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PANORAMA

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SUR LE FILM ET VIDEO AMATEUR



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Fred Briggs FSCCA

*"chickens and eggs"
and
"leading horses to water"*

In this issue you'll find reports of the Membership Chairman and new SCCA Secretary, Thom Speechley, and SCCA Contest Chairman, Keith Gloster, both of whom can now take a welcome break from those duties. As this is written, CIAFF Director Ben Andrews is up to his neck in CIAFF work, in the second weekend of judging the videos. As you read this, it should be clear that our Editor, Joan Bochsler, and her photographer, assistant, and husband, Joe Bochsler, have just entered the short period of peace which follows their periodic storms of activity. Your President and your Treasurer started reducing their activity immediately after the Annual General Meeting, Regional Meeting, and the auditing of the books, and the July and August SCCA Board of Directors meetings have been cancelled.

Except for an ongoing project on which Thom and Keith will continue to work together over the summer, and the trickle of incoming Membership Renewals and outgoing expenses, most of the Directors are entering, or have entered, a period of relative leisure which provides an opportunity for contemplating where we are now, where we have been, and where we are going.

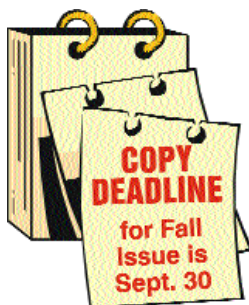
Keith Gloster's Competition Report makes reference to the high quality of the videos in the contest, but regrettably, the number of submissions was down. There were no entries for the Assigned Subject (Millennium) Intercities Contest.

Continued on page 10

Front Cover:

Frank Birch, of the Brantford Videomakers, shown receiving six awards at the Eastern Regional Conference 2000. More about Frank Birch on page 7.

Conference
photos
by
Joseph Bochsler



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PANORAMA

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PANORAMA is devoted primarily to informing Canadian movie and video makers of the activities of society and developments in the realm of amateur motion picture making. It aims to provide information about new equipment and methods, and offers a forum for discussion of topics affecting the interests of amateur and video makers.

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CLUB NEWS

By Wallace Robertson, ASCCA

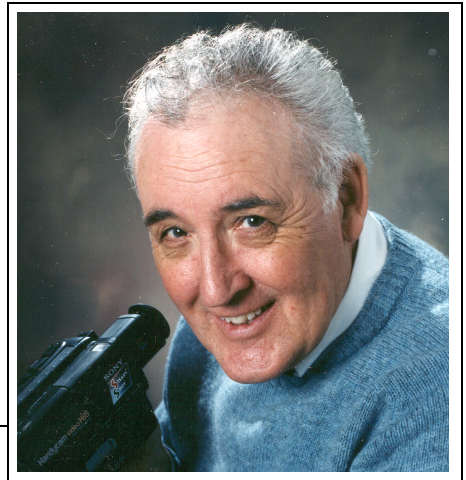


Photo by Ross

Well, we have just celebrated Canada Day 2000 and what a great celebration it was, with the young and old, rich and poor gathering across this great diversified country to enjoy our nation's birthday. But, among all these colorful festivities, one has cause to stop and reflect on the many reasons why people chose to settle here.

To the voyageurs it might have been for the adventure. As time passed people came to escape from oppression or poverty and lately it has probably been to get a better job or a more comfortable living.

Each year, if you listen to CBC, you will hear dozens of stories about why people came and stayed. My Scottish grandfathers both came in the last century; one, because his family was being dispossessed during the great Land Clearances (which wasn't so great for them) and the other left Scotland because he was one of the men trying to establish a foundry worker's union in Glasgow. (During those years you could go to jail for such subversive activity and he probably wasn't too thrilled about those prospects.)

Of all the stories I've heard about resettlement the most unusual one came from a friend, Danny Brown, an electrical technician, who came to Canada on a five year contract and with every intention of returning to his home in the U.K.

Now, Danny had an affliction. He regularly suffered from extreme migraine headaches. For those of us who have had them, they usually take on the form of a gigantic headache, which strikes directly behind the eyes, immediately inducing violent nausea and debilitating weakness in the body. Within a few minutes you can change from being a normal person into a total wreck. Well, as bad as these are, Danny's were even more severe, being compounded with diagonal vision and fainting.

When Danny came to Canada for the

first time air flights were limited. To get his young family over, it was decided that he would come on the first flight with his two-year-old son and his wife would take the second flight with their baby.

Everything went well on the flight; Danny met a number of Canadians who had traveled abroad and were coming back home. They extolled the virtues of their big, beautiful country and mentioned that he would certainly enjoy it, no matter where he might go.

Everything was going well until they reached Customs. That's when things began to unravel. As they started to move forward in the long line he realized that a migraine was coming on. As the line crept on Danny struggled to maintain his equilibrium. Unfortunately, it was a losing battle and he soon felt the blackness overcoming his consciousness.

Later, as he came back to the real world, still reeling in the violent, convoluted, throws of convulsion, his first thought was of his young son. He bolted upright, staring into the many faces of the concerned doctors, nurses and flight attendants which surrounded him. "Where is my son?" he blurted out in panic.

The crowd parted, and there, about ten feet away was his little boy in the tender arms of a middle-aged lady who Danny had spoken to earlier on the flight. As he regained his strength, Danny found that his fellow travelers had realized he wasn't well. So, they had decided to keep an eye on him. When he began to teeter and finally fall, two male passengers moved forward to support him, while at the same time the lady quickly took the boy's hand. Danny told me, many years later, that this was the moment when he decided to make Canada home. A country, where people care about people, and where you could trust a stranger.

Whenever I think of this story it reminds me that we have all come to

Canada from some other place and one of our great strengths as a nation comes from the fact that we have learned to trust and respect each other.

Going through the membership list of the SCCA and indeed my own video group I recognize names of people from just about every nation and ethnic group and I am warmed by the thought that we can learn and derive so much pleasure from each other's company. This is what makes us special. So, to every Canadian-----
HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, the **Victoria Video Club** is looking for members who are interested in attending the Ten Best of the West convention. This year it will take place in San Jose, California from October 12th to the 15th.

The club has also announced the results of the "One Minute Contest". First place: "Jewels in the Garden" by Eleanor Haire, Second place: "Daisy" from Margaret Chamberlain, and Third place winner (with the intriguing title) was Eleanor Haire's "Hookers in the Church Basement". Other videos were Dave and Joan Fuller's, "Fairies", "Bent Out of Shape", and "The Catch".

The **Vancouver Video Production Club** was to have a speaker demonstrate the Macintosh G3 or G4 in May. He turned out to be a 'no-show' so club members Dirk Oertel and Bryan Belfont quickly filled the breach with a discourse on the Pinnacle Studio Editing software and Studio DV software. This expanded into a number of 'pro-con' discussions on various softwares and into the area of non-linear vs. linear editing.

The club's windup meeting in June was to feature the Annual Video Competition, which would be adjudicated by three inde-

pendent judges, with cash prizes to be awarded in the sums of \$100, \$50 and \$25.

The **Winnipeg Amateur Moviemakers** ended their 2000 season with a workshop on basic editing. Norm Frederickson provided a 15 minute unedited video that he and two friends shot in the fall of 1999 while they were preparing for a muzzle loading competition. The film had been shot in a wooded area in a rural municipality near the city. In order to get full benefit from the video, a voice-over explaining the intricacies of the sport was added during lulls in the action. A selection of fast paced banjo pickin' and some special titling was included to 'spice-up' the colorful visuals. The final product was a light-hearted and informative production completed within two hours, which will surely entertain family and friends for years to come.

The June 14th meeting ended another successful year for the London Videography Club. The evening included the showing of all contest entries followed by the Annual Awards presentation. Contest winners were: Advance Class; Kim Brown for, "Things That Move"; Intermediate Class: Thom Speechley for, "Tide's Out"; Novice Class; Harry Ronson for, "Dorchester Pond". Other entries were Bob Thorn's, "Christopher and I Take a Ride" and "This is Rock Glen, Ontario". Ron Jacobs submitted, "Ornithological Snapshots from Down Under", while Harvey Hackland prepared, "The Making of a Fish Pond". "Karen's Carol", and "Autumn in Oxford County" were two offerings from Jim Town. Judges for the competition were Charlie Egleston, Goeff Keymer and Andrew McKinley.

In May, Peter Bedford, of the St. Catharines', Fonthill, (Niagara region) conducted a seminar on the parts that make up a good film or video. In other words, as their Club name implies, the **'Start, Middle and End'**. The write-up goes on to explain that, "every video must have a clearly defined opening or 'start', the bulk of the video (the unraveling of events or information) in the 'middle' of the work, then wrap up with a recognizable conclusion or 'end'." How simple this is, yet in how many of our videos do we miss reaching these goals.

The "Assignment" video for June was to be either "Your Hobby/Hobbies" or "Your Favourite Pastime". Members were requested to bring their camcorders to the meeting so that they could do some outdoor shooting near the library.

The **Ottawa Club** had their Annual Dinner on March 17th. One of the high-

lights of the evening was Jan Bekooy's report on the winning entries in the Annual Competition. Jan mentioned that he and four other people, from outside the club, had judged the videos and were extremely impressed with the quality of all the entries.

After dinner, those in attendance were invited back to President Doreen Higgs home for a light repast and the viewing of the films. The winners in this year's competition were: First place; "The Reunion", by Peter Holoubek and Christine McGregor, Second place; "In the Barn", by Christine McGregor and Third place winner was Rainhard Buehling's "Birds of Sailboat Key Island".

We had a nice talk with our friend Vic Adams, of the **Ottawa** group, the other evening. Although, he has been affected by macular degeneration he certainly has not given up the good fight. During our conversation he mentioned that he was particularly impressed with some of the electronic magnifying equipment on the market, but even more so with the wonderful, constant support his wife has given him.

While on the topic of Annual Banquets, **Toronto** videographers celebrated their year's wind-up at the Inn-On-The-Park on Friday, June 23rd. They viewed the entries in the Five Minute Contest and announced that the winners were: First place; "Images of Autumn", by Dave Warren. Second place was taken by Robert Porter, with "What's the Start" and Third place was "I Am Puzzled", by Trev Beard.

The Toronto club's new executive will be primarily the same as last season except that Bill Williams and Josephine Black will share the responsibility of being co-presidents. Sam Spence becomes editor and publisher of "Shots and Angles" and will be the Master of the Web.

There had been some discussion about cutting back to one general meeting per month but the consensus was that the group would continue with the present program, at least for his year.

Some late breaking news has it that Stella Magic has picked up a couple of trophies at the SCCA Convention. She took home First place in the Class 'C', Novice Division and also the Best Use of Sound trophy for her video "Canada's Best Kept Secret".

The **Brant Videomakers** are also extremely proud of Frank Birch, who recently won six (count 'em) six awards in the SCCA Video Competition. Way to go, Frank!!

Speaking of pride, in his year-end remarks in the "Brant Camcorder News", Editor, Laurie Ross hands out plaudits to

all the members. In his words, "We can assess our video club with positive satisfaction, not only in our strong membership, but also in the balance of practical and technical expertise emerging in the club", and goes on to say, "We must give thanks for the combined talent, co-operation and hard work that keeps our video club tapestry together." I'm sure all members can take pride when they receive compliments like this. Nice article, Laurie!!

The **Hamilton Video/Filmmakers** recently celebrated their 51st Annual Awards Banquet with great fun and fanfare. As usual this high powered event attracted over forty participants and observers. After an excellent buffet dinner, those in attendance were treated to vocal stylings of the popular "Tailor Made" barbershop quartet from the Stoney Creek area.

Following on their heels was the main event of the evening-The Annual Awards.

First Place Honours in the Advanced-Scenario Class was, "Snapshot" an entry by the "Tony Bifano group". First place in the Advanced-Non-Scenario Class was taken by Eckhard Kries for, "Friday the 13th, 1999". Second place in this category was, "A Day at the Caledonia Fair" by Dan Copland who also took home some hardware for Best Audio in this class for "Cathie's Butterflies". Also in this group, Evelyn Rosa won the award for Best Editing for her film "Pigeon Racing". Peter Janssen's "Giethoorn" not only took First place in the Intermediate-Non-Scenario Class but also took the Associated Awards for Best Editing and Best Audio. "Blue Herons", by Bill Traynor won First Place Honours and Best Audio in the Novice Non-Scenario Class. Jerry Apanosowicz came in Second with "The Garden" while Stella Magic picked up Third place and Best Editing for "Hunter Farms".

Special awards were presented as well. Joan Bochsler received the prestigious "Bunny Upton Award" which is bestowed upon the member of the club who has done the most for the organization during the previous year. The Minnie Carter Award was presented to Jerry Apanosowicz for being the Most Improved Filmmaker of the year.

The **Buffalo Movie-Video Makers** were heralding June 11th as their 'season finale'. That's the evening when the Hamilton group invades the friendly confines of the Screening Room Cinema and Café in Amherst to partake of some scrumptious goodies and a great evening

Continued on page 14

Convention Review

by Robert Matthews

The SCCA held its Annual General Meeting and the Eastern Regional Meeting in Hamilton the weekend of June 24 and 25. Since I'm from the US of A, Fred Briggs, our venerated President, and Joan Bochsler, esteemed Editor of our flagship publication Panorama, suggested that I write an article covering the Convention. I think one of them mumbled something about getting a furiner's point of view. I'm not a writer: I make no pretense about it; so all complaints should be directed to Fred and/or Joan. Anyway, here it is.

I generally attend the Convention every year because I enjoy it, and it seems to get better each year. Probably Fred and Joan wanted me to make a comparison of this year's Convention with those of yester-years. Was it as splendid as the conventions of the past? It wasn't! It was better. It was well thought out, and well managed. Shoko and I had a wonderful time. We enjoyed ourselves and simultaneously learned how to make better movies. This year was one of those years where it was not just better, but far excelled even my expectations.

On my way home from Hamilton, Shoko turned to me and said, "I really enjoyed the speakers. It was one time that I stayed awake for the whole Convention. The speakers emphasized the artistic techniques of making movies, and minimized the mechanical aspects of making movies." I agreed. "You need to know the aesthetics of putting a movie together, rather than just the procedures used to produce an acceptable image," I replied. "Most of the mechanics of movie making are controlled, automatically, by the camera, i.e., aperture, automatic volume control, etc., all without human intervention. You should concentrate on striving to make your film a work of art." "True," she said.

As we drove on, I contemplated about the good time we had at the Convention. The first speaker, Don Svob, of Wellandport, Ontario, showed us how to be parsimonious. Reaching into his bag of tricks, he raised the attribute of frugality to a new level. He showed us how to modify and use a monopod. Use it as a boom; use it to shoot high over a crowd, or down low; use it as a walking stick. Don, figuratively speaking, pulled an ingenious device out of his sleeve. Utilizing a putty knife, a

wing nut, and an eyebolt, he fashioned a holder for his lamps. But, the best idea that sprang from his resourceful mind was a so-called Mobile Rack. Should you have room on your PC? Mount a rack that will hold a removable hard drive. Then put in an IDE or SCSI drive and install your operating system, editors, and movie clips. This protects your video setup from contamination, crashes etc.

The next speaker, Chris Doty, of London Ontario, enthralled us with his experiences in the pursuit of his hobby; producing Historical Documentaries. "A hobby," he said, "which threatens to turn into a career." Chris enlightened us on some pitfalls that the unwary fall into when making Historical Documentaries.

- 1** - First decide what your story is - Don't string together a bunch of facts without any rhyme or reason.
- 2** - Amateurs are a good source of archival material, especially from the fifties on.
- 3** - Talk about people, not just facts. Present characters, and make them come to life. This will hold your audience.
- 4** - If you decide to form a committee, remember it can be a help or hindrance.
- 5** - If your point of view is based on a different era, don't use current standards. That means don't judge people of the past with today's standards.
- 6** - Pepper your narration with historical quotations; pre-interview your subjects; use photographs with the caveat that Historical Documentaries eat up visuals.

Many of these tips are nothing more than common sense, but if you forget or ignore them, you will almost certainly produce a turkey. Assiduously apply these tips when making your documentaries, and you'll create a winner.

The third speaker of this splendid Convention was Susan Coverdale. Susan is the Development Officer for Film, in the Hamilton Film Liaison Office. Susan deals only with professional film production, so it is unlikely that you'll be asking her for a permit to block off a street for your latest epic production. Nevertheless, it was very

interesting hearing about Susan's involvement with the film productions in Hamilton.

Lately I've noticed that many of the films and TV shows originated in Canada. I always thought that they were filmed in Toronto or Vancouver, never realizing that some of them were made in Hamilton. Susan tries to make Hamilton a film friendly community. Doing everything she can to make movie makers feel at home. On TV movies, mini series, specials, pilots, and documentaries Susan assists them in finding the roper locations, road closures, churches, etc.

In 1999 Hamilton hosted:

- 7 features
- 10 TV movies, specials, mini series, documentaries
- 8 TV series
- 1 Video movie
- 8 Commercials

Susan's doing a terrific job for Hamilton. It was an interesting and enlightening talk.

Our last speaker at the Convention was Colin Chilvers, special effects man extraordinary. Colin regaled us with some high lights of his astounding career, culminating in his crowning achievement of being honored with an OSCAR. This was for his brilliant special effects in the movie Superman. He kept us on the edge of our chair throughout his talk. Colin has led a fascinating life; Born in London England, he had difficulty breaking into the union. Once in there was no stopping him. The first movie he worked on was Stanley Kubric's 2001. Come to think of it, we're almost there. He has worked in Europe as well as this side of the pond. His accomplishments are numerous, in movies, music videos, advertisements, and winning a Cleo. The finale of his performance consisted of his fondly placing his OSCAR on a table, next to the podium, and letting the audience, touch it, lift it, hug it, kiss it, and have their photograph taken while holding it. It was a wonderful speech, and a memorable occasion. ■



SCCA Video Contest 2000 Summary

by Keith Gloster, Contest Chairman.

Another contest, with all its excitement, is over.

Some exciting submissions were received this year, and the contest culminated in a successful SCCA district conference, during which the winning submissions were rewarded with trophies and certificates.

I am pleased to report that I believe the contest quality continues to improve each year. No doubt this has something to do with the experience our membership is gaining through club participation, and also due to the increasing sophistication that new digital technology is placing in the

hands of our skilled videomakers. I hope your local club is pursuing these dramatic and exciting changes which are continuing, and will continue to affect the way in which we make our videos.

This year saw an increase of two new awards for the SCCA contest. Fairview Photo Lab. of Brantford Ontario donated a Novice category prize for "Best Sound", - (thanks Dave), and Adam Houston created a beautiful desk set for an award in the "Best Dialogue" category. This is a beautiful gift which is much appreciated Adam, as is your continuing support and SCCA dedication!

As I noted previously in Panorama, the year 2000 also saw a reduced number of video submissions, with no entries in the teenage category, the compulsory theme category, or in the best visual special effects category. This reduction is a problem which your executive is addressing for the next contest, along with some discussion

regarding potential changes in categories. More to come on this in the future.

This year, the executive also initiated the idea of keeping the actual trophies in the possession of the SCCA from year to year. With the assistance of our President, Fred Briggs, these trophies are currently in safe-keeping in Winona, Ontario.

Without the continuing support of members, the financial burden of the contest is increased, and the limitations of less than full competition come into play. I therefore continue to urge the obvious talent which is within our members, to come forward and make itself known to us in the annual contest.

Finally, congratulations to all who submitted video entries in the 2000 contest, and particularly to those whose entries were selected as winners. You have every right to be proud of your achievements!

I look forward to seeing your new entries in 2001. ■

Annual General Meeting - 24th, June 2000

by Thom Speechley, Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 11:17 a.m. There were twenty-four paid up members present, sufficient for a quorum.

Minutes of the 1999 AGM were read by Don Bradley, who moved they be adopted as read. The motion was seconded by Frank Birch, and was passed. There were no comments arising from the minutes.

Don Bradley retired from the Secretary position. Thom Speechley replaced him for the AGM and said he was willing to continue. Fred asked for nominations from the floor. As there were none, he announced that the present board would continue by acclamation.

President Fred Briggs described the monthly meetings and the kind of discussions that took place. He explained the unusual numbers on the treasurer's report which resulted from new funding arrangements for the CIAFF. He gave an update on the CIAFF pointing out the current decline in interest common to all competitions and festivals. Trevelyan Beard asked from the floor why entry fees were so high, and Fred explained there were increasing expenses in handling entries. Thom Speechley gave a preliminary count of forty members of the SCCA.

Keith Gloster advised there were fewer SCCA competition entries this year. He hopes to improve next year's activities, and welcomes ideas from members to make the event more effective. Stella Magic reported the library is in process of filing tapes from 1999 and 2000 competitions. There haven't

been any requests from clubs.

Fred gave reports on current member-in-good-standing from West of Ontario (Winnipeg Amateur Moviemakers, Annette Treble, Jeanette and Wallace Robertson, Leo Niilo, Andrew Antenucci, Jim and Betty Holliday, Robert and Ursula Webber) and East of Ontario (Jan Bekooy, Armand Belanger). He asked for member input to make SCCA more valuable and attractive to new members. The ideal would be to reach 500 members in the next two or three years. Trev. Beard asked for availability of complete listing of all clubs. [Suggest reference section of the nearest Public Library. Ed.]

When asked for a report on Panorama, Editor Joan Bochsler asked that people send articles, ideas for articles, and, if possible, a picture of their head, for use in Panorama. Joan advised that the newsletter competition was held again this year.

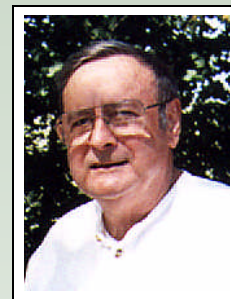
Jan Bekooy reports that membership is shrinking. His club has only seven members at present, and they are targeting youth since the older population is fading quickly. He asked for suggestions.

Jim Town suggested that we discuss the transport and storage of trophies. Keith Gloster explained previous problems tracking trophies, and the new procedures starting in 2000. Now the actual trophies stay in the possession of the SCCA Board for safe-keeping. They will be shown at the AGM and conferences. Winners will receive a framed photo of the trophy as well as a

"keeper" plaque.

In the final discussion period Jon Soyka asked that Fred read a complete list of the current officers and board members. Josephine Black asked about the films in the possession of Grace Upshall. Fred advised that Ben Andrews plans to pick them up in Etobicoke in the near future. Fred was also concerned about their permanent storage and said he would appreciate help with this concern.

The President closed the meeting at 11.55a.m. ■



Membership Report

By Thom Speechley, Membership

This year the AGM was so close to renewal date it wasn't practical to provide a report in time for the meeting. At July 9, 2000, six clubs, five patrons, five life members, eight honorary members, six families and 19 individual members were in good standing.

As we have received no notification of withdrawal or resignation in the last twelve months we are waiting for six clubs, five families and 31 individuals to renew their memberships.

SCCA WINNERS TRIANGLE

There are three outstanding winners in our SCCA competition results for the year 2000. The first is FRANK BIRCH of the Brant Video Makers with six Awards. One of his films, "Days of Content" was First in the Intermediate Section; it also won Best Dialogue, Most Original Entry, Best Senior Entry and Most Humorous Entry. Frank was also first runner-up with "Captain Bob" done with Keith Gloster. Frank Birch is perhaps the most active member of the Brantford Video Club. He is always either walking everywhere putting up posters, handing out video club cards to anyone with a camcorder, or he is writing to all newspapers in the area, contacting radio stations, telling all and sundry about the Brantford Video Club. Brantford has an Arts Council, and the Video Club is an active member. Frank has admitted that he hopes to celebrate his 89th Birthday, this October. Anyone else ready to applaud?

Next winner of note is Stella Magic, who won four awards in the Novice level plus one in the Intermediate level. She was also awarded the Best Sound (Novice)

Award. A remarkable effort and result. As well, Stella is a member of two video clubs, and is SCCA Video Librarian. The next notable result is from Jim Town of Woodstock. Jim collected three awards in the Class A Advanced level. He also received Best Cinematography for "A Taste of Oxford County" and Best Editing for "Echoes of Remembrance".

The Advanced, Class A award went to Philip McLeod for "Seasons of a River". This film also won Best Entry in the Contest. Walter Strickland was First Runner Up in the Advanced level with "Ontario Outings" This film was winner of Best Sound and of Best Travelogue. "A Nice Way to Spend an Afternoon" was entered by Joe and Joan Bochsler and was third runner up in Intermediate Class. Peter Janssen's "Giethorn" earned the Garlick Trophy for Hamilton, and The Movie Capital of the Year again went to Hamilton, This year Hamilton also won the Best Newsletter. ■

by Joan Bochsler



Frank Birch



Stella Magic



James Town

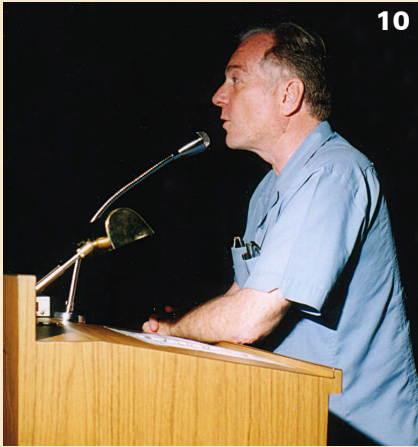
EASTERN REGIONAL



TOP TO BOTTOM (LEFT TO RIGHT) - #1 SCCA Executive holding the A.G.M., **#2** These three wear other hats: Keith Gloster is Contest Chairman, Joan Bochsler edits Panorama and Joseph Bochsler takes all the photographs (except this one.) **#3** Stella Magic awarded the Eumig Trophy. Keith Gloster & Fred Briggs assisting. Stella won six awards. **#4** Jim Town of Woodstock, accepting

some of his five awards **#5** Manfred Ernst accepting the Garlick Trophy for Peter Janssen. **#6** Adam & Agnes Houston welcoming our American friends Bob & Shoko Matthews, from Michigan. Bob Matthews has a report on the Conference on page 4. **#7** The Newsletter award for the Hamilton Club's Reel News.

CONFERENCE & TRIP



TOP TO BOTTOM (LEFT TO RIGHT) - #8 Don (Tinker) Svob was the first speaker. He always has new ideas and gadgets to share. **#9** Michael Adams spoke to us at Speakers' Corner, before showing us through CityTV, Toronto. **#10** SCCA President Fred Briggs, organizer of the Conference. **#11** Susan Coverdale of the Hamilton Film Liaison Office told us about the promising growth of the local film industry. **#12** Colin Chilvers shares his knowledge of special effects, and shows his Oscar. **#13** Chris Doty, London, ON shared his passion for making documentaries. **#14** Most of the group in the Newsroom at CityTV.

Thom's Membership Report shows where we are with respect to membership. We know there were more Members in Good Standing last year, and we also know that many of those members did not renew until several months after the June 1st renewal date. We have reasonable expectations that the numbers will again improve before the next issue of PANORAMA is published. Please, if you are among the large number delinquent in dues, please help make that happen.

In his Secretary's Report, Thom states that there were twenty-four members present at the AGM. What he didn't report was that nine of those were Directors (eight of whom meet every month), or that only six proxies were received from members unable to attend the AGM! That is, of the twenty or so Renewals which were received (some of course, from people who attended the AGM), only six filled in the proxy on the back of the form! The combined number of voting members in attendance and proxies received would not have met the constitutionally required quorum of 40% of the voting membership, if it were not for the large number in arrears at the time of the meeting!

The question regarding Visual Convergence fared better, with sixteen of the twenty who returned Registration Forms answering the question. However, many members paid by cheque or cash, in the mail or in person at the Regional Meeting or elsewhere, without submitting any Membership Renewal Form or Registration at all. This includes three Clubs, two Family and eight Individual Members. In addition, the five Life Members and eight Honourary Members do not renew annually, and have not answered the question. The President has asked some of them personally about their wishes on Visual Convergence, but there are still twenty-four members in good standing for whom we have no indication of whether to give their address to Visual Convergence, or not. Most of them probably won't even realize it until they read this, if, indeed, they do read this!

Which brings us to the bits about "chickens and eggs" and "leading horses to water".

Many of our members have reported that when they were trying to recruit new members for SCCA from among their fellow club members, they were asked, in so many words, "What's in it for me?" While I'm still a firm believer in the principles that "the more you put into a hobby, the more you get out of it", and, to paraphrase JFK's speech writer, "ask not what the organization can do for you, but what you can do for the organization", I have always tried to "give them what they want", and added value to the membership whenever and wherever we can!

In spite of the loss of our Editor, Linda Smith, and then our Layout Man, George McLachlan, the Directors, and Editor Joan Bochsler, have tried very hard to make PANORAMA a periodical of real value to our members. We hope you will agree that it's improving in appearance. Please help us to

improve the content. Tell us what you want. Technical articles? The Art of Film Making? News? History? Help us to get it.

We are spending considerable more on the production of PANORAMA. We are unable to attract advertisers to a publication with only a hundred readers (or fifty, so far this year). There is no money in the budget to pay for professional writers. Maybe if we had a much larger membership and higher fees, like the Institute of Amateur Cinematographers, whose Annual Membership Fee is more than \$60 Canadian, the Association for Independent Video and Film, which charges US\$55 annually for Individual Memberships, US\$95 for Dual Memberships, and US\$150 for businesses, or the Wedding and Event Videographers Association (WEVA) International which charges US\$125 for the first year and then US\$100 each year thereafter, we would be able to attract advertisers and increase the budget for PANORAMA. (Note: All the above organizations can be reached through links on our website, which is more than they provide for us.) Maybe we should raise our Membership Fees, because some people apparently don't value things which aren't expensive. If we had more members we could improve PANORAMA. If we improved PANORAMA, perhaps we could attract and hold more members.

As hinted in the last issue, we have been negotiating with the Editor of Visual Convergence over a plan to vastly upgrade PANORAMA, but of the 27 who have answered the question to date about Visual Convergence, six don't even want it FREE!

Looking back over the years on our conventions, we remember when they were expensive, three-day affairs, with several meals, including a formal banquet. Speakers were drawn almost entirely from among the members who would have come anyway, delegates were lodged in an expensive hotel, and the conventions were well attended.

In recent years we have gradually reduced meals, pared costs, shortened the duration, and suffered steadily declining attendance. We have experimented with technical programs, non-technical programs, auctions, and all manners of field trips and tours. We have presented technical experts, award winning professionals, inventors, and specialists of all kinds: stunt men, documentary makers, special effects people, sound men, foley artists, and many more. We have visited some of the most interesting places that can be imagined and seen some of the leading edge technologies. There have been door prizes and freebies in large numbers, and last year we even provided a free lunch to members who attended the AGM. Yet still, attendance declines.

I often think of the fellow who regularly raves about our visit to Wescam, but has never attended another SCCA convention since, and the many people who tell us how pleased they were that they were finally convinced to attend, and how well they remember this speaker or that speaker, and then don't come back.

We have come to the point where we are alternating between full conventions and

Regional Meetings. It's very embarrassing to the organizers to bring to London John Zales from Chicago for our first look at Screen Play, Ivan Reel and Brian Young from Toronto with Sony's lines of consumer and professional video products, Doug Wurster from Toronto to demonstrate the DPS nonlinear editing equipment, Nox Leavitt from Hamilton to explain how he invented the Wescam, and Jon Jarett from Hamilton who put together Ontv's first virtual set in Canada, and have them all speak to a group that at no time exceeded 30 people!

This year in Hamilton we reduced the speakers to four, all on one afternoon, and switched the emphasis away from Technology. Besides SCCA member Don Svob from Wellandport and Hamilton's Film Liaison Officer Sue Coverdale, we brought in documentary maker Chris Doty from London and the Director of Special Effects for X-Men, Colin Chilvers, from Crystal Beach. Imagine the concern of the organizers two weeks before the meeting when the Registrations for the Meeting totalled only fifteen! It took a lot of arm twisting in person and by telephone to raise the attendance to thirty (including the speakers) for the afternoon session. We were very pleased when Bob Makara arrived by train from Michigan soon after the first speaker began, even though he had to cut his supper short to catch the train home. But we were disappointed that there were no representatives from Barrie, Kitchener-Waterloo, Quinte, or Buffalo, and only Thom Speechley from London and Jan Bekooy from Ottawa. Thankfully, the speakers didn't realize that many of those in the audience weren't even SCCA members!

On Sunday, twenty-nine people, members and guests, took the bus tour to Toronto. Some, but not all, had attended Saturday, and not all from Saturday returned Sunday. Due to circumstances beyond our control (see Thom Speechley's report in this issue) the MZTV museum was not yet ready for the public and the theatre was unable to screen the film we had promised. Consequently, neither charged the expected fees, we were able to negotiate a free screening of two 3D films at another theatre location, and were therefore able to refund \$10 to each person who attended. In the end, Registration for Saturday, Sunday, or both, cost \$10 and the bus trip cost an additional \$10. The resulting charge of \$20 for the whole package, including the Saturday afternoon program, the evening presentation of the Awards and winning SCCA Contest Films, the bus tour to Toronto and Citytv, and two IMAX 3D films, (and a chance to have your picture taken receiving a real Oscar) was a bargain which should have been enjoyed by two busloads of people. Maybe we need to raise our rates to match WEVA and attract more delegates!

The part that hurts the most, though, is the number of people who said, when viewing Joe Bochsler's video of the tour over the next couple of weeks, "That looks great! I wish I'd known about it before!"

Which brings us around to "leading a horse to water". How do we get people to read the publicity we put out about the Convention or

TORONTO

June 25th 2000

By Thom Speechley

"Umbrellas and box lunches"

We had just finished a long day and evening at the annual regional meeting and a casual day in Toronto seemed like a good idea. (Of course, one wag asked, "So what was first prize?") However, the weather appeared to have other ideas and after struggling home through a summer down-pour on Saturday evening, we returned to our rendezvous point for a 10:00 am departure on Sunday. Fred Briggs had, as usual, laid out a very entertaining and enlightening day for us and thirty-one people showed up, umbrellas and box lunches in hand.

Our first stop in Toronto was CHUM/Citytv where we were greeted by hosts Michael Adams and Monica Lin. If you are familiar with the format of this organization you would not be surprised with the upbeat and energetic reception and tour we received. We visited all the

major production areas and there was activity everywhere. By the way, you don't peek in through windows, you are actually on the floor with the crew. We even got into the inner sanctum of Chairman Moses Znaimer where we looked at a very historical TV artifact: the original "Lucite" cabinet TV set used as part of the RCA exhibit at the 1939 World's Fair. Unfortunately time constraints and lunch details made it impossible to visit the MZTV museum where other significant and valuable samples of early TV technology are kept. (If interested, go there at: <http://www.mztv.com/mztvhome.html>)



After a break for lunch we reconvened at the Paramount "Imax" theatre around the corner from Citytv. We were going to see a new 3D feature on the really big screen. Unfortunately, the previous night's storm had inundated the projection room and the show was cancelled! We don't know the extent of the damage to the film itself but this must have been a very costly setback. Ever resourceful,

Fred re-examined our options and after a quick (and democratic) consultation, we elected to continue our outing at another Imax installation in northwest Toronto. This wasn't hard to refuse; we were given free admission to TWO features!

The first feature, a performance by Cirque du Soleil, "Journey of Man" traces the life of a man through dance and various acrobatics. The 3D close-ups really enhance the amazing and beautiful motions of this amazing group. The second feature, "Alien Adventure", was a computer generated animation of aliens looking for intelligent life at an amuse-

ment park. This is obviously the cartoon art of the future. With the 3D effect, the 'virtual' sensations are extremely effective. As far as I know, no one in our group 'lost it'. However, there was a range of colours on faces as we left the theatre.

Our bus got us back to the Hamilton drop off point at a reason-

able hour and after some emotional farewells, we parted for perhaps another year. Our thanks to Fred and Carolyn for what turned out to be a very fine day and to the (very untypical) bus driver who helped make it a real pleasure. I don't know who was responsible for the great weather. We didn't need the umbrellas. ■

Regional Meeting every year? How do we get them to come to the meeting/pay their dues/send in their proxy/enter the Annual Contest? Do Life Members and Honourary Members read PANORAMA? Do our members care? Do you care?

A few weeks ago I received a suggestion that we provide a place where members could enter into discussions with each other. I don't remember whether he meant on the internet or in PANORAMA, but since the latter is only published four times a year, I assume he meant on the internet. I informed him that there is a discussion page for that very purpose on our S-C-C-A.ca website, the "administrator" of the service terminated it after about a year because it wasn't being used, and another service provider for that service was arranged about a year ago. It still has no messages beyond my invitation to participate!

If the hard working Board of Directors and a handful of others are the only ones who care about the SCCA, why are we doing all this work?

Please give this some serious thought. Either we grow, or we die. What do you want in PANORAMA, in Conventions, and in other activities in which you think we should be involved? What do you think the others want?

Now please consider the alternative, from the Constitution.

ARTICLE XXII DISSOLUTION

Section 1. Notice.

Any three members in good standing of the Society may propose dissolution of the Society at an Annual or Special General Meeting, provided notice of motion in writing, signed by all three members, is placed in the hands of the Secretary at least six weeks prior to the

date of the meeting. Such notice of motion shall be mailed to all members by the Secretary, postmarked at least one month prior to the date of the meeting.

Section 2. Voting Requirements.

In order to become effective, a motion to dissolve the Society shall require a two-thirds majority of the voting power of the Society present either in person, by mail or by restrictive proxy.

Section 3. Procedure.

After the passing of a resolution to dissolve the Society, all the remaining assets of the Society shall, after payment of all liabilities, be distributed to such recognized charitable organizations in Canada as may be decided by the meeting.

Section 4. Dissolution.

The Executive Committee shall proceed immediately to carry out the decisions of the meeting and to surrender the Society's Charter. ■

Fred Briggs FSCCA

"GET'EM"

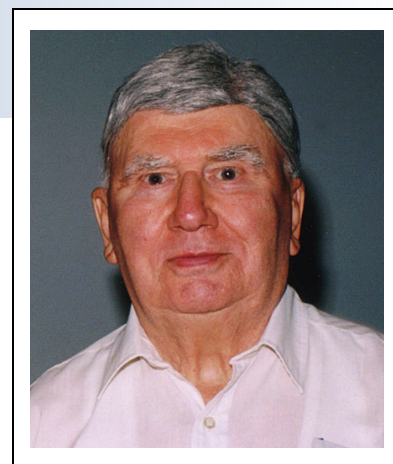
By Frank Birch

With more people buying camcorders one might assume that the videomaker clubs would be growing. That is not happening. I think that with many purchasers, once the novelty of a new toy fades, the camcorder is placed on the shelf to gather dust besides the family camera, to be brought out only for weddings and vacations. Then it is dusted off and zoomed with wild abandon to produce those long boring family videos that put even the dog to sleep.

Before we smirk at their ignorance, let us ponder as to why this is happening. The answer might be that nobody has told them that there is a better video world. If they're not told of your existence, how can you expect them to join you? You have to tell them!

Every Club should have a Publicity Person. They come quite cheaply but are worth their weight in new members. Such a P.P. would be a rip-snorting, hellfire-bent-on-new-members type of person.

This non-tiring type of individual would be plastering your posters all over town, and even nearby towns. The posters should always be headed in bold, eye-catching type, "CAMCORDER OWNERS". It is no use saying "Notice". Having caught their attention, the readers will be told about their boring videos. They are then told that by attending your meetings they will be introduced to a new world of videomaking with your friendly members. Spread on the goo with a trowel! You might say that henceforth their videos "will sparkle like the stars in the Milky Way. Your audiences will cheer and ask for more" You then give details of where you meet and a phone number to contact. In Brantford we copied the idea from Hamilton of having business cards to hand out to anyone we see with a camcorder. Every club member is an ambassador. They also need an occasional pep talk to this end. Your energetic P.P. will write to all local and other nearby newspapers



about your club activities. The P.P. will shout from the housetops should any of your members win an award. Make a bit thing of it. Get the news photographer involved.

Your wonderful rep will be continually looking for ways to tell camcorder owners what fun it is to belong to your Club, and how he/she will learn to make videos that "scintillate". It pays to advertise. So now you have 'em, how do you keep 'em? ■

...AND KEEP'EM

By Frank Birch

So now your advertising has paid off and new faces appear at your meetings. Be very sure that they are greeted and made welcome. Every club member should be made aware of the importance of making the newcomer feel right at home. Some clubs might appoint an official Welcomer.

So the new friend sits down to expect an evening's entertainment and instruction. However, what he/she gets is BUSINESS for a long boring hour. My friends, nothing will turn away a prospective new member more than having to sit through the ordeal! You can even lose some of your present members for the same reason.

Ideally there would be no business discussed, but this might be too much to expect. So your meeting should always start with videos, then you can do the business part, but keep it to a minimum. Most of your business should be done at a separate Executive Meeting. Blessed is the Club with a President who is short of gab! Then we get QUESTIONS and these

can run on and on. Whoever is in charge of the meeting should be able to tactfully shut up the longwinded members.

I think that all Clubs will have a refreshment break and this is a good time for members to mix and chat.

It goes without saying that your programme must be interesting to all members. This is not easy because you will have people with various degrees of skill. What might be over the heads of beginners might be "kids' stuff" to the more advanced. I have no solution for this, except to say that all members should be encouraged to say what they would like. Our Dan Kennaley has proposed that we have a Suggestion Box and that seems to be a good idea.

Ideally I would like to see every member really keen on the meetings and can hardly wait for the next one to come around. We seem to have some members who are lukewarm and think "Oh! I've nothing better to do tonight. I'll go to the Video Club." These are the people who sit

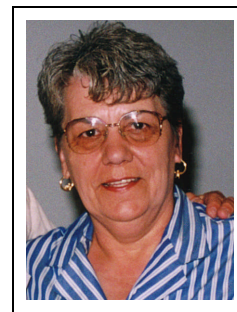
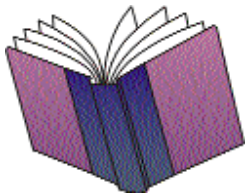
back and say nothing and do nothing. They toil not. Neither do they spin. These are nice people, but will not volunteer for any job in the running of the Club. Maybe they are waiting to be asked? Try it. Ask them to take on a simple job.

Do you have Club outings? These can be a good time for members to get to know each other better. How about having a picnic? Have special evenings in honour of special members or for birthdays. Present plaques. Try to get the Club into one big family.

Remember that we are on about keeping members as your Club grows. Your Executive should have this in mind. Get member participation. It is inevitable that you will lose members for various reasons: old age, death, moving away, etc. So your efforts to get new members will be continuous and you must keep on going. I hope that this epistle will help you to get 'em and keep 'em. Over to you. ■

The Story

by Jeanette Robertson



As a child I would sit where the adults gathered, listening to family gossip and history. I always enjoyed the telling and retelling of these stories. My grandmother was good at relating these tales. However, the one who could really spin an enchanting anecdote was my grandfather's cousin Barbara. She could take a somewhat sad event from her past, put a spin on it and take you on an adventure that could curl your hair, or make you laugh. She had a tough life, but always found a bit of humour in everyday situations. Her audience was always captivated and enthralled.

The other day I was looking through our wedding album. When we were getting married, my husband asked his friend to be our photographer. Ralph was a news cameraman for the local station. He shot it, not as a professional photographer, but with the eye of a newsman. Thirty-five years ago, I was disappointed that he didn't take more pictures of my husband and me. Today, these photos are treasures. During the wedding and later at the reception, he captured mostly pictures of the family, friends and neighbours. They were not posed, but intimate scenes of

people eating, drinking, smoking, dancing or just plain enjoying themselves. In this book we have very special pictures that tell a story. Looking back in time I see our five-year-old niece sweeping up confetti and throwing it back at us; my late great-grandmother digging in her purse for presentation money; my wedding gown and veil blowing wildly in the wind in an unusually cold and snowy September 4th. Storm; and many activity-filled shots of family and friends who have since passed on.

We are all familiar with these kinds of stories, whether they are told, written, or are in photographic or movie format. Yes, we are all capable of producing ideas and stories. If you don't think so, just ask your spouse if they'll do a household chore during their favourite TV program, or ask your teenager why they came in so late last night. You can bet your last dime that you'll get a creative story within seconds.

However, if your brain is still really sluggish, I would like to propose a couple of places to get your creative juices flowing.

In front of me is a calendar, and by flipping through the pages I find plenty of

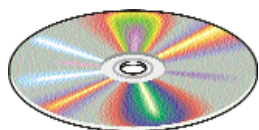
ideas. We've got Valentine's Day, St.

Patrick's Day, Easter, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Canada Day, along with notes for socials, weddings, birthdays and anniversaries.

Our telephone company says "Let your fingers do the walking through the yellow pages." I'm suggesting that if you're stuck for ideas, check out the yellow pages.

Another place from which to glean ideas is your local tourism branch. Quite often there is something going on just a few miles down the road. Should you decide to go, pack some extras: a hat, jacket, boots, medication and a light lunch with a thermos of coffee, in case you are gone longer than you anticipate. One other point, top up your gas tank.

Now that you have some idea of what to shoot, make it into a story; with a beginning, middle and end. Have a great day, but beware, for as Sid Caesar once said: "The trouble with telling a good story is that it invariably reminds the other fellow of a bad one!" ■



A Remarkable Training CD for Adobe Premiere 5.1

review by Trevelyan Beard

For the purpose of editing videos, it's generally agreed that the top program is Adobe's Premiere 5.1. Premiere is 'time-line' based whilst others are 'story-board' based. I much prefer the time-line method if for no other reason than this is what I have spent years using. Premiere is so well thought of that many plug-ins are written for it by independent authors and there are many books about the subject. Together with its major companion, Adobe AfterEffects, you can do anything the professional programs can. Premiere is loaded with transitions and filters and other goodies and has been around long enough to become reasonably trouble-free.

There's a fair learning curve for you to work through to master this Non Linear Editor (NLE) but because of its universal popularity there are several good tutorials

around. I've just come across a very good one and the price is a scant \$49.99 US. Although I have used Premiere for several years, I decided to work through it. The result has been well worth while. I have learned more than a 'thing or two' and enjoyed the exercise.

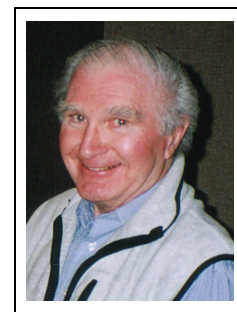
The tutorial is called "Premiere 5 Tutorials - Vol. 1". It's put out by Adita Video Inc. in Alberta (Tel: 403 274-7494).

You print the 300 pages that constitute the textbook (this is the reason for the low price). It'll take half a day to work through each chapter, as the authors believe in making the student apply him (her) self thoroughly. They are determined that you will become an expert. I enjoy a course that has been prepared by a practical mind and this course is very practical. There are 7 chapters or tutorials on the one disk and they take you from

the fundamentals all the way to the stage where you can match the experts. The many sample clips

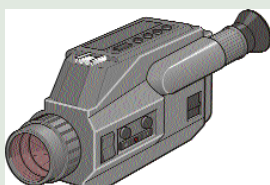
help enormously in understanding the work. Now what about the next disk which will be called Volume 2? Not out yet, it will be focused on specifically oriented tasks such as editing a wedding video, a corporate training video, a music video, a play or skit, etc. I'll write about this later.

The one CD-ROM is formatted to work on both the PC and the Mac. You won't be disappointed. ■



For Camcorder Hobbyists

by Bill McCormick
from The Quinte Videography Club



I don't know about you, but I find it getting more and more confusing these days. I got a Digital camcorder last year and carried on with the analog editing that I've always done.

You've no doubt noticed that the Camcorder magazine is now using the title Camcorder & Computer Video. Likewise the Videographer has become Computer Videographer. Reading the magazine has got me all hyped up to digital non-linear editing, but when I look into this I can't keep up with the trend. The fellow who stocks the magazine rack at the store is confused as to where to put the magazines -- in computers or the video/photo section of the rack.

The computer I've had for the last couple of years is one step below the minimum requirements for the editing programs now on the market. I shall have to

invest in a more up-to-date computer. There is a problem here in that the products are changing so fast that the equipment you buy today is obsolete before your credit card is swiped through the card reader at the cash register.

I do a bit of research on a program that is recommended by one of the magazine writers, but when I go to the local video store they don't have it. They don't even know what I'm talking about. They tell me they will try to find out about it for me. I turn to the internet and go into the maker's web page for information. Yes, it looks good and very much like the information read in the magazine. (Who is copying whom?) But when I ask where this product is sold in Canada all they can tell me about are the USA sales outlets. The next month's issues of the magazines highlight a new non-linear editing suite, but again the same frustration. I have been asking one retailer about Casablanca. It's been a month now and I still haven't got to see or even to get a price for a unit. Really, it's weird. They don't have a unit in stock but they gave me a handful of brochures from the makers extolling their products and how easy it is to use them. But it is hard to get your hands on one of the units. Ah, yes! It's a hard life, I tell you, trying to keep up.

I saw another dandy unit written up in a magazine published in May, so I called the local Sony dealer to ask about it, and

it wasn't on their listing of products. They called their Toronto office, who told them that the unit is not available in Canada. However, there may be a unit on the Canadian market in the next month or so. The local chap will follow up and let me know when it is available. I wait --and wait -- and wait.

I wonder, if a fellow got a non-linear system set up, if he could rent time on it to other people faced with some of the same frustrations. It might be an idea to look into. But first you have to get the equipment. But wait. Here is an article about doing your DV editing on 'net. You pay a yearly fee and get to edit a 30-minute video each month. (A longer video can be made but you pay for the extra time on the edit suite.) You have 1GB storage and can transfer your video on the internet. In this system you don't even need tapes other than the camera tape. Soon those tapes will be replaced with discs or solid state memory. Hint - don't invest heavily in the stock of video tape manufacturers. Watch their stocks closely if you have invested.

It is evident that I'll have to make a trip to the big city to the west- (I don't mean Quinte West!) to achieve my ambitions in non-linear editing.

Till next time - Keep the camcorder steady, and keep it recording! ■

Club News continued from page 4

of fun and entertainment. BUT, ARE THEY REALLY TELLING THE TRUTH? Not really, because on page two of their "Camerama" newsletter they go on to explain that although June is normally their last meeting of the year, they will be having special meetings in July and August with at least one of the meetings to be held in the great outdoors for some special group participation project.

The June 11th meeting will feature the following video, "Metz Racing" by Paul Hoeltke and Greg Paolini; "If the Animals Could Talk at the Buffalo Zoo" by Cynthia R. Liber; Tony Vescio's, "Marley's Breakfast" and John P. Weiksnar's, "I Be Cold".

Malcolm Colditz, President of the American Society of Amateur Videomakers & Cinematographers has an interesting article in the May/June issue of the "**Monitor**" entitled, "Know Your Subject". He explains that he and a small group of select camera people have, over the years, been picked to shoot the mating

and birthing habits of the North Atlantic Humpback Whales on the Silver Banks just north of the Dominican Republic. Their initial attempts to film within the designated zone proved fruitless because each time they moved their motorized boats to the specific spot, the whales and their young would move to another area. Finally, the group realized that if they were to be successful they would have to move slowly, cut their engines, and gently coast into the area. This worked well and they came away with some wonderful footage. Proving again: if you are acquainted with your subject, you can simplify your work, and save time and energy. Something for all of us to remember.

It seems that lately I have had the sad duty of reporting the passing of a number of our friends in the amateur film ranks. It is of particular note that I must add to this list of wonderful people the name of Tony Rose.

Tony Rose died in December 1999, at the age of 78, after a rather lengthy illness. He was probably one of the best-known people in amateur film, not only in the

United Kingdom, but also around the world. Tony was noted for his films, books, television appearances and for being Editor of such prestigious publications as Amateur Cine World, Amateur Movie Maker and Making Better Movies, a magazine for both cine and video enthusiasts.

He was well liked by all who knew him and as Alan Cleave wrote in his tribute to Tony in IAC's **Film and Video Maker magazine**, "if I had to choose one word to sum up his character it would be 'amiability'; he seemed to get on well with everybody and I have yet to meet anyone who didn't like him." What a wonderful testimonial to a truly remarkable man.

Peter Rouillard of Guernsey, in the same tribute, goes on to say "...we have lost one of the giants of the amateur film making movement."

To all our friends across the sea who knew and loved Tony...our condolences. He will be missed. Please, dim the lights. ■

Better S-Video Cables

by Doug Rickaby from the Quinte Videography Club.



Contributor's Note: After reading an article in PANORAMA by Jan Bekooy, I felt compelled to offer the following (piece) on higher end cabling.

As I am a newer member of the SCCA, Jan Bekooy is one of the few members outside of our Quinte branch I have had the pleasure of meeting. Jan and I had an enjoyable chat at the Summer Convention in Kitchener in '97. I got the definite impression of his concern for perfection. Therefore when I read his article on cables in PANORAMA, I wasn't too surprised at his quest for the elusive "perfect cable".

Having a small business devoted to video coverage of weddings, family celebrations and producing promotional videos, I, too, am concerned about quality. Simply stated, I want the highest quality product that my equipment will produce. I am sure that this desire is shared by all videographers.

In Memoriam



Just received from Bernie Wood, editor of the SAVAC Monitor, news of the death of Bill Sedlacek.

"Bill Sedlacek, a movie maker and a dear friend, died very suddenly from a heart attack on July 20, 2000. A long-time and linchpin member of Peninsula Video Makers, Bill was also a frequent visitor at the San Jose Movie/Video Makers meetings. Through his active involvement in SAVAC (he edited the SAVAC News for two years) he had become a valued colleague and friend of movie makers all across the USA and Canada."

Bill was also a member of SCCA, along with his wife, Ora, to whom we offer our sympathy. Ed.

The SCCA received with regret Don Bradley's resignation as Secretary. Don, who lives in Brantford found the heavy travel schedule difficult to manage.



S-video cables that come with prosumer equipment are fine for viewing from camcorder to monitor and even a single generation transfer will result in an acceptable final product. However, the quality loss becomes more evident when the raw footage is made into a master (second generation) and copies (third generation) of that master are produced through these original equipment cables.

As previously stated, my quest (bordering on obsession) has been to achieve the highest quality possible and my first notion was to make my own S-video cables. That idea lasted until I found that the cable end connections I sought were not commercially available - anywhere. Consequently, when Sony stores began marketing the Monster cable series, I opted to connect my editing equipment with Monster 3 S-cables. This wasn't cheap as one metre Monster S-video cable will set you back \$90 Canadian, plus taxes. The price tag to connect my edit suite components with Monster 3 video cables was \$1000.00.

These cables are double insulated against electrical interference and with 24 caret gold plated connectors the signal quality is great. However, I am sorry to report that this purchase was a mistake on my part. The problem is that the darn things are just too delicate for my use! As Jan Bekooy referred to in his article, some wires are extremely thin and this is one cable with thin conductors. Therefore, any flexing, save removing the cable from the packaging, and even that must be done with care, can result in cable failure. The only consolation is that Sony put an over-the-counter replacement lifetime warranty on these cables. That's great, but if I'm in the middle of an editing project and I change the connection of a cable end to temporarily eliminate my titler after completing the initial titling, and the picture goes black and white, or fails altogether, I don't want to drive 40 miles to the closest Sony store for another cable. The short term solution was to invest another \$90.00 plus taxes, for a spare cable.

I found out the hard way that three times the cost is not necessarily three times as good, or even as good, especially when it comes to durability! So what's the solution and where does the three times as much come in? Well I'm pleased to report that I have found one.

The discovery was made by accident as I happened by the Whitby Future Shop where I noticed a large display of connector cables manufactured by Acoustic Research. These cables seemed to be aimed at the home the-

atre consumer market, but with two of my Monster 3 cables out of commission and not having them with me for exchange at the local Sony store, I thought "What the heck, I'll try a couple."

The first thing I noticed about the cables was that they were constructed exactly the same as the Monster 3 cable with double insulation against electrical interference and with 24 caret gold plating on the connectors.

Then when I got home with the new cables and was able to compare them with the Monster 3 cables, I found the new cables to be much thicker. More importantly, upon trying to inspect where the wire connects to the cable end connector (where the Monster 3 cables failed), I was pleasantly surprised to be able to see nothing! That is, nothing except a large piece of shrink wrap covering the connections. The long and the short of this is that these cables are much more robust than the Monster 3 cables and I have not noticed any difference in picture quality between the two brands of cable.

Aside from being much more durable, there is another plus to the Future Shop cable and that is price. A metre cable retails at \$24.94 Canadian, plus taxes, or less than a third of the cost of the Monster 3 counterpart.

Rather than travel the 40 miles to Belleville to exchange failed Monster 3 cables, I now repair (or recondition) them myself at the first sign of trouble. This includes removing all the connections and solder, slipping a piece of shrink wrap over each end of the cable wire, resoldering the connections and installing the shrink wrap pieces in place. This renders the Monster 3 cables much hardier and I don't know why the shrink wrap is not added during the production process.

If you have the money and you never plan to change any of your connections, the Monster 3 cables come highly recommended. But if you are at all like me, and are just going to have to change your connections from time to time, and are always looking for a less expensive product of similar quality, you should check out the Acoustic Research S-video cables at Future Shops. ■

Keeping up (Newsletter) Appearances

From Larry Perks, on vacation in Glace Bay, Nova Scotia.

Newsletters are obviously intended to communicate, and although content is important an editor must remember that the packaging is a key element in communication. You can lead a horse to water but ... and you can give someone a newsletter but you have to make it attractive enough for the club member to read it.

That's why **Reel News** is considered the most appealing of the newsletters being judged. It is printed on letter-size paper and makes good use of colour. But the colour isn't the thing that makes it so eye-appealing - it's the fact that there are three columns of type to a page, with lots of white space (perhaps a little too much) between columns. This avoids the cluttered look and makes the reading enjoyable. Throughout the newsletter, names of members are in bold face, which is useful for a reader flipping through to see who is in the news. More imagination could be used for headings - "Last meeting" hardly grabs you, especially when the story contains some interesting stuff such as the winners of two contests and several announcements. It should be remembered that the first person "I" should not be used unless the name of the "I" is known. (Readers

need to know who is saying what.)

In the Brant Camcorder News, Laurie Ross writes "The aesthetics of editing is how pleasant your arrangement of pictures or scenes appears to the human eye. The artistic skill ... makes the story evolve in a smooth, effortless fashion." Amen to that - and the comments apply equally to the task of putting a newsletter together.

Some points for all newsletter editors to know -

*Material written in ALL CAPITALS IS DIFFICULT TO READ.

*An article set across the entire width of the page is uncomfortable to read - put it into at least two columns.

*Have your heading at least twice the size of the body type - bigger if the article is particularly important or long.

*Avoid clutter on a page - too many graphics and fancy borders interfere with clarity.

[Larry Perks judged last years' newsletters. Although he retired from Ryerson Polytechnic University some years ago he still co-edits a church newspaper. Ed.] ■

SCCA LIBRARY REQUEST

from Video Librarian
Stella Magic

To all former winners (First Prize) of the SCCA and CIAFF Annual Contests.

The SCCA Library is in the process of digitizing all winning films. This means they are put into a permanent form, and their storage space is reduced considerably. As well as being digitized, VHS copies are made from the films to be lent out to various clubs upon request. The digitized versions are being retained in the Archives.

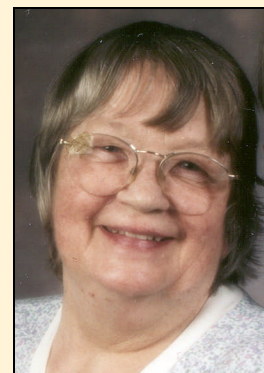
Copies can be made from the digitized version if the others are lost.

A pull of the forelock here for Trevelyan Beard, who has agreed to do the digitizing (sounds painful), only if we call him "Sir". Stella has already dealt with the 2000, 1999 and 1998 winning tapes. Please send your pre-1998 winning tapes to the Video Librarian to aid in completing this permanent collection. If you require your tape to be returned, please ensure that enough prepaid postage will cover the cost of its return.

[Final thought: Perhaps you could bring the tapes to a Hamilton Video/Film Makers or Toronto Film and Video Club meeting in the Fall.]

The Last Word...

This time there are two Last Words. The first is Grassroots. There are two articles from Quinte in e a s t e r n O n t a r i o . There is a story from



Winnipeg, and two stories from Brantford. I would label them all as coming from the Grassroots. We appreciate these stories from the members themselves, especially when they are down to earth, practical and of interest to many videographers. Anyone else who can tell it as it is, send in your Grassroots story, and let's share it.

The second word is Amateur. Sure it means "not for money" but it has another meaning "done with love". People who go out and buy camcorders don't usually expect to become experts within the first month, or to take over a wedding video business. They are amateurs in both senses of the word. They need a club that will have people to help them be the best amateur videographers that they can be. This may be a forgotten aspect of some Canadian amateur video clubs. We can easily get caught in the latest remarkable invention, and perhaps lose sight of the basic need to make good videos, and to share them with an audience.

This issue is spreading its base. We have input from Winnipeg, from several areas in Ontario, and one story was faxed to me from Nova Scotia. (Okay, he was on vacation!) But we are really delighted to spread our contributing area.

I should remind everyone that our next deadline for Panorama is September 30. So go and shoot video while the sun shines, and then share it with your club.

Bye for now.

Joan Bochsler, Editor.