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

Members may remember that way back, Dave Skertchly showed us his Model Railway film. Now he's setting down his method of filming from a camera wagon to bring the viewer down in size and travel on the model train. Dave has written several articles for a Model Railway magazine and tells me he's actually been paid for them!

The May Edition of Border Post will be brought to you by your new Editor, Paul Saban. Please support him with your news and photos.



Filming a Model Railway The Camera Wagon

Written and photographed
by Dave Skertchly

Dave Skertchly likes filming his model projects and we have seen some of his efforts shown at club evenings. His upgrade to HD means that Dave can re-shoot and improve his films and here he describes his new camera wagon and the tests carried out to achieve the best results. Ed



Film making is a hobby, which is in its own right as absorbing and fascinating as are model railways. Combine the two, as I have, and making films of the my model of the *Vale of Weedol Tramway* has become an enduring pleasure.

Forty years ago making 8mm movies of models was difficult and expensive, but nonetheless I tried with some small level of success. The 8mm clockwork camera required focusing with shims cut from cigarette tins, placed behind the lens. The 4 minutes of film cost a couple of quid (more like £15.00 now) and had to be sent away for processing only to discover a week or two later that the experiment had failed.

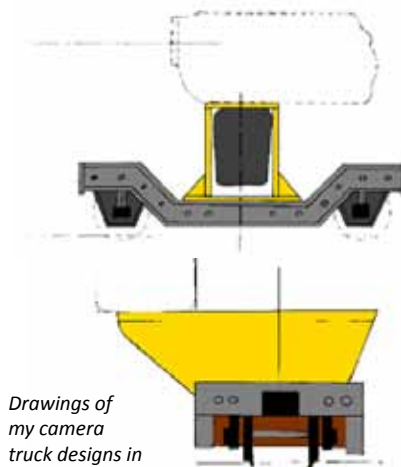
The breakthrough came when digital video cameras became small enough and light enough to be useful, and furthermore the cost became low enough that a crash into the pond did not ruin the bank account. Since then there have been many developments such as Bluetooth connected micro cams, and even the downlinked virtual reality cameras so beloved of drone pilots. For now I will limit myself to the kind of cameras most of us will have to hand, and maybe in the future we might review the latest technology.

I always wanted to film my railway in action as it were from on board the train and even in the cab. This has been achieved by

Dave, it seems, is one of those irresponsible types who leans out of the carriage windows to get the best shot of the train and locomotive at risk of having his head knocked off. Much better to limit this to a garden railway than risk your life.

using a simple camera crane mounted to a truck. The camera is mounted off centre so that the view is naturally along the train.

The first question you are bound to ask is what kind of camera should be used. I chose to test the 3 most common cameras as a comparative test.



Drawings of my camera truck designs in preparation

Each camera was mounted to the wagon and pointed at a squared screen at a standard distance from the lens which equated to one VOW bogie coach length. The squared test card was used to test field of view, focus and distortion. I then removed the test card and carried out

The basic set up of my diesel locomotive



a short standard run to check the anti-shake, depth of field and automatic focus.

1. Camcorder

The first camera tested was my camcorder (Panasonic HC-V210) with the anti-shake enabled and in fully automatic mode. All the results were, as expected, perfectly adequate.

2. iPhone

I then fitted an iPhone to the wagon using one of those mounts from a selfie stick and again good results were obtained, with the merest suspicion that the anti-shake wasn't quite as effective.

3. GoPro

The GoPro was then fitted using a rather large bracket. The field of view was enormous as was the barrel distortion which makes everything appear twisted.

This is a feature of the Go Pro which is intended to be used by sportsmen who do not use the viewfinder, the wide angle has the huge benefit of making it immune to shaking and having a massive depth of field within which everything is in focus. All 3 of the tested cameras produced good results and which you choose is simply a matter of artistic taste.



iPhone mounted on the camera wagon using the adaptor from a selfie stick.

The test results for the Go Pro Hero clearly show the very wide viewing angle. Barrel distortion is evident even in the centre of the frame and is even more evident where straight lines feature in the frame. On the other hand it is inexpensive robust and foolproof.



The Go-Pro is mounted on a strange screw arrangement and bracket which is a disadvantage.



The test set up with the coach and camera wagon in a fixed position with a test card to check the optical performance.

T2 and T3 Test results for my Panasonic HC-V210 which shows that it is capable of doing what is required. This is not surprising since I have been using it for the best parts of 3 years already.

I have enjoyed filming my railway for 40 years.



T2

These shots were taken using a clockwork 8mm film camera which was focussed with a shim cut from a cigarette tin pushed behind the lens.



This set up gives a really good shot into the cab of 970 Excelsior and fits in the loading gauge of farmer Edwin Jones' small bridge at Amcachudefaid.



Again close to the cab as Driver Sid takes 970 Excelsior over the ledge cut into the side of mount Bluddifrisin



A favourite shot along a light goods as 970 Excelsior runs through Llatidos Junction



I use a simple tripod which positions the camera at the right height for off board shots. It is based on a bottle top pan and tilt head which comes in most useful on holiday.



T3



An extension bar is useful to increase the field of view when the truck is shunted



All sorts of tricks can be used to set up the camera. A brick is used to position for a telephoto shot of (engine Duncan on the Bridge at Abbernuffawun.

Editor's Note: Dave makes his own engines and rolling stock from scrap metal and wood, painting it to look metallic. His workshop is full of his creations - he's an engineer at heart.



*However, he doesn't take it too seriously as can be seen in some of the Welsh looking names on his railway. Try reading **Bluddifrisin** forwards or **Llatireggub** or **Llatidos Junction** backwards!*

'Inside' gains ★★★★★

Philip Morley has received a result from the IAC that **Inside I'm 35** has been awarded three stars. The judges felt that it was two films in one, the 'interviews' and the musical, about which they were enthusiastic. Overall, they have given our efforts a thorough and fair appraisal.

Drone Zone

Photos - Dave Rayers, Written by Peter Frost

Our March club meeting was all about drones, organised and very thoroughly prepared by Philip Morley, one of the club's keenest drone owners.

Philip's Powerpoint presentation covered all the aspects of drone ownership and operation and was quite an eye opener but he was also joined by Allan Arthurs, who brought his professional knowledge to the proceedings and a whole load more information about operating a drone legally for financial gain.

Philip was up first and showed footage taken with his DJI **Mavic Pro 2**, a very sophisticated and highly capable drone that folds into nothing more than a man bag! It can take the place of a camera slider, a dolly and track, follow the operator, circle a designated spot, track through trees as long as there is sufficient wing space and get those amazing aerial shots, too. It is equipped with a 4k Hasselblad camera, so the resulting footage is remarkable.

DJI, a Chinese company owned by Mr. Wang, has captured an amazing 72% of the drone market.

Allan then explained his much larger drone, the **Inspire 2**, the first filmmaking drone in the world to integrate an HD video transmission system, 360° rotating gimbal and a 4K camera, as well as the simplicity of app control. Furthermore, the Zenmuse X5 and X5R cameras make it the choice of filmmakers around the globe.

Footage shot over Farnham castle was shown to demonstrate its superb capabilities. It was a fascinating evening, excellently presented.

Left: Philip and his Mavic Pro 2, Right: Allan with his Inspire 2



By Rita Wheeler: Photo by Peter Frost

We had a very successful afternoon at the Refreshers Festival. Philip set up 3 devices which caught the attention of people as they wandered from stall to stall. Philip also set up a camera with a monitor and a green screen so that Mike Sanders could pretend to be a weather man. We could



not entice any passer by to have a go. However, we feel that next year we should have two table spaces and have the green



screen with clear access, the monitor with the weather map on it for Mike to point to, then, if possible another screen pointing towards the audience so they can see the result.

We had 20 people leave their names and email addresses for me to contact. A figure which we felt was extremely good. A number of people we chatted to appeared to be really interested, so, we shall see if any turn up for the next meeting and more importantly, if any join!

We had several interested in us making films including Farnham Town Council (thank you Peter F for chatting them up) who would be interested in an 8 minute film showing a year in Farnham (think I've got that right); Rotary (the Duck Race) and several charities who want films made for them. I did point the charities in the direction of Lions and Rotary to seek sponsorship then to return to us once they've got some money promised to them.

Jim Reed and his wife stopped by to say hello and were surprised at how busy it was. Brian O'Connell came around about 6 and did some good PR chatting to interested people. In all there were plenty of us on the stand: Philip, Mike, Peter Ives, Peter Frost, Kathy, myself, Al, Alan Butcher and Brian. We needed that amount as we all needed to go off for a coffee, tea and a sit down at some point! Seven hours standing is hard going.

We were biased but felt that our stand was far more interesting than anyone else's as we had interesting visuals - i.e. the 3 devices that Philip had set up, all with different scenes showing. The green screen made us stand out. The two pop-ups, Sarah's War and the club one were a little lost, but if we have two tables next year both pop-ups will stand out more. Most of the other stands had pop-ups but were just handing out pamphlets.

Border Post Clippings

Netflicks Frensham Filming

By Peter Frost

Photo opportunity from opposite bank.

I am offering a novel prize for the best picture as this is my last Border Post as Editor. Send to Rita for me to judge for May Club meeting. Good luck!

On a recent walk, we saw large circular wooden structures laid out on the sand at Frensham Little Pond along the water's edge.

We were told by the surveyors busily at work there that they were establishing where village huts would be sited for a Netflicks film set in mediaeval times. Shooting is to start on Easter Day 22nd April, probably one of the busier days for visitors!

Border Post
Clippings

Dick Turpin Highwayman!



Reported by Peter Frost

As a surprise result of chatting to Farnham Council personnel at the recent Refreshers Festival, I have been told that *Eyeline Cinema Productions* are looking for 'crowd artists' to populate a major shoot sequence for their production of *Dick Turpin, Highwayman*, at a location in Bourne Woods, Farnham on **Wednesday, 8th and Thursday 9th May.**

The choice for many previous feature productions, Bourne Woods are doubling as forest near York, where Turpin was captured and then hanged at York Castle.

Anyone, male or female, over the age of 18 is eligible with no prior acting experience necessary as direction will be given and period clothing will be supplied.

Those interested in taking part are asked, in the first instance, to apply **promptly** on line at the address below where full details are given. This is a really interesting opportunity with time and numbers limitations. <https://www.eyelinecinema/turpin/take part/>



Bourne Woods,
Farnham,
Surrey

Border Post Contributors!

These members kindly helped me by contributing to this issue of Border Post:
Dave Skertchly, Rita Wheeler

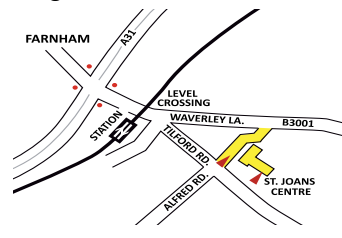
COPY DEADLINE!
May 2019 edition will be
14th of April
with **no extensions.**
Late copy will be carried over to the next month. Thank you for your co-operation - Ed!

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!



NEXT MEETING

Friday 5th April Groups formed for Film in an Evening. Brainstroming exercises + previous FIAEs

MORE DATES 2019

▶ **Friday 10th May** (NOT 3RD!!) Foley Edit results + some previous examples

▶ **Friday 7th June** Tech Evening with photographer Jason Butcher **AT HIS ALDERSHOT STUDIO NOT AT THE HALL. DETAILS WILL FOLLOW ASAP**

Friday 5th July Film in an Evening. Groups have 3 hours to film and edit then show the results at the club.

▶ **Sunday 14th July** Summer Social at Rita and Al's N.B. DATE REVISED

Fri 2nd August A selection of films to enjoy

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, props making, acting, learning about equipment, 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