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PANORAMA

OF AMATEUR FILM & VIDEO

SUR LE FILM ET VIDEO AMATEUR

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PANORAMA

is published four times a year by the Society of Canadian Cine Amateurs, an association of video and film makers. **PANORAMA** *is devoted primarily to informing Canadian movie and video makers of the activities of society and developements 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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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Photo by Joseph Bochsler Jr.

Fred Briggs, FSCCA

Excuses, Excuses ...

It seems that we can't get PANORAMA into your hands during the season marked on the cover! We always start with good intentions, and a deadline for submissions that is sure to provide ample time for final preparation. However, something, or rather many things, always go wrong. This issue had to have a late start because we were all very busy with preparations for the 2001 Convention, and since much of the issue would be devoted to reports from the convention, and that was exceptionally late this year, we couldn't even start until the beginning of November.

Beyond that severe limitation, the rest of the story is the sum total of a lot of little things affecting a lot of different people. In my own case, the post-convention period requires a lot more than simply unpacking. There are accounts to settle, records to be recorded, and equipment to be returned. This is followed by about a week of catching up on my own affairs that had been sidelined for at least a couple of weeks.

Adding to the confusion this month

Continued on page 15

CLUB NEWS

By Joseph Bochsler, F.P.P.O.

Photo by Joseph Bochsler Jr.

I haven't made much headway in my quest for an editing computer since the summer issue of Panorama. One of the advantages of belonging to a video club is it allows you to pick the brains of fellow members when it comes to looking for a new piece of equipment. I find that looking for a computer is a little more involved: when I think I have found the right computer my next step is to go to an expert or one who is familiar with it and I feel I can trust, with the best advice.

The system I'm most interested in at this time is the *Pinnacle Systems,* DV500 Plus, Native DV Editing with Real-time Effects, it has Real-time Multi-track Audio mixer for volume adjustments, Real-time 16.9 widescreen effects, transitions and titles. Title Deco RT, Real-time image corrections for colour and brightness controls. DV500 Plus combines analog and digital video sources with a set of real-time features. I'll keep you posted as to my choice in the next issue of Panorama!

In the meantime I'm using the JVC Mini DV/S-VHS Video Recorder, the newer Model with more features (see the Summer Issue for details).

Brant Videomakers, BRANT CAMCORDER NEWS, Edited by Laurie Ross. "In the September newsletter it was mentioned that as we open a new season we often speak of our video club and video productions. But, the club is made up of people who try their best to make our meetings enjoyable."

"At the October meeting we congratulated Frank Birch on his 90th Birthday. A birthday cake was enjoyed by all at the refreshment break. After the break, Don Hagey, of Video Magic Productions, talked to us about his video titled, "BCI-The Early Years", a video on the early history of the Brantford Collegiate Institute."

"On Video Editing, all it takes to turn your raw footage into an interesting, exciting, or informative video is a little basic knowledge. By means of clever editing, you can also build tension in your video and captivate viewers with interesting special effects. Just the ability to combine shots in different ways makes it possible to produce varying effects. The right sound (whether original sound, commentary, ambient or music), if used intelligently, can further supplement the selected sequence of cuts and support the intended effect of the images.

"Even if editing makes or breaks a video, you should consider how your video footage is going to be used while you are taping. Nothing is more frustrating than discovering during editing that you are missing an important sequence or that one camera angle does not fit with the others."

Buffalo Movie-Video Makers, CAMERAMA, Edited by John P. Weiksnar. "We were fortunate to gain a batch of new members, bringing our total membership to nearly forty members. Donna Marie Vaughan is a returning member, bringing back a friendly personality and plenty of talent. Donna also wrote, directed and co-produced the drama, 'In the best interest of the child'."

"Meet retired ABC News cameraman, Bob Dutru. Bob learned about us via BM-VM Alumni, Harold and Mary Cosgrove and quickly became an informative and inspiring source of knowledge from his overseas, camera-lugging relays in peace and war. Bob now plays with an 8mm Canon ES970 analog camera, shooting anything, really, "as long as they don't shoot back". He also edits with Premiere 6 and would enjoy talking to others who use the same system."

"The BM-VM Film and Video Festival will take place at the Screening Room Cinema and Café. Congratulations to members John Weiksnar and Jeff Stein, who grabbed first and second place awards, respectively, in the 2001 Shorty Contest. The membership's voting ranked "A Day On Elmwood" and "Pizza Delivery Man" the winners out of a healthy crop of entries. "ADoE" featured puppets "Pierce" and "Trache", created with Stephanie Hawkins, and "PDM" starred Rebecca Cukierman, Jeff and Phil. Thanks to all contestants

and participants!

Hamilton Video/Film Makers, REEL NEWS, Edited by Dave Picco. "Contests for:
September *Making a Video*…You can show the aspects of editing, behind the scenes work going on for a shoot for a video we have already seen, or anything else about making a video by club members.! Time: Minimum 5 minutes, Maximum 10 minutes.

October, *Annual Visitors Night*…. No Contest! It's the time we open up to Sister Clubs and the public in a big way. (Over 75 attended and enjoyed the videos and food.)

November *Kiddie Time*…Make a video designed to be viewed by children: for example, an educational bit or an entertainment video of special interest to them. Time: Minimum 3 Minutes, Maximum 5 Minutes.

December, *Fictitious Road Trip*…a road trip that never happened! Take footage from tapes and find a creative way to put them together as if it was all one road trip! New video can be shot to fill in the gaps if needed but try to use as much existing stuff as possible. Time: Minimum 3 Minutes, Maximum 10 Minutes."

"Joe Bochsler invited all members to take part in videotaping the Caledonia Fair. They are running the contest again this year-First prize is $100, with a second and third prize. In addition the Ontario Agricultural Society is also awarding prizes for best videos. All members would get free admission for participating.

"Harold Cosgrove gave us a great demonstration of a Non-Linear editing program, iMovie 2, using his 'clamshell' portable iMac. iMovie 2 runs on any modern Mac and costs only $50 US. (It comes bundled with the more recent Mac models.) On more than one occasion, when queried whether it could do this or that, Harold replied, "What do you expect for 50 bucks?"

The Toronto Film And Video Club SHOTS & ANGLES, Edited by Sam Spence. "The September issue of Shots & Angles welcomed the members to a new year and it will, as usual, be reporting on club happenings and will continue to publish tips, techniques etc. to aid us in taking our videos to greater heights.

"This of course begs the question, why do some videos capture and hold the attention of viewers while others beg to end? What are the secrets of creating truly spectacular footage, is it a function of the equipment or is it in the technique?

"Producing more striking video footage means understanding how to manipulate the images being captured, in a more interesting and pleasing way. This usually comes with a great deal of effort and experimentation; always keeping in mind the effect you are after. It may mean setting out early to a location where the sun is just right, or the morning dew/mist is begging to be recorded.

"This year we are encouraged to bigger and better video ideas .So look around and keep your mind open to ideas from everywhere.

"Congratulations! The Toronto Film and Video Club and all its members would like to offer our best wishes to both Jack Carey and Charlie Woodley on their Ninetieth Year. They are both stalwart supporters of this club and its successes and we hope they may continue for many years to come."

Winnipeg Amateur Moviemakers, BULLETIN, Edited by Ron Braun. Borrowed by the WAMM from the L.E.R.K. Movie Club: A couple of tips: Video tapes can leave a residue in the camcorder after extended use, eventually causing video dropouts during recording/playback. When dropouts and video noise become objectionable, it's time to clean the camcorder with a cleaning cassette.

A surefire formula for making a video: have a good beginning and a good ending - and keep them as close together as possible.

Borrowed from the LA8MM Club: Tips that keep repeating themselves in club newsletters. Here's the latest from LA8. Tilting and excessive panning are often mentioned - so don't do it! Rather, choose a portion of the subject and hold for 5 seconds. Then move to another spot, perhaps something detailed. Sequential shots are usually more effective than a pan.

Zooming in and out - don't overuse this tool. If you must zoom, hold the final image at the end of the zoom for about 5 seconds. Think about the composition before shooting. That's when you can use your zoom to fill the viewfinder with the subject interest.

The Vancouver Video Production Club, REEL TALK, Edited by Cathy Caravan. In Bryan Belfont's What's New in Camcorders? he gives this SUMMARY:

" It seems like a daunting task to choose between 6 different formats: 8mm/Hi8, VHS-C/S-VHS-C, DS/DV but my advice is to forget the analog formats and concentrate on *digital*.

• If you have been using a 8mm or Hi8 camcorder, the choice is easy: go for the D8. It will play your 8mm/Hi8 analog tapes and then record digital over your old tapes and therefore you can buy the cheaper 8mm/Hi8 tapes.

• Or you can upgrade to DV, you have the choice of mini DV recorders the size of a VHS cassette, a mid-size camcorder or a shoulder-mount if you want to look "professional". You can select you lens from Canon, Carl Zeiss or Leica and you can choose a one-chip or three-chip camcorder. With DV, there are over 30 models priced from $1000 to $7000 to choose from.

Bryan Belfont, the owner of VIDEO

INSTRUCTIONS, is the video instructor for Adult Education with the Vancouver School Board. Email Belfont@telus.net

The October General Meeting featured the Club's first competition of the season. It was the annual One Minute Competition. Time limit strictly limited to one minute (excluding credits), Maximum two entries per member, no previously-seen or professional footage. Top prize $25.00.

London Videography Club, IT'S A WRAP, Edited by Hugh Pitts. *From The Journals*. Last summer's video oriented magazines have had the usual mix of new camcorder and editing system reviews but the September issue of Camcorder and Computer Video had an article called "Amazing Video Advances " this review covers "Image stabilization "AFTER" the shoot". It reviews a software program that can take your shakey video and remove the shakes. Sounds like what I need to correct some shoots I made without a tripod. It was used on some jerky footage from the International Space Station that wound up being corrected and used in a Radio Shack commercial. This magic program is DynaPel ($49.95 US) and I wonder who in the London Video Club will be the first to use it and to report their results. More info www.dynapel.com.

From Co-President Bill Henderson's message, we have received word that Kim Brown's entry in the SCCA Contest has won two top awards. Now maybe we are not all as creative as Kim but we all can still improve the quality of our videos. How do we do this? One of our best teachers is our TV set. A training video is better because you can stop it when necessary to review a particular item of interest. What do we look for on the TV? First of all, turn off the TV sound so you do not get interested in the show and you concentrate on learning something. Three things to look at are composition, audio and lighting. In composition there are many shots that can be made, many as close-ups or wide-angle shots and zoom lens adjustments from one to another. Watch for composition as this is what really tells the story.

Victoria Video Club, Edited by Sheila Perkins. "Comments from Dave, for what they're worth….'We've archived almost all of our 2000-2001 winning entries from our contests. Maybe we can coax the Clubs to swap videos with us. Good idea? Please, your suggestions as how we try to do this, and feed back to the executive. (It seems to me that the more videos from other clubs that we view and enjoy, the greater are our chances "to receive inspiration")…' Dave"

"In my humble opinion, this year's 'crop' was distinguished by two significant 'moves': There were proportionately fewer of the '*travel and Documentary*' genre, and more attempts with '*storyboard/scenario*' and not least, a gorgeous 'Song' video - ranked in the Ten Best. I understand that this trend has been observed at the Cotswold International Festival this summer.

The Judging of the "The Ten Best of the West" The Vancouver Club hosted the event over the last week-end in September. [There were] 44 entries, 6 videos from British Columbia, including 5 from Victoria. Louis Lanser's home became a theatre with five judges present and presided over by the Vancouver Club President, Greg Caravan. Awards: Ten Best - One award to Victoria Club, Honorable Mentions - two to Victoria Club, Most Humorous, to Victoria Club

It is quite apparent that N.L.E. is the "norm". The advent of Non Linear Editing for hobbyist use has enhanced the ability for amateurs to focus in more intensely on such things as tight-editing, pacing, continuity and, particularly, in cutting dialogue. .

Magazine of the Society of Amateur Videomakers & Cinematographers, THE AMMA MONITOR, Edited by Bernard Wood. Malcolm Colditz, President of SAVAC, says " … in a family history movie, we want to convey feelings that we had, and project those that others had at various stages of their lives. This is a critical aspect of the story.

"So, let's all get busy on those personal and family memoirs! We have the still photos, audio, and Hollywood clips to supplement any home movies we may be fortunate enough to possess. Oh yes, continue to emphasize to your younger generations the importance of taking videos to preserve the feelings of their own generation. Good shooting!"

I.A.C. The Film and Video Institute, FILM AND VIDEO MAKER. Edit by Liz Donlan. From the Chairman's Chat: "The UNICA 2002 will be held in Luxenburg, from Friday August 23rd to Sunday September 1st. Do bear in mind that if you go you will have Euros for traveller's cheques and currency as national currency will cease for many countries from January 1st, 2002."

Gerald Mee has been appointed IAC Overseas Liaison by Council. In addition to keeping in touch with IAC members in other countries he hopes to have reports from overseas representatives and include these in Film & Video Maker from time to time. He feels that this is one way which they can be of service to distant members.

As Past President of the International Association of Amateur Film &Video Festivals, Gerald Mee has numerous foreign contacts and many movie friends, and it is these overseas festivals that he wants to support and, and of course, conversely receive support. ■

AGM

THE SOCIETY OF CANADIAN CINE AMATEURS

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Society of Canadian Cine Amateurs held at the "Highland Cinema", Kinmount Ontario, October 27th, 2001. Meeting called to order at 1:40 pm by the president, Fred Briggs.

PRESENT: TrevelynBeard, Frank Birch, Joan Bochsler Joe Bochsler, Fred Briggs, Carolyn Briggs, Jack Carey, Keith Gloster, Bill Henderson, Adam Houston, Agnes Houston, Joan Jacquemain, Stella Magic, Robert Matthews, Shoko Matthews, Jim Small, Thom Speechley, Bill Williams, Sally Williams. There were 19 paid up members in attendance and the President held fifteen proxies. This is sufficient for a quorum under the constitution.

MINUTES of the 2000 AGM: Adam Houston moved that the minutes be adopted as read. Motion seconded by Bill Williams. Carried

MEMBERSHIP: Moved by Adam Houston that the membership report be adopted as read. Seconded by Ben Andrews. Carried.

From the Floor: Trev Beard asked for an explanation of the difference between the membership totals for May 31, 2000 and the total to date. Fred advised that totals to date are awaiting 2001-2002 membership renewals from tardy members.

TREASURER: Fred read the accountant's statement advising that the latest report does not constitute an audit but that the books are in order according to acceptable accounting practice. Fred then reviewed the numbers, giving a comparison of 1999 with 2000 figures. He then explained the administrative costs and how they relate to our efforts in performing "charitable" service, such as informing the public about amateur film activities through the publication of "Panorama". Ben Andrews then moved acceptance of the Treasurer's Report which was seconded by Bill Williams and carried.

CIAFF: Ben Andrews reported that more than 200 entries were received for this year's competition. Thirty entries from a private film school had to be rejected for failure to conform to the established rules. He also noted that entries from former communist countries are also reduced in numbers due to the loss of support from their new governments. As a result of current changes, there were 30-40 fewer entries than last year. In addition, donations from corporate and other sponsors were also down.

One notable change is that almost one-half of the entries this year were received via e-mail, not just a sign of the times but an economic bonus because regular mail costs are avoided. Only one US entrant attended the festival in Campbell River this year, a situation attributed to concerns regarding air travel safety. Nevertheless, the event was well attended over the four days of showings at five different locations. More than 400 attended the festival "gala".

From The Floor: Trev Beard asked why the festival could not be held in Toronto. Fred advised that there is no one in Toronto acting on our behalf, to organize such an event. Bill Williams pointed out that former subsidies for this type of activity are also no longer available. (City of Toronto, Kodak, for example.) Bill Williams then congratulated and thanked Ben Andrews for his efforts. Joe Bochsler asked that we acknowledge the contribution of Jack Carey who hosted two of the judging sessions at his home.

Fred then reviewed the historical record for the CIAFF from the 1970's. Previous attempts to establish a permanent venue in Toronto, Hamilton and Ottawa all failed to attract the support necessary to cover the increasingly expensive event. The Campbell River arrangement has finally become selfsustaining and this year probably broke even. Fred's major regret is our inability to attract significant attendance from the east. This present joint effort with the Barrie Festival is an attempt to evaluate the possibilities of setting up a formal awards event in eastern Canada.

PANORAMA: Joan Bochsler drew attention to changes in format, including an increase in technical articles and focusing on prominent people such as the feature on Jack Carey. She also commented on the "Connections" feature which is intended to stimulate thinking about potential or worthy subjects for video. The magazine has received attention from international contacts anxious to use some of "Panorama"'s articles.

Fred commented on the enthusiastic job Joan has done in taking over the helm of "Panorama". Joe Bochsler thanked Kim Brown for agreeing to prepare a report on the present SCCA Convention for "Panorama".

LIBRARY: Stella Magic reports that all SCCA contest videos have now been archived on digital tape. She is now ready and waiting to receive CIAFF tapes for the same purpose. Stella wants to re-evaluate our present method of handling 'borrower' requests and has also received an enquiry regarding exchange of club tapes. Fred suggested that both these topics be put on the agenda for a future SCCA Board meeting.

SCCA COMPETITION: There were 31 entries in the 2001 contest, a slight increase over the previous year. There was a significant increase in "senior" entries and NO student entries were received. This is the first year we have accepted entries in DV format. For showing at this meeting, they have been converted to VHS format. Keith suggested that we may have to be prepared to accept entries in DVD in coming years. He then announced the 'theme' for the 2002 competition: "Been There....Done That".

Fred Briggs advised that he has now recovered all of the CIAFF library and that it is safely in storage.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS: All current executives have indicated their willingness to stand for re-election. The floor was opened for nominations and as no nominations were received, the present board was therefore elected by acclamation.

FLOOR OPEN FOR FURTHER QUESTION/REMARKS: Frank Birch rose to express his concern for falling club and association membership. He described his and the Brantford club's efforts, which have resulted in the formation of a club in Kitchener and significant growth of the Brantford club. He urged other members to be diligent in recruiting members and persuading existing members to join and support SCCA.

Bill Williams and Joe Bochsler expressed the same concern and an open discussion followed which attempted to identify the problems and opportunities for improved membership. The general conclusion was that the present condition is the result of inevitable changes in lifestyles and social interaction.

MEETING CLOSED: The President closed the meeting at 2:55

LOOKING BACK ON << REWIND '01

by Kim Brown

After battling a snowstorm on our way to Orillia Friday morning, we had lunch at the local Timmys and then checked in at the Stone Gate Inn. The hotel rooms were very comfortable.

On our first afternoon in Orillia, we went in the excursion van to tour the Huronia Museum at Little Lake Park in Midland. I was quite taken by the museum and its artifacts.... especially the old dentist's chair and ancient looking x-ray machine.

From here, we traveled on to "Sainte-Marie-Among-the-Hurons". As soon as the introductory movie was over, we headed out to see the village.... and that snowstorm which I mentioned earlier finally caught up as a heavy downpour of rain. Most people grabbed an umbrella and carried on.... but some were concerned about getting their cameras wet and stayed behind. Regardless, we all acquired some different looking pictures of the village.

Dinner on Friday evening was held at the King's Chinese Buffet on Dunlop Street in Barrie, not far from the theatre at which we spent a delightful two hours that evening. The film shown was called "Innocence". It interestingly depicted how two young lovers had separated their ways when they were younger and how they later tried to get back together in their senior years. It was a very moving film, ... without the violence which so plagues many of today's films. After the film, we attended a short party a few blocks away at La Costa restaurant. I don't know if any of the others got the food supplied. I found no food when I got there. Then it was back to Orillia for a night of rest.

Bright and early Saturday morning, we had a complimentary breakfast at the Stone Gate, and the van headed out to Kinmount.... a small village about 80 km east of Orillia and northwest of Peterborough. Here we visited the Highland Cinemas. A gentleman by the name of Keith Stata gave us a tour of the back end of his home. Here, he has built five small cinema theatres, attached to his house He spends eight weeks in the summer showing first run films to sell out crowds. In the lobby, he has many gigantic projectors, and film memorabilia which he has gathered all over Canada and the U.S. where cinemas have closed down. After a great boxed lunch at this place, we continued on to the business part of the meeting for SCCA in one of the theatres. Fred Briggs ended the afternoon with a demonstration of how to properly transfer film to video.

For dinner, we headed out to a local eatery in Kinmount, the Kinvale Restaurant, where most of us enjoyed their local special, "Fish and Chips". After dinner, it was back to the Theatres to view the winning entries. I was a little disappointed that we did not get a chance to see some of the winning films in certain categories. We all need to have a benchmark to learn from, and for me, this was a downfall of the convention. Perhaps the executive might address this problem for another time. That evening, we returned to Orillia, and engaged in a party at the Briggs' hotel room before retiring. [We had an extra hour's party because the clocks were turned back! - Ed]

Next morning, Sunday, it was breakfast again and off to Barrie for the Directors' Brunch and CIAFF, at the MacLaren Art Centre. The meal was great but the room temperature was so cold that I had to get out in the middle of the presentation given by Mark Starowicz and Michael Sweeney on the "Canada - A People's History" series on which they had worked. Later that afternoon, we adjourned to a warmer room to view the winning entries from this year's CIAFF competition. This was a great experience, because we could see the films and set our goals for improving our own productions in the future. Finally, the convention ended around 5:00 P.M. and off we went with another year of knowledge from the SCCA convention. ■

Michael Sweeney, Director of Cinematography, speaking in the dark.

Mark Starowicz, Producer of Canada, A People's History

<< REWIND '01

Some of our members at the Huron Village.

Keith Gloster presenting the trophy for the Most Original Movie to Kim Brown.

L to R: Keith Gloster, Shoko Matthews and Robert Matthews at an agricultural display at the Huronia Museum.

Frank Birch accepting the trophy for the Best Senior Entry. Frank has just celebrated his 90th Birthday.

Keith Gloster presenting Trevelyn Beard with two Awards of Merit.

Receiving the award for Best Video are Joseph and Joan Bochsler.

<< REWIND '01

Jack Carey accepting the Garlick Film Trophy for the Hamilton Video/Film Makers for Best Club Film of the Year.

Bill Henderson and Jack Carey looking at some of the old cameras on display at the Huronia Museum.

Fred Briggs accepting the Award of Merit for the Hamilton Video/Film Makers for "My Old Town".

Some of the audience at the AGM.

Contest Chairman Keith Gloster with many of the trophies to be awarded.

Fred Briggs, President (standing) and Thom Speechley, Secretary (sitting) during the AGM.

SCCA COMPE

CLASS "A" (ADVANCED)

THE BETTY PETERSON MEMORIAL TROPHY
CALEDONIA FALL FAIR 2000
Joan and Joseph Bochsler

FIRST RUNNER-UP
INSIDE PASSAGE
Harold Cosgrove

SECOND RUNNER-UP
WE WILL REMEMBER THEM
James D. Town

THIRD RUNNER-UP
THE MEMORY MAN
Frank Birch

HONOURABLE MENTION
THE FISH
Kim Brown

HONOURABLE MENTION
BELOW THE RIM
Eckhard Kries

HONOURABLE MENTION
PIES R US
James D. Town

CLASS "B" (INTERMEDIATE)

THE TORONTO FILM & VIDEO CLUB TROPHY
UNSER ALLEN FARM
Stella Magic

FIRST RUNNER-UP
HALLOWEEN 2000
Peter Janssen

SECOND RUNNER-UP
TRIBUTE TO CHARLES
Stella Magic

THIRD RUNNER-UP
ALCOHOL A THREE STEP PROGRAM
Stella Magic

HONOURABLE MENTION
HITCHED
Margaret Chamberlain

HONOURABLE MENTION
BONNIE AND THE TOWNCRIER
Keith Gloster

CLASS "C" (NOVICE)

THE EUMIG TROPHY
I'M PUZZLED
Trevelyan Beard

SPECIAL AWARDS

THE BEN V.W. ANDREWS TROPHY
BEST ENTRY IN CONTEST
CALEDONIA FALL FAIR 2000
Joan and Joseph Bochsler

THE ST. KITTS TROPHY
MOST HUMOUROUS ENTRY
I'M PUZZLED
Trevelyan Beard

THE DIXON TROPHY
BEST VISUAL SPECIAL EFFECTS
HALLOWEEN 2000
Peter Janssen

THE VANCOUVER CLUB TROPHY
BEST VIDEO PRODUCTION
HITCHED
Margaret Chamberlain

THE OTTAWA CLUB TROPHY
BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY
THE UNSER ALLEN FARM
Stella Magic

THE TELECINE TRANSFER TROPHY
BEST EDITING
A TASTE OF OXFORD
James D. Town

AMATEUR MOVIE CAPITAL OF CANADA

TITION 2001

FIRST RUNNER-UP
ALCHOLICS UNITE !
Trevelyan Beard

SECOND RUNNER-UP
MA, I NEED YOUR MONEY
Trevelyan Beard

HONOURABLE MENTION
CA-NA-DA
Eleanor Haire

CLASS "D"
(CLUB COMPETITION)

THE GARLICK TROPHY
CIVIL WAR RE-ENACTMENT
Hamilton Video/Film Makers

FIRST RUNNER-UP
A TASTE OF OXFORD
Hamilton Video/Film Makers

SECOND RUNNER-UP
MY TOWN - MY HAPPY TORONTO
Toronto Film & Video Club

THIRD RUNNER-UP
MY OLD TOWN
Hamilton Video/Film Makers

HONOURABLE MENTION
NIJMEGEN - MY HOME TOWN
Brant Videomakers Club

HONOURABLE MENTION
MY TOWN
Brant Videomakers Club

CLASS "E"
(COMPULSORY SUBJECT)

THE INTERCITY TROPHY
MY HAPPY TORONTO
Trevelyan Beard

FIRST RUNNER-UP
MY OLD TOWN
James D. Town

SECOND RUNNER-UP
MY TOWN
Peter Janssen

CLASS "F" (SCRIPT)
THE SCCA PLAQUE

HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL
Trevelyan Beard

THE CALGARY CLUB TROPHY
MOST ORIGINAL ENTRY
THE FISH
Kim Brown

THE FAIRVIEW TROPHY
BEST USE OF SOUND
HALLOWEEN 2000
Peter Janssen

THE ALLAN WRIGHT MEMORIAL TROPHY
BEST TEENAGE ENTRY
Not Awarded In 2001

THE GERALD F. ROBINSON MEMORIAL TROPHY
BEST SENIOR PRODUCTION
ONE STORMY NIGHT
Frank Birch

THE LEN COBB TROPHY
BEST TRAVELOGUE
INSIDE PASSAGE
Harold Cosgrove

ADAM HOUSTON AWARD
BEST DIALOGUE
MA, I NEED YOUR MONEY
Trevelyan Beard

— **Hamilton Video/Film Makers**

THE 2001 SCCA CONTEST

Our 2001 SCCA amateur video contest was a success from many points of view!

Over 30 submissions were given this year to the panel of eager judges, and after much deliberation, awards were decided based upon the various merits of the entries, once again recognizing the pool of talent that we enjoy as members of the SCCA.

The creative ideas and implementations our members employed in their video entries, made judging a challenging process. The quality of the videos and the use of original sound made viewing the videos a decided pleasure, and the judges were quick to point out the outstanding contributions.

This year saw our first contest receipt of higher quality DV tapes - something which certainly points to directions for the future, and with DVD creation now on some desktops - how long might it be until DVD discs begin to arrive for judging? The obvious quality and clarity make this something all videographers will soon come to appreciate.

The many special awards, certificates, and plaques, were much appreciated by the recipients, and as contest chairman, I offer a heartfelt thank-you to our donors who make many of our awards possible.

Keith Gloster presenting the Ottawa Movie Makers Trophy for Best Cinematography to Stella Magic.

Selected videos were shown to a warm audience of 2001conference attendees in Kinmount, Ontario, in October of this year. The audience was appreciative of the talent displayed through the videos, and gave warm rounds of applause to our winners. Be sure to check the pictures of our recipients that will appear in this issue of Panorama.

Next year's, (2002), theme is: "BEEN THERE -- DONE THAT!", and I urge all the past winners - and future potential winners, to put on your video thinking caps, write those scripts, plot those storyboards, and start preparing your next winning submissions.

A special thanks to the dedicated judges! Their efforts and professionalism demonstrated during the judging activity made the task a pleasure to chair. ■

Keith Gloster
Contest Chairman
November 2001

SurfSaver

by Trevelyan Beard

If you dabble in that great civilization called the Internet you'll find SurfSaver indispensable. As far as I'm concerned it's a MUST HAVE program and well within the price range of even the most frugal - because it's FREE. Why askSam give it away I'll never know, but they do!

OK, so you are viewing a Web page and like it, now what? With SurfSaver installed you merely click Save and the Web page is copied to a database - it's that simple- it has advantages in Searching. You can save as many layers or pages as you wish (I limit my preferences to a maximum of ten). In fact some of the time I make separate Saves.

An Edit dialog box pops up. The title is already filled out but I often change this. Keywords is next, then Notes and Date. You have a choice of saving the Graphics or not (to save resources in case you are strapped).

You also have a choice of saving everything to one folder (which I prefer) or making additional folders and even cabinets to organize your categories.

The Search function is very fast and yields the results at the bottom in list form. Of all the programs with search capabilities I've found askSam the fastest of all. Now click on any one of the listed 'saves' and the snapshot of the Web page pops up. It's fully operational and is so fast that I often use this to browse miscellaneous sites. To go to the actual URL, it's one click away.

An interesting feature lets you save the Web page as an HTML file. This allows you to view the page as the author wrote it - in case you are an intended designer.

A powerful feature allows you to email your saved FILES subdirectory to a colleague who can then enjoy all the wonderful gatherings you have collected.

To acquire the program, go to www.surfsaver.com and relax for the rest of your life. ■

Video CD Poor Man's DVD?

By Thom Speechley

DVD (Digital Versatile Disk) is rapidly becoming the format of choice for home entertainment. It is estimated that since it's introduction only four years ago, one third of US households now have DVD players. Canadian figures are probably similar because video rental chains (Jumbo, Blockbuster) predict that within 2-3 years, they will only be offering DVD's for rental! (What are the implications for tape? The subject for another time, but don't throw out your VCR yet.)

The advantages of DVD are numerous. In addition to superior image quality (>500 lines of resolution) DVD offers interactive features such as multi language tracks and the ability, on some productions, to actually change the viewing angle of the action. DVD's take up much less space than tape cassettes and are expected to outlast tape. In addition, they are cheaper to mail.

In the past year, the ability to make your own DVD's has come down to the consumer level. If you are already editing video on a recently purchased computer, by adding a DVD CD-R/W drive and suitable software, you could save up to four hours of your work on a single DVD. The cost is still rather high: about $1500 Ca for the burner, $500-1000 for software and a single recordable disk costs about $15.

However, there is close cousin of DVD which offers many of the disk's advantages and can be created on any current computer with an ordinary CD-R/W drive. (Burner) This is **Video CD.**

I became interested in VCD when it became obvious that some of the advantages mentioned above, could meet my needs of converting my video and old film to a much more compact and long lived archive. I have already started to put my more valuable still photos and slides on to CD-ROM for posterity. Here is a method for preserving video. (Not that I have any illusions about the immortality of my work but because it represent a considerable amount of effort, they should be saved for someone else's future use or entertainment)

Here are the important aspects of this alternative, which may help you decide if it has any value for you in your production of video.

First, here is a brief comparison of VCD and DVD, just so you understand the limitations.

DVD
>500 lines resolution
4 hours recording
Many interactive features plus multi-language capability
Cost ca. $4/hour

VideoCD
320 lines VCD1. Up to 400 lines SVCD
One hour VHS quality (30-40 min SVHS)
Menu, chapter and playback control only. Can add subtitles
Cost ca. $1.60/hour

Note that there are other major advantages of having a DVD class CD-R/W drive for mass data storage but we are only dealing here with CD storage of video.

Equipment Requirements

- (For a PC. Requirements for "Mac" will be comparable) Let's assume you are targeting for maximum quality VCD. The processing requirements are fairly high and these are only suggestions based on my experiences.

Pentium III 450mhz or higher. (Pentium IV 800mhz or more is preferable.)

ATA 100 EIDE hard drive or better. I am using an ATA66 and my system has problems handling MPEG2 streams containing lots of action.

128MB RAM minimum, 256MB recommended. I upgraded from 128 to 384 MB but it didn't solve all my problems. I have only 100mhz memory. Newer equipment has 133mhz modules which would be preferable.

CD-R/RW Drive - No special requirements for your "burner".

DVD Player - Of course there is no point in creating VCD's unless you have some way to play them. I will deal with that subject separately.

The VCD Creation Process - At the present time, there are THREE flavours of VCD. Here is a comparison.

VCD1 - 352x240 @ 29.97 fps MPEG1
44.1 kHz audio
Track selection - no playback control

VCD2 - 352x240 @ 29.97 fps MPEG1
44.1 kHz audio
Track selection forward/reverse

SVCD - 480x480 @ 29.97 fps MPEG2
44.1 kHz audio
Tracks, chapters, playback controls

Don't be alarmed with the 480x480 format. Your player renders it at the correct 4:3 ratio.

CAPTURE - The first step is to capture the video as in any other process. Many video cards are capable of capturing MPEG formats directly to the hard drive. Select the best parameters offered by your video card. If MPEG is not supported, save in AVI format and convert as follows.

ENCODE - If capturing DV (720X480 AVI) through a IEEE1394 it will be necessary to convert (ie: encode) the file to MPEG after capture. Some editing programs will "save as" or convert a project or file to MPEG. I am using "Media Studio 6 Pro" supplied with my "Pyro" 1394 card. It supports both MPEG1 and 2. Two freeware downloads I can also recommend are:

AVI2MPG2 available at ***http://members.home.net/beyeler/***
TMPGEnc from
http://www.tmpgenc.com/

A word of caution: because MPEG encoding is a complex arithmetical exercise, both these programs offer several layers of settings for fine tuning your video. Neither has "default" settings for the uninitiated but if you start at the opening screen and make minimal changes, you will probably get satisfactory results. It is advisable to do some reading on the subject so that you can optimize your output. Another cautionary note: Even on a reasonably fast system, the encoding is the most time consuming part of the operation. Because of the way MPEG compresses the video data, it tries to conserve more or less of the information depending on content. Therefore where there is a lot on action (ie: many changes in information between frames of video) the program struggles to save what information is essential. I have had to wait 5 ½ hours to encode an 18 min. file from DV to MPEG2. I'm sure though, that after I become more familiar with the system, this will be reduced significantly. Note also that MPEG1 encoding takes less than one half the time.

AUDIO - It is important that the audio portion of your video be 44.1Khz format. Make sure it is correct before encoding to MPEG or it may be left out. This may require re-saving your AVI file.

AUTHOR - Now that you have your video in the appropriate MPEG format (MPEG1 for VHS quality, MPEG2 for S-VHS) it is necessary to add information to the file so that your DVD player will recognize it. This is also the stage where you can add any other features your software supports, such as "chapters", playback control or subtitles etc. This step requires another program to create or "author" the finished VCD.

There are several commercial packages which are probably worth their cost because they have user friendly interfaces and can help avoid wasted time and/or blank CD's. I have used "Adaptec" (Roxio) "Easy CD Creator 5 Platinum" but find it only handles MPEG1. Other programs worth looking at are "NERO" ***http://www.ahead.de/en/index2.htm*** or ***Ulead Studio 5.*** These both can also be used author DVD. However, my favourite is a program called "VCD Imager Easy" which is still a free download from: ***delphi.stuff@vcdhelp.com.*** Simply open the program, add your MPEG file, select the VCD level you are aiming for, check the "burn" box and click "start". It uses your burner's maximum speed so that a 30 min. video will be finished in less than 7-8 minutes on a 4X CD writer.

This has been a simplified tour of VCD but I can promise that within these basic guides, it is a very easy learning curve, compared with much of the editing software out there. So if you have come even close to mastering "Premier" you are ready for VCD.

Some final details

PLAYERS - I use a "Pioneer" Model DV343. I selected this model because it plays all varieties of DVD and VCD. In addition, I discovered an undocumented feature: It will play videos in CDR-W format! That means I can create a small sample of video, burn it and view it and if I don't like it, I can then erase the disk and try different settings. (Could have saved me about 8 CD blanks if I had known in the first place!) Manufacturers don't seem to be promoting VCD over here (in Asia, it is virtually the dominant format for home video. In fact, they sell players which only play VCD) and the manuals don't always tell the whole story. Best way is to burn a CDR-W and take it into a few stores and try it out. There is also a very thorough listing of compatible players at:

http://www.dvdrhelp.com/dvdplayers.html

Of course, you should also check the manufacture's North American website to make sure any particular model is available here. If you are simply interested in archiving your material and don't really want to invest in a DVD player, your computer DVD drive, if you have one, will play VCD's with the appropriate software. (I also understand that there is a "plug-in" for "Sony Playstation" if your kids are lucky enough to have one. Just try and get the kids away from it !)

Support Despite the apparent apathy of hardware makers, there is a large body of user groups and forums on the internet where you can get excellent information and free software. Try these.

http://www.vcdhelper.com/
(thorough DVD VCD help site)

http://www.labdv.com/en/index.php
(DVD and VCD information)

http://www.greenspun.com/bboard/q-and-a.tcl?topic=Video%20CD
(a forum with links)

http://www.mnsi.net/~jschlic1/
(free software links)

http://www.softlandindia.com/VideoPlayers1.htm
(software players for your computer)

For DVD only:
http://www.digital-digest.com/index.html

http://www.cdmediaworld.com/hardware/cdrom/cd.shtml

http://www.dvddemystified.com/dvdfaq.html

Thom Speechley
November 09/01
London Videography Club
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President's Message continued from page 2

was the sudden announcement by my internet service provider that because of the precarious financial situation (Chapter 11 Bankruptcy Protection) of @home.com, they were terminating their contract with @home for the provision of email services. That meant changing my email address. It was relatively easy to accomplish, and it was easy to notify everyone in my email address book of the change, but then the difficult part was still to come. It took me four days of steady work to notify all the email subscription lists to which I belong, update the registrations for much of my software, change the records for the Registration (in Canada and the U.S.A.) of our Web Site Domain Names, the URL Forwarding services, the various Web Hosts on which our sites reside, the many .com companies who provide free services (site search, visitor statistics, etc.) for the S.C.C.A., and other services which had to be updated or be lost. Each of these required a visit to their site and the entry of a username and password, some of which were issued as much as three or four years ago, and haven't been used since. It's a good thing I save almost all my email!

Meanwhile, other S.C.C.A. members with @home addresses were also notifying me of their change of addresses, but not all at the same time. Some where changed to cogeco.ca, some to shaw.ca, and some to rogers.com, and I have no idea when, and to which one, they will be changed, until I receive notification from the members. This requires regular updating of our database, and in the case of the executive, with scca … @canada.com addresses, updating of the redirect service for each one. (So, if your email address changes, please let me know at scca@canada.com or fredbriggs@cogeco.ca.)

Be Afraid. Be Very Afraid.

No sooner was this completed (well, almost) when I was hit with the Nimda worm/virus, on three computers. It has taken a very full week, almost all day every day, and most of many nights, with a friend helping me for two of those days, to finally defeat this scourge. Before this happened I objected to the possible inclusion of computer hackers as terrorists within the new terrorist control laws that were being draughted, on the grounds that categorizing vandals with terrorists trivialized the September 11 death toll, but now I'm not so sure. I am still maintaining my perspective and won't even suggest that this virus should even be included in a discussion with the September 11 massacre or the Anthrax letters, but this worm/virus is particularly vicious and should awaken everyone's recognition of what hackers can do.

Some viruses are relatively benign and are merely an attempt by hackers to show off their skills to other hackers. Some are most destructive, destroying data and or operating software and rendering individual computers unusable. This virus (Nimda, in all its variations) is aimed at the entire internet, with periodic attacks designed to bring down the internet under the weight or volume of countless email messages being sent from every computer to every other computer. It proliferates five different ways: by email, through networks, by exploiting chinks in the defenses of home computers and network and internet servers, and it can even infect your computer just by you visiting a web page which is infected. Once on your computer it replicates on all your hard drives, using the names of files it finds already on your computer so that it can hide undiscovered by the computer user, infects important operating system files and makes changes to your registry. It even attempts to infect other computers by sending out probes to computers selected at random, and tries to penetrate their defenses. It also installs a hidden "back door" which hackers can exploit to invade your computer further, and do just about anything they want to do. Suddenly, periodically, it springs into action, sending email to people it finds on your computer in your address book, masquerading as having been sent by other people in your address book! (So if you receive the virus by email, you can't assume that it came from the "sender's" computer - it came from the computer of someone who has both that name and yours in his address book!)

The only clue that you will have that an email message might be infected is that often there is no "Subject". (There's also no message when you open it, but that's too late! And this one doesn't need you to open an attachment!) So if you are one of the few people who occasionally send me email with no subject, be advised that I won't be opening that email! Previously I would open it if I knew the sender, but no longer will I trust that!

This isn't to say that Osama bin Laden is behind this virus, but if terrorist could be, they will be. A virus like this one may not cause the loss of a lot of lives, but it could seriously harm the economy of the developed nations who now largely depend on the internet for communications between corporations and even within the various divisions of some corporations. Before you are victimized by Nimda, please go to http://www.curenimda.com were you can read more detailed descriptions (by Kaspersky Labs and Symantec) and download FIVE FREE PROGRAMS which remove the virus and repair the damage. Print the information for future use. Copy those five programs to a 1.44 Mb floppy and keep it ready to quickly clean up an infection. It shouldn't take 7 days if you're prepared!

A few days ago I had no idea what I would write about here. I thought I would have to pointing out the included list of Members In Good Standing, and point out that those not on the list have just received their final copy of PANORAMA. (If this applies to you, it will be brought to your attention by the FINAL ISSUE sticker on your copy.) We simply cannot wait until the end of May for the 2001 membership fees as we did in 2000!

Been There! Done That!

Mercifully, I received a copy of the November REEL TALK from the Vancouver Video Production Club, with an interesting article by Pat Sheridan. Briefly, Pat raises the question, for consideration by members of that club, of whether an animated movie generated completely on a computer, and which uses no footage (is that still an applicable word?) shot on a camcorder, qualifies as a video production. The question was meant for members, and not for me. I respect that, and I have always been quick to point out that the SCCA is a Society or Association of Individuals Members and Member Clubs. The clubs are not branches, or franchises or chapters of the SCCA. They make their own rules under their own constitutions, have their own histories, challenges, aims, practices, and perspective. Nothing I say here should be taken as direction to Vancouver, or even a suggestion, but I can't help being reminded of some similar controversies in the past. The question should be of interest to us all, and the following are just one man's thoughts!

A few of our member clubs have been formed recently, since the days of film, as video production clubs, but most have long histories going back fifty or sixty years. Originally those clubs were exclusively 16 mm. film clubs - that's all there was (well, not really, but close enough). Sometime later, according to the stories I have heard from the more senior members, there was a real battle when 8 mm. film and cameras was introduced, between the 8 mm. fraternity and the l6 mm. stalwarts. The long time members eventually accepted 8 mm. into their clubs, though probably none embraced it personally because it was always inferior to 16 mm. Super 8 was accepted more easily (though some complained about planned obsolescence) and most 8 mm. users replaced their equipment with Super8, and eventually most of the surviving 16 mm. users also laid down their big rigs and went Super8.

Video, however, was another story. Speaking only from my own experience in the Hamilton Movie Club, I can tell you that movie makers were curious about video, but very wary. A resolution to the effect that video was a suitable subject for discussion, guest speakers, and demonstration, was carried with a clear majority. Another stating that video would be accepted in the club with rights equal to film, including the competitions, carried by only one vote! In the heated discussion leading up to the vote several members vowed to quit the club if video was allowed full rights. Again, as with 8 mm. film, much of the resistance was due to the inferior quality of video, but some was the high expense of the equipment, especially editing equipment, and surprisingly, the low cost of the video tape! We had learned to live with boring ten-minute films of baby-on-the-lawn. Now there was a fear, with cheap two-hour tapes and out-of-reach editing gear, of hour-long boring baby-on-the-lawn. With the closeness of that vote and the heat generated, the Hamilton Movie Club moved very slowly towards full implementation of the resolution.

A rose by any other name ...

Eventually, however, a point was reached when the camel had fully introduced himself into the tent and began to try to push the Arab out. The new majority, all relatively new members who had started their movie making on video, wanted to limit the competitions to video, ban the entry or even the screening of film-to-video transfers, and change the name of the club to drop any reference to film. But some of the remaining ex-filmmakers, all now converted to video, banded together and rallied to preserve the right to use film in the club activities, even if it was only symbolic, for old-time's sake.

The SCCA escaped the name-change controversy (possibly because almost nobody knows what "Cine" means), but SAC, the Society of Amateur Cinematographers, didn't. At a very heated Annual General Meeting, their members wrangled interminably over semantics. Someone introduced (or maybe coined) a new word - *Videography*. I remember questioning the use of the word *video* the way we used it then and now because the thing to which we are referring is really a combination of both audio and video. We couldn't adopt Audio-Video because that might be confused with AV, which everyone knows is Audio-Visual, and usually refers to slide shows set to a tape-recorded soundtrack. I was content to retain the name as it then was and pointed out that the Teamsters Union had not felt it necessary to change their name to Truck Drivers Union, even though very few of them drive a team anymore. In the end the assembly approved Society of Amateur Videomakers and Cinematographers (SAVAC).

We have it on reliable authority that at their AGM in October they changed their name again. Henceforth, they wish to be known as the *Amateur Movie Makers Association* (AMMA). Sometimes we progress by advancing to the rear. Perhaps if more of our clubs replaced *video* with *movie* in our club names, constitutions, by-laws, and contest rules we could avoid divisive discussions about the definition of the word *video,* just as our ancestors finally stopped arguing about "How many angels can dance on the head of a pin?" after many, many years of pointless animosity.

If it looks like a duck ...

Setting aside semantics, Pat Sheridan has a strong point in his contention that video production has always begun with a camera. "Whether it was with film in the 'old' days, or with videotape in this present age, a critical part of creating a production is the acquisition, or the shooting of raw footage. Cinematography (whether it be with film or video) is such a difficult art form to master. It's been the challenge to master this art form that has been the backbone of this club from day one. Day one was fifty years ago with this club, so it's nothing to shrug off. Proper editing is important as well, but you can't make chicken soup from chicken feathers! Or can you? Is it possible to edit and create a production that has NO effort put into the cinemagraphic challenge of

acquiring the raw footage? I'm afraid that today this is not only possible, but its already been demonstrated by Randy with his animations. These are animations which are done strictly from within the computer. No 'real' images have been captured first. This is entirely different from the animations that club member Barry Moffat has produced. I've never had a problem with Barry's animations being entered in our video competitions. I feel quite differently about computer generated animation."

I want to state here again that I have no intention of quarreling with Randy. This is their decision to make, but eventually we will all have to make a decision on this problem, as well as some others that I won't bring up in this issue. I quoted such a large piece of his argument because he puts the case so eloquently.

Here are some other points for consideration. Cinematography was a very big challenge. Fifty years ago your camera, besides being large and very heavy, had one lens, or possibly three on a turret, or more likely, one lens with a magnifier for telephoto and a reducer for wide angle, on a turret. Those who were really well-heeled could screw out the prime lens and replace it with another. Focusing was a real pain before through-the-lens-focusing. Some movie cameras were fixed-focus, some were focused for each shot by either guestimating for scenics or measuring the distance from the lens to the subject with a tape measure for closer subjects. The real fun part was allowing for parallax!

Most cameras were hand-cranked before electric motors and batteries were added. This made it very tough to leave your camera running in a tree waiting for the mother bird to return to the nest. Besides the cranking problem, you only had three or four minutes of very expensive film in the camera and then you had to change the film. You used to have to adjust the exposure for each shot by setting the iris opening on the lens, either guessing at the correct exposure, or using a hand-held light meter. Eventually we got meters on the camera and then behind the lens exposure meters that set the exposure automatically, even if the light or scene changed during the shot. Film came light balanced (now we would say white balanced) for just two different sources of light. If you were shooting indoors and went outdoors, or vice versa, you first had to change the film. (Not an easy task with roll film in the middle of the roll somewhere!) For more subtle variations in the light you needed a collection of glass filters, and guessed about which one to use, shot by shot.

And if you were serious about cinematography, you always used a big, heavy tripod to support that big, heavy camera, even lugging it through the bush or into the swamp.

Now we have a tiny lightweight camcorder that holds an hour or so of inexpensive tape, sets the exposure automatically, sets the white balance automatically, and even focuses automatically, and does all of this constantly even on a moving subject or during a pan, or when shooting from a boat or a car. And let's not forget the optical stabilizers which reduce the shake from hand-holding, or riding in that car. Oh yeah, it also records the sound automatically in sync and at a level which never fails to be audible, in contrast to the challenge cinematographers used to face to record sound separately, but maybe this should be considered an improvement in sound recording or editing and not counted as another cinemagraphic challenge tamed.

So, now where's the challenge in cinematography? One that still remains, and still trips up some people (usually novices), is the avoidance of jump cuts. Another is too many pans and/or zooms, which still trips up too many people. Mostly what remains is selecting the right focal length (there are a lot more choices available now), the angle and the distance from which the subject is viewed, and changing them all often enough that the audience doesn't tire of the shot. We should also mention respect for the action line, or screen direction, but that's broken so often now by the pros that it's difficult to enforce among amateurs. More of the challenge gone!

There was a time when judges gave good marks for cinematography if the picture was in focus, properly exposed, and avoided most of the glaring pitfalls. I remember judging an entry from a club in a western city beginning with "V". (I'm not being coy: I really don't remember if it was from Vancouver of Victoria). A short film (barely under 3' 20") that began with a title shot and ended with an end-title shot. In between was a long (lengthy) shot taken at a kitchen table. The camera was placed in a fixed position (either on a tripod or on the lend of the table) and the actress or actresses sat at the other end of the table or around it a little. The camera never stopped except after the opening title and before the closing title. (There were no splices.) It was years ago and I don't remember what happened onscreen, but I do remember that no one faulted the cinematography. The exposure was good and it was in focus! Our problem was that there was no editing! Should it get full marks for editing because there were no bad splices, or zero because there was no editing? If the film had been edited-in-camera we would have counted that as editing and judged the quality, even though it had no splices.

A question about editing and animated films has also arisen at judging sessions. Most judges seemed to accept the idea that "preplanned editing" that takes place in the planning stage, in the drawing stage, and in the shooting stage, should count as editing. After all, there is no point in drawing some poorly conceived or badly drawn frames just so they can be removed after shooting!

In the 2000 CIAFF, in the Feature Film Division, we judged a film that featured only extremely lengthy shots. There was a lot of talk and not much action, and often scenes carried on when there wasn't enough happening to justify the screen time (walking to the door, opening the door, greeting the visitor, inviting him in, taking his coat, etc., etc.). Soon some of the judges were calling out "Cut! Cut!" After we all agreed that this wasn't the winner, we fast-forwarded to see if anything ever happened. No matter where we

stopped, it was carrying on in the same way. In full agreement that the editing was terrible for a feature film we took it off. Suddenly it hit me that this was all ONE SHOT! No one could believe me, because they all thought they had seen a few cuts. We put it back into the VCR and searched for anything that might be a cut. The things that we thought were cuts in fast-forward were not. One I remember was a man brushing his teeth and when he left the bathroom there seemed to be a cut. We found that in order to keep the camera running on the man as he walked out past the cameraman in the cramped bathroom, the shot used the reflection of the man in the mirror until he passed the cameraman and then the camera panned to pickup the actor again. At a higher speed the man's suddenly disappearance as his image left the mirror appeared to be a cut, but not at regular speed!

We watched some parts over and over again, examining the techniques used. One difficult scene was a couple leaving the house and getting into the car, the man on one side and the woman on the other, of course. The trickiest part was letting the woman walk right past the cameraman, watching her open her door and get into the car, and the cameraman getting into the back seat with the camera still running, keeping it on the woman, without showing the rear door opening. An assistant had to open the door that was closed when she passed it, but open when the cameraman needed it open, without the camera showing it open.

This was even more impressive when you consider that this planning and rehearsal wasn't just a feature of this small shot (that would be tough enough for most of us) but was just one tiny piece of a ninety minute shot full of such moments. Rehearsals were so complete that no actor (and there were many, often half a dozen at a time) was ever noticed to have flubbed a line or miss his spot. The blocking was so well thought out that every camera move, actually one very long move, interacted smoothly with all the actors and action. Now we knew the reason for that very long car ride through the streets! Getting from Set A to Set B, with the actors engaging in conversation all the way, they couldn't afford to hit even one stop light, so they had to plan a rather tortuous route through the back streets of the city!

Poor Editing? No Editing! (Unless you count the scripting, blocking, and many, many rehearsals) Poor Cinematography? Brilliant cinematography!

The film lost because the script was poor. Of course, it was poor because it had to be written so that it could be acted in many locales in one complete and perfect run. Nevertheless, it was a magnificent demonstration, and a lot of films fail because of a poor script.

And quacks like a duck ...

Very recently in Hamilton we had a mini-contest for "...a video designed to be viewed by children ..." It featured one long (in time) shot of a woman reading a bedtime story to the camera. There were no cuts, no change of angles -- just one very long shot. This video maker, who is known for always supporting the club by submitting a video in every mini-contest, obviously made a deliberate choice and decided to keep the shooting very simple for very young children. Nevertheless, there was a lot of grumbling among the audience who didn't appreciate his viewpoint, or at least couldn't appreciate it for that long. There were even comments, voiced and written, to the effect "That wasn't a video!" But under the criterion described above, it is a video.

Apparently, editing done before the camera rolls can be considered as editing, and the tedious frame-by-frame shooting of claymation can be considered cinematography. I assume the tedious frame-by-frame shooting of hand drawn frames can also be considered cinematography.

But what if the frames were not hand drawn, but drawn on, with, or by a computer, and does "on, with or by" make a difference? Some people who have never tried it confuse "done on a computer" with "Easy". Buying paints and brushes makes it possible to begin painting, but it doesn't make you Rembrandt. The new camcorder with all the bells and whistles won't make you the next Spielberg. And a computer Animation program just sits there, and it's a much bigger challenge to learn to use that tool than your new camcorder. Especially a camcorder locked down on a rostrum, shooting animation cels.

How would I judge such cinematography? Assuming the fundamentals, (exposure, focus, etc.) were satisfactory, I would be looking at long shots, medium shots, close-ups, and a variety of angles, with a few pans and zooms incorporated into the "cinematography". An animated film which all take place in one long shot from one vantage point would get low marks for cinematography, and one which incorporated the above list of camera moves would get higher marks. I would be inclined to give the highest marks to one that also incorporated a moving viewpoint or camera position, regardless of whether it is the result of drawing successive frames that way, or setting up the camera moves in a computer program. I might even give that video the award for best Cinematography.

That's a wrap!

The question is often asked "How can you judge a travelogue against a dramatic film, or a documentary against a music video?" The answer, of course, is "With great difficulty!" That's why, in contests large enough to afford the opportunity, videos are separated into categories, or classes. You may have a category for Travel, another for Documentary, one for Music Videos, and another for Animation. If there are enough entries, you can have separate the latter into categories for Animated Art Work, Claymation, Pixillation, and even one for Computer Animation. Of course, in a small club competition with only a handful of videos, they all have to be judged against one another. That isn't so bad in a good-natured competition among friends, is it? ■

Fred Briggs *FSCCA*

CIAFF 2001: A Runaway Success!

By Bobbi Smith

For the sixth year in a row, Campbell River BC hosted the Canadian International Annual Film Festival. Events kicked off during the week of Oct 9th with a series of community screenings. The Campbell River public was invited to view this year's award winning films at free venues such as the local art gallery, different coffee shops and the Campbell River Museum.

Kevin Harrison, Assistant Director (Campbell River) CIAFF, Master of Cermonies

Delegates began arriving for the weekend activities the night of Friday, October 12th. Local restaurant Boston Pizza offered a filmmaker's special and delegates from as far away as California came to be welcomed and to network.

Activities for the day of October 13th were initiated with a special student workshop called the "High-5". With the guidance of various industry experts, students competed to produce a film by 5:30 that evening. Prizes included several Sony alarm clocks and a DVD player.

The afternoon was made complete with a workshop entitled "Breaking into the Industry" offered by Beth Walrond, a talent agent with Beth Walrond Talent. There, industry hopefuls were instructed in the art of finding work in the film world.

Finally the entire week culminated in an evening of glitz and glamour as the CIAFF hosted the "best ever" Gala Awards Night. Coordinated by HRDC media interns and supported by the CIAFF this year's evening was made possible by a myriad of volunteers, sponsors and catering donations. With a flawless technical performance and an engaging line-up of MC's and presenters, the 2001 Gala received rave reviews from both delegates and audience alike. ■

Ben Andrews, Director of CIAFF, chats with Cam Hayes, Director of the Film Circuit, a division of the Toronto International Film Festival Group.

Tinker's *Tips and Tricks*

Tips #3

A New Kind of Cushion

At your local dollar store you can buy thin but rough "rubber" matting. Put about three layers on your dash, nestle your camera there, ready to shoot. The matting will cushion the vibrations, and stop your camera from sliding as you travel.

Tripod Spreader

Some tripods will slide on a hard smooth floor. This can damage your camera. Here is a low priced spreader you can make. You need three dog choke chains and one key ring. Slip one end of each chain onto the key ring. Spread them out evenly on the floor under the tripod. Put the spike from the tripod leg into the last link of each chain. Now you have a spreader for your tripod.

Suppose you don't have the time or the items to make the spreader, but you NEED ONE RIGHT NOW!
Get a tablecloth, towel, T-shirt, or any material that will lie flat on the floor. Use the tripod spikes to hold the material in place, and you have an emergency spreader for your tripod.

P.S. Need help to burn a Video CD? Go to www.vedhelp.com for all the information to do just that on any computer system.

Movie 2002

CALL FOR ENTRIES TO IAC'S 62ND ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL FILM AND VIDEO COMPETITION

Films and videos produced by non-professionals are welcomed from the UK and abroad. Entries can be of any length, format, and genre.
The closing date for entries is 6th January.

Details of the competition and entry forms are obtainable from their website www.theiac.org.uk or Liz Donlan, 594a Bolton Road, Pendlebury, Swinton, Manchester M27 4ET
Email Mikedonlan@compuserve.com.

Winning entries will be screened over 2 days at the Movie 2002 Festival which will be staged at The Chesterfield Hotel, Derbyshire, from 19 - 21 April, 2002. This showcase of international amateur movies attracts visitors from abroad as well as the U.K. Previous competitions have attracted more than 250 entries from 20 countries.

For a local contact: Joe Bochsler 1-905-765-5408

"I Love You, Panasonic"

by Trevelyan Beard

This week, I had an 'All's Well That Ends Well' event. My three chip EZ30 camcorder had been giving trouble ever since I bought it in 1998. The problem was intermittent with long stretches of good behaviour and short bouts of Hell. This last week: I happened upon a tape with the evidence of 'malfuncionitus' plainly visible on it and took it in again. Their chief surgeon, Chris Robinson, put the camera on the operating table and with help shown by the evidence, after four hours work, finally found the problem - a slightly loose ribbon connection.

I don't know who was more delighted that the elusive gremlin had finally been skewered, he or I. The warranty had long since expired and I was suffering a little about the prospects of paying for the hospital care. But

Panasonic made my day by announcing there would be no charge for the operation. Thank you Chris and thank you Panasonic. ■

The Last Word...

Fred Briggs and I both blame a virus for keeping this issue back. I had the kind that knocks you out for about a week, but Fred had three computers with a really bad virus (read his President's Message), and that was much worse.

Joe and I didn't make it to the West Coast for the CIAFF Gala -- maybe next year. Many expected California people didn't go either, after the September 11th tragedy.

On the convention tour I learned of another, older, tragedy: that of the Huron Indians. We wandered among the buildings avoiding rain and puddles at the site of Ste.-Marie-Among- the Hurons, rebuilt as it used to be more than two centuries ago when built by the Jesuits in the style of 17th Century France. They built a church for themselves, and then built another in which the Hurons would be more comfortable, with no floor, and no pews, like a longhouse. They had expected to find a group of savages, but instead found a self-governing society, controlled by the women.

In their longhouses we saw holes in the very high roof that acted as chimneys, and warming fires (usually they had nine of them), down through the centre of the building. Family cooking fires were lit only for cooking meals. The wide shelves on either side were not for sleeping, but for storage. People slept on mats, woven from reeds or grass on the floor below the smoke which filled the longhouse beginning four feet from the floor.

Like other Indian tribes, the Hurons survived for thousands of years in North America. But the Jesuits, who came to help, also brought childhood diseases like measles and mumps and the Hurons succumbed to disease, and the Iroquois greatly reduced their numbers. If ever you are near Midland, go to visit this tribute to the Huron people and to the Jesuit Mission. It is unforgettable, even in the rain.

On a lighter note, Keith Gloster is now an official Grandfather. His daughter (see the cover of the Spring issue) had a son a few hours ago!

Have a wonderful Christmas, and we'll be back early in the New Year.

Joan Bochsler, *Editor.*