

North Thames Region



The Film & Video Institute

www.theiac.org.uk

NEWSLETTER

July—August 2014



Spring has gone!

Reports & Reactions to the new 4x4 Competition Final

(see pages 3—5)



Summer is upon us!

Time to get our camcorders out, and make a film!

(How to win 4 Stars at BIAFF—see p. 12)



It'll soon be Autumn!

Entry Form inside for our NTRIAC Annual Movie Festival

(see pages 6—8)

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Chairman's Chat

Brenda has been a member of Wanstead & Woodford Movie Makers for over 20 years, was its Chairman from 2007 > 2010, and has been Chairman of the North Thames IAC Region since November 2007. She was made an FACI in October 2012.



Brenda Granshaw FACI

First, let me congratulate Hemel Hempstead on winning the 4 x 4 Competition. I must also thank all the judges who participated in the competition as I know how hard it was to choose the most entertaining programme from what proved to be a very varied selection of films.

I am sure there will be a few minor changes to improve the running of the competition and if you are sitting there with a suggestion please email it to me at brendagranshaw@padwick.plus.uk.

I should also be glad to know if you were happy with the 4x4 format or if you preferred the format of the Triangle competition.

Having been to a talk about the benefits of DSLR cameras and how they are so much better than a camcorder, I thought I ought to think about having one. An interesting encounter with a shop assistant followed!

It was explained that relying on the included lens kit was not a good idea and ideally one should buy a high quality lens to maximise image quality and increase the zoom capability.

However, while you are swapping lenses there is a risk that dust will get in and leave marks on your footage so be sure to buy a camera with a built-in cleaning system.

Then the built-in microphone picks up motor noise, so best to add an external one.

And of course you can have a hood to go over the LED screen so that you can see it.

While the camera assistant was impressed with his stock, I contemplated my handbag. No, not to dig out my credit card but to check on whether all this gubbins would fit in. The answer was a resounding no, which meant that the camera would never be with me to take all the superb shots it was capable of. I was happy to leave the shop and order another neat little camcorder with a built in viewfinder!!

I do recognise that the DSLR is no doubt fantastic for those planning to film an event and having sufficient time to sort out their lenses etc., but for those of us who just want to be able to record the unexpected moment or holiday memories the versatility of the camcorder is hard to beat.

Enjoy the summer.

The NTRIAC 4x4 Competition Final

Your editor reviews the show

Sunday May 18th was a gloriously sunny day, and Laleham by the Thames was an attractive venue for the first 4x4 Competition Final.

Unfortunately, the weather did not help to entice a large audience – there were just 41 NTRIAC members present, and 11 of those were from Potters Bar FM – a club not even participating in the Final!



The appreciative audience

The absentees missed an excellent afternoon – almost all the films were well-made and interesting, the judges' comments were well-pitched and erudite, and their quality was matched by the 5-Star catering from hosts Staines VM. **Bourne End VM** began proceedings with their programme of four Blu-Rays, total length just over 23 minutes. It featured a comedy ("On the Rails"), a documentary/travelogue ("Crianan Canal"), a short animation ("A Nursery Rhyme") and a "Film to a Record" ("Summertime").

Next came **Staines VM**, with five films, also all Blu-Rays, a full 25 minutes worth. "Jumping for Joy" was a short

documentary/promo, "Forget Me Not" a comedy, "The Shard" a documentary, "The Cloud" a drama and "Spoon Fed", another comedy. After the lovely interval food, **Hemel Hempstead MM** showed four films including 1 BluRay & 1 4x3, lasting 24 minutes. They had two documentaries, "HGM Brickmakers" and "Master Glass", an animation, "Eggstrodinary" and a drama, "Tightrope". Finally, **South Essex FM** showed six films, all 16:9 DVDs, lasting in all around 18 minutes. "Fishy Business" was a comedy, "The Swans of Harrow Lodge Park" a Film to a Record,



The Staines VM Projection Team



The Judges: David Moore, Paul Kittel, Bob Hayward

"Say No to Knives" a sort of comedy romp, "Hit Me" a karaoke film, "Le Mans 2011" a video diary and "Messing about on the River" another film to a record.

The high quality of the films, the sound and the projection really underlined how far amateur film-making has advanced in technical quality in the last ten years. The films that stood out for your editor were "Master Glass", a beautifully made documentary, a re-working, I think, of the film that won HACCA in 2013, "The Cloud", a really entertaining, competently acted drama with a twist at

the end, and "Tightrope", with its wonderful special effects. The three judges, all connected in some way to the professional film world – yes, there are three judges for the final! – all spoke after each programme about each of the films, and announced:

4th: South Essex Film Makers

3rd: Bourne End Video Makers

2nd: Staines Video Makers

1st: Hemel Hempstead Movie Makers



Ron Jones presents the new trophy to HHMM Chairman, Byron Welch

And what do we think of the new 4x4 Competition?

Paul Kittel, one of the judges and an award-winning TV director, gives his thoughts on the Final:

Twenty-five years ago I went to university near Staines, where I studied the works of William Blake. My tutor was always at pains to remind me that a Blake poem shouldn't be read in isolation because it belongs to a collection that should be judged as a whole. So, I found myself back in Staines and thinking of my old tutor. My job, like my appreciation of Blake, wasn't to judge films in isolation but as collections.

The competition referee, Ron Jones, had done a wonderful job organising the competition. He had also chosen his judges carefully, with each of us bringing a different set of skills to the table; David Moore is an audio specialist, Bob Hayward is an editor and I am a director. I hope our different backgrounds in television were reflected in the comments we made about the entries. The 4x4 Competition gives judges greater freedom than the old Triangle format and, on paper at least, is much simpler. Each club produces a programme with no specification on genre or limits on the number of films entered.

Our criterion as judges was to decide which of the four programmes was the most entertaining. Any of the programmes would have made a worthy winner but there could be only one. Before making the tricky decision about the winner, we had to make 'off-the-cuff' comments about the films we had just seen. This can be a nerve wracking experience, especially as somewhere in the audience there maybe film-makers quietly pressing pins into judge-shaped voodoo dolls. However, I was pleasantly surprised by the lack of furrowed brows in the audience. I was equally heartened by how united we were in our comments, identifying similar strengths and weaknesses in the films. This is good because it means the filmmakers didn't receive too many mixed messages, even if some of our comments may not have been that welcome!

The main task of the afternoon was away from the gaze of the audience. When all four programmes had been screened, we were spirited into a back room where we had to place them in first to fourth places. We didn't have long because the hall had been booked by another party but we were able to release the white smoke relatively quickly because, once again, we were united in our thoughts. We agreed that one film stood out as the most entertaining of the afternoon ... but did it belong to the best programme?

Actually no! After all, one good film doesn't make a good programme.

As we tried to find parameters for what constituted a good programme, we agreed that as well as being 'entertaining', there needs to be variety, consistency of quality and innovation.

In the end, **Hemel Hempstead MM** shaded it because of its four very diverse and strong films, with no weaker entries that had been put into simply to make up the numbers.

Their first film was **HGM Brick Makers**. Despite its somewhat prosaic title, this is the kind of film that clubs excel at; a documentary about a local trade. This film tells the story of the production of something that most of us consider quite ordinary, the humble brick. But the film had charm, character and a wealth of research that brought the subject matter to life.

The programme then took a sharp turn, as the focus moved from bricks to eggs, and from documentary to animation. **Eggstraordinary** is a delightful cartoon in which some crudely drawn eggs play the piano at the Royal Festival Hall.

Masterglass took us back to the realms of documentary but unlike *HGM Brick Makers*, this is a 'how to' film. This well shot and informatively scripted film, shows how a chap called Petri Anderson made a beautiful stained-glass window. Even for someone with no particular interest in stained glass, this was an engrossing little film.

The final film provided the programme with another dramatic shift. Although at times unfathomable, **Tightrope** is an exciting and innovatively shot film about a man stuck up a tree with man-eating birds watching him avariciously.

Although we felt this was the best programme, there were other highlights in the afternoon. **On the Rails**, from **Bourne End VM**, was a delightful and original comedy about a railway-obsessed husband and his vengeful wife.

The Cloud by **Staines VM** is a classy drama about a conman and some dodgy gardeners. Its strength is the twist at the end of the story.

Say No to Knives from **South Essex FM** is a well shot and fast edited mini-drama about a mock gun battle between a father and daughter. It really goes to show what can be achieved in just one minute.

Perhaps there is an argument for there to be two awards in this competition. The main award should still go to be the best programme but I wonder if there could be another award for the Best Film.

Finally, I hope next year's 4x4 is of such a high quality and just as entertaining.

Peter's views on the Final. But what do others think of the new Competition?

Maximum 25 minutes, but maximum of four films — separate award for Best Film in the Final – Is a Semi-Final necessary? Why not just the 4 Heats Winners to go through to the Final (HHMM had already competed against two of the other finalists in the previous rounds).

Andrew Pennycook, pp Hemel Hempstead MM

How about the judge in each round selecting the film in his or her opinion was the best shown on that night even though the club's entry might not have progressed to the next round? It doesn't have to shown in the final just listed in the programme. Just trying to attract more people to attend the final.

Dave Smith, Harrow C&VS

The criteria should be the most suitable, entertaining and informative programme for a wider audience, and the number of films in the club's programmes should be limited. Like a good wine, I'm sure this competition will get better each year.

Ken Martin, Enfield FM

Don't necessarily look for balance—look for quality, entertainment and audience involvement.

John Astin, Potters Bar FM

**North Thames Region IAC
Annual Movie Festival - Sunday November 30th 2014
COMPETITION ENTRY FORM**

Title of film:

Name of maker:

Date of birth [Youth & Junior only]:

Maker's address:

..... **Post Code:**.....

Telephone:

Email:.....

IAC membership number (if applicable):

Please mark (x) in appropriate box:

Details of film: Mini DV [] DVD [] Other []

Aspect Ratio: 4:3 [] 16:9 [] 16:9 letterboxed [] Other

Projection :- Please specify any special requirements

.....

Leader : If Mini-DV, state length (preferably 5-10 secs black)

.....secs

If DVD, state whether a Menu or no. of secs black

.....secs

Length of movie : State exact length :.....

Start of audio : If before first frame – state number of **secs:**....

**(Please detach these centre pages or make a
photocopy to use as an entry form)**

Give brief description of film :

.....
.....
.....

Copyright clearance : – to be strictly observed [see Rule 6]

MCPS/BPI Licence Nos.

Entry Fee £ **Return postage** £..... **Total** £

(For fees see page 10)

Return Postage. Not necessary if arrangements have been made for collection of video(s) at the event. **If video(s) are not to be collected then return postage is necessary otherwise they will not be returned.**

Cheques to be made payable to ‘North Thames Region IAC’ and sent together with the entry to:

**Mr. K. J. Mills OBE LACI,
35, St. Mary’s Avenue, Northwood, Middlesex, HA6 3AY.**

For acknowledgement of receipt of entry, please enclose a stamped self addressed envelope.

Will the entry be collected at the Festival? Yes [] No []

I have read the rules of this competition and agree to abide by them

Signed Dated

Closing date for entries is 12 noon, Saturday September 20th 2014

Videos will be returned as soon as practicable. While every care is taken, the Region cannot be held responsible for any video which is lost or damaged.

Rules:

1. The competition is open to all amateur movie makers residing within the North Thames Region of the IAC.
2. Entries must be made without professional assistance other than the use of recorded music as they may be included in a compilation record of the Festival on DVD. Videos can be on tape or DVD. If your video is on Blu-Ray please also send a "standard" DVD copy for viewing, in case of technical problems.
3. You may submit as many entries as you wish, providing they have not been entered before and have been made in the last 3 years.
A separate form must be used for each entry. Photocopies of the entry form are acceptable. Entrants for the Youth Section must be under 25 and Juniors under 18 on the Festival date.
4. It is a condition of entry that videos which have won a major national or International award, are not eligible to enter this competition.
5. Only one video to each tape/disc will be accepted. The maximum length of any video is limited to 25 minutes.
6. **All copyright material, both audio and visual, must be cleared by the video maker. Details of music copyright clearance can be obtained from the IAC at Dorset House, Regent Park, Kingston Road, Leatherhead, Surrey KT22 7PL Tel. 01372 824350**
7. The judges' decisions are final. No correspondence will be entered into with reference to any decision made.

Entry Fees per video:

IAC Members:

Adults £7:

Youths [18-25yrs] £3;

Juniors [under 18yrs] £1;

Non-IAC Members:

Adults: £10

Youths: £4

Juniors: £2

Add return postage if the entry will not be collected.

Prizes of £50, £25 and £15 will be awarded to the top three winners in addition to the usual trophies and certificates.

Trophies:

North Thames Regional Trophy for **First** place;

Ganderson Trophy for **Second** place;

Kodak Trophy for **Third** place;

The **Leslie Germany Trophy** for the **Best Use of Sound**;

the **Kenneth Seeger Trophy** for **Best Editing**.

Certificates for Very Highly Commended, Highly Commended and Commended.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE FUTURE



SATURDAY OCTOBER 11th

Potters Bar FM 's Festival of Films—the Club's Public Show.

Performances at 2.30 & 8 pm at Northaw Village Hall.

(Details to follow)

THURSDAY OCTOBER 16th—SUNDAY OCTOBER 19th

IAC AGM Long Weekend, hosted by CEMRIAC in The Falcon Hotel, Stratford –on-Avon.

*Contact **Alan Atkinson (01788 890726)** or at **Alan AtkinsonCV23@aol.com** for further details & to book)*

FRIDAY OCTOBER 31st

Closing Date for Entries to the 2014 North v South Competition

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 30th

NTRIAC AGM & Annual Movie Festival, in Pinner Village Hall, Chapel Lane Car Park, Pinner, HA5 1AB. Doors open at 10 am for 10.30 am start. Tickets £8 on the door, or £6 if bought in advance from your Club Secretary

When I listen to music, I want to just listen to music. It's the same with cinema. If you have a chance to enter another world, then you need a big picture in a dark room with great sound. It's a spiritual, magic experience. If you have the same movie on a little computer screen with bad sound—and this is the way people are seeing films now—it's such a shame. It's a shameful, shameful thing. It's so pathetic.

David Lynch

VIDEO PROJECTOR FOR SALE

Harrow Cine & Video Society has been donated by one of its members a Hewlett Packard Video Projector, model HP-VP 6110, a digital multimedia DLP model with SVGA resolution, a quoted brightness of 1500 ANSI lumens and a contrast ratio of 2000:1.

Unfortunately, the lamp in this projector has blown, it is lacking a mains lead (easily replaced) and there is neither a remote handset nor a user guide.

Consequently, this projector is now being offered for a £30 contribution to club funds.

Lamps for this projector are readily available from several suppliers on Google, priced between £90 and £175, also from www.justprojectorlamps.co.uk, as are remote handsets and user guides.

This could be your opportunity to acquire a home video projector at a bargain price, although a certain amount of computer research would need to be done, and the Society can give no guarantees of any kind.

The projector can be inspected at my address, 19 The Ridgeway, Stanmore, Middlesex, HA7 4BE but ONLY by prior appointment - 020-8954 2607.

Aivar Kaulins

Casablanca Repairs: A Recommendation

Recently my Casablanca Kron broke down and urgently required repair.

I quickly established via the internet two telephone numbers: for sales 0845 4560734, and for support 07783 303899.

Having telephoned the first number I discovered that Martin Dalby had since retired, but repairs could be obtained via another engineer at 8 Thorn Drive, George Green, Wexham, Bucks SL3 6SA .

Having driven down to that address, I was delighted that my Casablanca Kron did not require to be left, but was fixed within 20 minutes with a new circuit board.

I therefore share this information with other Casablanca users in case they experience similar problems.

Nigel Lee, Enfield Video Makers

NTR 100 CLUB

Contact: John Farrer

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

Each of the following wins £12:

May

- 38 Ian Luetchford
Potters Bar FM
- 23 John Farrer
Potters Bar FM
- 22 Angela Stroud
Potters Bar FM
- 107 Martin Page
W&W MM
- 1 Ted Bateman
St. Albans MM
- 49 Anne Mills
Harrow CVS

June

- 102 Tim Stannard
Staines VM
- 13 Lorna Gill
W&W MM
- 40 Martin Dwyer
?
- 74 John Parkes
Potters Bar FM
- 55 Frits Cohen
Finchley FM
- 64 Penny Love
Potters Bar FM



The Film & Video Institute

To join the IAC, contact:
IAC, The Film and Video Institute,
Dorset House,
Regent Park,
Kingston Road,
LEATHERHEAD, Surrey, KT22 7PL.
Tel.: 01372 824350
E-Mail: admin@theiac.org.uk

to our new members:

- Michael McMenamin Bucks.
- Luke Robson Oxon.

The 2014 North v South Competition: Theme—"If"

I hope to have space to print a Competition Entry Form in the Sept./Oct. Newsletter. Early birds, however, can download an Entry Form from the Competition Website; www.n-v-s.co.uk
Ed.

Potters Bar FM's Brian Palmer, of Palmer Productions, won a 4-Star Award at BIAFF 2014 with his comedy drama about blind dates, "The Gamble". He writes about the film's production:

A couple of years ago I was told the story of two people who were supposed to meet in a castle but things did not quite go according to plan. The story interested me and I thought it would make a good film but with a few modifications - I couldn't get a castle!! A colleague at PBFM, Geoff Glover, showed some interest, so we wrote the story out as a film script and then went on a hunt for film locations.

The main scene needed a tea room. After a few visits to local hostelrys, we decided that the entrance lobby to a local church could be made to look like a tea room, of sorts! With the help of a friend and a sympathetic vicar the lobby was acquired, subject to weddings, services etc.

After speaking to a helpful member of a local amateur dramatic group who contacted their friends, we had our cast.

After a script reading and rehearsal we were ready. The extras were friends who were promised free tea/ coffee and homemade cakes, provided the props were not eaten until after filming!

The opening scene was filmed at Eurostar Arrivals and Kings Cross Stations, - hand held camera as discretely as possible.

The suitcase was filmed on our own drive and added during editing. The hospital shot was filmed outside our local hospital, again hand held camera. After the third take we were challenged by a hospital employee and thanks to some quick thinking on Geoff's part we beat a very hasty retreat, having got what we wanted.

Another shot was filmed at a local bus stop on what is normally a quiet road, which was checked out several times but as soon as a tripod appears, so do the world and his wife!

Our actress was fitted with a radio mike and to keep the conversation on the mobile sounding normal, my wife was behind the bus stop sitting on top of the rubbish bin, carrying on the other side of the conversation!

The main scene had to be completed within five hours which included setting up the tea room and moving church posters etc, all of which had to be reinstated before we went home.

Unfortunately the acoustics did not work in our favour because of the height of the area.

I laid a sound wild track which I hoped would help when editing, only to find, not only did I not have this track but also lost 60% of the day's sound.

I added traffic sound, music, and people talking (which was recorded during a tea break on a club night).

To make it sound more authentic, the sound of spoons stirring tea and being put on saucers was done at home using Mother's best tea service!!

Fortunately, my wife was filming with another camera to get the mistakes, so some of the lost pieces of dialogue were salvaged.

(After the above problems I have since purchased a Tascam DR-60D Linear PCM Recorder which enables sound to be recorded onto the camera and onto the sound card in the Tascam itself and synchronisation is easy using the slate in the Tascam)

The editing was done using Vegas Pro 12. This was my first time of using and it turned out to be a very steep learning curve—but I was very pleased with the result.



Brian directs in the Church Hall converted to look like a tea room



Brian (left) & Geoff Glover (right) filming on the street

Deadline for the next issue is Sunday August 3rd
Please send all contributions by e-mail to:
john.astin1@ntlworld.com