



Cameras always  
Take a Holiday!



Header Creation: Peter Frost

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FILM IN A MONTH

Written by Peter Frost Photography by Brian O'Connell

And talking of the Weyfarers, their entry called **Raring to Go** devised by Brian to address the lack of people available, centered round the planning meeting at our usual location for such things, the Horse & Groom pub in Meroo, Guildford, upstairs at a long table delightfully placed

and the humorous contrast between the rather serious reasons for absence was hugely helped by the flow of pub customers in and out of the toilets.

The whole thing was shot once in just 25 minutes using three iPhones set at different angles, a recorder on the table and available light. Brian edited our rambling into something worth watching and it raised some laughs. The toileteers had no idea that they were being filmed.



Yes, I'm filling in for Philip who needs a little more time to deal with other things, so here we go - August already!

Let's kick off with our July meeting and the **Film in an Evening (or actually in a Month)**

with the theme: **Lies, Lies Damned Lies.** There were just two entries due to so many having other demands around the 1st July, so no chance for a one evening shoot, edit and show. Quite a relief!

Philip Morley took the role of MC and stood in for Mike who was dealing with another round of **IT**, and Gordon Sutton (Weyfarers) missed out for the same reason.

Brian was on technical, Gordon had the role of the meeting coordinator, but it doesn't go very far as one after another, the four members visible and two others on the phone (Brian), each told Gordon their reasons for not being able to make the shoot on 1st July, and he found that he was the only one who could - but then he had a phone call!

The story was sketched out by Brian



OLDER and WISER (marginal thinking)

TRUST SCIENCE: STUDIES SHOW THAT IF YOUR PARENTS

I STARTED OUT WITH NOTHING, AND I STILL HAVE MOST OF IT



Written and Illustrated by Jim Reed

I've always thought that real life is a rich source of material for humour, and I've not been disappointed.

Jo's character was based on a real life Diplomat who met with Saddam Hussein to discuss the border dispute between Iraq and Kuwait in 1990. It was later suggested that as a result of her apparently indicating that America wouldn't intervene, the US had given Saddam a 'green light' for his subsequent actions. April's role was re-imagined and applied to the Falklands war.

The document entitled 'Middle East Information Centre – Telephone Handbook', subtitled 'How to Lie Convincingly' was released as part of the State National Archive in 2021. Apparently it had been created at the time of the First Gulf War by anonymous department of Foreign Affairs officials, and I couldn't resist using it in my video.



I wrote the script with Jo in mind for the character of April because I thought she could deliver the words with cold, honest, naivety. I also had in mind Gillian for the part of the interviewer, because I believed she could ask the question straight, but become increasingly incredulous at the responses.

Gillian wasn't keen to go in front of the camera – but she need have had no concerns - she delivered both the visual expressions and words just as I had hoped!

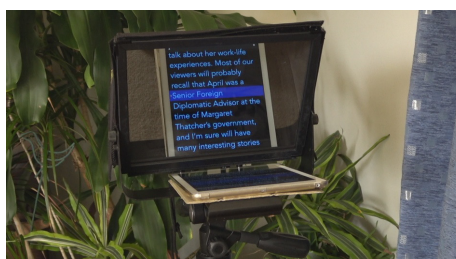


Both Jo and Gillian should be rightly proud of their performances in the video. They were excellent!



Due to a variety of circumstances, it was not possible for everyone to be available at the same time for rehearsals or on Friday 1st for a proper 'Film in an Evening' session. But I decided to make a video anyway.

The format of an interview worked well because, despite the appearance in the video, Jo and Gillian were never in the same room at the same time. Their parts were recorded separately, and joined in editing. This also meant that no one had to learn a script – we could use a teleprompter.



Each spoke to a teleprompter positioned in the location that the other would eventually occupy. Added realism was created because when we recorded Jo's session I spoke the words of the interviewer, and then when we recorded Gillian's part, she was able to listen to an audio playback of Jo speaking.

The microphone was Jack Visser's wireless Rode system, avoiding the need to hide cables, which then connected to his Tascam recorder. Jack also provided

the lighting using two LED units with reflectors.

Peter Stratford framed the talent in the cameras, and also managed the multiple camera positions.

We used the same room in my house as we did for Cards of Destiny, but the room acoustics are pretty poor due to the lack of soft furnishings, so I had to steal the curtain rail and curtain from the lounge when Moira wasn't looking, and then suspend it from the plaster wall lights. Fortunately they didn't break - There isn't really a window behind those curtains!

At times it felt a bit like herding cats, because availabilities were so challenging, but we got there in the end. We all had great fun, and that was the most important thing. It was a great team.

My thanks to Jo Jones, Gillian Gatland, Peter Stratford, Jack Visser and Mike Sanders.

Jim Reed



If you'd like to see it or see it again, here's the link:

'Diplomatic Immunity' (14 mins)  
<https://youtu.be/Nhifvk7Nmp4>



## A BIT ABOUT TELEPROMPTS

Written and Illustrated  
by Jim Reed

Watch Jim's 'The Making of Diplomatic Immunity'  
(7 mins) using this link: <https://youtu.be/IEhnyV3pDFU>

The limited availability also meant that there was no time to learn scripts (although I'm not sure if anyone really does these days – in **Cards of Destiny** the words were written on the playing cards).

What I learned from **Cards of Destiny** was how challenging it is for non-professionals to remember lines. They are forgotten, or mixed up, causing frustration with the actor.

But something that I hadn't expected was how 'dry' and 'wooden' lines can be when they are spoken by someone who is trying hard to recall their words from memory. Probably it's because we are spending our effort trying to recall the words, and that it makes us forget to use any kind of inflection or emotion in our voices.



The teleprompt proved to be huge success. The **PromptSmart** software uses speech recognition to track the text location and was running on an elderly ipad. Despite the ipad being a bit temperamental – and often locking up – it did the job in the end. No one had to learn any lines, and more importantly neither performance could possibly be described as being wooden! Nor is it obvious that either Jo or Gillian were reading their lines. But, because they were, their brain was free to add emotion and feeling into the words and expressions, which they did magnificently! Great performances – well done to both of them!



I also believe that utilizing teleprompts with other club members could help with



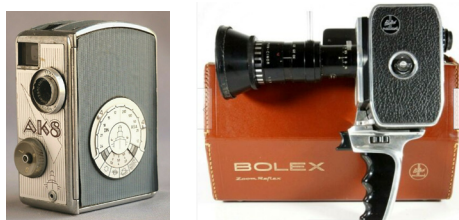
their acting – I'm sure that almost everyone is capable of delivering a very convincing performance with a little bit of cheating!



Surrey Border Movie Makers is my today creative film making stimulus but I've been there before.

I started film making using my dad's Kodak camera, actually taking it over from him until he felt that I deserved my own so he could have his back. I was in my mid teens then and was a proud owner of an AK8 single lens standard 8mm little wonder.

I say that because this camera had many advanced features. Sure, it was clockwork, but unlike most you could rewind film in-camera which allowed for dissolves from one scene to another. It also had a single frame release, great for animation which I dabbled in and an 'effects box' to make wipe transitions, keyhole view, split screen and the ability to add other effects, too. What a gem, used to hone my craft!



But I wanted a telephoto lens and progressed to a Bolex p2 which had a superb zoom lens and it was this camera

## Digitising Old Movies

Written and illustrated by Peter Frost

with which I made most of my early films ranging from documentaries to story films, both dramas and comedies.

I was now in my late teens and had joined a local film making evening course at nearby Fitzgeorge School with my next door neighbour, whose dad was President of Epsom Cine Society and she was the Treasurer. We had grown up more or less as brother and sister.

At the course we met others who were finding their way in film making but we soon knew more than our tutor. When the course ended, as a group we decided to carry on and formed Fitzgeorge Films, to make story films.

I now had a 4 track tape recorder, sound projector, a striping machine and stepped up to semi synchronised sound - effects, music and some lip sync speech. But over the last 55 - 60 years, my 8mm films have been in a box as the equipment to show them became defunct.

Time to bring them up to date, so I started to investigate the companies out there who digitise film and video as I wanted to

have the transformation done correctly and sound kept in sync with the visual. I learned that the frame by frame scanning method can be adjusted to all speeds without loss of sync. or distortion.

The Companies I contacted were: **Pennylane Video / Kodak Express / Each Moment / Digital Converters / Oxford Duplication / Excelsior Films / Rutland Productions / Images 4 Life**

I reduced the list having made contact and found that some only took Super 8mm, others only standard/super 8mm silent.

Various options within the digitising process were available. Retain the 3x4 format and have black edging or expand the image to fill the screen. Did I want it upscaled to HD 1080, 4k or left in its native state? What about cleaning, enhancing, colourising? Supply on DVD or stick or download? How much do they charge, by the foot or reel size? Do they charge extra for sound transfer? Are there any quantity discounts?

It became very confusing when comparing one company with another and I have a

lot of film and Video 8 to transfer, so it would be a sizeable investment. I had to be sure that I picked the right company, so after many emails and enthusiastic phone conversations, I whittled it down to three companies.

I thought that, with a potentially large order, the only way to make my selection was to find out if any would do a free digitised 8mm film and video tape, each company to get the same two items. They all agreed.

My film *Squirrel* was shown at the July meeting, a test by one of the companies selected, with a little re-editing as well. It's not a perfect film, contains soft focus that I had wanted to go back and reshoot, but it does serve to give me a comparison, albeit with some reservations.

Here are some grabs from both film and video that I received and at this point, I'll give each an alphabetic reference. Although free of charge, the idea was for each company to show off its digital transfer capabilities for an order in the region of £1,500, and more to follow.

The photos here are illustrative and can't have the clarity of the actual transfers!

## FILM Opening Title



**Company A\*:** Drab image reproduction with a sort of fog over it; dirty; part of title sequence chopped off; sound speed too fast. 14 days turn around; by post.



**Company A:** After putting it through iMovie and enhancing the colour and contrast but sound could not be improved.



**Company B:** Vibrant saturated colour favouring Kodak's blue-green; sound correct speed; 4 days turn around by hand.



**Company C:** Colour very close to the film origination; sound at correct speed; 7 days turn around by post.

\*A. It was agreed that the film would go through their professional service, so the poor result was unexpected and will be investigated. They have agreed to redo it.

## FILM FOOTAGE Colour Comparisons



**Company A:** Drab colour; dark areas either side



**Company B:** Saturated colour too green; showing more grain



**Company C:** Good colour true to original; more even exposure

## Detail Comparisons



**Company B:** Detail loss, possibly partly due to over saturation/heavy contrast areas



**Company C:** Detail showing in tree trunk on left and in shrubs on right. mp4 version with file size of 1.12gb



**Company C:** Same as item left but .com version with file size of 5.95gb. On computer screen, I couldn't see the difference.

Clearly Company A's colour looks washed out by comparison. When I first saw Company B's vibrant colour, I was delighted but then considered it to be rather too saturated, very green in parts and showing more grain. Company C seemed to have it just right.

IF GOD WANTED ME TO TOUCH MY TOES, HE'D HAVE PUT THEM ON MY KNEES

## VIDEO FOOTAGE Clarity Comparisons



**Company A:** Exposure good with enough detail in highlights, sound okay, image slightly squeezed



**Company B:** Highlight detail burned out; sound okay.



**Company C:** Good exposure with good detail in highlights, sound okay

While I had hoped to have all the transfers done by the same company, that may not be the best decision for the best reproduction, so it might be a split order and will discuss with each where I have a concern. I will carefully assess the results and reactions of all three companies, together with their prices which do differ quite a lot. They all know that I am making the comparison and have been helpful and happy to work that way.

I have 67 film, video and reel to reel tape recordings to transfer to digital files. Thanks again to Mike Sanders who has already helped me to identify what is on the reel to reel tapes

and the recording speeds involved ( $1\frac{7}{8}$ ,  $3\frac{3}{4}$  and  $7\frac{1}{2}$  ips) as I no longer have a tape recorder and some of the films have sound on separate tape. Only one of the 3 companies handles digitising tape but it may be something I can do with club help myself.



Written and photographed by Brian O'Connell

looking to check that everyone has everything they need. And similarly with the wonderful food, all was laid out so you could fill your plate with an array of delicious salad accompaniments.

There was a buzz to the afternoon and lots to chat about. Sadly a few members could not make the occasion and had been struck down with Covid or other ailments.

Philip picked up his glass to say a few words and gave a well appreciated speech and toast to absent friends, as well as thanking Rita and Al for hosting this fabulous event.



could only have been achieved by folders of spread sheets and trained managers, but for the Wheelers this just seems to happen naturally and without any hint of stress. They are there to greet you with a warm and welcoming smile, and always

In many pubs at closing time, they allow an Alsatian to roam freely to discourage clients to linger. Rita and Alan have found a much softer but equally efficient method to disperse attendees by inviting Brian (guitar) and Alan Butcher (drums) to play for the last twenty minutes. As expected the hasty exit produced a queue to get away in the car park, but Brian and Alan enjoyed themselves anyway.

For the umpteenth year in a row, Alan and Rita very kindly opened up their wonderful garden and house to generously host our annual club BBQ. The weather was perfectly warm (ie not too hot), and the gentle aromas of sizzling sausages wafted across the air as chilled white wine and cooled beers were quaffed in chat and banter.

Alan worked his magic with his Weber, skills that he has perfected on occasions too numerous to remember. As far as I am concerned this event is the sausage highlight of the year.

All was organised to ensure that drinks could be dispensed on demand. In any other establishment this level of efficiency



IF WALKING IS GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH, THE POSTMAN WOULD BE IMMORTAL

## CONTRIBUTORS!

Thanks to those who jumped to it and helped me by contributing to this issue: Brian O'Connell, Rita Wheeler, Peter Stratford, Colin Lewis, Tim Stannard, Jim Reed.

## MEMBERS' SUPPLEMENT

This month there is a 3 page supplement for members only distributed with this issue

## SUBTLE REMINDER!

BRING YOUR OWN MUG TO FUTURE MEETINGS OR DRINK OUT OF CUPPED HANDS!



## NEXT MEETING: FRIDAY 5TH AUGUST

Selection of Films from SERIAC

## UPCOMING DATES

5 August - Selection of Films from Seriac  
2 September - Documentary Competition

# BRAIN FADE? BRAIN FADE?

Brain cells, hair cells and skin cells - they all die constantly, but fat cells seem to have eternal life...

I got myself a seniors' GPS. Not only does it tell me how to get to my destination, it tells me why I wanted to go there.

I just ordered a life alert bracelet so if I get a life, I'll be notified immediately.

Being twenty in the seventies was much more fun than being seventy in the twenties.

We are living in a generation that would unplug your life support, just to charge their cellphone.

I see people my age out there climbing mountains and zip lining and here I am feeling good about myself because I got my leg through my underwear without losing my balance.

Some call it multi-tasking, I call it doing something else while I try to remember what I was doing in the first place

## COME AND SEE WHAT WE DO!

See what other movie makers are up to and you may get 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](http://www.surreyborder.org.uk)

or email the secretary: [secretary@surreyborder.org.uk](mailto:secretary@surreyborder.org.uk)

We are also on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/SurreyBorderMovieMakers/timeline](https://www.facebook.com/SurreyBorderMovieMakers/timeline)

Meetings are held at St Joan's Centre, 19 Tilford Road, Farnham GU9 8DJ, usually on the first Friday of the month starting at 8.00 pm and finishing at 10.00 pm. If you are interested then email: [secretary@surreyborder.org.uk](mailto:secretary@surreyborder.org.uk)

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 **FREE** parking.

## Remember your first visit is free

### Your Club Contacts

Chairman  
Vice Chairman  
Hon. Secretary  
Hon. Treasurer  
Webmaster  
Competition Officer  
Digital Engagement Officer  
Club Film Projects Co-ordinator  
Public Relations Officer  
Editor - Border Post  
Social Events

### Name:

Mike Sanders  
Philip Morley  
Rita Wheeler  
Gillian Gatland  
Dave Rayers  
Tim Stannard  
Jim Reed  
Dave Kershaw  
Kathy Butcher  
Philip Morley & Brian O'Connell  
Committee

### Email:

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Your contributions for inclusion will be appreciated together with photographs if possible. Please send them to: The Editor Border Post for the September issue.

## COPY DEADLINE

September 2022 issue will be 14th of August so keep it coming. Late copy will be carried over to the next month. Thank you for your co-operation - Eds!

# Border Post