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CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

It is with regret that I have to report the sudden death of our Treasurer George Hill early in August. George was a great chap and provided a valuable service to the committee over the past year or so in a financial capacity. He will be missed by many.

By popular demand, last month found us trying out another venue for our regular monthly meetings. On this occasion we were at the recently constructed St Joan's Centre adjoining the Catholic Church of St. Joan of Arc on the Tilford Road some 200yds south east of Farnham Station.

This was the third time we have tried an alternative meeting place in the last couple of years and it proved to be third time lucky. From the members present in August, the decision for its adoption was

unanimous: all 27 in favour and it will therefore be our new home from now on.

The location is set back from the road in a quiet area with ample car parking space and good access to the entrance foyer and Wright Room where we met. A well-equipped interconnecting kitchen offers serving hatches at both ends. The room is fractionally smaller in floor area to St Martin's Hall that had been our home since 1985, but is of good proportions. The room is light and airy and is provided with roller blinds on all windows. Chairs and folding tables are easily accessed and stored in an adjacent room – a big sigh of relief!

Being a new facility it has built-in audio video systems with retractable overhead large 16:9 wide screen and video projector together with a sound amplification console at the rear of the room feeding both front of room and ceiling mounted speakers. At

present, getting the built-in Mitsubishi WD2000 projector to display a 4:3 image is proving difficult, but we will persevere.

In addition to a radio microphone, wall sockets are also available for auxiliary microphones and for linking a computer to the video projector. It was pleasing to note that our own projector worked well with the larger screen. In short the new venue is great, many of us are delighted and we look forward to a long association with St Joan's.

Autumn now approaches so it's timely for me to remind and encourage you to get cracking on your end of year members' competition film (6 minutes max) that needs to be submitted by the November club meeting for judging by the well-known David Watterson.

Gordon Sutton

GEORGE HILL - HON TREASURER

Sadly our Club Treasurer for the past 18 months died suddenly on 9th August 2008.

George with his wife Delia joined Surrey Border in 2004 to learn about film making, but specifically editing, shortly after Delia gave him his 1st camcorder.

Delia joined the committee in 2005 as Social Secretary and George followed two years later by becoming Treasurer.

Although we saw little evidence of George's filming endeavours he certainly put in much effort behind

the scenes in maintaining the club's accounts. Our sympathy goes to Delia, their 3 sons and families.



CHRISTMAS MEAL

The Christmas meal this year is at the Farnham House Hotel on Sunday 7 December. The final cost is to be confirmed, but will be £16.25 to £18 per head. If you wish to book, please add your name to the noticeboard.

Please note that as Delia has funded the booking, your deposit of £10 is required when you book.

The menu is on the noticeboard, so please have a read, and make your choices by the beginning of November latest.

ON THE SUBTLETY OF BARN DOORS

No - this is not about barn doors on farms! It's the 'Barn Doors' you might find under the Transitions section of your video editing software.

Transitions in videos are effects that we all need when we want to fade from one scene into another rather than use a simple cut. I suspect most film makers stick to a simple 'dissolve' or 'cross dissolve' - the names of these transitions seem to vary from one package to another. Today's video editing software offers a wide range of alternative transitions - such as page turns, peels, fly aways - and so on. Some folk like to play with these in their films but I confess that I belong to the school of thought that sees many of these transitions as intrusions which tend to distract the mind of the audience from a film rather than draw them into it.

The basic reason for using a transition is to indicate some form of discontinuity in the story. If the action is continuous but seen from different camera angles, then simple cuts are all that are required. But if the action changes to either a different time or a different place, then it is no longer continuous - especially in the mind of the viewer. This is when a transition is required and the simple dissolve will fit most such occasions. But there can be exceptions and one I have come across is what prompted this article.

Dissolves, like most transitions, work well when the 'before' and 'after' images are significantly different. Man jumps

into taxi, taxi drives off, man arrives at hotel. A dissolve between the taxi driving off and the man's arrival at the hotel is enough to let the audience know that it took some time for him to get there. But here the taxi and hotel arrival images are very different. If the two images are very similar - almost identical - this convention doesn't work as well.

I came across this problem several years ago in a project for a fund raising video which involved interviews with parents of children with special needs. I transcribed the interviews and selected the clips to be used to tell their story and, of course, these came from different time points in the interviews. So although the interviewees were in the same basic seated position, their head movements and shoulder movements obviously varied throughout the interview.

Assembling clips with simple cuts led to obvious jump cuts. To get round this I used the normal dissolve but found that this was very unsatisfactory. The same person was in the 'same' position and apparently just continuing talking - and this weird dissolve effect interrupted the video image while the voice continued without any apparent interruption. The best option would have been to use cutaways but unless these can be chosen to be obviously relevant to what the interviewee is talking about they can stand out like a sore thumb.

I experimented with other transitions and opted for a 'page turn' - which

seemed unobtrusive to me but when the audience of parents saw the film they asked "What was that?" Later I revisited the problem and, under the 'Wipe' class of effects, found the Barn Doors option. This, in my software (Adobe Premiere Pro CS3), consists of two thin vertical lines which 'wipe' out to left and right from the centre of the image. The speed at which they do this is controllable. Where the before and after images are very different, the transition is glaringly obvious - more so than a dissolve. But where they are almost identical - as in the interviews - surprisingly, the result is quite subtle. The background stays exactly the same and the slight head movements are softened by the wipe effect, not jarring as they would in a cut.

I can recommend trying this transition in any similar situation where the before and after images are very similar. I have used it to good effect in a number of projects. But I got caught out recently in a project which involved six different interviews, each of which needed such transitions at several points. I was so confident in my Barn Doors effect that I overdid it! So the audience became all too aware of it - thus spoiling the effect. I replaced half the Barn Doors with relevant cutaways and all was well.

So Barn Doors can give you a subtle transition for situations like the above, as long as you don't overdo them as I did.

With thanks to Jim Closs of IAC

AUGUST CLUB NIGHT

There was an excellent turnout for this very special August meeting of Surrey Border Film & Video Makers: the trial of a new venue, St Joan's Hall near Farnham Station. Members were delighted with the light, airy and ultra-modern hall with a built-in projector and screen, efficient blackout blinds, a built-in sound system and all other mod cons to match.

For comparison purposes, the club brought along its own equipment to try alongside what was provided. The first film we saw was the most memorable and remarkable for many a year. It was about the experiences of the filmmaker when diagnosed with lung cancer. In a dedication to filmmaking far beyond anything most of us could achieve, he

kept a detailed video diary of every aspect of this potentially fatal ordeal.

The tale started with a video of him pleased with himself for having given up smoking. Only a few weeks later came the dreaded cancer diagnosis, visits to see the consultant and MRI scans, all faithfully filmed. With the full cooperation of the hospital and the help of a fellow film-maker, the film even included views of the operation to remove the growth from his lung.

His wife's tearful scenes were not even spared when, half-way through the operation, the news came that the whole lung had to be removed rather than just a part. Chemotherapy and all

its side effects of hair loss and feeling completely rotten were all there in a film that would make even the most dedicated smoker give up immediately.

Brilliant photography and editing made this a truly remarkable film, and it is good to be able to report that the patient came through it all and is still alive today! A number of other films were shown during the evening but they all paled into insignificance compared with this one.

At the end of the evening the unanimous vote was to continue in this magnificent location for all our future club meetings. The club now has a standing booking for the first Friday of every month.

Neil Cryer

LEFT, RIGHT, LEFT, RIGHT

Crossing the line - Ha, it seems to happen so often these days. It makes me spit..... Now, now, calm down Dick, these poor ill informed Directors of today have had their training in Media Studies, very often instructed by people who had never worked in the TV/Film industry. No wonder they have got it wrong so often, and then they try to vindicate themselves, by saying that it was deliberate, "to keep the audience unsettled, taking nothing for granted". Ha.....

I am sure that those fortunate Club members who have attended the Club's professional training courses, so ably run by Mike Sanders, will understand completely, how not to cross the line, and what happens if you do, but for those who have not been able to attend, let me explain a little.

Perhaps an illustration from my past might point us in the right direction. And Direction is what it's all about.

Sometimes I used to work as a television cameraman on horse racing. The standard set up was to have three cameras by the grandstand, one on the finish, another on the straight before the finish, and a third towards the bend before the 'straight'. There was a fourth camera mounted on a 30 foot scaffolding tower in the middle of the race course. This camera was to cover the horses on the far side of the race course, where it could get closer shots of the horses than the by the grandstand cameras. The procedure was to follow the horses from the start with the grandstand cameras, but when the horses reached the first bend, and stated to show their backsides to the grandstand cameras, to cut to the

camera in the centre of the course, who would follow the horse around to the next bend, where the Director would then cut back to the grandstand cameras, who would take the horses to the finish. All very straight forward really.

Well it would be if the Director keeps his eye on the game, and not on the horse that he has placed a large sum of money on, especially if it looks like winning.

"Zoom in tighter camera 4 on the lead horse. Yes that's it keep following it nice and tight. Oh great, keep following it, its definitely going to win" But camera 4, which is on the other side of the race track, is now pointing at the Grandstand, not visible because of the CU of the jockey and horse. Suddenly the Director realises that the other cameras are still following the race, and that we are coming to the finish, so he cuts to the other cameras.

The horse that he has been following on the remote has been going from RIGHT to LEFT on the monitor, but when he cuts to the grandstand cameras, the horse is going from LEFT to RIGHT. So, as far as the poor benighted viewer is concerned, the horses have magically started running the opposite direction! This is because the remote camera, has panned the horse all the way round the course, but because the camera has 'crossed the line' by staying with the horse, rather than letting it leave frame on the bend, and forcing the Director to cut to the grandstand cameras, then as far as the viewer is concerned, its going the wrong/opposite way to the other cameras.

Confused?, well I am. Another OB

(Outside Broadcast) I used to love doing was white water canoeing from Llangollen. We had cameras right down at the waters edge, and up high on the banks to see the canoes progress down stream, through their tricky 'gates' which required a lot of skill. We did this OB for several years, then one Director decided to have one camera on the opposite bank, Canoes which were proceeding down stream, were magically made to appear going up stream when the Director cut to the camera on the opposite bank. Sadly we were never asked to do that OB again.

So basically all you have to remember is if your artist, object, thingy, that you are following, leaves your camera frame left, make sure that on the next shot, it comes in from the right. If it leaves your camera frame going right, make sure that it comes into the next shot from the left. In this way it will appear to be travelling in one direction, and your viewer will then have some grasp of the simple geography of the event.

Just for the hell of it why don't you try filming some feet, going from left to right. Let them go out of frame, stop recording, step over the imaginary line of where the footsteps have been, and ask your 'friend' to walk through frame again. So they have left your frame going right, you cross the line, they walk again and they come in frame right. Now that can't be right surely!!!!

Just remember, exit frame right, enter frame left, and you won't have crossed the line. Good luck.

Dick Hibberd

SURREY FILM-VIDEO FESTIVAL

At the time of writing this (late July) the future of "The Surrey" on 18 January 2009 is in very great doubt.

Over the years the Committee has reduced in numbers. It now consists of:

Terence Patrick - Chairman and projectionist

Maurice Barham - Projectionist

Colin Pain - Raffle

Gordon Sutton - Front of House

David Longley - Secretary, Treasurer and Competition Office

We sent invitations to the other Surrey video clubs to join the committee but without result. As a committee we feel we can just about get by with the pre- and post-show administration so we are



not asking you to join us, although if you volunteer you will be enthusiastically welcomed (we only meet about twice per festival).

What we cannot do is staff the festival for the Public Show. If we cannot attract some volunteers to help out

on the day front of house (for about six hours) we shall have no alternative but to cancel the show. This will be a huge pity considering the reputation of 'The Surrey' for quality in all respects - standards of movies, judging, presentation and accommodation.

We hope that in these critical times YOU will come and help us out. We will have to make our decision in early September so please contact our Chairman as soon as you can.

Terence Patrick FACI, 11 Woodstock, West Clandon, Guildford GU4 7UJ. Telephone 01483 222534 or email: Terencedpatrick@aol.com.

David Longley



MEETINGS are held at St Joan's Centre, 19 Tilford Road, Farnham on the 1st Friday of each month at 7.30pm for 7.45pm. Meetings close around 10pm.

New members are very welcome, either phone 01252 717877 or turn up at the door!

St Joan's Centre is 200 yards south of Farnham station and is in the grounds of St Joan's Church. The entrance to the church is by a narrow road opposite the junction with Alfred Road, and St Joan's Centre is to the right of the church. There is ample parking.



COMPETITIONS

A note for your diary

Just to let you know that next year's Albany Competition will be held on Sunday 19th April 2009

At the Newell Centre Hall, Chichester. (Same venue as this year)

Doors open at 2:00 for show to start at 2:30

We would expect to finish 6:00 to 6:30

Further afield

Phase 4 Fiction Film Competition kw@phase4.free-online.co.uk

Closing : 9 Oct 2008

Festival : 15 Nov 2008

The Golden Knight, Malta International Film Festival www.global.net.mt/macc

Closing : Sep 2008

Festival: Nov 2008

Guernsey Lily Festival. La Villette Hotel, Guernsey, Channel Islands.

Festival: 17-19 Oct 2008

Cotswold International Film Festival www.cotswoldfilmvideofest.co.uk

Festival: 6 Sep 2008

BIAFF (British International Amateur Film & Video Festival)

Closing : Jan 2009

Festival: 24-26 Apr 2009

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2009:

Jan 25 North v South Grand Final

Mar 21-29 FIFA (Wildlife) Festival. Held at Albert in Northern France.

CLUB DATES

Sep 5 Reading F&VM exchange visit

Oct 3 Inter-club Competition

Nov 7 Chairman's Night

Dec 5 Annual Members' Club Competition

DIARY DATES

Nov 12 SBFVM judging at Chichester

Dec 7 Christmas Lunch

MISCELLANY

- If you are in Farnham, look out for the static displays up in the entrance to the Farnham Library.

- If anyone has any camera or editing questions, please let Fred know. We have a great pool of people who are prepared to give 'one-to-one' assistance.

- Sir Paul's next (annual) show of Club Films is to the Rowledge Good Companions, on 4th November, with Paddy Haines presenting, as usual.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Name:

Telephone:

Email: