

Message from your Chairman - *John Mills*



Hello everyone,

Congratulations to Sir Paul on winning the documentary competition, I am looking forward to the next instalment. It is surprisingly difficult to create a good documentary film, I wonder if there would be any takers for a club training programme on documentary making. Email me if you are interested.

I read the other day that Apple were going to include a 4K camera in the iPhone 7; now that would be a game changer. However, does more resolution make better films? No, I think not. You still have to have a good story and great sound, married to good camera work.

The constant change in the weather makes for some interesting filming opportunities, with dark sky, rainbows and then brilliant sunshine. All very dramatic. I am not quite sure how this can be included in a club film but fun taking the shots any way. The main thing is to have a video camera with you all the time and know how to instantly be recording footage. Hurrah for mobiles.

Happy filming

John.

Press Release - *Kathy Butcher*

Film Club Using Smart Phones for Movies

Would you like to know how to make professional looking videos on your mobile phone? If so, you may be interested in coming along to Surrey Border Movie Makers presentation 'Using your Mobile for Video' which will take place on Friday 4th September at the St Joan's Centre in Farnham. The evening will include an informative talk, demonstrations and a selection of films which were produced using mobiles. Entry is £5 on the door for non-members. Refreshments will be provided. Please contact secretary@surreyborder.org.uk.

At the clubs August meeting the winners of the new Documentary Competition which took place in July were announced. The votes were based on sound and lighting quality, camera work, dialogue and subject interest. The results were 3rd place Watercress to Millennium Trail by Peter Frost, 2nd place Haslemere by Alan Brown and the winner was Spitfire Restoration by Sir Paul Holden club Founder Member and President who received his trophy with an enthusiastic round of applause from the audience.



John Mills presents Trophy to Sir Paul Holden



John Mills demonstrating his "Video Slider" to other members

On club nights members are invited to bring along any interesting film making equipment and accessories etc. where they are discussed and demonstrated during the coffee break. This month our club Chairman John Mills demonstrated his newly purchased 'Video Slider' which attaches to a tripod to enable smooth panning when filming, a very nice piece of kit, already being used for his next project no doubt!

If you are interested in any aspect of film making we always welcome new members. You can find out more about us by visiting our website:

www.surreyborder.org.uk or email the club secretary at secretary@surreyborder.org.uk. We meet on the first Friday of the month at St Joan's Centre, 19 Tilford Road, Farnham GU9 8DJ there is plenty of parking and your first visit is free.

Zoom H6 Audio Recorder Review - John Mills

The Zoom H6 is the first-ever handheld field recorder with interchangeable microphones. It features a 6-in, 2-out USB audio interface and 4 XLR/TRS inputs for external mic/line connections. It is ideal for recording projects where you need to record easily from multiple sources.



The first thing you notice about the zoom H 6 recorder is that It's quite heavy weighing in at just over 1/2 a pound. The surface of the zoom H6 is covered in a slightly rubberised very tactile plastic which is slip resistant and feels extremely good-quality. The H6 itself fits in the hand comfortably and the weight is mainly concentrated on top of the unit so it's well-balanced.

On the left hand side is the SD card holder, the headphone socket, volume and on/off switch. When you switch the unit on, the screen with a full-colour display lights up; as the screen is slightly



angled towards you it is very easy to read when the rest of the unit is secured to a camera. I noticed that the screen itself unfortunately scratches extremely easily, and I've decided early on to cover this with an iPhone screen protector which I had cut down to size. I also read in the press that the screen appears to be very

soft and this is clearly a defect in the design of the recorder, however with the screen protector on there was no further scratching despite my fairly heavy use.

On the right hand side of the unit is the USB port, menu button and the control button to access the various functions. The recorder takes several accessories onto the head attachment and it comes complete with an XY Stereo Microphone, when attached to the recorder this will be the main source of ambient recording and a Mid Side Mic which allows for adjusted stereo recordings in post production. Both have their own gain knob The XY is brilliant, recording every detail at an amazing level of detail. I have not tested the Mid side mic yet fully so will comment on this at a later stage. The Unit can be used as a handheld with either mic.

In addition there are four further XLR sockets for plug-in external microphones.

Each individual socket has a rotating dial for the gain. These knobs are large enough for big fingers but the 0-20 decibel switch is a bit fiddly, but has a reassuring click so



you do know it has been switched.

Below the rotating dials are the fast forward rewind record pause and stop buttons together with the channel



selector buttons and record button.

These all have a positive click when depressed with a small green/red LED that lights up when depressed. You can select an individual channel when recording to change the gain, this was a recent upgrade in the latest firmware.

Very useful feature.

Underneath the unit is the battery box with a tripod screw socket and a small speaker.

The unit comes with WaveLab software, this allows extensive manipulation of recordings, but is quite complicated and requires a fair time to learn. Something for winter evenings.

One set of batteries will apparently last for 20 hours. In practice I think that is a little optimistic as I shot a wedding recently and after 8 hours the batteries were looking quite drained. But 8 hours is pretty good considering it was powering a Rode shotgun mic continuously. A great feature is the lock button, meaning you can switch it on, lock it, and not be worried you have missed something.

This is an excellent investment for high quality sound, and I have long wanted to up the sound quality of films I make. It does however introduce yet another set of equipment that needs to be carted about and understood, the whole sound thing is a world of its own. Lots to learn.

I am very pleased with the H6 and with more practice I really do think it will improve my films considerably.

Movie Trivia

There seems to be an inexhaustible supply of film trivia, and people who spend time documenting it. **Apparently...**

Members of the Irish Army Reserves were used as extras in "Braveheart" (1995), and some of the scenes had to be re-shot as the soldiers in the background were wearing wrist watches and sunglasses.

"Kill Bill" (2003) is Quentin Tarantino's first movie in which the F-word is used less than 100 times. It's spoken on 17 occasions.

Bollywood (Indian movie industry) is the largest film industry in the world. It produces over 800 movies a year, almost twice as many as Hollywood!

"Casino Royale" (2006) was the first Bond movie that was approved by the Chinese censor board.

I clearly remember watching Spaghetti Westerns (as a young lad) where the objective was to try and beat our friends at spotting wrist watches, vehicles, and aircraft vapour trails.

How sad is that?

Critique!

Written and illustrated by Peter Frost with comment from David Skertchly

Over the months I've noticed that we, (the Royal one) view the productions of others, mostly from outside the club, when the maker isn't present (!) and will highlight 'faults' more often than elements to 'praise'.

I'm no prima donna in this respect as I've done it too but hope that it's been constructively given. Sure, there are plenty of holes in amateur movies and you can find them in professional ones too if you look closely enough but there's obviously going to be a difference.

The professional production has a budget sufficient to support the production hoards, within which are a host of specialists in each aspect of production. Of course, some professional work is produced by a small team but they will still have to be at the top of their game to make it to the screen.

Us amateurs usually have a minuscule budget, low end equipment and a certain lack of talent by comparison - but we have passion, and that's what really matters.

And it's passion which drives us to make our family films with the wish to perpetuate the memory of an enjoyable time with family and friends. Or perhaps there's another hobby interest which we want to record as it brings us pleasure which we want to share.

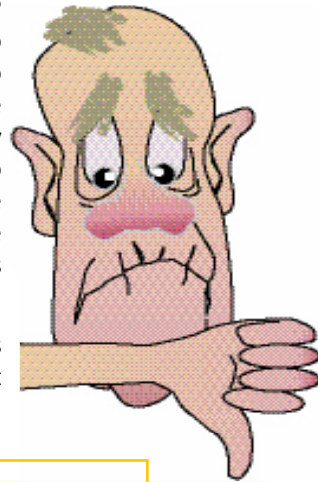
The point is (at last, he's got to it), when we view a video made by someone we don't really know, should we be more balanced in our views? Someone has set out to make a movie that matters to them. Technically, they have probably done the best they can, so our comments need to accept certain flaws and praise their effort, identifying the good while picking up points for improvement.

Some seem to lean towards more negative comment while not coming forth with

anything that they've produced, so I say qualify your comments with your own production - don't hide your abilities away!

I've been speaking to member, David Skertchly, and he made these (slightly edited) observations with which I tend to agree:

"Competing with the pro's is of course a worthy objective and much fun for those who want to do that... and most of us are up for a go now and again. It has always been near impossible for amateurs to match the pros, because as our equipment has improved, the professional format has changed. What used to be a 25 minute drama in the 60s, which we could attempt to make, has become an 8 hour boxed set. Try an 8 hour boxed set at the annual comp or BIAFF!"



Many enthusiasts buy equipment for family reasons and this is one area where the commercial guys are not able to compete.

That Wedding video which the Aunts, Uncles and Grandparents so love would cost upwards of £2,000. Well produced family films are so enjoyable because they tell us something that the pros can never do, they tell us about our friends and families. They offer us a special private peak into their lives. Made well family films are bread and butter of the hobby, so enjoy!"

Well, I don't think I've got the energy to even consider making an amateur 8 hour box set, let alone finding an audience to endure it, so I reckon BIAFF are quite safe - as are we all!

The SBMM club members are a helpful bunch who love this hobby and will try to help anyone who needs guidance to improve their own efforts, so it's worth making it known if help is needed.

Beyond our Ken

Written and illustrated by Peter Frost

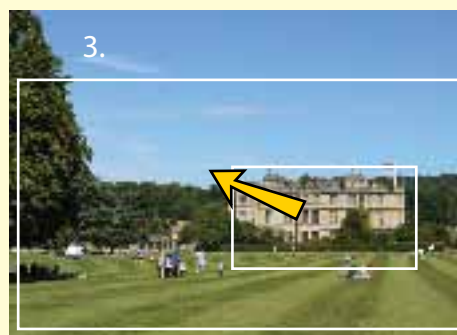
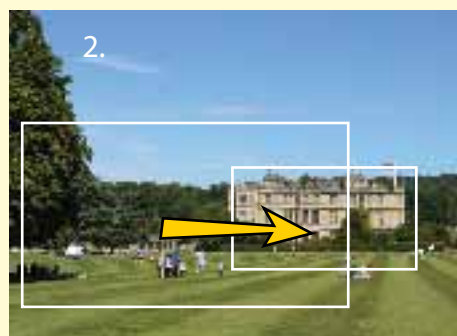
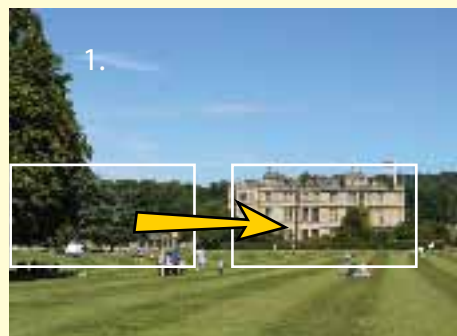
The Ken Burns effect is a method within an editing programme by which a camera can appear to pan across or zoom into a still picture, simply by plotting a start and end point for the planned movement.

I've currently set myself a challenge to make a movie of a very static subject - statues. It's not too difficult to take a series of stills and set them into the time line, treating each to a touch of the Ken Burns technique but I want to take it further.

Ken Burns is going to be very helpful in this project but I don't want it to be what can also be achieved with a slide show, so I hope to bring more 'life' into the static subjects to best qualify the result as 'a movie'.

I have a plan but whether it will work, I don't know. Time will tell!

I have used Ken to help create a title with which I am very pleased - I don't think it's that obvious how it's been achieved, so that has given me the kick up the rear needed to keep up my efforts.



The **Ken Burns Effect** creates camera 'movement' across a still picture by defining the *start* and *end* areas of the scene, horizontally, vertically or diagonally. Here are some pictorial examples:

1. In the example top left, the Ken Burns effect will produce a pan from the left to frame Longleat. The time taken to achieve this can be controlled.
2. In the example middle left, the Ken Burns effect will produce a pan from the left zooming in to frame Longleat. Again, you can regulate the time taken from a slow effect (which tend to be smoother) to a fast one.
3. In the bottom example, the Ken Burns effect will produce an off centre zoom out from Longleat to reveal the full scene.

Limited Animation; Animation for Fun - *David Skertchly*



"You don't want to watch that American Rubbish, why don't you go and play in the street like

the other kids", how times have changed. My heart sank, I had patiently watched the parentally approved, but very non trendy Blue Peter, in the hope that my mother would not notice that I was still viewing when my real favourite, Top Cat, came on the screen. Unknown to us Top Cat, and other favourites such as Huckleberry Hound, Yogi Bear and Quick Draw McGraw was seen as scandalous by our parents. You see the demand for low cost TV programmes in the 1960s was immense and this demand has not stopped growing since. The cost of a full animation used for films such as those superb Warner shorts was some \$35,000 per show in the 1950s, equivalent to \$350,000 in today's money. William Hanna and Joseph Barbera, both ex Warner Brothers animators, spotted that you did not need full animation to tell a good story, indeed comic strips use no animation at all and yet tell their stories superbly with the aid of brilliant artwork. Hanna Barbera productions therefore invented the limited animation technique which cut the number of cells from 26,000 to 1,200 and the cost to \$3,000, about \$30,000 in today's money. The techniques they used included re-using standard sequences and positions, animating only the essentials, and using simplified, but very stylish artwork. This however was seen by my parents as typically American profiteering.

This attitude was however misinformed, the Sainted Oliver Postgate and his business partner Peter Firmin too had spotted the market and their beautifully produced Cardtoons and model animations are classics to this day. My Postgate favourite is Noggin the Nogg, with its atmospheric dark age drawings, villainous Nogbad the Bad and the evocative music played on a bassoon, but even this classic was rather short on genuine animation. Postgate's autobiography "Seeing Things" is a good read and tatty second hand copies can be had for quid on Amazon. Emily Firmin (you know Emily who owned Bagpuss the cat) has recently had published a superb "art of" book of Smallfilms artwork which is a must for limited animation fans. A visit to her pottery shop in Canterbury is a must too.

For us amateurs, drawn animation can seem to be an unattainable objective. Class films produced some superb animations on Super 8, but these took a team of animators several years to produce.

My first effort at animation was done using Sinclair Spectrum computer (remember those). The simple film used no more than a dozen cells animated in "basic" with a bit of machine code. "Arthur Goes Out" is the story of Arthur the Worm who could not go out on his own until he learnt his kerb drill; a lesson for my Children. The hook is "whoever heard of worm on a bike!" I learnt a great lesson from my 8 year old son who brought the character to life by simply drawing a hat on him.

For our next effort we used cardtooning. This is an admirably simple technique which uses cardboard cut outs which are moved through card extensions or sometimes operated through slots in the background card, I have a book called "Comps Storyboards and Animatics", also bought second hand from Amazon, which describes the technique. We even won a competition with our film "The Substitute". I have many happy memories of my children drawing characters and animating them. I have particularly fond memories of my daughter Penny in fits of laughter as the cat ate the goldfish. "The Substitute" also established a Bollywood format which I like to use and which invariably has a song at the end!

Thus inspired we bought an early copy of Disney Animation Studio software. Our first effort was "The Witch Switch" in which a tired baby dragon migrating from Norway lands on a roof near to where we lived. The dragon is turned into a pot (a roof tile gargoyle) by a fairy to prevent the wicked witch from cooking him on a fondue set. A kiss from a little girl will set the dragon free.....

The last family animation was "The Clot" starring a paranoid padlock and dancing dynamite, enough said.

Last year, after 30 years, I re-visited the genre and won 2 stars in the BIAFF, a first for me. To tell my stories, which have no basis in reality, I have taken "limited animation" to the extreme. At the last count my latest production, "A Corpse in the Park", a Bollywood version of the BBC thriller "Silent Witness", used only 78 Frames and took just 3 months to produce. It used no special software, all the animation being achieved using pinnacle 11 on a laptop computer in just 2 layers.

Animation should be expansive not expensive, so give it a try and who cares about the pundits, just have fun.

My first animation "Arthur Goes Out" was made using a Sinclair Spectrum Computer. The breakthrough was the hat which made Arthur the Worm come alive.



Below "The Substitute" was a cardtoon, here Grandad goes to the fair hoping to win a Goldfish to replace the one eaten by Marmalade the Moggy.



Below: Grandma discovers Marmalade the Moggy eating Michael the Fish, drawn by my son age 11.



Below The baby dragon is spotted by the witch in "Witch Switch". This film was animated in Disney Animation Studio and converted to TV format using an early TV adaptor, hence the colours bleed all over the place.



The witch leaves her hovel, I particularly enjoyed animating the door shape which would be physically impossible to open in the real world.



Below: The paranoid traffic warden from "The Clot", and the equally paranoid padlock and never mind the Dynamite Rap.



Below "A Corpse in the Park". It is a Bollywood version of the BBCs "Silent Witness" here the pathologist and forensic scientist examine the corpse, a role type cast for the Video Club Chairman.



Film History - Kathy Butcher

J Arthur Rank was born in Hull in 1888, the son of Joseph Rank who had a successful flour milling business. Arthur was a member of the Methodist Church and became a Sunday school teacher, where they often showed short religious films. However, he was never very impressed with the quality of the films and decided to produce and finance his own. The seeds had been sown for the creation of greater things.

Rank went into partnership with film distributor C M Woolf and formed General Film Distributors. It was Woolf's secretary who devised the famous trademark of a man with the gong seen before the credits at the beginning of the company's films.



By 1937 Rank owned Pinewood Studios and Denham Film Studios, these together with General Film Holdings were consolidated to make the new company called the Rank Organisation England's biggest and finest film production company. They went on to buy the Odeon cinema chain, Elstree Studios, Ealing and Islington studios amongst others where many memorable films were made. The man with the gong was retained as the trademark.

The first gong man was a 6' 5" circus strongman called Carl Dane who was already famous for becoming the first man to pull a London bus complete with 12 passengers using only his teeth. After World War 2 Carl was replaced by Billy Wells a British boxer. The third gong man was a film extra called Phil Nieman and the last man used was wrestler Ken Richmond, winner of an Olympic Gold medal.

The 6ft tall gong was in fact a mock up made of papier-mache and the actual sound was made by a much smaller Chinese gong called a tam-tam which produced the deep resonating tone. Today the gong can be seen at the London Film Museum in County Hall London where it is on loan from Pinewood Studios.

J Arthur Rank died in 1972 in Winchester, Hampshire. The Rank Organisation continues today as a leading European gaming business, it no longer has any connections with film making.

Content taken from an article printed in the Daily Mail 2015

Film Festival News

Imperial War Museum

The IWM (Imperial War Museum) Short Film Festival is now accepting entries.

The festival will take place at IWM London in 2016 and submissions are being accepted until 30 September 2015 from all around the world. Please check out their website: www.iwm.org.uk

Australian Widescreen Film Festival

We shall be entering the festival again this year. The films have to be received in Australia by 3rd October. No film longer than 15 minutes. Last year our club film 'Frequency Hertz' was placed 8th.

Reed Short Film Competition 2015.

If you are interested....

Go to: www.reed.co.uk/film to see the winning films from their 2015 Short Film Competition. Keep an eye on their website for the deadline for the 2016 competition.

Five Tips on Making Documentaries - Rita Wheeler

1. Choose a theme or ask a question.

Once you've got your idea you need to have a driving force. Ask yourself what question you want to ask and "how will I show this"?

2. What is your subject?

Try not to film a subject that has been done a thousand times before, unless you can find a complete new take on it. Think what will make it entertaining and interesting.

3. Think how to recreate events.

If you can't get archive footage then be creative in how you show things that have happened in the past.

4. Choose your soundtrack carefully.

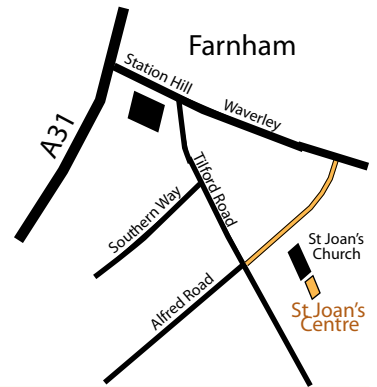
Think about the music you want for your soundtrack. If there is a commentary, think about who is the best person to present it. Some people do not have good recording voices and can ruin a film by doing their own commentary.

5. Think about the vision.

What is it you want to say? Think about presenting it in the most interesting way possible with varied camera angles, moving images and possibly stills too, as well as the right sound track to compliment it and a good clear voice giving the commentary.

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. New members are very welcome, 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



Dates for your Diary

Friday 4th September 2015: How to make a film on your Smart Phone.

Friday 2nd October 2015: Inter-Club Competition

Friday 6th November 2015: Peter Matthews will talk about the "Cinema Effect", followed by members films.
Deadline for December Club Competition.

Friday 4th December 2015: Club Competition

Sunday 6th December: Christmas Lunch

Christmas Lunch - Rita Wheeler

We know it's only September... but we have to book in advance to make sure we get the venue we want.

We shall be at the Farnham House Hotel again this year. Put Sunday 6th December in your diaries.

I shall be sending the menu out to members during September, asking you to pay a £10 deposit in October (or the full amount if you want) and the remainder in November.

Members Only Club Competition

Deadline: Friday 6th November 2015.

Films will be shown at the December club night.

Films will be judged by Dave and Jan Watterson who will give detailed critiques.

Entry: free.

Films can be about any subject but cannot be longer than 6 minutes.

Categories: drama, documentary, holiday, musical, animation.

Trophies will be awarded for:

- Best Holiday
- Best Photography
- Best Creative Film
- Best Use of Sound and Commentary
- Best Documentary
- Best First Time Winner
- Best Editing
- Best Camerawork
- Best Overall

