

Whacking
6 of the best!



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The Journal of Surrey Border Movie Makers
www.surreyborder.org.uk

Documentary Diary

Members speak about their competition entries



Our last meeting was the Documentary Competition for which there were seven interesting entries which were judged on the night by the members. However, as a cliff-hanger, the winner will not be announced until our October meeting and there was no time for any of the film makers to talk about their entries. Border Post gives them that opportunity right here in the order of showing!

Raft Race 2017

Guildford. Entered by Peter Frost with the great help of John Ivil and Philip Morley.

Peter says: "This film was featured extensively in the August edition of Border Post, so please refer back for information."



Hemis Festival

Ladakh, India. Entered by Peter Stratford

Peter says: "I guess the reason for me joining SBMM was to get objective reviews from fellow enthusiasts to see just how good or bad my efforts are and to improve in any areas where criticism is well made.

I suspect that the scoring for the entries yesterday might be influenced by how much the audience were interested in the subject as much as by the production quality or technical complexity. I suppose the challenge is to inspire interest where none existed before!"

Photos: Above - Raft Race scene of mayhem. Right: Hemis Festival monastery crowds; Festival procession; young monks gambling.



Photos Cody: Above - Cody illustration; Left: In his flying machine; Below: The British Army 1A model; Below that: David Wilson



Samuel Cody and his Flying Machines

Entered by Colin Lewis

Colin says: "I first became fascinated by Samuel Cody when I was working at the Royal Aircraft Establishment in the 1980's. At the same time, I was engaged in aero-medical repatriation work and learnt that Cody's water plane formed the basis of the first air ambulance. The photographic department at Farnborough gave me some pictures of that aeroplane, which I used when giving talks about patient repatriation.

I finally got around to making a film about Cody last year as a one minute feature, with the resolve to make a more involved documentary later. Besides books and internet detail about the man and his achievements, there is a wonderful tribute to him at the Farnborough

Air Sciences Trust museum, with a full size non-flying replica of his British Army Aircraft 1A, and other artefacts. I approached David Wilson who was the project manager for the construction of that replica, and he was delighted to help out with my film, as was Peter Buckroyd (Trustee and volunteer at the museum). I was also introduced to Jean Roberts who bought the house that Cody had lived in (during the time that he made his powered flight), and subsequently became the leading authority on Cody.

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From your
Club Chairman
John Mills:

Well at last we have some great sound with the new speakers. Well done to Mike for sourcing these and making the required modifications.

For some time we have been struggling with playing the varied types of films on our DVD player. We have had a policy of accepting films on any medium and this has thrown up these issues with many different members using a plethora of systems to edit their films.

We believe we have found a solution without adopting a draconian set of rules that all must abide by. This month we will be testing the proposed solution and hopefully that will solve the problem from now on.

Don't forget if you have an idea for a film and you would like some help to make it the club is ready to assist you, just ask any committee member to start things rolling.

Happy Filming!



Mac Users Forum

by Kathy Butcher

A new Mac user's forum will officially start from October at Peter Matthews cinema, Hut 3. This follows the 2016 training sessions for the Hollywood Camera Work Course which were held at either Mike Sanders studio for PC users or Peter Matthews studio for Mac users.

A taster evening was held in September for the new Mac Forum. Five members were present Peter Matthews, Brian O'Connell, John Ivil and Alan and Kathy Butcher. A lively discussion took place concerning editing software, in particular Final Cut Pro a popular choice with Mac users and included information on getting the most from special effects to overcome, correct or improve various shooting problems. Hints and tips were also exchanged between members which is always useful. Everyone came away having learnt something which is one of the main aims of the evening.

If you are a Mac user or are thinking about buying a Mac and are interested in joining the monthly forum please contact Alan Butcher training@surreyborder.org.uk 07595 62401 or Peter Matthews at the next club night.



Making a Difference

Entered by Jim Reed

Jim has provided a very thorough piece of background about his equipment and approach and says: "My camera is a Sony AX-53. It's a 4k (25p) camera (XAVCS) with either 100Mbps or 60Mbps recording option, but also supports XAVCS 1080 HD at 100p, 50p, or 25p, and more popular standard AVCHD at 50i, 50p or 25p. Having discovered the limitations of 4k, I now almost always shoot in XAVCS HD at either 50p or 100ps

The Hawk video was shot almost entirely in XAVCS HD 100p, which means that the footage had a bit rate of around 100Mbps. I've found that the higher bit rate gives the appearance of very crisp video, and even when its reduced to around 28Mbps (typical of AVCHD bit rate) it seems to give an edge for depth and sharpness. I rendered all my videos at 26Mbps.

Some of the footage was reduced from 100fps to 12.5fps, but it since it was effectively half speed at the normal 25fps, it was still smooth, utilising Sony's active stabilization with all the footage being handheld, with zoom used, too, up to 30x clear image in 4k (30x in HD).

The Autofocus is not so hot, and often struggles to focus. Some of the fast moving birds were out of focus because of the delay in locking on, and a lot of footage was unusable. The video was edited using Sony Vegas Pro 13 Suite, which includes HitFilm, NewBlue, and Izotope plug-ins. The title was created using Sony Vegas, with images of the birds stabilized, and superimposed over the title and background clouds.

The final output was rendered in 50fps and 26Mbps - evidently a problem for the club projection system, but not for my TV! Jim has uploaded it to Youtube at:

<https://youtu.be/fKS5u7LGyLI>

(Note: This entry suffered a projection problem causing jerkiness. It was partly due to the way the video was presented for projection but it resulted in considerable discussion within the committee and Mike Sanders believes he has found a workable solution which John Mills mentions, left. It will be tested at the club like the speakers were. Ed)



Photos for Making a Difference: Impressive title sequence; owl flight between two young visitors; vulture flight low over the crowds.

The Forgotten Country

Armenia. Entered by Peter Stratford

Peter says: "The video was shot on a Canon Legria HF S21 without any tripod - just a bean bag to rest the camera on for these images. The commentary was recorded back home via the built-in stereo microphone of my trusty old Canon XM1



Forgotten Country *from page 2*

which I find gives a nice crisp response for close mic speech when combined with suitable EQ on my Edius editing software. To achieve a “steadycam” effect on a lot of the hand held shots, I relied on Mercalli image stabiliser software.



The Whistlers of La Gomera

Canary Isles. Entered by Martin Boyman

Martin says: La Gomera is unique for two reasons, its amazing landscape and its whistling language. It's the smallest of the Canary islands .

A P&O trip took us up high where we could see the cloud hanging beneath the peaks on Tenerife. Then higher to the Garajonay National Park, a Unesco World Heritage centre designated so in 1986.

The climax of the trip was a chance to witness a demonstration of the Island's unique whistling language, known as Silbo, developed centuries ago to enable the locals to communicate with each other, over distances of 1 or 2 miles, despite this difficult and hostile environment.



Samuel Cody *from page 1*

I prepared by interviewing the experts on camera, giving them free rein to expound in discussion (this gave a natural feel to their appearance). I had organised past photographs and early cine, and appropriate background music. This research gave me a good idea for the screen play and I narrated missing details.

I quickly learnt that there was an awful lot to Cody which easily could have justified a feature film, so I decided to focus on his flying machines, with an introduction about his cowboy background and determination, and ending with his tragic death and funeral. The momentous first successful flight in 1908 was never filmed at the time and photographs were scarce,

The Making of Harry Potter Tour

Warner Brothers Leavesden Studios. Entered by Peter Frost
As a family, we visited the studios back in April and I wrote up an article at the time to hold for a future issue of Border Post - and this is the one! It's on the next page!



The demonstration really needed two cameras, one to film the main whistler and a second to show the other whistler moving around the restaurant showing how she was being guided by whistle language to find the hidden objects, but you can't use what you haven't got.

The Island and Spain are now very keen that the language is preserved for future generations. To this end it is a compulsory subject for all schoolchildren.

Camera: Canon XA25, using the built in microphone. **Recorded** at 24 Mbps and 25 fps in AVCHD. **Editing Kit:** Corel Video Studio, Pro X6.

Photos: Left - travelling higher. Right - Mount Teidi view on Tenerife; Whistling demo (whistler is on the far left)



but there were some nice water paintings and illustrations which added to the feel of that flight.

I find the biggest problem in making documentaries is the narration and matching it to visual material - which comes first? Answer? A bit of both. I stand up with the script and pretend I am speaking to an engaging audience, whilst recording! Nicely timed overlays illustrating specific points help break up a fixed view of the presenter.

Last year I began to film material using my Panasonic palmcorder. It's not my best camera but for its remarkable portability it does record excellent colour and definition, and so continued using it. Sound inside the museum and at Cody's former house was marred by road traffic noise, which I find very difficult to remove

in edit, and used background music to partially mask it. The next project will use wearable mikes with a very defined sound capture envelope. I felt that Cody's life span era (1867-1913) was in keeping with a simple edit (Adobe Premiere Elements 15) - so no fancy stuff there! The edit required constant trimming to fit into 20 minutes. I was worried that the film may have been a little too technical for a general audience but I think seeing the Cody Flyer replica in action, and detail such as the on/off switch did create interest! Samuel Cody deserves a longer tribute.

Well worth a visit!

FAST Museum, Farnborough Rd
Hants. GU14 6TH

<http://www.airsciences.org.uk/index.html>

THE MAKING OF Harry Potter

Written and photographed by Peter Frost



As someone who has always been fascinated by film making, even to the extent of arranging a private viewing of the actual Walt Disney animation and live action studios, in Anaheim, California, long before the theme parks featured 'tours', I have been waiting for an opportunity to visit Warner Bros Studios, Leavesden for 'The Making of Harry Potter Tour'. My chance came as a recent birthday present from my family who booked a special after hours opening from 8.00pm to midnight (there's another discounted visit in December at <https://www.groupon.co.uk/deals/warner-bros-studio-tour-experience>).

Although it was an M4 / M25 challenge to get there, it was so very well worth it. It is not a theme park; there are no rides; it takes about 3 1/2 hours to walk through all the exhibits contained in the very Warner Bros Studios (J and K - appropriately the initials of author, JK Rowling) where the series was filmed and includes the backlot too.

You can take your time, as once you're in you go at your own pace, reading all the notes, viewing the videos and displays and taking in and walking through the incredible sets, finding out about film makers' 'secrets' (how they achieved the effects), the amazing amount of props (there are another three massive warehouses full, as well!), architectural drawings, models, prosthetics, creatures, animatronics - and you can take photographs or film as a record of your visit, but the lighting for some displays will give it a blue cast.

I cannot think of any other place where anyone interested in film making, and all

the work that goes into creating a feature film, is so clearly on display. As this article is likely to be read by budding amateur film makers, if you've not already been, you should not miss the opportunity. It would help to have seen the *Harry Potter* blockbusters but it's not essential as there is so much to absorb which is fascinating in itself. No, WB didn't pay me for this!

Details:

3.5 hr walking tour (guide headsets are available)

First Studio - Great Hall, Production and Costume Design, Set Construction, Gryffindor Dormitory and Common Room, Dumbledore's Office, Professor Snape's Potions Classroom, Hagrid's Hut, Green Screen, Special Effect, Construction and Forbidden Forest, Platform 9 3/4.

Cafe -

Try 'Butterbeer'.

Backlot -

Knight Bus, Harry's House, Hogwarts Bridge.

Second Studio - Prosthetics, Creature Creation, Diagon Alley, Art Department - Concept Sketches, Technical Drawings, Card Models, Hogwarts Model.

Photos taken on the tour:

Top Two: Yule Ball decoration; Gryffindor dormitory.

Second Row: The Great Hall; Professor Snape's Potions Classroom; Buckbeak.

Right Column: Chamber of Secrets door; Dumbledore's Office; Hogwarts Express on Platform 9 3/4; Diagon Alley; Hogwarts scale model.



You must prebook a tour!



Looking at Animation

This article will be an irregular one, turning a brief spotlight on professionally produced animation of quality but not that of the widely seen studios' output such as Warner or Disney.



I'm kicking off with **Sylvain Chomet**, a French born writer, comic strip creator and musician who came to London to learn animation. His first film was in 1998, *The Old Lady and the Pigeons* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4PaOpBfrev8>), and he received an Oscar nomination for it. A starving policeman sees an old lady feeding the pigeons and, dressed as a huge pigeon, he forces her to feed him to bursting.

Chomet's hand drawn painterly style really appeals to me. His films are rich in observation with beautifully fluid animation; I have two of his films in my collection.

His animation influence came from Nick Park and those humorous animations of *Creature Comforts* before the *Wallace and Gromit* successes. His characters are nonmarketable (not the sugary Disney doll types) as they are caricatures of life.

Chomet's films are rather few and far between but they have met with huge acclaim and many Oscar and BAFTA nominations, having international appeal as there is little dialogue. His first feature success was *Belleville Rendezvous* (*The Triplets of Belleville*). Realising that her grandson is a lonely child, she tries all manner of gifts to stimulate him, eventually getting him a trike. As he grows, she trains him to exhaustion for the Tour de France. The mafia kidnap him and granny and the dog set off to find him. This is one resourceful granny - hilarious.

Chomet had grown up with and admired the work of Jacques Tati (*Jour de Fête*; *Monsieur Hulot's Holiday*; *Mon Oncle*; *Playtime*, etc) and, as an illustrator in France, had drawn posters for Tati's films. He asked Tati's daughter, Sophie, if he could adapt her father's unfiled screenplay of *The Illusionist* for animation. As she did not want another actor to play her father she realised that animating him would be the way to go.

Chomet changed the film's locations to France, London and Edinburgh, where he set up a studio and lived for six years with his English wife and producer, Sally. The film

Researched and written by Peter Frost

captures the light and atmosphere of the city and surrounding landscape so beautifully in watercolours and is truly a homage to the City of Edinburgh.

It's the story of a conjuror, Monsieur Taticheff (Tati's real name), having to scrape a living in ever declining nightclubs and music halls of Paris. In search of work he travels first to London, where his act is almost swamped by a talentless rock group, the Britoons, and their screaming fans.

Still searching for work, he travels to Scotland and the Isle of Iona, off the western coast. The journey by train (Chomet loved train travel) and boat to the island is so beautifully realised. Iona is where a young fan becomes fascinated by his magic and accompanies him to Edinburgh. There develops a gentle father/daughter relationship between Tati and the young fan for whom, although he can't really afford them, he buys gifts which she thinks he conjures up by magic.

She eventually grows into a well dressed young lady at the magician's expense and falls for a young neighbour. You can feel the emotions within the animation. Chomet's vision and direction are superb. This is poignant animation at its best.

Chomet's latest animation project will be *The Thousand Miles*, based on Italy's most prestigious car race, Le Mille Miglia, when two brothers step back into their past on a magical odyssey. It comes out this year.



(Copyright images acknowledged and used only for illustrative purposes).

1. 2. *The Old Lady and the Pigeons* - The emaciated policeman and dressed as a pigeon
3. 4. 5. *Belleville Rendezvous* - the young boy; granny buys him a pup; and as an adult exhausted from cycling
6. 7. 8. *The Illusionist* - magic for the fan; overlooking Edinburgh; Edinburgh city view. 7. *The Thousand Miles*

10 Spot the Differences!

Photo by Brian O'Connell; conceived and doctored by Peter Frost

You may wonder what's going on here, but that's not the question. The question is - **CAN YOU SPOT THE DIFFERENCES** between the photo on the left and the amended one on the right? You will have to **enlarge** them to compare as the 10 differences are subtle. No space for the solution this month, so frustratingly, you'll have to wait until November! I hope the tension doesn't overwhelm you!!



NEXT MEETING!

Fri 6th October It's Inter Club Competition Time again! We host the Competition between other local clubs, view and judge their entries, providing a critique on each.

MORE DIARY DATES 2017/18

Fri 3rd November Showing of *Norah's Ark* and *The Making of* with the children and parents involved invited along plus popcorn and cartoon. Second half will be SERIAC films. Deadline for Club Comp.

Fri 1st December Club Competition

Sun 3rd December Christmas lunch - venue to be confirmed

Fri 5th January 2018 Film selection and discussion

Fri 2nd February AGM plus programme to be announced

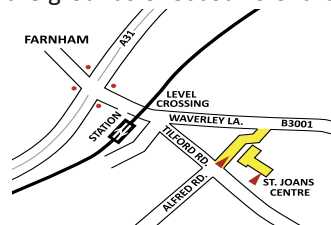
2018 Plans! Watch out for: *Phone Film Edit Exercise*; *Film in an Evening* - the Return!

COME AND SEE WHAT WE DO!

See what other movie makers are up to and you may get some inspiration for your own projects. We always welcome new members and you can sound us out for **free**, too. You can find out more about us by visiting our web site www.surreyborder.org.uk or email the secretary: secretary@surreyborder.org.uk We are also on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SurreyBorderMovieMakers/timeline>

Meetings are held at St Joan's Centre, 19 Tilford Road, Farnham GU9 8DJ on the 1st Friday of each month at 7.30pm for 7.45pm. Meetings close around 10.15pm. When coming for the first time, please email: secretary@surreyborder.org.uk 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.



REMEMBER!
Your first visit is free!

Our members range from beginners to ex professionals, shooting video with DSLR Cameras, Camcorders and Phones, editing on both Mac and PC platforms. But that's not all, we welcome those who want to learn or participate in all aspects of film making, including script writing, storyboarding, producing, directing, lighting, editing, acting, helping out as crew or simply improving your family and holiday films. Whatever you are interested in, you are welcome to take a look at us as detailed above.

Border Post

Your contributions for inclusion will be appreciated together with photographs if possible. Please send them to Peter Frost, The Editor Border Post for the November issue: editor@surreyborder.org.uk