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CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

As a member of Surrey Border there has been much to keep you busy during the past month, if you were so inclined. For starters, two film festivals to attend; 'The Surrey' at the Electric Theatre in Guildford and the North v South Final in Farnborough Village Hall, Kent.

In preparation for the Albany Competition on 19th April to the theme "The Clock is Ticking" two groups have been working hard preparing and producing films to the working titles of 'Nine Lives' and 'Last Prayer'.

Paul Holden has been keeping me briefed with the technical and acting rehearsals and planned filming occasions and I was delighted to see that our recently recruited youth member

Thomas Adams was taking an active

role. Good on you Thomas. Our PRO advises me that we hope to be seeing another prospective young member at our animation club night in March so please make him welcome.

Continuing on the activity front, following an initiative by Dick Hibberd for the club



to make a short technical film on how to transfer ciné to video, Fred Hawkins our Training Officer has canvassed us for other possible topics that could be incorporated in one or more training DVDs. Peter Matthews was particularly taken by the possibilities that this offers, and has come up with three pages of suggestions covering the topics of camera, sound and lighting. By the time you read this 12 of us will have met for a brainstorming meeting to plan the way forward.

Now that our AGM is upon us it is time for me as your Chairman, having served for three consecutive years, to step down in accordance with the club's constitution. Immediately prior to that I served on the club committee as V-C for 5 years so now feel the need to be rested to give others a chance to inject new life into our club.

I have enjoyed being your chairman and am most grateful for the help and advice I have received from my fellow committee members during my time in office and sincerely wish the new committee all the very best for the future.

Gordon Sutton.

SURREY BORDER AT 'THE SURREY'

Nine of our members attended the Surrey Film and Video Festival on Sunday 18th Jan at the Electric Theatre in Guildford and enjoyed seeing a most excellent programme of 25 films that formed the Public Show, out of an overall entry total of 41.

Eight of the entries came from Surrey Border, of which four were shown at the festival - i.e. 'Grain Processing' by Paul Holden, 'On Patrol' scripted by Rita Wheeler and 'Brighton' and 'Westfield' both from **Steve Bissett**. Steve was our only winner on this occasion and



collected a well-earned Commended Certificate for 'Westfield'. Our other entries

WESTFIELD

Westfield picked up a commended certificate at "The Surrey" and is a classic example of why I take my video camera out and about with me.

My brother and I were at the opening of London's brand new shopping centre "Westfield" purely by accident. The opening included a live fashion show and provided the perfect opportunity for me to try and mimic the "shaky" camerawork style that is purposefully used on programmes such as "The Bill" and "Spooks". The visuals were then cut fast to some very fast music including sirens to grab people's attention.

One of the judges commented that the movie could have been cut even faster. That's the first time I've been accused of that! Of course it was followed up with "...and the movie could have been longer". Now that's business as usual.

Steve Bissett

were 'A Good Start In Life' by David Jackson, 'Blonde Fancy' by Eastern Fringe Group, 'Home Alone' by Golden Girls and 'The Crash' another film by Steve.

David Longley as the hard working 'Surrey' Competitions Officer and fellow member of SFBVM, as in past years did much for the overall success of this festival, and entered 'Gillian' by Heron Productions. Gordon Sutton and Gillian Gatland were part of the Front of House team along with representatives from Reading and Staines Clubs.

Gordon Sutton

CLUB NIGHT - SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Surrey Border Film & Video Makers began the New Year with a lively discussion of some of the films that were winners of the SoCo Roadshow 2008. SoCo, meaning the Southern Counties Region of the Film and Video Institute, runs a regional film and video competition each year.

The idea of having the discussion was to encourage members to think critically about certain aspects of films, and what makes the difference between a winner and an also-ran.

Two films were compared. "One Week in August", which covered some of the history of Cowes week in the Isle of Wight, and "The Cities That Touch the Sky" about a visit to Peru.

The general opinion was that the narrator for "One Week in August" sometimes

slurred his words together which made it hard to hear the commentary, whereas the diction was very clear for "The Cities That Touch the Sky".

Despite the interest of seeing archive footage of previous sailing weeks in Cowes, the audience felt this was over-used. The film lacked a coherent narrative, a beginning, a middle and an end, whereas in comparison, the one about Peru told a definite story. The audience was correct in recognizing that the winner was "The Cities That Touch the Sky".

In the second half of the evening members were entertained by watching a short animation "Jug Band and Blues" followed by an interesting travelogue "Santorini - Island on the Edge". The final film was a drama called "The Race" which won the novice cup. It was well edited, the acting was good and the director had used some interesting and unusual angles for the shots.

Rita Wheeler

EDITORS NEEDED

As we have not yet put a film together on either The Rural Life Centre or Kempton Park, willing members are invited to start the ball rolling with this exercise. I have the footage for The Rural Life Centre, but material is needed for the visit to Kempton Park. Volunteers are needed please, to edit or come up with material for either of these club visits.

Paul Holden

FARNHAM PLAYWRIGHTS COLLECTIVE AT THE MALTINGS

"Farnham playwrights' collective present work-in-progress extracts from six new plays.

*Rachel Barnett - Heather Dunmore
Mark Hewitt - Sean Tyler - Rita Wheeler
Matthew Wilkie
Saturday 17 January 2009 at 6:30pm at
Farnham Maltings, Farnham
01252 745444. Admission free. RSVP"*

Well, that is what the notice said in the last Border Post, and it was probably the fact that it was FREE that probably got me there!

When Jean and I arrived at the Maltings, there were quite a few familiar faces from Surrey Border to greet us, and it was if we were on a family outing. Most enjoyable.

In due course we were summoned up into the 'Barley Room', where audience seating was raised in tiers at one end, leaving the other three quarters of the room bare apart from some chairs. Along one side sat a motley selection of people, who were introduced to us by the Director as the 'actors'. She explained that they had given their time free to perform extracts from the plays-in-production of the authors at the head of this piece. They had been rehearsing all day, and now at 18.30, they would perform for us.

First up was 'Margot' by Heather Dunmore, which will be a full-length play

about the turbulent life of Britain's greatest ballerina. We watched the opening scenes set in the early 1060s looking at her relationship with Rudolf Nureyev.

Next was 'Psychological Interventions in Early Psychosis' by Sean Tyler, which was one scene from his play set in a hotel in New York. The play explores the intimacies of the lives of the residents of the hotel.

Matthew Wilkie's 'Everything I'd hoped you'd be and all things you weren't' was the opening scene from his work



in-progress. A mother takes over her son's identity when he dies, in order to reinvent him as the son she always wanted him to be.

Then it was time to watch our own Rita's work in-progress. Entitled 'One word and you're dead', the scene was about Helen, who left home because of abuse and who became an elective mute. When her abusive father is dead, Helen returns home to finally lay the ghost to rest, and talks again after years of silence.



Finally, 'Untitled (exposure 1)' by Mark Hewitt, which originated from the observations of a woman in a red wing backed armchair gesticulating as she chatted to a friend. "The play only appears to be about the living because the actors are living", says Howard Barker.

It was really quite wonderful how these ordinary people, transformed themselves into other characters, in different environments, just using the floor space and a few chairs. The 'playlets' were really quite diverse, and different, and how someone in one play was a Russian ballet dancer one minute, and then in the next performance, something different again. I found their transformations quite frightening, but very convincing.

Well, in no time our 6 Authors each had a fair crack of the whip, in the way of performances, and I can't imagine how they felt, to see their written fictions, becoming reality before our very eyes.

I thought it was all quite wonderful, but between you and I and the gatepost, I thought our Rita's was the best.

I would just love the Club to make this into a video.

Jean's and my sincere thanks for a very interesting and entertaining evening.

Dick Hibberd

NORTH v SOUTH FINAL

Sadly, three stalwart attenders of the N v S presentations had to pull out due to previous engagements or excessive overtime towards the end of the tax year, so SBFVM attendance was down to 3 this year.

Gordon, Paul and Vivien were treated to an excellent show. The prolific North had produced 14 entries for the first heat, and the nine that didn't make the final were shown first. We realised that if they were representative of the quality of excluded films produced in the North, we were going to be in for a serious challenge in the main competition!

This certainly turned out to be the case. After a comfort break, we were shown the first five films. Then there was a tea break, with excellent refreshments laid on by the Orpington ladies, before we settled down to the last five, including our entry "Just in Case", which actually was shown last – and I appreciated how much the film had been improved during its last edit before submission.

As always at N v S finals, the audience were asked to rank the first three films in order of merit. Only one member of

the audience cleverly got the same three films as the judges (but not in the same order); I found it interesting that Gordon and I, quite independently, ranked three different films in the same order as each other – but only one of our selection was included by the judges in their first three films! (It's up to you to determine what that tells you about the quality of the judging, or of your Club Officers!)

Following the not unexpected announcement of the North as the winners for the umpteenth consecutive year, the theme for next year was announced as "Trapped".

But it is a pity that so few Club Members take the opportunity to see a presentation of so many high quality films produced by our peers. Do make a resolution to go to at least ONE of the various film festivals this coming year! You will not be disappointed – you will be entertained – and you might even pick up some ideas on how to make OUR films better!

Paul Holden

PAYMENT OR EXPOSURE?

A couple of weeks ago I received an email from an IT company in Kuala Lumpur!! Their core business, so they explained, is providing IT software and service for computerisation of medical clinics.

This is what it said – *"Recently, some medical clinics have approached us to provide LCD TV and content to play in their waiting areas for the benefit of patients/visitors. In addition to medical and health-related videos, we think viewers would enjoy short videos on travel. We do not charge the clinics for the content, only the hardware and setup. Hence we would appreciate it very much if you could grant us permission to use three of your videos that are posted on Travelistic (www.travelistic.com) for this purpose."*

Now my slightly cynical husband immediately asked if they were offering to pay me, (they weren't) but to be honest I feel that anyone who posts videos on the internet is simply saying 'I want an audience', not 'I want a fee'. So I therefore replied that they were welcome, and asked if they wanted me to make available better quality videos than were on that particular website. We agreed in the end on 2 gig per second .wmv files which I uploaded to my own webspace, and gave them the URL so they could download them, which saved

me posting DVDs to Malaysia (for which costs they would have compensated me, had it come to that).

It just goes to show that there is an audience out there, and sometimes people actually appreciate what we do. The videos in question were what could be described as 'wallpaper' (a term used by Brian Harrison) ie, just music and pictures, and I can see why they chose those, after all, there is no language barrier if there is no spoken word. It is the video alternative of the fish tank in my doctor's waiting room. Apparently my videos, and no doubt others, will provide a bit of light relief between medical information videos. I wonder which the waiting patients will prefer??

For info, the videos were <http://www.travelistic.com/video/show/851/penguins>, <http://www.travelistic.com/video/show/1057/sunset-beach,-kota-kinabalu>, and <http://www.travelistic.com/video/show/1175/Krimml-falls,-Austria>

The last two were filmed in the mid to late 1990s on my analog Sony handycam, long before I joined this club, although I edited them later. Even though the camera is decidedly shaky, it's difficult to spoil nature at it's best.

Gillian G

LEARNING ZONE

So what does a judge look for in a video competition? We continue to look at judging tips from Pennyj

Sound

Is the sound right? in sync? consistent level?

Are there gaps in the sound (-)

Was the sound particularly difficult and well executed (+)

Too low, too high, any hisses, hum or extraneous sounds. (-)

Does the music suit the film? NO! (-) Cleverly? (+)

Did the ambient sound jump to the next clip? (-)

Maybe a short dissolve would have softened the transition?

The narration was stilted with lots of sss on the "Ss". Hesitant, not loud enough, not clear enough or uninformative (-)

A good, clear, informative, and interesting narration, well delivered! (+)

Transitions

Is every clip dissolved? (This happens a lot and can be very heavy on the eye!) (-)

A dissolve should be used to depict the passing of time, long or short amount of time, also to soften transitions in sound and video.

A fade in and out should be used to begin and close the film, chapter or episode.

Good transitions should not be noticed while watching, only judging!(+)

So too many fades, dissolves or effects cause distraction. (-)

Photography

Look for:

Steady, well framed shots

No unwanted debris or people in the background.

Good lighting

In focus or thrown focus

Any clever stuff with action shots, time lapse, Camera angles,etc (+)

Where are the Close Ups and Big close ups? (+)

Traditionally still shots were not accepted with video, for me if a still shot is used it should zoom in or out to keep it moving.

Next month we shall learn about Editing, Documentary and Audience Appeal

Pennyj



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 10.15pm

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

All details and entry forms of the following competitions can be found on the IAC website.

Competition	Closing Date	Festival Date
BIAFF	31 January 09	BUT GET YOUR FILMS IN NOW!
Frome 5 minute	28 January 09	5 April 09
Croatian 1 minute	18 April 09	30/31 May 09

A note for your diary

Just to let you know that next year's **Albany Competition** will be held on **Sunday 19 April 2009** at the Newell Centre Hall, Chichester. (Same venue as this year). Doors open at 2:00pm for show to start at 2:30pm. We would expect to finish around 6:00 to 6:30pm

21-29 March 2009 FIFA (Wildlife) Festival. Held at Albert in Northern France.

CLUB DATES

- 6 Feb** AGM + 'Kit and Gadgets' by Peter Matthews
- 6 Mar** 'Animation' by Sally Maltby + Rouland Couvela
- 3 Apr** Editing exercise with music
- 1 May** Ray Puleston (Chairman of South Downs) is willing to bring 1½ hrs film including 'Evening with Editing on Steroids'

DIARY DATES

- 19 Apr** Albany Competition, Chichester
- 30 May** Croatian 1 minute competition

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

- 17 January Several members attended the Farnham Playwrights Collective evening at the Malt(ings) Extr-acts. Rita Wheeler's play, 'One Word And You're Dead', was one of the playlets performed.
- 18 January Gordon and Gillian manned Front of House this year at the Surrey Film Festival at the Electric Theatre, Guildford.
- 24 & 26 Jan Training and rehearsals for Albany entry 'Nine Lives'
- 25 January Gordon, Paul and Vivian represented SBFVM at the North v South event at Farnborough in Kent.
- 25 January First shoot for Albany entry 'Last Prayer'
- 31 January Shoot for 'Nine Lives'
- 2 February First of a series of Technical Group meetings to discuss the possibility of filming various aspects of film making for training purposes.
- 4 February Recce for second shoot for 'Last Prayer'

LOOKING FOR ACTORS?

We have contacts with an organisation which puts actors in touch with filming projects. They are quite happy with situations where no payments are made, but in that case the actors will be wishing to add to their show reel that they use to promote themselves.

Go to: www.StarNow.co.uk/

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Name:

Telephone:

Email: