining programme as well as to illustrate the progression of equipment, techniques and quality of films produced during the Club's existence.

This event will also have examples of equipment showing the expensive and time-consuming art of making cine films, then move through the period of VHS editing to consumer computer editing, finishing with the latest digital HD technology plus special effects. Club members will be around to answer questions.

If you would like to come along and support us tickets are available at:

bevm.ticketsource.co.uk .



**Bourne End Carnival
Film, 1966**



"Cricket", Club Film



**"On the Rails",
Club Film**

Deadline for the next issue is Sunday June 7th
Please send all contributions by e-mail to:
john.astin1@ntlworld.com