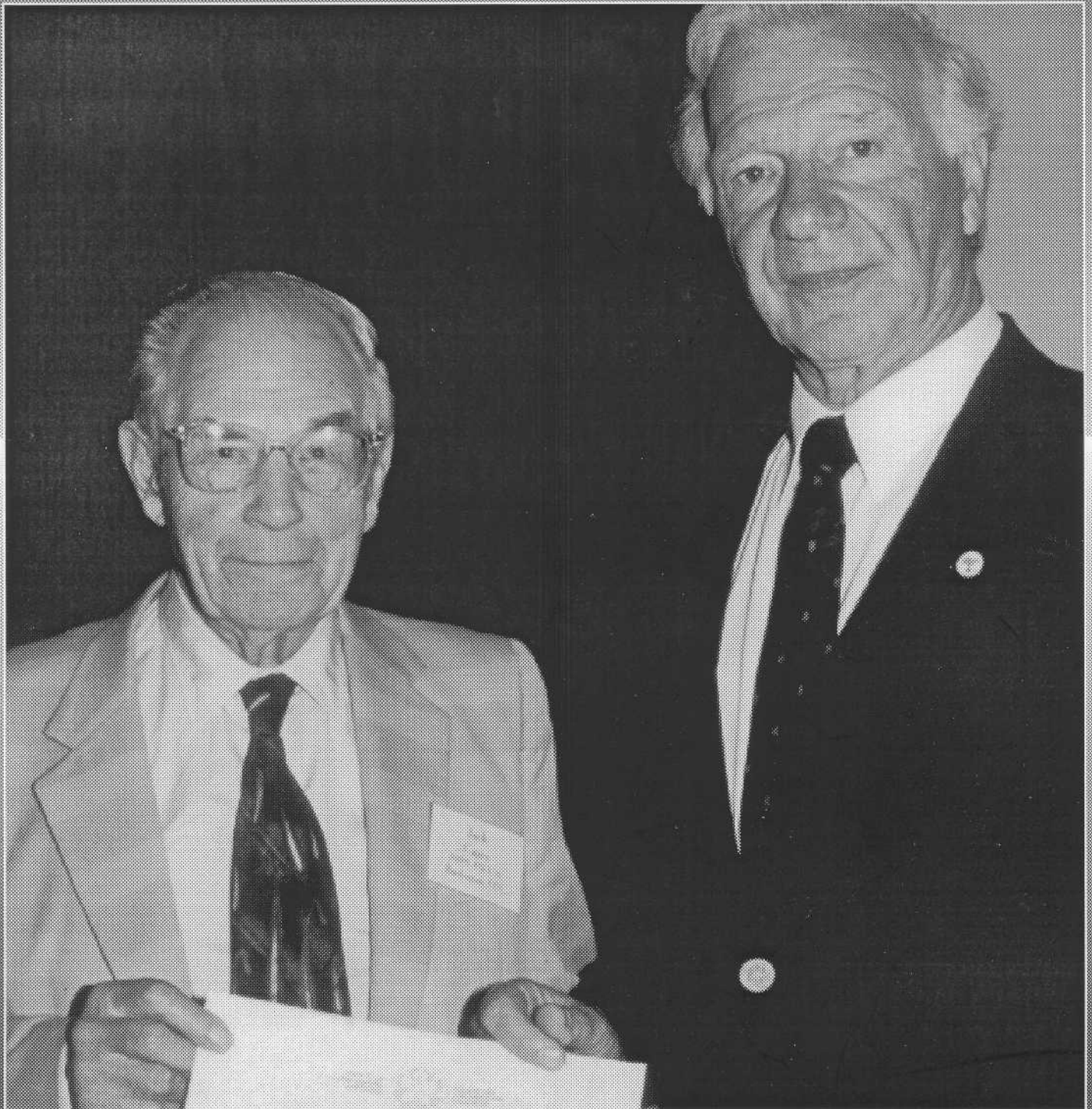


VOL. 33 No. 3 & 4 SUMMER / FALL 1999

# PANORAMA

OF AMATEUR FILM & VIDEO

SUR LE FILM ET VIDEO AMATEUR



The Publication of the SOCIETY of CANADIAN CINE AMATEURS / SOCIÉTÉ DES CINE AMATEURS CANADIENS (Inc. 1969)

## Executive Panel

1998-1999 ISSN 1187-8207

### Honorary President

Christopher Chapman, C.M.

### President

Fred Briggs, FSCCA,  
3 Wardrobe Avenue South,  
Stoney Creek, Ontario L8G 1R9  
905-662-4406 scca@canada.com

### Past President

Jon Soyka  
45 Highcliffe Avenue  
Hamilton, ON, L9A 3L3  
905-388-5840 Fax 905-388-5840

### Eastern Vice-President

Jan Bekooy FSCCA  
274 Alexandre Tache Blvd.,  
Hull, Quebec, J9A 1L7  
819-777-5078

### Western Vice President

Margaret Chamberlain ASCCA  
2701 Arbutus Road,  
Victoria, B.C. V8N 1W8  
250-477-5814

### Secretary

Don Bradley  
31 The Strand Avenue  
Brantford, Ontario, N3R 1Z2  
(519) 735-2285 sccaecy@canada.com

### Treasurer

Carolyn Briggs FSCCA  
3 Wardrobe Avenue South,  
Stoney Creek, Ontario L8G 1R9  
905-662-4406 scca@canada.com

### Festival Director

Ben Andrews, FSCCA,  
25 Eugenia Street,  
Barrie, Ontario, L4M 1P6  
705-737-2729 ciaff@canada.com

### Contest Chairman

Keith Gloster  
10 Seneca Crescent,  
Brantford, ON. N3R 1K2,  
519-752-5745  
sccacompetition@canada.com

### Membership

Thom Speechly, #19 - 295 Wilkins Street  
London, ON, N6C 5C1 519-685-6197  
sccamembership@canada.com

### Publicity Officer

Fred Briggs, FSCCA,  
3 Wardrobe Avenue South,  
Stoney Creek, Ontario L8G 1R9  
905-662-4406 scca@canada.com

### Film Library

Fred Briggs, FSCCA,  
3 Wardrobe Avenue South Stoney Creek,  
Ontario L8G 1R9  
905-662-4406 sccacanada.com

### Honours Chairman

John J. Carey FRPS, FSCCA  
632 Ellengale Road  
Burlington, ON L7T3N8  
905-637-3025 sccahonours@canada.com

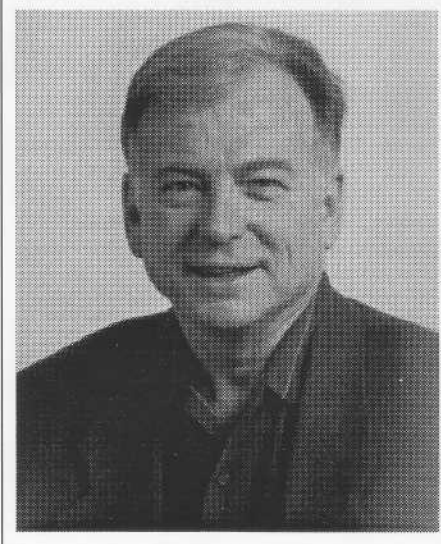
### PANORAMA Editor

Joan Bochsler  
475 Caithness Street East  
Caledonia, ON, N3W 1E3  
905-765-5408 panorama@canada.com

### Video Librarian

Stella Magic  
#200 - 1395 Wilson Avenue  
North York, Ontario M3M 1H9  
416 - 248-9389  
sccalibrary@canada.com

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



In the most recent issue of PANORAMA we were celebrating Spring in this column. Spring is universally viewed as the time of rebirth, renewal, and "starting-out-again". However, most video clubs and organizations (with a few exceptions) begin their new season in September after a summer hiatus, and have either just opened or are about to open their new season as I sit down to write this column.

What happened to Summer? What happened, indeed! Some of us have just experienced a glorious season with record breaking fine weather while others among us have just experienced the worst summer on record, or at least in recent memory. Whether you suffered late snow or early snow, drought, floods, or forest fires, those of us who got the breaks do sympathize with you. All we have left is memories, good or bad, but I'm sure we all agree that Summer is gone too quickly.

However, if your question was "What happened to the Summer Issue of PANORAMA?", I do have an answer. Because of the late decision to upgrade the Eastern Regional Meeting to a National Convention, and the early date for that event, it became necessary to get as much information as possible into the hands of all the members as soon as we could. Since much of that information wasn't available, and wouldn't be until quite late, your Executive decided to forgo the Summer issue of PANORAMA and substitute a special mailing to all the members of the SCCA. The mailing also

*Presidents's Message continued on page 13*

**Cover Photo:** by Joe Bochsler

Jan Bekooy receiving "Fellow of the SCCA Award" from Jack Carey. See page 11 from more details.



### EDITORIAL BOARD

Joan Bochsler  
Wallace Robertson

### LAYOUT, DESIGN & TYPESETTING

George McLachlan

## PANORAMA

...is published in Vancouver, B.C. Canada.

*The publication of the Society of Canadian Cine Amateurs an association of video and filmmakers devoted primarily to informing Canadian Movie/Video makers of the activities of the Society and developments in the realm of amateur motion picture making. It aims to provide information about the new equipment and methods, offers a forum for discussion of topics affecting the interests of amateur/video makers.*

### Subscriptions:

Free to members of the SCCA.  
Membership Dues—  
Individual **\$30.00** — Family **\$35.00**  
Annually — Payable by May 31st.



# CLUB NEWS

by Wallace Robertson  
ASCCA

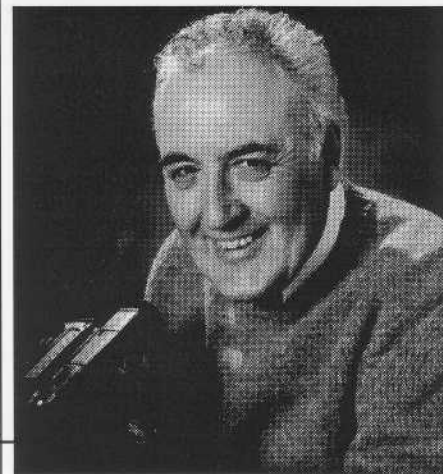


Photo by Ross

**F**or most of the clubs across Canada, October will herald in the first meeting of this, the last year of the century. Again, with great anticipation, we will be looking forward to making "The Great Canadian Video", and once again we will probably fall short of our lofty ambition. Nevertheless, there are people out there who are producing some pretty good work.

We recently returned from the S.C.C.A. Conference in London Ontario, where we had the opportunity of viewing some 'top-notch' films. The convention not only featured movies but also was a showcase for new equipment and in the 'off' periods allowed us time to schmooze and discuss all those things that are of common interest to all of us. One point of discussion was the perennial question of getting new members. Once again I heard the same suggestions about attracting young blood into our organizations. It wasn't until I was on my way home that I realized that probably we are missing the point and should be directing our attention to the largest and most influential group of all...women! That's right, our wives, sweethearts, daughters, sisters and nieces. If we had more females in our groups we would probably have a better balance. Men have always been more concerned about the bells, whistles and electronic gadgetry. The women might provide the creative spark. Anyway, it's just a thought, and possibly one that could be discussed.

One group that seems to have a great number of ladies in their membership is the **Victoria Video Club**, and in fact, if the results of their recent "One Minute" contest is any indication, they can more than hold their own against the men. Example: First Place - "Quiet Neighbourhood" by Eleanor Haire, Second Place - "Remote Less" by Margaret Chamberlain, Third Place finishers were Margaret Chamberlain (again!) with, "The Great Outdoors", Eleanor Haire (again!) with, "Take A Minute". Gladys Knappett had two - Third Place finishes

with, "Let Beauty Surround You" and "Orchid Show". The ladies did allow one man to get into a Third Place finish but that was only when he collaborated with his better half. Stanley and Janet Fox got a Third Place finish with their video, "Natalie, Papa and Mommy At The Zoo".

We were pleased to have a visit from Ron Chappel of the **Vancouver Club** earlier this summer. He was in town doing some research and reminiscing about his early family life here in Manitoba. Ron attended the last meeting of the year and brought along some of his excellent music videos. For those not acquainted with Ron's work, we should explain that he is able to do two and three camera 'shoots' of musical productions. He specializes in choral groups and orchestral recitals and has gained quite a reputation in the Vancouver area for his quality productions. He has promised to send us a copy of some of his videos in the near future. Also Crawford McCrone wrote a few days ago, and although he seldom gets out, he remembered that we still enjoy some light hearted humour, and sent us some clippings for our newsletter. Many thanks, Crawford!

David Cooperstone writes in his 'Workshop Report' that these sessions will be returning to their roots when the group starts operations again in September. Plans are underway to have production teams, assigned subjects, technical speakers and equipment demonstrations.

**Winnipeg Amateur MovieMakers** are gearing up for their new season which starts early in October. Members were asked to think about ways to improve the membership base over the summer months and hopefully some exciting new ideas will be forthcoming. They were requested to 'beat the bushes' for some interesting and knowledgeable speakers. It was suggested that members could make an assignment video on Hallowe'en for November and possibly one for December using "Fossils" as its theme.

**London Videography Club** has started

into the fall season with what appears to be a full slate of interesting programmes. Their first meeting was dedicated to a presentation by Brian Young from Sony and Rod Rossini of Videoscope. They will be exhibiting and demonstrating the latest in Sony Camcorders. Coming up at a future meeting will be a discussion of the new Panasonic line with guest speaker Wayne Gowanlock.

In "It's A Wrap", London's monthly newsletter, they also announced the winners of their 1999 competition. In the Advanced Class, Jim Town won First Place with his thoughtful documentary, "Lest We Forget". Jane Veraart took the Intermediate Class with her rather sweet video, "Making Maple Syrup - 1999". Harvey Hackland picked up the silverware in the Novice Class with, "Close" and Ron Jacobs captured the First Time Entry Class with his, "Double Trouble" video. Other entries included Jim Town's, "Hand-Made Cuban Seed Cigars" and "Waldo Visits Canada's Outdoor Farm Show"; Bill Henderson's, "All Things Bright And Beautiful"; "Kanyo Bank", by Kim Brown; another "Double Trouble", this time by Harry Ronson and "Jennifer's Graduation-OCA 1999" by Hugh Pitts.

We notice that the "**Start, Middle, End**" group of **St. Catharines** (Niagara region) are anticipating a big year, with the September meeting touted as, "The most important meeting in the history of the **Start, Middle, End Club**." As they mention, the main focus of this meeting will be to set the club in a new direction for the 21st century. Along with a discussion on this 'direction' they are requesting members to prepare and submit their "Best of Summer" videos. These can be on any topic but must not exceed three minutes in length.

At their August 3rd meeting the Hamilton Video/FilmMakers took time to welcome back Manfred Ernst and Adam Houston who have been under the weather and

*Continued on page 10*

# 1999

# London Convention REPORT

*By Wallace Robertson*

London, Ontario is a quiet, busy community situated in the heart of the southern Ontario peninsula. It is the home of the University of Western Ontario and boasts the finest cancer hospital in all of Canada. For those of us who are a little longer in the tooth, it is the boyhood home of Guy Lombardo, who produced the "Sweetest Music This Side of Heaven". In fact, if you listen very carefully you can almost hear the sounds of his music gently floating on the warm, summer air.

On August 8th and 9th, London was host for the 1999 Society Canadian Cine Amateur Convention, and what a job they did, as they readily rolled out the 'welcome mat' for the many enthusiastic filmmakers. For those of us who had the wonderful opportunity of attending this event, it was indeed a special occasion and the London Videography Club, along with the S.C.C.A. should take great pride in their efforts and be commended for their choice of facilities and their genuine warmth and friendliness.

The very full programme took place at two separate venues, one in downtown London and the second at the University.

The Sunday activities were conducted in the attractive, London Regional Arts and Historical Museum. Ten a.m. was the official time for the "call to arms", as delegates sipped the perfunctory cup of coffee, renewed acquaintances and signed in. At 11.15 Fred Briggs, President of the S.C.C.A. welcomed everyone and, officially opened the Annual General Meeting by introducing the new executive. A number of reports were presented; Ben Andrews brought us up to date on the Canadian International Amateur Film Festival; Keith Gloster detailed the judging of the S.C.C.A. film competition, which was conducted at the Kodak Centre in Toronto; Tom Speechley reported on the state of the membership while Stella Magic presented the video library report. It was particularly noted during her report that Trev Beard will be digitalizing the

winning entries from this year's contest and copies will be sent out shortly to all participating clubs. Fred Briggs ended the meeting by presenting the annual Treasurer's and Auditor's Reports.

The afternoon programme was "kick started" by Tom Speechley of the London Club who introduced London's President, Bill Henderson. After words of welcome to the delegates, he introduced society chairman, Fred Briggs who in turn had the honour of introducing the first speaker of the day, Jon Jarrett.

As an audio/visual director within the engineering section of ONtv, Jon's present roll is as special project supervisor, working liaison between the engineers and the creative personnel. Jon went into great detail as he explained the complexities of his latest assignment, preparing and processing virtual sets for television. With the use of an ONtv news promotional video, he was able to explain how these virtual sets were able to use chromo-key, with a blue grid (basically blue screen) to combine two separate subjects complete with motion control and computerized models. The advent of virtual sets allows more flexibility for performers when "on camera"; offers better crew/studio/production efficiency while at the same time being extremely cost efficient. Jon went on to explain that this "cutting edge" technology, is at present, only being used for television news broadcasts but will be utilized in the future for major motion pictures. He mentioned that George Lucas' next production will be entirely on video and will incorporate much of this technology.

J. Noxon Leavitt, was the second speaker of the day. Mr. Leavitt has the distinction of having been the President and CEO of ISTE Limited, the company which developed and marketed the Wescam Stabilization Camera System for Westinghouse. He has garnered a number of awards in the scientific and engineering community plus several Emmys for

television production. In his presentation, he explained the Westcam camera mount which aids stabilization of camera movement on movie aircraft and vehicles. Initially, this equipment was to be implemented by the military to detect and identify tanks and other moving objects, but today it is primarily used by customs officials, police and professional film makers. The Westcam can be quickly installed beneath an aircraft and offers high stability images. This system is comprised of a ground station monitor linked to a parabolic camera located on an aircraft by using a correcting parallax. (Note: two cameras - one shooting from above, the other from the side through a silver glass, two-way mirror). They are able to view wild life unobserved from a distance of 3000 feet above ground level with minimal effect from vibration. He said they recently equipped a blimp with one of the systems and a telephoto lens and were able to photograph an object with clarity from 10,000 feet. It was also capable of spotting, in close-up, a man getting out of a truck 30 miles away. This equipment was so successful that it was used by the military to watch Russian fishing trawlers suspected of carrying spy equipment during the recent cold war.

Rael Wienburg was the founder and first President of the London Videography Club. Over the years he has had a great number of successes shooting weddings, commercials, seminars, sports events and has taught video production courses. Although, all of these efforts have afforded him a feeling of accomplishment, none have come close to his most recent involvement, as one of hundreds of videographers who participated in Steven Spielberg's epic project, "Survivors of the Shoah (Holocaust)"

Rael first learned of the project when he saw Spielberg being interviewed on the Larry King Show. He immediately volunteered his services and after a short time found out he had been selected to participate in this massive effort. In his



presentation, Rael explained that each interviewer was initially issued a 12 page instruction manual. It was noted that there could be 4 to 6 hours of tape used on each interview, and that the interviewer had to possess great sensitivity when interviewing the survivors in order to set a calm atmosphere. For the taping, the interviewer and a support person would come to the survivor's home one hour before the interview and quietly prepare the person. Rael said that he did 30 such interviews. Of the 50,000 interviews done throughout the world, 2000 were conducted in Canada. During his talk, Rael presented a thirteen minute video issued by the Spielberg studio and in it were short vignettes of stories told by some of the survivors.

When the project was completed 30 to 40 Canadian videographers met in Toronto and were personally thanked by the organizers for their dedication and support in helping make this massive project a success.

Sunday evening was devoted to the presentation of awards and the showing of winning videos. The gregarious host for the evening was the S.C.C.A.'s Contest Chairman Keith Gloster. Jack Carey, Honours Committee Chairman presented a "Fellow of the S.C.C.A. Award" to Jan Bekooy, while Vic Adams and Jon Soyka became "Honourary Members of the S.C.C.A." Our own congratulations goes out to these gentlemen on receiving this well deserved recognition of their contributions.

Look for a listing of the winners and runner-ups of the film competition in this issue. Needless to say, James D. Town walked off with the majority of the 'gold'. Congratulations to the winners and all those who entered their best work. "Kudos" to Keith Gloster for very capably running this event.

The second day of the conference we learned about all the latest gizmos and gadgets being offered by a number of manufacturers in the industry. The venue for day two was the McKellar Room at the University of Western Ontario.

The first speakers of the day were Ivan Reel and Brian Young from Sony Canada. Ivan is product trainer for consumer video products while Brian is presently involved in the broadcast and professional division. Both men proved to be very knowledgeable about the Sony product line and they certainly had to be because a number of technically "tuned" delegates kept them on their toes. Ivan Reel conducted the first portion of the meeting and went over the specifications and application of the new digital and Hi-8 digital camcorders. He described the advantages

of this new technology including their compatibility with present equipment; broadcast quality pictures (500 line horizontal resolution); less degradation of picture quality; reproduction and ease of editing when using a computer.

Brian Young picked up the second portion by showing and explaining both the consumer digital video and the professional digital video camcorders. He elaborated upon Sony's digital DV cam interfaces and why Sony leads the industry with pro/sumer i link (IEEE-1394) "firewire", the professional model SD1 (Serial Digital Interfaces) and SDTI (serial data transport interface). To end off their portion of the meeting Brian and Ivan displayed some of the Sony products and fielded tough questions from the delegates.

Following the presentation by the reps from Sony, Dour Wurster, Sales Manager of Digital Processing Systems Inc., DPS proceeded to demonstrate his company's latest non-linear editing equipment. Under the names EditBay and Spark they work in conjunction with "Video Action" software to produce a truly state of the art editing system. Using a large projection screen he was able to show how to take a number of shots from a pre-selected video, capture them in the gallery; add appropriate titles; cut and replace sound then assemble them into a coherent, entertaining production. Doug told us that this equipment is capable of previewing shots before putting them in the gallery. Its sound component can set balance, mute original track and set volume. There are over 80 visual effects and 20 transitions groups can make, or soften borders and provide colour changes, 250 fonts are provided for titling. All of this and more for a mere \$1200.

Whenever I attend these conferences one of the high points is seeing our own Don Svob wow us with his high energy level presentations. Not only do I get to see how an "unbuttoned" mind works but he also saves me money. (No true Scot can resist that!) This convention was no exception. Don began with a monopod that he uses, explaining his recently invented "quick change" neoprene head mount. This monopod can be employed as a boom mike support. Don is able to do close up work, with zoom capabilities, by applying a close focus adapter set. Right about now you are probably asking yourself, "What else has this crazy guy got up his sleeve?" How about the following for example: (a) a map stand as a light stand, (b) a baseball bag for transporting tripods, (c) three dog choker chains interlinked to act as a spreader/stabilizer for tripod legs, (d) a piece of chain to be

used as an instant monopod, (e) a rubber mat (purchased in any 'dollar' store) to support your expensive equipment on slick or shiny surfaces, (f) an emergency blanket as a reflector, (g) a lamp module (Radio Shack) with a remote control for controlling your floodlights, and (h) as a waterproof housing, a giant rubber condom, purchased from a novelty store for \$4.00.

Because the final speaker had just arrived and was in the process of setting up his equipment, the delegates got the opportunity to view James Town's award winning video, "A Nation Weeps". This excellent documentary about the Hurricane Mitch Flood disaster in Nicaragua in 1998 hit home very forcefully among the delegates mainly because James is one of our own members and the material he recorded was not the type of thing professional news people normally record. It didn't show the flooding or mudslides or the immediate desolation of the area. What it did show was the aftermath; the courage and intrepid spirit; the true human drama. Over 2300 people died, five whole communities were completely destroyed with no chance of being resurrected, and 4448 refugees were left to search for potable water and food. In the film, doctors and nurses went from village to village on foot because roads were destroyed by huge mudslides which could go on for as far as the eye could see. He personally was in a small group carrying medical supplies through isolated coffee plantations and over rocky terrain.

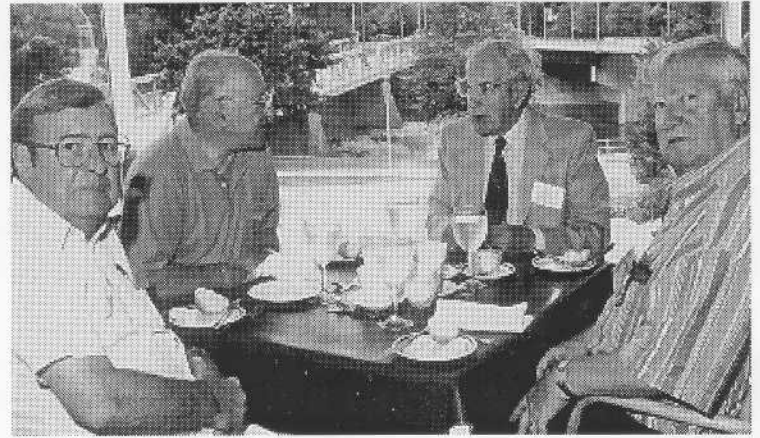
What James saw and recorded were ordinary people struggling to understand the devastation, yet proudly as a nation, fighting on, knowing they would overcome this catastrophe. Countries that normally resent each other, quickly rallied together to send aid. The United States provided 1600 military personnel to build roads and bridges, while their unlikely ally, Cuba, sent in doctors, nurses and other health care professionals. Probably the most heart wrenching scenes were the people who stood before the camera and personally thanked the outside world for helping them in their time of need. This is a well conceived and thought provoking film, one that every club across Canada should have the opportunity to see.

Although John Zales luggage got lost and his plane was late getting in from Chicago, he was still able to get to London in time to be the last speaker at the conference. John installed and demonstrated a new non-linear editor called "Screen Play"; a piece of equipment that

*Continued on page 9*



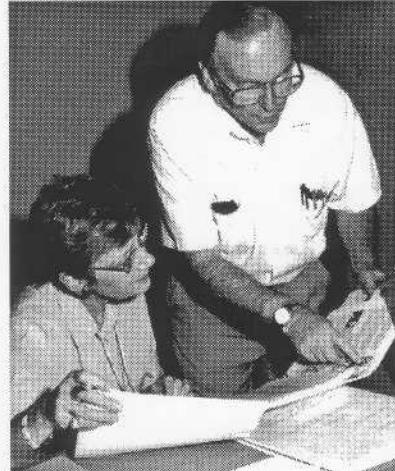
1



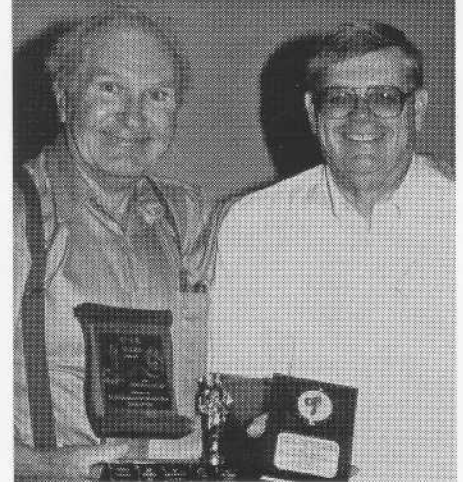
2



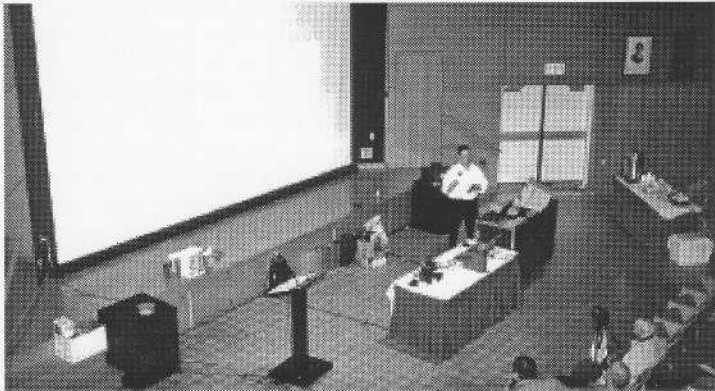
3



4



5



6



7



8



9





10



11



12



13



14



15

1. Keith Gloster, in charge of awards, gives the Intercity Trophy to Wallace & Jeanette Robertson from Winnipeg.

2. Some of the London Club people at the Lunch on Sunday

3. London Club President Henderson welcomes guests to the Convention.

4. This is where the buck stops— Organizers Fred & Carolyn Briggs

5. Trevelyn Beard has an award from Keith Gloster

6. Ideal setup at the Community Building at Western University

7. Joe Bochsler gives the first Newsletter Award to Hamilton and Toronto. Accepting are Fred Briggs and Jean Williams

8. Dinosaur Dinner Joe & Jean Bochsler at Imax night before the Convention

9. Executive of SCCA at the A.G.M. New Secretary Don Bradley at the left end.

10. Jim Town receiving one of many Awards.

11. Joan & Joe Bochsler get trophy for best Senior Production.

12. Keith Gloster presenting to Ben Andrews

13. Evelyn Rosa gets Award for the memorable "Wonderful World"

14. Most of the people who attended the Convention – are you there?

15. Keen group came a day early to see double bill at IMAX, T-Rex and Everest.

*All photos by Joe Bochsler*

# THE AVANT GARDE FILM

## An Art Form, or Just a Deodorant

**avant garde** (Fr. *à vän-gärd*/ n. *A French expression meaning "What in the hell was that?"*)

*by Stan Whitsitt*

**T**he year is 1999. With the millennium fast approaching, the world is embroiled in an orgy of soul searching for cosmic answers to the age old question as to why things are the way they are. In a milestone almost as earth-shaking, I approach a half-century of making home movies. The burning question fueling my angst is that after seventy films, and fifty or so articles, what must I do to maintain my status as a pseudo-writer/filmmaker, without repeating something I have done five or six times before. For answers I will assume the lotus position, pull up my shirt tail and peer deep into my navel.

It occurs to me, that over the years, I have never expounded on the genre simply referred to as Avant Garde. I have always tiptoed around the subject as something too esoteric for my bourgeois mentality to fathom. (which is exactly the attitude its practitioners wish to promote.) Those damn French words have a tendency to intimidate us country boys.

In the 1960's as I was evolving from my "Baby on the Lawn" period to the "If you don't quit making faces at the camera, I'm going to break your arm!" period, I became aware of the term "Avant Garde", also referred to in some circles as "under ground films".

At that time prominent names in the movement were Andy Warhol, Stan Vanderbeek, Marie Menken, Robert Frank, Peter Goldman, Ken Jacobs, Jack Smith, Jonas Mekas, Naomi Levine, and David Brooks.

Description of some of their work convinced me that I had not reached a sufficiently lofty intellectual plane to appreciate their efforts. In glowing terms, one article described an Andy Warhol film entitled "SLEEP", as a six and a half hour silent visual of the body of a sleeping person. In

another, the camera was focused on the Empire State Building for eight hours straight....with no intermission."THE LAST CLEAN SHIRT", a film by Buddy Wirtschafter was touted as, "The entire film being shot from the rear of a moving automobile." It is easy to see why I was intimidated.

With more study of the underground film movement, my inclination was to dismiss the whole scene as "just not my cup of tea", and devote my efforts toward more conventional genres.

During the past year I have been contacted by two people writing books

***"It takes very little talent or effort to throw together an attention provoking product by sprinkling it heavily with crude language, along with scatological and genitalic images."***

on the amateur/non-commercial film movement, and a doctoral candidate writing her dissertation on the same subject. This sudden interest motivated me to take another look at the avant garde scene, thirty years later.

A local organization partially funded by the Los Angeles Cultural Affairs department has an ongoing program presenting non-mainstream, and avant garde films. I attended a series of their programs to see what changes thirty years have wrought. Hold on to your hats as I chronicle a few of my cinematic moments in the nether world of the avant garde.

One film, made by a supposedly leading A/G film maker, was 30 minutes of hand-held (very shaky hands), out of focus jump cuts, swish pans, and trombone zooms, paced by an incoherent narration drowned out by an overly loud music track. A significant portion of the film was footage that appeared to have been made by turning on the camera and carrying it around like a suitcase. I

have a lot of footage like that, where I forget to turn off the switch on my camcorder.

My favorite was a seventy minute epic entitled "BLUE". It started with a blue screen, such as one would get by turning on a projector with no film, but a blue filter over the lens. I sat there attentively waiting for the titles .....nothing but blue screen! (avant garde folks don't believe in titles). The music starts.....blue screen! narration starts.....a funereal voice details a life of rejection and hard knocks.....still only blue screen! After about eight minutes I finally "get it". A blue screen

is all the visuals I am going to get. Inasmuch as it is the last item on the program, I decide to forego the last sixty two minutes and go home. Thirty years evidently had not raised my consciousness to the

level required to comprehend the subtleties of the avant garde film.

Prepared to consign myself to the ranks of the "losers" who just "don't get it", I was struck by an epiphany while perusing the entertainment section of the Los Angeles Times. Written up was an interview with a young, bright-eyed, bushy-tailed executive of a major entertainment company. He was discussing enthusiastically a new up coming so-called "cutting edge" production. When asked why he was so sure of its success, he replied,..."BECAUSE IT MAKES OLD PEOPLE MAD!"

I slapped my forehead with the flat of my hand, as the revelation came to me. That statement appears to be the driving force behind most of the "non-art" with which we are inundated daily. The avant garde film, rap music, and other artistic frauds that assault our senses constantly, are all rooted in that infantile narcissistic craving for attention everyone is born with. As babies we have a single aim. Getting our needs and wants met is the only thing we can



comprehend. As such, outrageous activity, is one sure way of getting attention when normal methods doesn't bring results. It is only when we mature and outgrow the ego-driven compulsion, we become civilized human adults. When that infantile craving for attention is never outgrown, we have adults that will seek it by any means.

If you will forgive a personal example, I will describe my own metamorphosis. Some years ago(it's nobody's damn business how many years), I received my education in a one roomed schoolhouse on the edge of a woods. This was before bathrooms were invented and outhouses provided the facilities. The outhouses had a seven foot high board wall around them for privacy. Certain creative(???) persons, usually of the juvenile male persuasion would swipe chalk from the blackboard and scribble dirty words on the walls around our toilet facilities. Needless to say, this made the teacher and old people in the community very mad. We culprits would snigger and bask in all the attention our artistic expression had provoked. The realization that such expression is not worthy of an adult, is usually reached by high school age.

Statistically, among the general population, there is a minority that never reach that level of maturity. In our culture of cutthroat competition every situation is judged on the basis of winners or losers. Everyone, other than "number one", is treated by the media, and much of society, as a loser. Such a thesis creates a lot of losers in our midst. The mature individual does not take the "I'm number one" philosophy seriously. Not being top dog is merely a fact of life to be lived with, or an incentive to try harder.

Contemporary society is hung up on the cult of celebrity. An immature few, with no talent, lacking the necessary intelligence, or just too lazy to contribute something of value, covet the celebrity status and envy those who attain it. Ego-driven, to receive the applause of recognition, they will carry the "graffiti on the outhouse wall" to new extremes. Outrageous behaviour will make the old people mad and get attention. Why else would so much of today's art scene be characterized by crude language, vulgar images, and in general breaking all rules of civilized discourse?

Looking specifically at avant garde

films, many of them, in order to shock the establishment, employ all the "hot buttons" mentioned above. It takes very little talent or effort to throw together an attention provoking product by sprinkling it heavily with crude language, along with scatological and genitalic images. Viewing such films one gets the feeling some talented people are wasting a lot of time and money, or a lot of "no talent" losers are trying to con us into believing they have something meaningful to say.

As I observe the devotees of the avant garde film, they appear to pass themselves off as an intellectually hip elite group, capable of seeing meaning where ordinary mortals see offal. Psychologists refer to this trait as self delusion.

When viewing many A/G films I am reminded of the old fable of the king who was hoodwinked into buying a wardrobe of imaginary clothing. His subjects were afraid to tell him the clothes were invisible. The truth came out during a parade the king had staged especially to show off the new wardrobe. As the parade passed by, a kid looked up from his ninetendo gameboy and hollered, "Hey everybody!...Look! The king is naked as a jaybird!"

When looking at some of the films made by supposedly famous A/G film makers, I have to restrain myself from the cinematic equivalent of hollering, "Hey!...Look! The king is naked as a jaybird!" In the foregoing exercise of opinion, bias, and prejudice, I reached the conclusion that many avant garde film makers are merely cases of arrested adolescent development. They are more concerned with shocking and making old people (i.e. the establishment) mad, than they are with making a meaningful contribution to the culture.

Now, having "spilled my guts" on the nuances of the avant garde film, if no one shoots me, I may feel constrained to enlighten the masses with a diatribe explaining another popular French expression dear to the hearts of the literati.

"AND, WHAT WOULD THAT BE? "?" they asked. Can you say "film noir?" .....Stay tuned! ■

*film noir* Fr. "film nwar" / n.  
A French expression meaning "you forgot to remove the lens cap."

## Convention Report continued from page 5

many experts feel is equal or even superior to, the 'Casablanca' and 'Trinity' systems. This comprehensive edit unit offers a number of 'quick' features, such as: (a) shot selection, (b) colour correction, (c) fades and special effects, (d) transitions, (e) graphic selection, (f) sound modulation, and (g) quick insert music. John went on to explain that the equipment is capable of handling up to 999 separate 'clips' in its memory. The price of this little gem...\$4000 (American).

The final 'event' of the conference was a video which was sent to the committee by the Buffalo Film/Video Club. Steve Brisco, allegedly the spokesman for their group, condescendingly apologizes to all the delegates for being unable to attend in person. He tells us that because he is such an important and valued member of his community he is always in high demand at social functions and must therefore allocate his time judiciously to the more important events. Steve realized that many didn't know who he was, so he gave a brief run-down on his life and accomplishments. For instance, as Steve said, he is a dedicated husband and father of four..eh..three children, whose eclectic career encompasses not only the entertainment business but that of an inventor. His successes range from the 'super fertilizer' which allows trees to grow at a rate of twenty years in a span of three weeks; his concept of painting fire hydrants yellow so they are more visible; and his introducing a beautiful flowering plant called Purple Loosestrife into North America to beautify neighbourhoods. It is at this point we find out who Steve Briscoe really is. Steve is a stand-up comic working out of Buffalo and has been featured on programmes like Star Search, and his own comedy special, A Cult Of One. What a great piece of comedy and certainly a wonderful way to end off two informative and interesting days dedicated to our favourite pastime. ■

More NLE Experiences...

# Matrox Rainbow Runner

By **Pat Sheridan** *President of the Vancouver Video Production Club*

Welcome back after our summer break. What summer, you ask? Well, we had a couple of nice days in September, didn't we?

One advantage of the crummy weather we had this past summer, was that I didn't feel too guilty about staying inside a lot and learning how to use my non-linear video editing system. Yes, you read correctly, I finally have a non-linear system. After months and months of frustration, I was eventually able to get my hands on a Matrox Rainbow Runner. Interestingly enough, I did NOT get the latest version, but I bought an older one. By "older", I'm referring to the version that was originally available two years ago. The video CAPTURE part of this dual card setup is basically identical in its abilities to the newest Rainbow Runner that is now made. The only difference is that it's required to work with an older video DISPLAY card made also by Matrox. This is not necessarily bad. The quality of the video editing and output does not suffer at all. The only difference is that the slightly older video display card does not perform as well as newer video cards do when it comes to displaying 3D graphics with the new computer games. Seeing as how I do not have any games loaded on my computer at all, this is not of any consequence to me. Maybe I should back up half a step and explain that the current G-series Rainbow Runner, when used with a G200 (and now G400) series Matrox video display card, is essentially the same thing as the Matrox Marvel that some of you may be familiar with. There are some minor hardware differences, but nothing that affects overall performance. The older version I bought is referred to as the Rainbow Runner Studio, and there are two versions of it (just to make things more complicated) that work with either the Mystique or the Millennium II video display cards (all made by Matrox). I bought a used Millennium II with the attached Rainbow Runner for about half the cost of a new Marvel. That's if you can find a new Marvel. I gave up and I am VERY happy

that I bought what I did instead. I also bought a second video display card so that I can now use TWO computer monitors while doing my computer editing. This is real handy for un-cluttering the screen when there are a lot of "windows" to be seen at one time. Add to this the fact that I also have a small TV monitor hooked up so that I can watch a direct video output from the computer, and you can imagine that it's pretty crowded around my computer. I can probably heat the whole house with the warmth that is being generated by all this equipment!

I still have an enormous amount to learn, but I can confidently say at this time that I am pleased to have made the switch to this editing system. However, this system is not for everyone. I would not recommend it to someone who requires "broadcast" quality. The quality is very good, probably equal to Hi8 or SVHS, but it cannot reproduce professional Beta-cam quality. I would not recommend it to anyone who needs to be able to edit video while under pressure, ie., a customer looking over your shoulder who is paying you by the hour. That's because there are some procedures which are slower with this system than they would be with a more expensive one. I would also not recommend this system to anyone who does not already have some computer savvy. I use the word "savvy" as opposed to "experience" because all the experience in the world simply using a computer does not guarantee that one has any savvy. There are going to be problems. Problems with conflicts, problems with crashes, problems with your blood pressure. All these problems can be overcome, but only if you have the knowledge and/or the patience to figure them out. I'm not trying to scare anyone away from investigating or investing in this technology, but just be prepared for many hours of frustration before you can experience many more hours of pleasure. The price of a new Matrox Marvel is about \$400 in Canada. Sure, there are other associated costs with the computer and its components etc., but compared to anything else available on the market, linear or non-linear, this is still one heck of a deal. ■

*Club News continued from page 3*

recouperating from some health problems. We hope that they are well on the way to recovery and are soon in top form.

Joe Bochsler had the pleasant task of introducing Steve Hayes, Stella Magic, Glenna McIntyre, Mercedes and Morris Masgoret, Michael Assadourian, Sandra Millar and Arnold Bourns as guests for the evening.

Jim Town received a Certificate of Merit for his video entitled "Ice Cream"

A number of films were shown, including Joe Bochsler's "The Barbeque" and "Summer Storm"; Keith Davy's "Memories of China"; Bill Traynor's "Carnival"; Don Copeland's "Peggy's Cove"; and Adam and Agnes Houston screened "Those Golden Days" a video taken of their 50th Wedding Anniversary. The evening was topped off with an instructional video called, "Shooting Made Easy".

"The Gazette" **Ottawa Film and VideoMakers** monthly newsletter reports that Don Svob recently attended one of their meetings and brought along a number of gizmos and gadgets which he demonstrated for the members. Once again Don ran out of time before he ran out of material and inventions.

Congratulations to Vic Adams and Jan Bekooy, both long time members of the Ottawa group, who have worked unstintingly for the Society of Canadian Cine Amateurs over the years and who were properly recognized for this work at the recent SCCA convention in London, Ontario. Vic is now an "Honourary Member of the S.C.C.A." and Jan, a "Fellow of the S.C.C.A." Congratulations go out to both of these gentlemen and a big thank you for your countless hours of hard work!

**Buffalo Movie-Video Makers** announce in "Camerama" that they are in the process of creating a new logo for their group and are requesting all members submit their designs at the October meeting. Members at that meeting will vote for their favourite and that design will be used for all future newsletters and publicity. Members are also asked to enter a production of five minutes or less in the "Shorty" contest. Those in attendance will pick the winning entry.

Coming up on Tuesday, October 5th, is the **Hamilton Visitor Night**. The **Buffalo Club** is intending to send a number of members to enjoy the videos, speakers, demonstrations and contests. (But, of course, we know the only reason they are coming is so they may experience the exquisite and exotic Canadian cuisine.)

In reading through the Society of Amateur Videomakers & Cinematographers' latest edition of "The Monitor" one has to be impressed by the fine array of speakers they



have lined up for their convention in Branson, Missouri.

Gerald Turk is a proficient film maker who has produced over 100 educational programmes at Photographic Society of America functions. At the conference, he will be discussing "Impact Editing", and in particular how it applies to Preparation, Shooting and Post-production.

Next on the agenda is the prolific film maker, Wallace Shaw, who will talk about narration, a sadly neglected part of amateur film making. We understand that his presentation is, "interesting, lively, easy to understand, and best of all, useful."

Long time movie maker, Bernard Wood, will be speaking on the, "Single Concept Movie". As noted in the magazine "Bio": "The consummate single concept movie is the TV commercial. Its objective is to totally commit you to a specific product, service, or action."

I was hoping to go to this conference when they announced it last year, because I really like the St. Louis, Kansas City area. It was either go to Branson and have fun, or, paint the house. I wavered back and forth between the two choices. Finally, I made a decision... my wife said, "Paint the damn house!"

I was impressed with the cover on the latest issue of the "Film & Video Maker" magazine. This is the official publication of the Institute of Amateur Cinematographers, our cousins in the United Kingdom. This is the first time they have added a colour cover to this glossy, 35 page publication. They can certainly be justly proud of the result.

Aside from the obviously attractive front page the magazine is chock full of interesting articles on film making in Great Britain, running the range from making better movies, through technical articles, book reviews and awards presentations to personal biographies and a young film makers section.

Coming up in October they will be celebrating their annual Autumn Convention and AGM Weekend at the Royal Stuart Hotel in Derby. We would encourage anyone who might be in Britain at that time to contact Janet Smith, Administrative Assistant of the IAC at 24c West Street, Epsom, Surrey, KT18 7RJ to get information on attending these festivities.

You have probably noticed that the "Club News" section is a little shorter this time. The reason is that some of the clubs have not as yet started into their regular monthly meetings. As a result we haven't received their first newsletter of the year. But, rest assured, by the next issue we should be back to normal and reporting on the comings and goings of your sister organizations. As they used to say in the radio reports ...Stay Tuned!! ■

# JAN BEKOOY

## FSCCA

**J**an Bekooy joined the Ottawa Movie Club in 1952 and remained a member until 1965. During those years he won a number of awards for his 8mm. movies before resigning because of the pressures of his vocation.

He joined the Ottawa Club again after his retirement in 1986 (then using video) and remains a member till the present. He has accepted a number of different positions on the Executive of the club over the years, and is currently Contest Director.

In 1991, as part of the club's 50th Anniversary celebrations, he instituted a program of showing movies made by club members, in hospitals, nursing homes, and retirement homes. The following year he screened films in 48 institutions, and this work continues to this day.

In 1988 Jan was elected Secretary of the SCCA at a time when the Society was considering merging with SAC (now SAVAC) and continued in that position until 1993. That year he was granted honours as an Associate of the SCCA.

In the same year Jan began new duties as Chairman of the Honours Committee, and served in that capacity until 1998, when he was elected Eastern Vice President.

Jan has a long history of writing articles for PANORAMA, which began with his election to the Board of the SCCA and continues to today.

He also has a long tradition of travelling annually to Toronto to serve as a judge in the CIAFF competition, and that, too, continues to this day.

Jan's contributions are outstanding and he just keeps on giving today as few people can give - serving on the Executive of the Ottawa Film and Video Makers and the SCCA, writing articles for PANORAMA, judging for the SCCA and CIAFF, screening videos on a heavy schedule to seniors in nursing and retirement homes, and constantly shooting, and editing Hi8 and S-VHS videos for those shows.



Jan is an accomplished videographer and a loyal supporter of SCCA. In the Ottawa area he is noted for his public service activities, where he regularly puts on video shows for shut-ins - a service which we all applaud, but few of us manage to perform. In addition to this, he regularly attends judging sessions for CIAFF, which necessitates considerable travel and inconvenience but he never fails to support our organization in this selfless manner.

On a personal note, I would be remiss if I didn't tell how helpful Jan was to me when I was first asked to be president of SCCA. I had little or no knowledge of just what was required, and I'm sure Bell Canada declared an extra dividend because of the calls I made to him in that first year. And Jan made it easy for me to impose on him, because he has the rare talent of being a real and willing friend on very short acquaintance. Personally, I consider it an honour to propose Jan as a very worthy Fellow of the SCCA. Thanks Jan - as they say in the ads - "you're worth it!" ■

**Jack Carey**

# VIDEO IN EUROPE TODAY

by Bryan Belfont

On my recent trip to Europe, summer of 1999, I had a chance to visit a number of video stores in Britain to check out the equipment available. They use PAL, so none of it will work over here; but it may indicate what we will have in a year or two.

## Camcorders

The information I could gather from various video stores suggests that the camcorder sales in 1999 would be along the following lines. Hi8 / 8mm still account for over half of camcorder sales; but DV and now D8 (only recently arrived in Britain) sales now account for about 25% and are rising fast. Sales of VHS-C / S-VHS-C camcorders total less than 25% of sales and are falling fast. In fact, when I visited Dixon's, the largest video retailer in Britain, they told me that they no longer carry any of these compact VHS-C camcorders. VHS / S-VHS camcorders are no longer available in Britain. D8 has only recently arrived in Britain; but already accounts for about 10% of sales.

Most of the camcorders in the stores were Sony with Canon, JVC and Panasonic represented by DV camcorders only. Prices in the stores were about 50% higher than in Canada; but the mail order discount prices were only about 10-20% higher than retail in Canada.

Everywhere you go, "digital" is the answer.

## VCRs

Most top-of-the-line PAL VHS VCRs now playback NTSC. Surprisingly, there were at least a dozen VCRs with flying erase heads and audio/video insert available from Aiwa, Ferguson, JVC, Mitsubishi, Panasonic, Philips, Sanyo, Sony and Toshiba. Europeans seem to take their editing

seriously. In fact, they have a number of "dual" VCRs that I have never seen anywhere in North America. Sony has a Hi8 - VHS VCR and JVC has just introduced a DV S-VHS VCR. And to top it all off, JVC and Panasonic have VHS VCRs with "Digital Stereo"! The latest DVD players also feature PAL and NTSC playback.

## TVs

In Canada our top-of-the-line TVs (i.e. Sony's CV-32XBR200) are still in the 4 x 3 format of the original 35 mm film. In Europe, the rush to Wide-Screen (16 x 9) is on. Sony have just released their Wide-Screen, Flat-Screen Pro-Logic Wega IC)TV (model # 1KV32DS60) which is rated by "What Video" as the "World's Best TV" (September 1999 issue) for £2000. This is an analog and digital TV which can carry terrestrial (mostly analog) and Satellite (mostly digital) signals. It can even convert analog "letterbox" into wide screen to get rid of the black bars. Plus, it is NTSC / PAL / SECAM compatible!! "What Video" (not known for its uncritical reviews) stated once it was switched on, we couldn't take our eyes off it. That's not PR hype we're regurgitating, but genuine adulation." If the equipment I saw in Britain is any indication of what we can expect in Canada, I am very excited about the future.

Note: These figures are for all camcorder sales up to September 1998. This was before the introduction of the Digital8 format. The figures for Canada are not available; but my guess is that they would be similar to those of Europe. In fact, I would suggest that the US figures show the past while the figures for Japan show the future. ■

**Bryan Belfont**, the owner of *VIDEO INSTRUCTIONS*, is the video instructor for Adult Education with the Vancouver School Board  
e-mail: belfont@bc.sympatico.ca  
Web Site: www3.bc.sympatico.ca/belfont

PERCENT of CAMCORDER SALES by FORMAT -1998

Country	DV	Hi8	8mm	S-VHS-C	VHS-C	VHS	Total
USA (NPD)	3	29	26	<1	35	7	100%
Europe (GKK)	8	27	38	<1	26	<1	100%
Japan (ACISS)	78	11	10	<1	<1	<1	100%

(<1 = less than 1%)

# CIAFF

## Special Commendation

Thirty films are included in this list. Thirteen are from Canada, twelve from U.S.A.. The remaining five are each from a different country.

### Canadian entries were:

GOD COMES AS A CHILD Jeremiah Hayes  
GUY Jean-Sebastien Busque  
THE BRUCE PENINSULA Walter Strickland  
TWO COFFEES Howie Woo  
THE TIME HAS COME FOR YOU TO DIE Chris M.Laskowski  
SPIRIT OF DISCOVERY Twyla Rosovich  
THE LOVE RACK Jacob Potashnick  
SIRENS Jackie Blackmore  
YO-YO Remy Campbell  
LIFE OF THE PARTY Jacob Vish  
GLP AND ME A Griffith C Parker B Jenkins G Marr J.Salo  
LIQUID D M Hrachuk M Orcherton M Holland K Kiyooka  
KAMAKAZEE KREW - THE ART OF BREAKDANCING David Young

### From U.S.A.:

CRUX Lawrence P. Reilly  
FROGMAN Yuri & Elvin  
THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH Sandra T. Morya  
NOTHING IS FOREVER Ephraim Horowitz  
THE EXPERT Frank Cossa  
THE ROAD TO CHARLOTTESVILLE Diego Colombo  
ALLEY CATS Derrick Dean  
WHAT'S IN HEIDI'S HEAD Nancey Ferguson  
SOAP BUBBLE ARTISTRY Casey Carle  
JESUS 2000 Eric Cooper  
HERE DIES ANOTHER DAY Caryn West  
CREATURE Ben Soper & Tyler Soper

### Remaining entries were:

ISLAND Irena Joannides Cyprus  
PUTO DE OROS Miquel Crespi Traveria, Spain  
MOTHER'S HEART Michael Metzner, Australia  
VENGANZA FATAL Mariano Fernandez, Argentina  
KTO TO? (WHO IS IT?) Agata & Dorota Bialkowskie, England.



went out to all members of all SCCA affiliated clubs within reasonable travelling distance from London, which meant all Ontario clubs and the Buffalo Movie-Video Makers.

That mailing also included SCCA Membership Forms for those whose fees had not yet been paid, and a Proxy Form for members unable to attend the Annual General Meeting. Sufficient Proxies were received to assure a quorum, but many members just didn't bother to return their proxy. Some, but not all, of the delinquent dues were returned, but surprisingly, many of those members didn't put the proxy in the envelope with their Membership Form and payment!

While we're pleased that so many of our members are outstanding, we are much less pleased that so many of the fees are! Yet we hesitate to issue another call for payment of membership dues, because last year we confused several members whose fees were up-to-date, and they paid again, requiring considerable correspondence to clear up the errors and return the second cheques. Thom Speechley, our Membership Chairman, have to contact people individually, but if you keep a good record of your cheques and can verify that you have not yet paid since June 1, you could lighten his load by submitting your cheque to the Treasurer, Carolyn Briggs, now.

While we haven't exactly been inundated by new members introduced to the SCCA by our present members, as urged in the Spring Issue, we have added four new members - two at the convention and one who found us on the internet. We have also added to our roster a new club, the Kitchener-Waterloo Video Club. I wish I could claim that the formation of that club came about as a result of our 1997 convention in Kitchener as hoped, but alas, none of them had heard of the SCCA when they came together earlier this year! Regardless of their origin, we're very pleased to welcome them into the fold.

I won't deal extensively with the convention here except to say that those who attended seemed to have enjoyed themselves, and we later received many thanks and compliments by email. All members of the Executive, with the exception of our past Secretary, Adam Houston, (who is recovering nicely from his recent bypass surgery) had earlier agreed to stand again and were re-elected by acclamation, as was Adam's

replacement as Secretary, Don Bradley of Brantford.

Earlier we reported that we were unable to obtain a Canadian URL for the CIAFF and had resorted to using "http://Fast.to/CIAFF to avoid requiring visitors to type "http://hvw. Polar.icestorm.com/ciaf". That shortcut will still work, but we have now obtained the domain name "CIAFF.org". Now "http://CIAFF.org" will also take the visitor to the same place, and like the S-C-C-A.ca domain name, only the domain name will show on the visitor's browser. The CIAFF.org site has not yet been overhauled, but will be soon when new material about the Campbell River Gala, the Barrie Film Festival screenings, and the complete list of all the 1999 Winners is added.

Some major improvements were made to the S-C-C-A.ca before the London convention. In addition to the regular updating of the pages describing the then upcoming convention, the biggest change was to the table of navigation links which was recently added to the bottom of the main frame page. This has now been replaced with a "pop-up table" at the bottom of the same page with all the links formerly available in the table at the bottom, and before that, along the edge of the home page. However, these links are now available regardless of the page a visitor is viewing, and are much easier for the webmaster to add to, change or delete. It also takes less space, leaving room for two more navigation aids along the bottom. The "Search This Site" search engine has been moved from the home page to a new position at the bottom right, where it's available while any page is viewed. Between the two boxes is a "Site Map", also available from any page. Click on this link and a list of links to every other page on the site is presented.

Another major change has been to the "Links Pages". This formerly consisted of two pages of links, decorated with a large number of cutesy icons and graphics. The site is maturing and the pictures have been replaced with a much more useful "SCCA Film & Video LinksU which is more of a service (from graphics company i/us) than a web page. Eight general categories are presented (including "Odds & Ends"). Clicking on a title presents as many as 48 links. Besides the hierarchical structure, this system has several advantages. In place of the pictures, each title is accompanied with a brief (maximum 255 characters) description of the contents, saving the "client" consider-

able time in finding that which interests him or her. Clicking on any of these subtitles brings up a new window whose links can be followed as wanted. Closing that window will return the viewer to the SCCA Links Page, but clicking instead on the SCCA Links Page will switch windows, putting the SCCA page on top and the other window on the bottom task bar. From here, the viewer can click on other SCCA Links, opening more windows from which the viewer can switch back and forth, comparing the contents of the various pages. A third option remains: the viewer can still click on the SCCA "Where Would You Rather Be" menu at the bottom of the frame page to visit another SCCA page, leaving the new window opened earlier still available on the task bar. While all this may seem confusing as described here, and to some who visit the site, it will be appreciated by "power users" who know what they want and don't want to waste time looking for it! We hope they will bookmark the SCCA site and use it often.

In the last issue I described The SCCA Courier, the news service which watches the internet for news items which may be of interest to film and video makers. A great deal of information is brought into the site everyday by this service (including eight Canadian newspapers!) but this can lead to "information overload" and discourage people from returning. We have added a Web Spotlight, at the top of The SCCA Courier page, to "President's Choice", my own pick of keywords for which the search engine should search. This search narrows the focus of the other, wider searches, and produces links to about 50 stories from the last few days, most of which will be about video or a closely related topic. You will still need to weed out the chaff (exactly what another member is most interested in), and visit the site every few days to avoid missing that breakthrough announcement for which you have been waiting.

The SCCA Discussion Forum is still on line, and still, no one has signed up as a member, posted any messages, or opened any discussion. Hello! Is anybody out there? ■

# The Future of Cinema is now!

**T**he Screening RoomE-Cinema Development (of Buffalo) and Digi-Flicks (of Chicago) have announced a joint venture to open an international network of electronic/digital cinemas, as well as a distribution arm providing programming for the locations.

The movie industry, the press release continues, has been discussing the future of E-Cinema for several years now, however, this will be the first actual business rollout of the concept. The Digi-Flicks/Screening Room venture will develop company-owned locations, as well as work with other individuals and businesses interested in owning cinema applications. A variety of people from both the entertainment and technology industries are

now involved with this project, which offers full service beginning September, 1999.

## Electronic/Digital Cinema

Electronic Cinema refers to the big screen exhibition of movies through electronic projection, eliminating the film from the projection process. Electronic Cinema is on the threshold of becoming the biggest revolution to

happen within the movie industry since the development of "talkies", and is about to change the way movies are produced, distributed and exhibited. Electronic Cinema can provide a very low cost method of cinema

development, eliminating many of the operational and financial barriers associated with traditional theatres. This opens up all facets of the movie industry to interested individuals and companies normally unable to participate. Electronic Cinemas can also tap into a wide range of alternative programming and auxiliary income opportunities, creating a truly unique entertainment venue.

## The Screening Room

The Screening Room was one of the first companies involved in the research of the Electronic Cinema concept, and the only company to operate a working electronic cinema test-site since 1993. This site has evaluated the technological feasibility and customer acceptance of Electronic Cinema, generating over 6 years of information and feedback. The Screening Room has experience in all aspects of Electronic Cinema operation, including:

- Video projector analysis and comparison
- Programming ideas and marketing
- Booking procedures and contacts
- Public performance and Copyright law
- Digital technology in filmmaking, distribu-

tion and projection

- Video, DVD and laser player analysis

- Satellite technology and data storage.

The Screening Room is dedicated to developing the Electronic Cinema industry by creating an international network of cinemas, distributors, filmmakers and electronic cinema resources. Currently the Screening Room is working with a wide variety of companies involved in all aspects of electronic cinema, but will continue to remain an independent consulting service, providing unbiased recommendations and programs designed specifically for your cinema operation. Your business remains completely independent and autonomous in all aspects, yet you can tap into the benefits and leverage associated with a network of theatres.

## Programming and Sources

Since electronic cinemas are not limited to the medium of 35 mm film, they are able to tap into a wide variety of exciting programming, including:

- Traditional movie presentations
- Classic movie showings
- Independent movies created digitally or on film
- Cultural programming such as plays, operas, concerts etc.
- Pay Per View Performances of big events — boxing, concerts, etc.
- TV simulcasts of important events -- elections, Academy Awards, etc.
- Independent Video nights
- Advanced digital effects, such as 3D

Electronic Cinemas will be able to program live "feeds" of special events. Unique events such as filmmakers introducing their films live, and having national discussions following the movie can become a reality. Electronic Cinemas will create venues that can take the movie experience to the next level. In addition to entertainment programming, electronic cinemas can offer services to private groups and businesses. Projectors can be used for videoconferencing, sales and training videos, simulcasting featured speakers, and a variety of auxiliary businesses. Movie screenings for private groups or organizations can also be arranged. The DVD format also gives you access to dubbed and subtitled versions all in one disc, adding to your potential programs.

Programs can be delivered through a variety of sources, including:

- Satellite transmission and storage
- Fiber optic transmission
- Internet transmission (future)
- Hard copies of both analogue and digital formats... S-VHS, 1/2" VHS, DVD, LaserDisc, W-VHS, Hi-Def, Betacam SP, M-11, U-Matic, DigiBeta, D1, D2, D3, D5. Digital S, and more.

## Advantages of Electronic Cinema

- Low start-up costs
  - No projection booth or ventilation needed
  - No trained projectionists needed
  - Very little "throw" needed to project image.
- This allows you to create a very large image in a small facility.

- Less daily maintenance and cleaning
- None of the general operational problems inherent with film, dirt marks, scratches, focus problems, film breaks, poor splicing, water and oil spots, picture jitter and ghosting, projectionist errors, general deterioration.
- No deterioration with repeated shows
- Easy installation
- No film cans or storage/shipping issues
- No environmental concerns
- Satellite transmission and hard drive storage will offer a wide range of advantages including the ability to change, add or drop movies from screens easily.
- Cheaper distribution than film. No need to produce film copies at \$2500/print
- Low upkeep
- Consistent image quality
- A variety of ancillary operational and income possibilities (See above)
- Will allow small towns a better chance of exhibiting first run movies earlier.

## Video Projectors.

Video projectors have always been the weak link in the concept of Electronic Cinema, however, in the last two years the technology has advanced to the level where images bigger than any current movie screens are being projected at a quality acceptable to the industry. Projectors come in all shapes and sizes, with prices ranging from \$3000 to \$250,000. Many factors come into play when deciding what type of system to install. Projectors are rated in terms of resolution, contrast, brightness, bandwidth — and more, these factors must be matched with the physical characteristics and operational needs of your potential cinema.

## Possible Venues

Traditional theatres — Electronic Cinema can be installed in traditional theatre settings. It can be used as the main projection source, or as an alternative option. Cinema Bars and Cafes — a popular combination of food, drink and movies. Electronic Cinema is the perfect mix with this concept. It allows you to fit in a variety of building sizes and areas. Areas without Cinemas — The low cost of developing electronic cinemas makes it a perfect option for small towns or areas without any theatre. Alternative Cinema Locales — Hotels, resorts, museums, clubs, societies, lodges, churches, parks, military bases, restaurants, apartment complexes, corporate settings, seasonal towns, cruise ships, "moveable" cinemas. ■

For more information contact :  
 Bob Golibersuch, President  
 The Screening Room/Digi-Flicks  
 Century Mall 13131 Sheridan Drive,  
 Amherst New York, 14226  
 (716) 837 0376  
 EMail: movies999@aol.com



## LETTER to the EDITOR

### Thanks...

I'd like to express my sincere thanks to the members of the S.C.C.A for voting me an Honourary Member at the recent convention. It is a great honour particularly as it comes from friends who enjoy the same hobby. I'll treasure the certificate and try to justify your granting it.

I observe in reading Wally's reports of club news, that programming is a prime concern in all clubs. I guess it was ever so. When I shot my first live action film in 1931 I did it on Kodak roll film sliced into 16mm strips, spliced together and perforated with the precise 16mm punch I had made. All done in the dark of course, as was the processing. The meetings of our group were completely taken up with our discussions of how we

did those technical operations. It wasn't until some eight years later that I got into the other half of film making - using the arts of storyboarding, shot composition, camera movement, editing and music to engage the viewer's imagination and make his mind see the story, situation or emotion that is in the filmmaker's mind. This art I found as interesting and even more challenging than the technical side - partly because it is open-ended. You can always do better. That's why I hope that the S.C.C.A. clubs will always give at least equal programming time to the art side as they do to the technical side.

Many thanks again for the treasured honour.

Vic Adams

## MY ROMP ... around the London Conference

by Trevelyan Beard

Going to these conferences is my version of the annual journey to Mecca by The Devoted. It would be quite out of the question to miss out on one, I know what I would be missing and that would make me sore the rest of the year.

The trip to London took no time at all. I had made a booking at the Super 8 Motel, low price but near the Conference buildings. Very nice place and lots of parking. The breakfast we had (Arnold was along too) next day was something I'll never forget. Good food and too much to eat. I chatted with the waitress, looking at the photographs round the walls. Seems the owner liked steam trains and had collected his fill of pictures. The surprise came when we got the bill - two for the price of one! So this is London.

We should talk about the performances but first let me tell you that the dining out is just as much a part of the thrill of the holiday. A bit topsy turvy on a few occasions but fun all the way.

When someone else is doing all the work I tend to become a complete slob and leave

them to it, sitting in the front row and spreading my legs out, almost lying in the seat.

The SCCA part of the program went well with Toronto up there somewhat. I viciously ground my heel into the floor as I muttered "We've got to do better and better".

We had ten performances over the two days and everyone of them was above average and therefore very much enjoyed. Noxon Leavitt did a talk on gyroscopically stabilizing camera platforms in use on a chopper. Being an engineer, this really held me. Rael Wienburg did a show on some of the survivors from the holocaust. Being just back from seeing the extensive holocaust museum in Jerusalem, this was fascinating. Then Phil Utech did a spoof on Plastic Dinosaurs which got me to thinking that we in Toronto should tackle something like this, not about Dinosaurs but about the "spoof" angle.

The talk on Sony Digital 8 cameras was useful, I'd heard similar stuff but this was

a great opportunity to bombard Ivan Reel with questions and comments. Next up, Doug Wurster talked about EditBay and Spark by DPS. I've tried EditBay and like it.

Then relaxation in the form of Don Svob. I'm anxiously waiting for him to develop a personal flying machine for under \$100 so I can replace my car.

The last speaker was John Zale, demonstrating ScreenPlay. This is the competition to Casablanca and though priced about the same is technically up a bit. But wait. The Casablanca people (DraCo) are about to release the Avio - a machine selling for \$1,500 US that is a newly engineered editor that should set the world on fire.

The day ended with the Poobah of Poobahs, Fred Briggs demonstrating Beat 2000 and Band in a Box. And of course Fred (God bless him) had enough sample discs for all of us. Thanks to the organizers, especially Fred for a memorable experience. ■

# Judge's Comments...on the

## Newsletter Competition

by Larry Parks.

(Retired Journalism Professor from Ryerson,)

*Newsletter editors or compilers have a difficult task. Often there is not enough deeply interesting material so the publication can end up looking like either a research paper, or at the other extreme, a collection of free ads. It is evident from examining a dozen newsletters submitted by clubs of various sizes from across the country that there is no real common ground as far as contents and approach are concerned. (Except to remind members of an upcoming meeting! Ed.)*

**W**hen you get down to it, there is probably not a great deal of difference between presenting a collection of items in a newsletter, and making an attractive video. You try to pick highlights, so that the reader, or viewer, is given a change of pace as the material is covered; and also to present the contents as attractively as possible.

Chosen as ties in this first contest are Shots and Angles, put out by the Toronto Film and Video Club, and Reel News from Hamilton Video/Film Makers.

Avoid hitting readers over the head — for instance in Reel News there are three boxes on page one and some annoying repetition of illustrations. On the next two pages there are seven boxes containing headlines or whatever.

There's nothing wrong with focusing an issue on one topic if you think the readers are interested in it. Again in Reel News there is a story on page one about IMAX, then on page three there is another, and that leads you to yet another very long story on IMAX well nothing more than this one story, then tell the reader on page one that this issue's focus is on IMAX development. Readers then feel that they're getting an honest package on IMAX. Otherwise they expect different topics until they read them and find there's one story which has been broken down into sections. You shouldn't try to fool the reader.

Shots and Angles needs to give more attention to headlines or story titles. The newsletter would be improved considerably with use of informative headings that say more than "Annual Business Meeting" or "Recent Events."

Don't have pages that are grey type—without visual relief, such as a small graphic, occasional bold type where appropriate—anything to make looking and reading a pleasant experience. It may be discouraging to some that if so many criticisms can apply to the winners, what about the poor people who aren't winners? Well, all is not lost. There are some aspects of each publication entered that work well and do the job of helping the reader. One way that the various editors can help themselves and their clubs would be to arrange to exchange a copy of each other club's publication. Then see if somehow they can make use of what they recognize as good material or good method, in their own publication. It's a case of learning by example, and sifting the good from the bad.

Newsletter producers should keep in mind nothing that uses the first person "I" should appear unless that person is made known to the reader through use of a byline. ■

## LEGAL DEPOSIT

(This information provided by Joseph Bochsler, concerning his documentary video entitled "125th Caledonia Fair".) Legal Deposit of Video Recordings. Recently, a member of Hamilton's video club received a directive from the National Library of Canada requir-

ing two copies of a video he had produced. It was pointed out that the deposit provisions of the National Act require Canadian publishers to send two copies of their publications to the national Library.

Until 1993 this was limited to books, sound recordings, periodicals, multimedia kits and microfilms. It now includes video recordings produced after January 1st, 1993.

Material received on legal deposit is preserved in the permanent collection of the National Library, where it is made available for research and consultation. In addition most titles are also listed in "Canadiana", the national bibliography.

The National Library enclosed mailing labels and information forms which were to be completed and returned with the videos. ■

For more information contact:

Kathryn Husband

Canadian Acquisitions Division and Legal Deposit Office

National Library, Canada

Ottawa, On. K1A 0N4

Telephone 819-994-6867

Fax 819-953-8508

Internet: legal.deposit@nlc-bnc.ca

## The LAST WORD...

**M**y first Canadian winter was spent in Moose Jaw, Sask. in the fifties. I remember walking home from work one evening with delight, at thirty below zero fahrenheit. The favourite story that year was about a local contest where the first prize was two weeks in Toronto, and the second prize was three weeks in Toronto. These experiences gave me just an inkling of how people feel, west of Winnipeg.

This issue of Panorama has some input from the West, thanks to George McLachlan, and I hope everyone will enjoy reading it. I hope you will also find the Electronic Cinema article worthwhile, after I wrestled with it.

The results from CIAFF and the SCCA competition have been inserted separately, except for the Honourable Mentions. These would be available from Ben Andrews in Barrie, On., or catch him at Campbell River in October 12 to 16, at the Film Festival.

The main event of our summer was

the SCCA convention in London, August 8 and 9. It was a first class event, well appreciated by the lucky ones who attended.

There are two articles on the convention, plus a double page spread of pictures. There are comments from the judge of the club newsletter competition, and also from a video club member who has been asked (directed?) to give a copy of a particular video he had made to the National Library of Canada.

As most of you know when the information for Panorama leaves me it goes to Vancouver, where George McLachlan creates a magazine out of a heap of papers, then it flies, walks or runs to Winnipeg where Wallace and Jeanette Robertson get it into production and send it all over our land. Tons of thanks go to these people, but I must save some special thanks for husband Joe. Without his persistent reminders and wrestling with our computer and doing a million little things to help, this "baby" would never be put to bed! ■

**Joan Bochsler**

Editor