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Eighty Years on, thriving and growing



Pete Heaven

Assistant Programme Secretary, BFVS reports...



Now in its 80th year, Bristol Film and Video Society is in fine form, with membership at a high level and increasing.

Far from any problems usually associated with such longevity, new members, mostly attracted via our web page, are lowering the average age and bringing fresh new ideas while actively taking part in filming sessions.

Our retired members, some of whom were professional in the field of film and video, are able to devote more time to our wonderful hobby while nurturing and mentoring those less experienced by passing-on their knowledge and skills.

The results speak for themselves, with many productions appearing to some to be of a professional standard even though made by our amateur members - a true compliment.

As if that isn't enough, just a few weeks ago we had a 'megashoot' day with four separate films being shot in one location on the same day by four crews, involving a total of 12 actors and 30 of our members, while other films are in production, helped by those specialising in scriptwriting.

We are very fortunate in Bristol to have BBC and ITV studios, a host of small production houses, Films at 59, and of course



Aardman and the famed BBC Natural History Unit, while acting is well covered by the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School and the drama departments of the University of Bristol and the University of the West of England.

So we can call on many knowledgeable professional speakers to give advice and an evening's presentation.

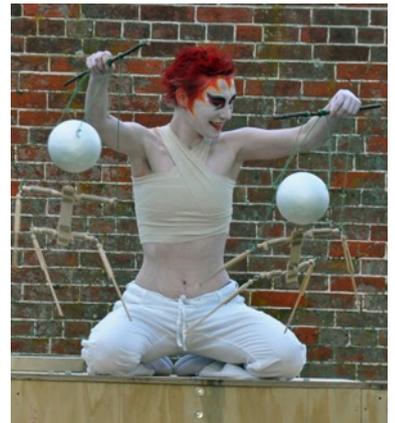
Our club membership of the Avon Association of Drama, which has virtually all local amateur drama clubs as members, is a great source of acting talent in front of

our cameras, and has transformed our films into something special.

This synergy benefits both sides, with actors gaining experience of a film set, and our production of prizewinning films.

It's something of a surprise to find members coming from as far afield as Chard, Exeter, Cirencester, Box, Bournemouth

and other 'foreign' parts (to a native Bristolian, anyone living beyond Gloucester is a Northerner!), and because of this we try especially hard to ensure that their journey will not be wasted.



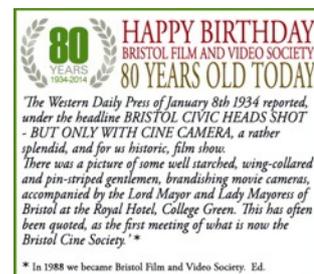
As a result, our programme suggestions for forthcoming meetings have a high practical content, and this seems to be the way that - certainly our newer members - want things to go.

It's a bit of a challenge, but the committee is dedicated to continuing our upward trend by encouraging our members to produce great films and win prizes, and provide them with the skills and experience to do so.

We all look forward to 2014 with enthusiasm!

More info and lots of stuff to read at:

www.bristolvideo.org.uk





Pip Critten
Writes...

Editorial

Many thanks to those of you who have contacted me to say that they approve of the new look of the magazine. I always welcome your feedback; good, bad or indifferent.

I'm so glad that Rob Catt is feeling well enough again to make his contributions to your magazine.

Well I didn't make it to BVE in London this year. I normally travel up with a couple of my film making buddies from Plymouth. We have thought, over the last couple of years, is it really worth it. Yes it's a good day out but, it is clearly aimed at people with far bigger budgets than the likes of me.

By the time you add up costs of rail travel, underground and food at the venue, it makes it an expensive "jolly". Added to this, the rail track to the westcountry was washed away in the storms making for a torturous journey.

Instead we will go to the ["Look Listen Experience"](#) event at Bristol, which this year is held on 18th March 2014, at the Bristol Football Stadium site. This is usually a good day out with interesting speakers who are just like us; independent film makers.

There is a good selection of kit to see and try with some "on the day" deals to be had. For me, it's just two

hours up the road in the car making the journey so much easier.



If any of you are going, do let me know as it would be good to meet up.

Looking Forward

I'm looking forward to meeting the members of the Sutton Coal Field Movie Makers in Early April when I go to lead a hands on workshop on Lighting For Video.

I always enjoy these events as it gives me a chance to meet up with others with a passion for video. I take along a selection of lighting kit and we have a "good play".

We experiment with fluorescent, tungsten and LED lighting to create the mood and atmosphere we are looking for.

As an added bonus, well for me anyway, while I'm away I'll get to go to the theatre to see a musical.

Oh, I'm such a luvvie!

Pip,

pip@pipcritten.com



Chairman
Anne Vincent

Chairman's Chat

Hello Everybody,

Hope you have managed to keep dry in all the bad weather. As you already know Phil is retiring from SoCo Competition Secretary.

However for this year only, he will be running the Dolphin, The Baby Dolphin and Top Of The Clubs. Sue Minns and myself will take over the SoCo Competition and Sue's husband Ernie will look after the technical side and make up the Road Show.

There is one alteration to the Rules however, it has been agreed to do away with the Semi-Pro Category as there have been hardly any entries for quite a period of time and have a separate section for non IAC members who, however must be members of an affiliated club.

Once again there will be no SoCo Weekender either 2014 or 2015, the latter due to SoCo running the National AGM, which is going to be held in Bournemouth in October 2015. However, all is not lost as we hope to try and re-kindle the SoCo Weekender again after that.

This year however, it is hoped to hold a Public Show for the SoCo Competition Incorporating the SoCo AGM which will possibly be held in the Weymouth area. September/October are lovely months in Weymouth, so you might fancy a few days here and come along to the event.

I know I have asked you before but If there is anyone out there who would like to take over the Competition Secretary Post, please get in touch, I can assure you all the back up required will be given, so why not have a go?

Look forward to hearing from you

Anne

2014 AGM IAC AUTUMN CONVENTION & AGM



16 - 19 October 2014

hosted by CEMRIAC

in Stratford-upon-Avon

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vU8LXdMAkc>





Reader's Letters

Have your say

Dear Pip,

As a member of the SERIAC panel that judged the recent SoCo competition entries I would like to take issue with Lee Prescott about his offensive letter on page 3 of the latest SoCo News.

He states that our efforts were a complete waste of time and that we totally failed to realise the ramifications of our decisions and goes on to state that five of the major awards went to 'Into the Light' by Bristol Film and Video Society.

He failed to realise, probably because he wasn't there, that this title was shared by **four** different films which were made to a common theme. The four SERIAC judges stand by their decision and are saddened by this vitriolic attack on our efforts in particular and the IAC in general.

It is this attitude that makes it difficult to get judges for our competitions who are willing to voluntarily give up a whole day to view the entries and then further time to write up the critiques.

I am fully aware that Lee Prescott loves to have a rant about virtually anything and particularly the IAC of which he is a member and has been honoured with a fellowship. He should stop and think that what he is doing is detrimental to our hobby and his comments are unhelpful.

And finally I do hope that all the entrants to the SoCo competition didn't also feel "short changed" by our decisions.

Yours sincerely

Ron Prosser FACI

On behalf of the SERIAC Judges.

Hi Pip

As you know I am a GoPro enthusiast and this picture was taken from a model helicopter.



If any members in the Thames valley have anything like it I would love to have copies for my History collection.

The electric powered helicopter is a new way of making videos.

Regards,

James Hatch

toastmaster@islandnet.com

Hi Pip,

Thanks again for your SoCo News. As you say , a little cleaner.

I haven't finished reading it yet but the editorial caught my eye very soon.

I have had a canon MP610 all in one printer for 3 years now and very successfully use a Rihac CiSS unit. If you haven't used one before – I can recommend one as it is so useful and cheap to use for all printing, I use one on my Epson 1410 for photo printing also.

I checked their website and <http://www.rihac.com.au/mg5350-ciss-prefilled-p-1053.html> , I purchased with the chips included for extra \$25. The inks last for ages. I only buy the 100ml refills for the colours I need about every 6 months, and I print heaps.

My only recommendation is that you use it often and that prevents any issues with bubbles and clogged heads. I have left mine for 3 months(we are grey nomads also) and forgot to remove the cartridges and switch off the supply bottle unit. It took me a few head cleans to get going again. That would have cost me at least 1/2 set cartridges if this happened using standard cartridges.

Brian Harvey

President

Wollongong Camera Club.

PS – If anyone from UK is in OZ in 2014 they are welcome to join us anytime. I wonder if its possible for you to publish details of the FAMM Convention we are running in April. <http://www.wollongongcameraclub.com/famm-2014/>. Currently we have over 40 conventioners booked from OZ and NZ and we are aiming for approx 80 people to stay for the 5 days conference we are running here in Wollongong.

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Weymouth Cine & Video Club

Our thoughts here in Weymouth are of many more throughout the South West and further a field who are suffering this very wet winter, even the most ardent of us are finding it difficult to venture out with our cameras to record the conditions.

Les Haylor did and took these pictures of Chesil Beach)

Even David Cameron ventured away from his office to visit the Cove Pub (unknown cameraman) after the wave hit it of course.

Lets hope the sun shines soon on us all so chins up.

Keep your camera dry!

David Martin



Gloucester Film Makers

Gloucester Film Makers was formed in 1962 and over the years it has made a major contribution to amateur film making in the area, providing helpful advise and instruction in every aspect of the hobby.

The club holds eleven competitions annually covering a wide range and variety of subjects creating a friendly atmosphere in a competitive environment, which provides all competing members with a chance to win one of the many trophies.

Both the club and individuals have achieved awards in local, national and international competitions over the years.

Joining the film unit provides practical experience in script writing, camera work, sound recording, location filming and editing to the final completion stage of the film.

With their experience in film making, the club can offer to arrange talks and film shows with a comprehensive range of amateur productions.

Even if you do not possess the necessary equipment but are interested in making films you are invited to come along to a club meeting and meet the members of Gloucester Film Makers.

The club meets at St George's Church Centre, Court Road, Brockworth, GL3 4ET on most Monday evenings.

Recently I went through my file containing all the names of various groups, clubs and societies to whom we have given film shows and was very surprised to see that over 70 of such clubs etc have had a visit from us and hopefully enjoyed our films.

Already this year 2 more new names have been added to that list. Further we must not forget our annual Railway and Archive evenings both go back at least 12 years.

I feel these achievements are worthy of note and something we should be proud of as very few clubs could equal our efforts.

On a personal note, you may be aware that I filmed the restoration of the Massey Shaw fireboat which was carried out in Nielsen's boatyard in Gloucester docks. Filming began in January 2012 and continued at regular 2 and 3 week intervals up to November 2013 when the boat sailed out of the docks under a spray of fire hoses.

The Massey Shaw was built in the 1930s and was in action on the river Thames during the blitz on London's docks. Along with hundreds of other craft it was used in the evacuation from the Dunkirk beaches where it rescued some 500 men .

Copies of my DVD were given to Nielsen and also to the Massey Shaw Society in London and it is there the boat will be based. My DVD was to be shown at The Boat Show in London and will be viewed on board the boat when visitors are given a tour.

All in all it was a most interesting experience and I was pleased to be part of the history of the Massey Shaw.

For further information contact John Greene on 01452 531838

www.gloucesterfilmmakers.org.uk

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What You Are Doing Today Relies On This

Researched and updated

by
Lee Prescott
FACL.

In 1933, a beautiful, young Austrian woman took off her clothes for a movie director. She ran through the woods, naked. She swam in a lake, naked. Pushing well beyond the social norms of the period.

The most popular movie in 1933 was King Kong. But everyone in Hollywood was talking about that scandalous movie with the gorgeous, young Austrian woman.

Louis B. Mayer, of the giant studio MGM, said she was the most beautiful woman in the world. The film was banned practically everywhere, which of course made it even more popular and valuable. Mussolini reportedly refused to sell his copy at any price.

The star of the film, called Ecstasy, was Hedwig Kiesler. She said the secret of her beauty was "to stand there and look stupid." In reality, Kiesler was anything but stupid. She was a genius. She'd grown up as the only child of a prominent Jewish banker. She was a math prodigy. She excelled at science. As she grew older, she became ruthless, using all the power her body and mind gave her.

Between the sexual roles she played, her tremendous beauty, and the power of her intellect, Kiesler would confound the men in her life, including her six husbands, two of the most ruthless dictators of the 20th century, and one of the greatest movie producers in history.

Her beauty made her rich. She is said to have made - and spent - \$30 million in her life. But her greatest accomplishment resulted from her intellect, and her invention continues to shape the world we live in today.

This young Austrian starlet would take one of the most valuable technologies ever developed from under Hitler's nose. After fleeing to America, she not only became a major Hollywood star, her name sits on one of the most important patents ever granted by the U.S. Patent Office.

Today, when you use your mobile (cell) phone or, over the next few years, as you experience super-fast wireless Internet access (via something called "long-term evolution" or "LTE" technology), you'll be using an extension of the technology a 20-year-old actress first conceived while sitting at dinner with Hitler.

At the time she made Ecstasy, Kiesler was married to one of the richest men in Austria. Friedrich Mandl was Austria's leading arms maker. His firm would become a key supplier to the Nazis.

Mandl used his beautiful young wife as a showpiece at important business dinners with representatives of the Austrian, Italian, and German fascist forces. One of Mandl's favourite topics at these gatherings - which included meals with Hitler and Mussolini - was the technology surrounding radio-controlled missiles and torpedoes. Wireless weapons offered far greater ranges than the wire-controlled alternatives that prevailed at the time. Kiesler sat through these dinners "looking stupid," while absorbing everything she heard.

As a Jew, Kiesler hated the Nazis. Mandl responded to his willful wife by imprisoning her in his castle, Schloss Schwarzenau. In 1937 she managed to escape. She drugged her maid, sneaked out of the castle wearing the maid's clothes and sold her jewellery to finance a trip to London.

(She got out just in time. In 1938, Germany annexed Austria. The Nazis seized Mandl's factory. He was half

Jewish. Mandl fled to Brazil. Later, he became an adviser to Argentina's iconic populist president, Juan Peron.)

In London, Kiesler arranged a meeting with Louis B. Mayer. She signed a long-term contract with him, becoming one of MGM's biggest stars. She appeared in more than 20 films. She was a co-star to Clark Gable, Judy Garland, and even Bob Hope. Each of her first seven MGM movies was a blockbuster.

But Kiesler cared far more about fighting the Nazis than about making movies. At the height of her fame, in 1942, she developed a new kind of communications system, optimised for sending coded messages that couldn't be "jammed." She was building a system that would allow torpedoes and guided bombs to always reach their targets. She was building a system to kill Nazis.

By the 1940s, both the Nazis and the Allied forces were using the kind of single frequency radio controlled technology Kiesler's ex-husband had been peddling. The drawback of this technology was that the enemy could find the appropriate frequency and "jam" or intercept the signal, thereby interfering with the missile's intended path. Kiesler's key innovation was to "change the channel." It was a way of encoding a message across a broad area of the wireless spectrum. If one part of the spectrum was jammed, the message would still get through on one of the other frequencies being used. The problem was, she could not figure out how to synchronize the frequency changes on both the receiver and the transmitter. To solve the problem, she turned to perhaps the world's first techno-musician, George Antheil.

Antheil was an acquaintance of Kiesler who achieved some notoriety for creating intricate musical compositions. He synchronized his melodies across twelve player pianos, producing stereophonic sounds no one had ever heard before. Kiesler incorporated Antheil's technology for synchronizing his player pianos. Then, she was able to synchronize the frequency changes between a weapon's receiver and its transmitter.

On August 11, 1942, U.S. Patent No. 2,292,387 was granted to Antheil and "Hedy Kiesler Markey." Most of you won't recognize the name Kiesler. And no one would remember the name Hedy Markey. But it's a fair bet than anyone reading this newsletter of a certain age will remember one of the great beauties of Hollywood's golden age, Hedy Lamarr. That's the name Louis B. Mayer gave to his prize actress.

Meanwhile, almost no one knows Hedwig Kiesler - aka Hedy Lamarr - was one of the great pioneers of wireless communications. Her technology was developed by the U.S. Navy, which has used it ever since.

You're using Lamarr's technology, too. Her patent sits at the foundation of "spread spectrum technology," which you use every day when you log on to a wi-fi network or make calls with your Bluetooth-enabled phone. It lies at the heart of the massive investments being made right now in so-called fourth-generation "LTE" wireless technology. This next generation of cell phones and cell towers will provide tremendous increases to wireless network speed and quality, by spreading wireless signals across the entire available spectrum.

This kind of encoding is only possible using the kind of frequency switching that Hedwig Kiesler invented.





Sue Mansi
Reports..

Four Films
in a Day:

December the 7th
with Bristol Film
and Video Society.

Part One of Two

Last August the Bristol Film and Video Society had an enjoyable and well-attended club night, billed as the '120 Minute Challenge', in which a number of groups attempted to make short films, shot, completed and edited and then shown, all within the parameters of a single meeting. With some prior preparation, of course.

It didn't quite work out like that, some of us finding that the editing was a task too far in the noisy conditions of such a high-pressure event. But, at the end of the evening a few ideas that had been sparked off were quickly voiced, one of which was – shall we have a day's filming on a similar basis?

With this in mind, a venue was booked for the 7th December, and the BFVS committee approached a few people who they knew were championing at the bit to head up making films, and asked them to come up with their projects for the day.

I was lucky enough (and foolish enough, easily) to be one of the chosen ones. As plans firmed it emerged that there would be four films all made in the one day, with three of the directors virtually new to directing. I say virtually, because Roslyn Shennan and myself had both had one of the slots for the 120 minute challenge, whilst Steve Andrews had done a similar piece of on-the-fly club filming, so we'd dipped our toes in before.



Of the four directors only David Price had much prior directing under his belt, so this was a great opportunity for some people to brave the directorial waters in a fun way that might encourage bigger projects later on.

Toe-dipping does not a film director make, so for me, at least, this felt like my first real opportunity to plan and execute the complete process of making a short film, which is, after all, what I joined BFVS for just two short years ago.

When I first joined I was full of ideas, but I really knew nothing about how a film was put together – I wasn't one of these people who'd been making home movies for years and had a string of interesting cameras, I was approaching from the other direction entirely, as a writer who'd decided that I wanted to try communicating through film rather than only through the words on a page.

My motivation, far from being technical, is all about telling stories, developing stories, and getting ideas across. Anything I know about the mechanics of filmmaking – which is still very little, really – has all been learnt since I joined the club.

Here's a quote that caught my eye recently, by the director of one of 2013's most controversial films, *Blue is the Warmest Colour*:

"To use an image, making a film is like climbing a mountain or crossing an ocean – every day has its challenges. There's not one day more difficult than the other. Every day, there's that tension and the pressure. Each scene that you shoot is like getting to that next step, but there's still that mountain to climb. So it's

not like one day is harder or one scene is harder – they are all equally challenging." Abdellatif Kechiche.

Okay, we're climbing molehills not mountains, crossing ponds rather than oceans, but the principle is the same. Even for a single day's shoot there have been weeks of thought and preparation, the assembling of the cast, the crew, the equipment, and – above all, in my opinion – the passion from all concerned for the project. My own first task, having said 'yes' without a backward glance, was to prune a twenty-five-minute script that I had into something that could be completed within the day, so probably six-eight minutes maximum. My poor characters didn't want to play, but this was my big opportunity to get directing so I basically battered them into submission. I speak of the characters in my head, of course – not the actors, who I hadn't acquired yet. Indeed, that was the next urgent task. And this was October already! All the groups were beginning to scramble around for actors and crews at this point, and our stalwart club member, Graham Egarr, who was pushing the day forward, coordinating and organising and basically acting as Executive Producer for all four films, must have felt like his computer was growing out of the end of his fingers, the number of emails he was having to field.

December proved to be a difficult time of year to get people to commit to. I managed to get actor one fairly easily, but I needed three. All possible sources seemed to lead nowhere. We are very fortunate to have Jane Andrews as chair of BFVS at the present time, and she, as someone who has been involved in Am Dram in Bristol for years, has many contacts in the acting world, but even she couldn't trawl me someone to the surface for my second female role, although she helped to find someone for the sole male role – of which more later.

Eventually some train of thought reminded me that I 'belonged' to various local Am Dram and Film Facebook pages, so I put out a plea – and it was now November! – for a middle-aged woman actor who was free on December the 7th and might be interested... and I was, excitingly, inundated with responses. Some were far too young and lovely, which made me ponder my definition of middle-aged – or their definitions, perhaps – but I had a few tingly feelings, and one in particular where everything came together, and so the delightful Fiona Barras was recruited without us even meeting, because time was slipping away fast, and I had so much else to do, and I just wanted to say yes and cross 'actors' off the hundreds of lists I was spawning.



The venue that had been booked for the four productions, St Paul's Church in Bedminster, Bristol, is one that the club has used for a number of productions. It already feels very familiar to me, as I've been involved in things there a few times since I joined, and I know it's been used in the past, too. It's familiar, we have connections there, it's not expensive (in fact it's cheap!) and, to some extent, it has aspects of being a relatively controlled environment, always useful in filmmaking. For instance, the crypt has no natural light, being



Abdellatif Kechiche.

underground, so lighting can be manipulated without any outside factors interfering. The great thing about having it for the Dec 7th shoot, though, was the number of possibilities it afforded us within the one building, because, with the exception of a couple of hours in the afternoon, we had the whole place to ourselves from early morning to as late as we liked.

So there was the crypt, which has one large space and a few smaller ones, the main body of the church, and the upstairs, which has one large room with a divider and with a further space outside it. Graham coordinated the usage of space, and I was lucky enough to find out, just a few days before shooting day, that I would have the upstairs St John's room to myself for my film, which by now had the working title of 'House Clearance'.



There was a planning meeting in the lovely local café 'Grounded', a general rehearsal evening at the church for all that could attend, and a separate read through evening was held for 'House Clearance' at Fiona's house. The other groups may have had some extra rehearsal time too, but really there was very little time that any of the groups came together before the day of the shoot.

Myself and my crew and the other cast members met Fiona for the first time at the church rehearsal, and the group seemed to gel well – this was only a couple of weeks before shooting. I delegated all issues technical to my marvellous assistant director, Mike George, in the hopes that I could stop worrying about that side of things and concentrate on the creative processes.

This more or less worked, although being a worrier and a control freak (I mean that in the nicest possible way towards myself – no-one who isn't a control freak would want to write, direct, AND edit their own films) I didn't entirely sail blissfully though leaving it all to Mike and the rest of the crew, but felt the need to check up on things from time-to-time.

Late-in-the-day I even developed an obsession

Late-in-the-day I even developed an obsession as to where a clapperboard might be available from, which wasn't a bad obsession to have, as it turned out!

I look at the list of things we were going to cover on the church rehearsal night, including:

- When all the actors have arrived, the directors are to run through the scenes, and block out the moves. Once these have been worked up the crew are to watch so that they understand the story.
- A run through of the script with the cameramen handholding (tripods on the day) the cameras in the positions they will be on the day. Boom operator to do same.
- On arrival the director to explain to the director of photography (DoP) and the crew the style of lighting etc. that they want.
- The DoP to decide what lighting is needed.

- The camera crew to check all compatibility issues re equipment e.g. cameras, plugging in microphones etc.

- To check that the group has or can access all the technical kit needed and agree who is bringing what. Identify for wider requests to BFVS anything that is missing.

- Towards the end of the rehearsal evening the cast and crew to gather together and go through all the props needed and decide who is bringing what - a list will need to be taken.

- Brief crew members new to their tasks on how to do them - note: clapper operators to also act as assistant to the director keeping track of the script / storyboard.

- Directors to discuss costumes / clothing with the cast.

- Review by the directors and assistant directors with the producer re the arrangements for juggling the locations.

As Graham told us in the email that detailed this, the plan was that we used the evening to ensure that on 7/12/13, when time would be tight, we could hit the ground running and get filming very quickly. It's thanks to Graham's planning skills and experience that lists like this one kept the inexperienced among us on track for a successful shoot. Did we cover everything we were meant to that night?

Looking back, I doubt it, and I knew at the time that our performance fell short of the meticulous, but everything we did do was a significant step in the preparatory process that makes the actual climbing of the mountain something that can be embarked upon with relative confidence.

So; dawned the day. I'm sure my fellow directors were as preoccupied as I was, and as excited and longing to get started. Minor crises had already been averted; my original boom operator had had to drop out with car problems, but had been replaced. A clapperboard had been sourced! I was up at, if my memory doesn't deceive me, five o'clock, assembling props, packing a lunch and a flask, waving my clipboard about and checking my proliferation of lists.

Me, a film-director – what was I thinking? I needed medication. But I know, of old, that all of that anxiety is best managed by action (Action!), so off we went – my partner, John, who works hard all week, dragging himself out of bed to deliver me and all my accoutrements to the church on time, which was 7.30 am.

I had deliberately written an outside scene into my script so that a) I could tackle, on a small scale, the challenges of managing outdoor filming, and b) for the variety of scene it would add to the finished film, - so my first job was to unload all of my props at the church and then get to a nearby house that belongs to one of my crew, outside of which we were filming Scene one.

This also meant that my crew and cast had a slightly later start than I did, because I have no wish to be a tyrannical director, rather to get the best out of people through kindness and accommodation. It also meant, of course, that we were weather dependent from the get-go, and luckily, especially considering that it was December, we had perfect weather – no rain, no bright sunshine, cold but clear of anything inimical to filming.

Continued in the next issue...x



Rob Catt
Wonders...

Rob Catt wonders...

I've been under the weather for a couple of months or so, so I haven't been able to write up anything for the mag.

I got a bit frustrated with being stuck indoors, what with the weather and my health, that I really missed video making. Then I came up with an idea that I'd like to share if you have space in the next edition. It could be helpful for folk, like me, who can't get about much these days.

Do you remember a children's programme on television some years ago called 'Jackanory'?

It was a very simple format. A storyteller would sit in a comfortable armchair and tell stories, designed for youngsters, straight into the camera.

There was very little camerawork – maybe a VERY slow zoom – and if the story was quite long maybe there could be a change of camera angle cut, but only if the story warranted it.

Simplicity was the watchword, with some stories told straight to camera with no camerawork at all!

In my reading material I came across a short story that might lend itself to this format, but would be aimed at a more mature audience.

So I set up my camera, on a tripod, aimed at a comfortable chair.

Then sat in it so that I could see myself in the viewfinder to make sure that I maintained a nice tight shot.

The result you can see here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W6yc2e6JYDs&feature=share&list=UUnlTeriGfcl-hO5dBPIVh6Q>

It's been available on YouTube for just over 36 hours and it's already drawn over 50 hits and, for me, this is quite encouraging with a couple of folk asking for more!



Chippenham Movie Club Chairman and Vice Chairman are concerned about the future of the club.

Look in the national or regional magazines about video making and they are full of negative comments about the inability to attract new club members.

Many clubs are just packing up. You may recall that our recent connection with the club in New Zealand happened because their original partner club in Los Angeles (!) folded through lack of interest and they looked to us as an alternative. (We exchange DVDs from time to time.)

So membership seems to be an international problem.

But some clubs are still going strong despite the negativity around. I wonder if it's because they do not demand too much of their members? In our club I can recall being harassed by a club critic because we are not making club films, or videos of any kind. They even float ideas along with a whine 'why aren't my ideas being picked up' when that critic could make the video him or herself - but never does. Pressure of this kind is unlikely to draw a positive response from current club members let alone newcomers.

I am sure that encouragement would be much more effective.

Putting together a series of interesting club evenings is not an easy thing. In my time as a programme planner I looked at the members of the club, then looked at the kind of videos they make if any, and then tried to assess how best to encourage them in our hobby. Few of us expect to make masterpieces, but the odd tip here and there, can make a modest holiday video into something quite entertaining for viewers who were not part of the originally intended audience.

And as for the negative comments about just spending an evening watching videos, that's bunkum. I've picked up many a valuable tip from watching other people's work. Just between you and me, it sometimes think, 'Oh, I wouldn't have shot that scene like that!' But I'm careful about how I share that thought.

We recently had a very depressing session or two where a new member thought that it was his duty to adversely criticise any and every video shown at the club by verbally stripping it to pieces. So now very few members will bring along videos - including myself.

The idea of sharing is so easily killed.

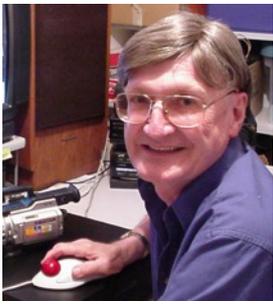
And finally, this business of being a 'social club'. In our programme there is a planned space for us just to catch up with each other. Surely the social element is just as important as the rest. In our time, we have had evening sessions videoing in local villages.

The evenings always seemed to end up in the local pub where the conversations wafted across a myriad of topics. But in there somewhere there is often a germ of a good idea for a film.

Nourish it.

Robb Catt

"The idea of sharing is so easily killed."



Keep It Simple

The Critical Mass

How does an amateur video club recognize it's approaching a "twilight zone"? "It used to be fun belonging to the Club. Now, it's all just talk. Then we sit around and watch other clubs' movies." The membership has dwindled. A few veteran Seniors remain.

What can a struggling Club do to revitalize itself ?

First, let's not get bent out of shape and depressed . Let's DO something about it. Put the "fun" back into our Club !

Otherwise, the "critical mass", from which there is no return may soon arrive - unless there are changes.

Rekindling:

It's worth a shot. The fire that once was within a video-makers' club may be rekindled when the club commits itself to MAKING MOVIES, however humble the movies may be .

Today, with easy access to electronic editing, the amateur is freed to create movies that don't look like 1980's style travelogues.

Get cracking. *Make movies* . Yeah, yeah, every club every club has "doers" and its "viewers". The doers will proudly bring along their new movies and the viewers will sit on warm chairs. Ironic, isn't it: With fewer and fewer movies being made, there's a dearth of movies to view !

Come on, let's be positive. "Brethren, gather round under the tent. Revival may be at hand."

Make Movies, but, for starters, Keep It Simple

Within beginners' reach.

And don't be surprised to find your ship on its way to a bright future, is making hard sailing; there are "jaundiced pessimists" - people on board who are always throwing out the stern anchors. "Ahoy, shipmates, who has an inspiration, an idea for our next Club Movie?" Whatever the vision, as quickly as possible, get it into writing so it can be shared and some enthusiasm developed. Writing it down enables the gem to be shared. And maintaining momentum is vital .

Keep Productions Short

Leave the epics and full features for some other day - way down the line. Bring an inspired vision down to a size suited to the club's resources.

Suppose the Brian's vision keeps growing and growing in his mind. A Club Movie about Harbor Taxis. The prospect of a Shoot featuring the Harbor Taxis . You can be sure this topic will have been "done" before, so we could use a fresh approach.

The history, archived photos, interviews and the 30 minutes long trip is too much for a general audience and too ambitious for the club. So, without bruising any egos, the neat trick is to choose a few of the most informative and entertaining aspects about the Taxis. Then, at the editing desk, plan on further compressing the *better* shots into the *best* ! Four to five minutes, max.

A Theme... hmmm . "Emma and Jack are Brit. visiting a club member. Take them on a "tour", from *their* point of view."

Two club members as hosts. Two cameras on board, other cameras left behind at the dock, one more at a destination. A member as "tour guide" explaining, light-heartedly, what the camera is focusing on. Reaction comments from guests. "Where is that big boat the *Coho* going ?" A shattering HONK ! "Did you have the camera recording that ?"

In both documentary and narrative genres, the classic art of compression is probably the "One-Minute" Movie. Maybe the subject will be just a joke with two characters, or a sequence about preparing a Nanaimo bar . A little longer ? A short amateur video lasting only a few minutes, will be a "window" to look with "new eyes" on to something, or process, or display, etc. . Tailored for a general audience.

A marathon "epic" may well leave only ONE happy person in the audience ! The Director. Keep it simple and short - but not simple-minded - and designed for a general audience .

Planning & Communicating

Before Shoot Day, as much planning as possible should be in writing.

Either Screenplay or Documentary, whether it's produced by a "Lone Ranger" or a small group of enthusiastic members, planning, sharing and rehearsing combine to make a successful production more likely to happen . Planning spelt out in writing helps keep everyone "on the same page" during the Shoot.

But, always some details are "left in the director's head". He has to have room to "elaborate" and seize opportunities. And you can't hope to put everything in writing - really.

There's another benefit in providing a detailed script. It's a vehicle to clear away doubts and misunderstandings. Remember, though, after any changes are made to the screenplay, the Director is the boss, and after all the pre-Shoot discussions, helpful hints and suggestions have been dealt with, he's the best equipped to keep the "vision" intact, and its "promise" delivered .

Keep the production process *moving along* ! Share the responsibilities .

Technical and Artistic Dimensions

The value of Workshops.

Delve into the member's technical arsenal as the need arrives - this is the easy part ! But there's no need to waste an eternity of Workshop time on "technical" things as isolated entities. For example, a hands-on morning workshop on "Rule of Thirds" will provide a sufficient base . With a monitor on location, the Shoot can become, also, an opportunity for some members to actually see how such things as "rule of thirds" work successfully. MS's and CU's, POV's will show their practical significance.

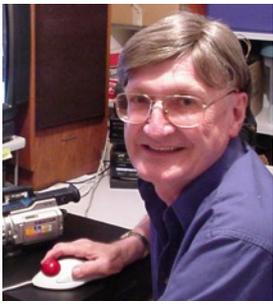
The most difficult thing to master in movie-making - yes, you knew this - is dealing with the artistic dimension . Having a "vision", expressing it, planning in sequences - a "shot list" is worth every moment of a workshop.

For a club without a bank of successful "shooting" experience to fall back on, there's only one road to Utopia : develop your own bank of experience by DOING SHOOTS . So, "take a shot" at it but, for starters, keep it simple.

Let's Be Practical

David Fuller

Offers a few tips on keeping your club alive



David Fuller

Continued

Yeah. By all means brainstorm a member's vision.
 But before you write a word on paper, think about the feasibility of the project you have in mind. Can your Shoot Crew muster up the needed resources ?

The membership has to help out. "Who do I know would take a shot at acting ? I'll ask about among my friends."

As so many clubs have discovered, the availability of suitable locations and actors for a project, in either genre, will likely limit the number of suitable choices. S, the moral of the story is....

A few words of advice about designing a Narrative Shoot;

When you're looking over scripts and stories, "read between the lines". Are there "exploitable" elements in this script, lying there "between" those lines ? Ones that a director or screenplay-writer may add colour and elaboration to, so as to further engage the audience, but without mutilating the writer's originality .

How can facial or other body movements suggest what the words don't ? Nothing attempted, nothing gained.

Seeing what's hidden "between the lines" is like finding gold. Extracting the artistic performance is the next step .

If you have a writer in your Club, she may provide a potential idea, a story. But what if what she gives you is partly in prose form. She's made her contribution .

It's now up to the Screenplay writer whose task is to transform the "story" into "frames, dialogue and body movements" . And to break down the elements of the screenplay into individual short "scenes", mostly just a few seconds long. Record what you have as a "Shot List".

The Screenplay writer's having been involved in other Shoots and in the editing process will enable him to build on his "bank of experience.". Same goes for the Director. Within a small-sized club, you most likely will not have the luxury of having members with only one responsibility . And, here we go again - how does the director share and shift the burden of responsibility to others?

The Shoot Team has to "sell" everyone on the prospect of "having fun" . Only by DOING and participating in the Shoot can a club develop movie-making team-skills.. Experience, my friends, is the only real effective teacher. So let the experience be fun.

A Word About Scene Length

Keep the average scene length about 5 seconds, which includes the brief Cut-ins, most likely from 0.5 to 2.15 secs. in length. This is a form of compression. The pace of the resulting movie will "move" . Not a hard and fast rule, of course. A scene of 25 seconds may be "broken" here and there by using cut-ins with a variety of POV's. Shorter scene length is harder on the director but much easier on the actors. Continuity is forever on the director's mind as he moves through action-cuts, cut-ins and L & J cuts.

Don't be afraid of shooting sequentially - and that applies to capturing the cut-ins because the mood and lighting may be different for those takes on another day or time. Remember, too, no one claims to be a Pro!

By shooting sequentially, at the editing desk, the chosen "take" (inc. cut-in's) is easier to locate when's it resides in sequence.

Keep the Narrative or Documentary "active", with shot-variation and "active" pacing. On the location and

set, provide each scene with "pre-roll" start of five seconds and a "post-run" of similar length. (Handy for those L & J cuts.) Take plenty of cut-ins.

Keep Shoot Day as simple as possible

No harm done in using "slating" as the Pro's do. Have fun with it. But editing with the Time-code is just as good for movies of short duration. Why complicate things ? We ain't a multistage production, with dozens of employees where slating is the only way to keep track of "takes" and "scenes" piled up in fifty cans of negative film, daily, and carted to the Lab from six locations or sets. We ain't in that league !

Lighting and Audio-capture

Again, keep it as simple as possible..

For an interview, for example, or a simple set with two people at a desk, one light aimed to the white ceiling is enough. For starters.

A shotgun mike – yes, but if don't have one, get to know the limitations of capturing clear audio and limiting "room-boom" using an on-camera mikes. DO it and listen to the take and learn how to minimize "room-boom" at the editing desk.

Give it Your Best Shot

If my above "treatise" possesses any future value, it won't be worth a hill of beans until you begin to building a team with a bank of production experience. Maybe, you'll remember the message from under the Big Tent, and see how it all fits together. Do it.

Our Club recently put my above "chatter" into practice by doing a Shoot, using short "Doctors' Jokes". We used what was brought to us by members. We shot in the Meeting room.

Our set was located in a corner of the room; we fed a video signal to the club TV monitor (no audio feed), one table, a borrowed stethoscope, white gown, a laptop, manila files, ambient lighting, on-camera mikes, a live audience of members waiting their turn to be " patients", and watching the same things as the camera-person was seeing, and a doctor. a "rehearsal room." . We took parts of two meetings. Thirteen participants "on stage" or "on cameras".

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NzAINnfrXu0>





Noel Leeder

presents ideas for ensuring your videos are seen for many years to come

Archiving My Lifetime of Film and Video Making?

I believe that I may have at long last found an acceptable way to responsibly archive and show my family and friends worldwide the produce of my almost eighty years of film and/or video making.

As you may know, I have uploaded almost ninety films and videos to my Youtube site at "[youtube_nleeder](#)" where, to date, about 90,000 viewers worldwide have looked at them.

But I do hate the much lower resolution imposed by Youtube's processing in California, whereby my viewers have to now see my original much sharper standard definition images severely downgraded in YT playback.

So, what to do?

Well, in addition to continuing to upload more archived footage to YT to satisfy my committed viewers there, I have lately started to put my videos on the now "cheap as chips" memory sticks - under 1\$/GB - whereby my friends and family can now easily view my videos on their TVs by simply plugging the memory sticks into the USB ports now appearing on almost all the new generation flat screen TV sets - which themselves are now so affordable and so much better that most keen viewers are now upgrading their old sets to enjoy much better viewing.

However, sound from their tiny speakers is awful and most keen users add the excellent and well priced new

sound bars being offered recently by leading audio manufacturers to release the great audio already there on the memory sticks.

So, I now simply convert my old AVI videos to the very good "wmv" format (Windows Media Video) using the excellent AVS Video Converter 6 easily downloaded free online.

In wmv format, an 8.29 gigabytes AVI video becomes a compressed (BUT VERY VIEWABLE!) 359 megabytes in wmv format and runs on screen in acceptably sharp resolution for just over 39 minutes.

How good is that?

In other words, I can now send my friends and family a very stable and very TV-viewable total of 800 minutes - over 13 hours - of my videos on one tiny 8GB memory stick costing only about A\$5!! Unbeatable!! And, allegedly, it is almost indestructible storage when handled sensibly!

So cheap to buy, so light and tiny that it is easy to mail anywhere and, according to info I can find on the web, totally safe storage way into the future!

All now very viewable on TV and far sharper than the degraded wmv image re-processed in California and placed on my Youtube site!

Can't beat THAT!!

Noel Leeder.



Around The Clubs



Our programme for the first few weeks of the new year, seems to have been well received with good attendance on all evenings. A guest speaker covering the subject of Interview Techniques including Vox Props, came with a car load of equipment to fully demonstrate a live interview set up with camera, lighting and sound. There was a lot to take in, especially for those of us still relatively new to film making, and our guest actually *volunteered* to return next year with hands on workshop evening. Fantastic! That's one night taken care of in next seasons program!!

We have also had excellent presentations by 2 club members. David Goddard shared with us his experiences of filming live pantomime and the difficulties which can occur with multi camera colour balancing, especially with all the bright lights, but also ensuring quality audio. David, together with Tony Colville regularly record live band concerts, and are becoming very experienced in the art of live event filming, and multi-camera editing. Club member and retired music teacher, Ian McDougall, once more entertained us covering the subject "How music and film work together", which included a whole host of examples from animation to Hitchcock thrillers. Both David and Ian presented faultlessly as they had clearly invested many, many hours of their time in the preparation of the visuals to be included in their demonstration to keep the evenings lively. We are all very grateful of their time.



Our annual 1 minute film competition had a record 13 entries this year, which caused a little concern, since our score sheets only have 12 spaces available! We coped, however, and were thoroughly entertained with films which included Garden time-lapse, the recent flooding in Reading, amusing family fiction stories, and even a poem. The winning film was made once more by new member, the very talented Thomasz Franek. Take a look at the Gallery Page of our website to see our up to date examples of films including Thomasz's "Funny Face" winning short film.

<http://www.readingfilmandvideomakers.org.uk/Resources/gallery.htm>

I also lined up a practical evening (see photo) and asked members who owned dollies and track dollies to bring them along. We split into 2 teams and attempted to create 2 short films building tension. It proved to a huge learning curve, especially for the organiser ie me! We did manage 2 films, but never enough time to achieve anything special in just a couple of hours. The point of the evening was however achieved, as it demonstrated how different a "zoom in/out" shot is to a "dolley in/out" shot, and I am sure we will now use these tools more often in future club projects. A bit more time and trouble to set up, but well worth the effort. Apart from the 2 team films, Laurie Joyce made a film of "The making of" which was a great piece of work and shows the range of members currently in our club from teenager through to 91 year old Bernard, and everything in between. You can see Laurie's film here.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TxCXAQBNL7A>

Anne Massey

Programme/Promotional Co-ordinator



Lee Prescott
F.A.C.I.

Future: Heavenly
Wild Life

When You've Gotta Go you've Gotta Go!

In the not too distant future the first "Manned Mission to Mars" will take place and this is very likely to open, further into the future, a major avenue of exploration. Eventually it is also likely to become available to many ordinary folk. (Pipe Dreams? No way, remember the author Arthur C. Clarke wrote in the 1960's about what is quite common place today)! When the time arrives and our primitive rockets are displaced following the development of the "AGE" the Anti Gravity Engine, it will not take 9 months to get to Mars – the journey will be achieved in an incredibly shorter time to say nothing of other journeys!

So you may well ask, just what has this tale got to do with Film / Video and SoCo News?

Well, neither I nor most of you will be around to see it or take any part - but the Young People some of us are privileged to nurture in our "hobby" will be, are quite likely to be. At an appropriate time they will be the Camera People et al who will make the various journey's to film exploration, discoveries and report back News-wise. What these explorations and discoveries will find, especially the initial ones will, without any doubt, provide some amazing footage! (Note: Much has already been "suppressed" by the likes of NASA)!

To get to the stage where such Wild Life and Exploratory film productions in reality will be possible, a very considerable amount of technical problems have to be overcome. Screaming in Space as first perceived in the fictitious film "Alien" will not be heard no matter what the reason being it terror, taking parts of you alive, or larval monsters developing in your intestinal tract!

Out in Space more relevant matters do require urgent attention and technical / engineering advancement. A major one is one which would make anyone scream and that is a person's very own "Farty Fog"! (No not a misprint)!

Currently, Astronauts living so close together in such a confined environment literally "Pong"! Humans of course are, frankly, the worst possible pieces of "machinery" that space scientists and engineers have to deal with.

Humans are, unavoidably, the most demanding entities because of our eating and drinking necessities resulting in "odoriferous dumps"! Face it, we are the only reason that Space Vehicles need "Bogs"! Long nappy clad journeys will not suffice).

Humans in zero gravity is the reason that any dumping arrangement will require "rear view mirrors"! Design engineers have to think about weightless problems in Space. (Maybe there's an expertise here that Dyson could solve)? The previous Space Rockets were devoid of "Bogs"

The "primitive" mechanics of docking etc. ruled out anyone "boldly going where no one had gone before"! Baths and Showers are also far to tricky to operate in zero gravity. Therefore as you can imagine, currently any Space Vehicle speedily ends up stinking.

If you wish you can easily experience this problem for yourself – Just live in your car with all the windows and doors closed and never leaving it for just one week!

When the USA Navy Frogmen opened up the Space Capsule(s) descended into the Pacific Ocean John Lovell when later asked said: "The interior was quite different to the Ocean Breeze"! (Actually his words were at the time rather more descriptive – but ladies read the SoCo News)! He then added the rejoinder: "It was like living in a Porta Potty"!

On shorter trips thus far the "material" has been dumped in Space. The confusing term for this procedure is "The Urine Dump". Astronauts have stated that the resultant "flash frozen" droplets lit up look like a beautiful angel snowstorm"!

However, pretty as it may be, for the planned "Manned Mars Voyages" and on into the future, recycling will be mandatory as it is now on the International Space Station. Seemingly and perhaps surprisingly, once the salt has been removed and the 'orrible organic material has been trapped in the charcoal filters those that have had to use Urine state that it is a restorative beverage, not bad with lunch!

The "solids" on the other hand present a different set of problems but with possibilities. Hydrocarbons prove to be good radiation sealing.

Thought is being given so that on the outwards journeys, (to Mars), your "food" would be used to line the inside of your vehicle.

NASA does have a device for turning Poo into special tiles after the fashion of an Easy Bake Oven. SO -- at this time --- you'd rocket off to Mars in a "tin of food" and come home in a can of Poop! Of course the words that the young Scientists and Engineers use(d) was a tad more descriptive – but I do have to remember to be polite!

So any quite Young potential, Exploratory, Wild Life, Film / Video Producers reading this, treat it as a "gasp" into the future. It's a fact that none of us know what that holds but I can add this: "it's gonna be an interesting time"!

In conclusion you might justifiably ask from where do I get my information, (finger tapping nose,) – you would be really surprised IF I dared answer that question.....



FOR SALE Eumig Std8 / Super 8mm Dual sound projector



Claw on the film gate is broken off
Otherwise OK. could be repaired but
suitable to cannibalise for spares.
£30. O.N.O.

Can deliver within 25 miles of Gloucester,
otherwise buyer collects.

E-mail: lee.video@talktalk.net



Thinking Back

In about 1996, I joined the Portsmouth Cine Club, which at that time, only had about a dozen members. I seem to remember, that most of them were changing over to video, except for one die hard gentleman, who like myself, had an affection for film.

Alan Wallbank

Portsmouth
Film Makers

Part Two of his
series looking back
over his film
making days

Of course, being in a club, meant making films. I always felt that I had good editing skills, but the thought of adding music, commentary and titles, was not something I was looking forward to.

To be honest, it was such a difficult job to do properly, that one had to be a dedicated film maker to produce the best results. So I raise my hat to all those who were able to master the complexities of making cine films.

As time went by, I did make some films, but I was never happy with the end result. One of the most frustrating aspects, was making titles, using the Presgrip Titling Set, a tedious task that would have tested the patience of a saint! Then there was the cameras parallax to be taken into account, where what was seen through the lens, was not what the camera would record, resulting in offset titles!



Anyway, I continued to use cine film, but by now, I also had a Braun Nizo camera, that in the main produced excellent results. I was still going to China and to Cuba in 1996, because it had lots of old American steam engines, most built in around the 1920's.

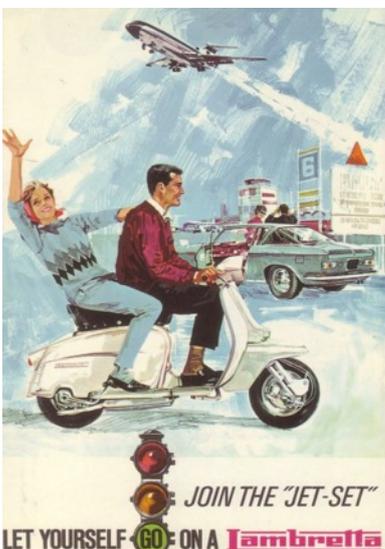
The problem with the Nizo, was that dirt would build up, at the top of the film gate, resulting in it being visible when projecting the film! I never ever had that problem with any other camera, so really don't

know why it just affected the Nizo.

It was suggested that I clean the gate between cartridges, but this was impractical, due to the dusty conditions we often endured at nearly every location. I remember that the more experienced photographers, had their cameras taped up, to keep the dust out. I cannot remember if I actually did it myself to the cine camera, but I did with the T50, but still finished up with scratches across my slides.

The film I took during my last summer visit to China, was a great disappointment. At the end of every scene, there was, as best described, a 'blue flash'. I took it to an ex Nizo technician, who had repaired other problems I had had with the camera, but he had not come across that particular fault before.

Also, in 1996, E W Burnett & Sons, a motorcycle shop in Southsea, closed after being in business for nearly one hundred years. My father and I went there in 1962, with the intention of buying a motorcycle, as I had just started my first job. We got fed up waiting to be served, so my father bought me a Lambretta in a private sale. Over the years, I had a number of different motorcycles and would often return to Burnett's for spare parts.



However, in 1984, I bought a car and therefore my visits to the shop were unnecessary, but I always glanced in when passing by.

The shop was a 'time capsule', with an uncertain future, so I asked other members of the then 'Portsmouth Cine and Video Club', to help me film the interior, before it was all removed. We interviewed a couple of ex mechanics that had worked there.

As I didn't have a video camera, I had to record everything onto slide film and I was also fortunate to meet lots of people who had a special affection for the business. Some of our club members, filmed the sale days and the shop being stripped out of all its fittings.

In February 1998, I went back to Cuba, using the Braun Nizo camera. What a disaster! Nearly every film was spoiled by a flickering shutter, loss of sound and that blue flashing! I think I managed to salvage about 100' out of Twenty reels of cine film!!!

Goodbye Cine

On the 12th of December 1998, I bought a new Sony Hi 8 TR3100E video camera, that has never given me any trouble at all. This allowed me to continue my filming at the shop, as parts were demolished and new houses built on the old m/c workshop site.

Around that time, I took on other projects, until at least seven were in the can, yet not one had been made into a film, even the one of the m/c shop!

In about 1998, the Casablanca Avio was demonstrated to our club. Around 1998, most members were using computers to edit, but were constantly frustrated by its failings. At one of our meetings, we were treated to a Casablanca Avio demonstration.



I found it all very complicated and felt it too difficult to master. However, our club bought one, so that those without computer editing systems, could at make films.

With the Avio, its possible to work on three separate projects, so each member was given a week with the machine, before being passed on to the next person to work on their film. Of course, it was not the best of arrangements, as it meant each member having to wait a fortnight before they could resume work on their film.

Surprisingly, I mastered the Avio fairly quickly, but the constraints of only being able to use it, when it was available, led me to buy one for myself. By now our remaining cine man had succumbed to video and although in advancing years, was able to master the Avio as well.

In 2001, I managed to complete the m/c film, or so I thought. It was forty five minutes in length and included interviews from a wide range of people, including ex-mechanics, sales representatives, customers and relatives.

However, once it was finished, I felt that the history of the business was just as important, so I decide that I would have to make it into a 'five' part film.

Thinking Back *continued*

Unfortunately, with six other projects still outstanding, I had no choice, but to work on another film first and then another and

Well, twelve years later, I have completed all but two of those seven projects, including two more parts of the m/c film, the last part being another forty five minutes long and ending with the outbreak of war. I had planned to start on part four this year, but that is unlikely to happen, as more pressing films need to be completed.

One purchase in 2001, that has been extremely useful, was a set of Trantec Radio mics. I have used them countless times, especially as I often do "pieces to camera".

I find their main advantage, is that the recorded sound level is so consistent in all situations. It doesn't matter if I am 30 yards away in a busy street scene or next to the camera in the middle of a field, the end results sounds very professional.

To add a pleasing visual touch, I always hide the mic under my clothing. Of course, this does restrict movement, as I have not found a way of walking about, for example, without a rustling sound being heard, although I have got away with it on a few occasions.

I have not used the mics since about the end of last year and from information on the IAC website, they radio frequencies may not be available now. Bearing that info in mind, I bought a one of those hand held mics on ebay last year, the type that you see in outside broadcasts.

Its a Sennhieser, but I'm not sure which one, as there is nothing on the mic to suggest its model.

I used it earlier this year when I was filming outside Portsmouth Football Club. I had to do 'a piece to camera' and tried both mics. I have to say the Sennheiser sounded the better of the two. I held it just out of sight, as I spoke to the camera and read from my notes, as there was a lot to say, and you really would not know the mic was there at all!

As time went by, I bought two other Casablanças. So why did I not go down the computer based route? During this time, those in the club that had computers for editing, where always having problems. I needed a system that provide consistent results, without worrying whether it would crash or disappear altogether.

I also doubted my ability to master a new system, when I was happy with the one that I had!

About three years ago, the mic input on the Hi 8 camera, was causing problems and although in no great rush, I realised I had to get another camera. A new club member had a Sony PD150 and I fell in love with it straight away, so I bought one on ebay.

It also came with a very useful widescreen lens, that is attached to the outside of the barrel, rather than screw into the lens filter.

I had lots of problems with pixilation to begin with, mainly down the right side of the picture, but overcame this by using using Sony tapes, instead of Panasonic. Now, as an extra precaution, I always fast forward the tape for ten seconds before recording and thirdly, I make sure the camera is used on a regular basis.

Several years ago, our club became the Portsmouth Film Makers. We have never had many members, I think the most has been fourteen since 1996. We tried every avenue to attract new members, but without success. All those who have left the club, have either moved to another part of the country or have sadly passed on.

Despite our single figure membership, we still managed to hold our five yearly competitions and be regular entrants in the Albany and occasionally the North V South Competition.

Then last year, after a long fight against cancer, we were devastated to lose Peter Tilbury, the clubs leading light, whose presence is sorely missed. Our oldest member Jack Carpenter, who 'always' entered a film into every competition, decided to call it a day, bringing our membership down to seven, which is now six.

Perhaps surprisingly, we held a very successful main competition in December last year. I know Peter would have been proud of us.

To save money, we now meet in a members house and have cut our competitions down to three. We have also left the IAC, although I am still a member.

Our film making activities club wise, have generally come to an end and in the main, also as individuals, except for me. I still have two outstanding projects to finish and am constantly working on other films.

Except for a couple of entries into the So-Co competition in Bournemouth, I have only entered a film into one other competition, mainly because of two reasons.

Firstly, most of my films are documentaries and are usually far too long, usually between 30 minutes and an hour.

"I really don't want a judge to tell me what I already know."

Secondly, I know my films contain faults, most of which I cannot change and I really don't want a judge to tell me what I already know. Where I get my greatest pleasure, is the reaction of people who have contributed to my documentaries.

In the past, I have showed these films, at the community centre where our club used to meet, ensuring a reasonable audience. The result has always been one of great admiration for my achievements, which means more to me than any competition, especially when repeats are often requested.

I do point out the flaws, but everyone says they were enjoying the content too much, to see any mistakes. The last but one film I made, was I feel, one of my best, which I entered into the 2013 Regional So-Co Competition and won best documentary.

Alan Wallbank

[Final episode next month]





One To Watch

This is a classic "MUST SEE!" It may have done the rounds before, but it is the first time it has reached me.

Brilliant desktop videomaking of the great "boy chases girl" genre, but the punchline right at the very end – after the credits have finished – is a brilliant denouement.

Noel Leader

<http://vimeo.com/25845008>



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Have you ever seen an ice tsunami? It happened on the south side of Lac des Mille Lacs, Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada, on May 11, 2013! It destroyed more than 20 houses in 15 minutes!

The ice looked like legs creeping up to residences and then kept going right inside the houses to

destroy them. Frightening!! Who wants to live there? Makes an awful Aussie summer look pretty good!

Noel Leader.

<http://www.youtube.com/v/Wbs8tN8xlxA>

I'm quite sure this'll give you a Lift!

John Halloran

<http://dotsub.com/view/6c5d7514-5656-476a-9504-07dd4e2f6509>



Wuff Wuff I've passed my driving test. Comical and clever especially the reactions of the "people"!

Lee P

<http://www.youtube.com/embed/fybch3DX8c8>



Watch this, especially if you like me, love dogs - clever and a great advertising film.

Lee P

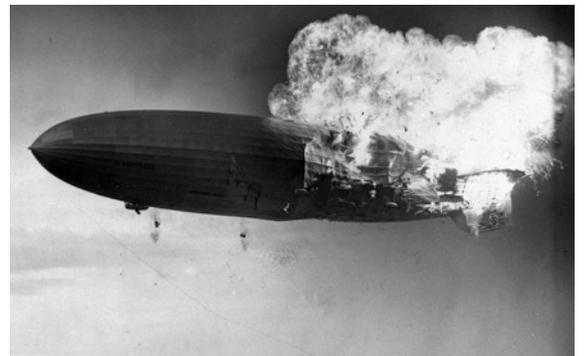
<http://www.youtube.com/embed/AA56LgpFbSw?rel=0>



The PATHE Newsreel - Hydrogen death and destruction. These are original photos from one of the original passengers.

Lee P

<http://www.theatlantic.com/infocus/2012/05/75-years-since-the-hindenburg-disaster/100292>



Don't try this at home - you'll need to change your underwear!!!!

Lee P

http://www.youtube.com/v/zok7LitWU0E?hl=fr_FR&version=3&rel=0



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Copy Deadline for May - Jun 2014 Issue

To reach Editor by 15th April 2014

Changes

New & Rejoined:

Mr Charles Elsdon, Bracknell,
Mr Michael Wright, Barnstaple
Mr Nigel Cheffers-Heard, Exeter
Mr Roy Jacobson, Clevedon
Mr R Mallison, Bristol

Change of address:

Ms T Cryer, Exmouth

Cancelled / Removed:

Resigned:

Mr David Elsbury, Bristol

Cancelled:

Mr Roger Brenton, Southampton
Mrs V S Campbell, Dartmouth
Mr A G Howells, Braunton

Deceased:

Mr M D Rowlands, Chippenham

Moved into SoCo Region:

Mr N Rogers, Stithians