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

Congratulations - Border Post is now 21 years old. The first copy was produced in February 1993.

Message from the Chairman - *Mike Sanders*

Spring seems to be here, after a milder but extremely wet winter in the south, but the north is still getting rain.

Having lost power here on that nasty weekend of high winds just after the February club meeting at 19:30 Saturday it was restored at 22:30 on Sunday and then went off again at 01:00 Monday until 04:30. The shops on the main road were on so as I hadn't eaten I ordered a takeaway curry. My generator used two jerry cans to keep it going at £21 a go, so not exactly cheap making your own electricity. I was woken up at 04:30 on the Sunday morning with the alarm bleeping to say the battery was exhausted, so I had to jury rig it to my big computer uninterruptable power supply as it was somewhat unneighbourly to keep the generator running overnight. I took the opportunity to put the heating on it as well. Some automatic changeovers will be wired in – another 5 minute job. Some of the side roads close by suffered tree carnage and a number of cables were down, including one at the end of my road.



We had a very successful new members evening at Rita and Al's recently with Colin Lewis, John Mills and John Hunt; Paul, Maggie Rita and myself were there, and the new members told us about their careers and their film aspirations.

This year, as before, Peter Matthews and I went to Broadcast Video Expo in the Excel London. We had a traumatic start to the day with signal and points failures between Alton and Farnham, so we had to get the bus from Alton station to Farnham town centre and then walk to the station. Everything was back to normal by the time we returned. We met up with Gordon Sutton & his son, who had some tales about remotely operated news cameras at the BBC getting a mind of their own, and bumping into things and each other. We also met up with Peter Frost and Dick Hibberd to name but a few. This year may well be their last as its getting very similar now, there was very little to buy on the day and it's all on the web anyway. The 4K Ultra HD demonstrations on stands were on monitors that were far too small so it was difficult to appreciate the quality. As Ofcom charge so much for radio spectrum and Ultra HD takes up more of it it's going to be a costly exercise for broadcasters to deliver it to our homes, plus all the re-equipping that they will have to do, so don't hold your breath on that one for a while. Mpeg-5 is supposed to be the latest compression technique for 4K.

Press Release by *Geoff Baier*

At Surrey Border Movie Makers monthly meeting on 7th February 2014, after their Annual General meeting, trophies were presented to winners of club competitions during the preceding year: Brian O'Connell, Peter Frost, Gordon Sutton, Steve Michell, Neil Cryer, Alan Brown, John Mills, and Gillian Gatland.



Club Competition Winners

An entertaining observational film: 'Christmas in the Garden' was shown by Peter Frost. This was shot in Covent Garden using a hand held camera and captured 'larger than life' personalities amongst the tourists as well as the entertainers.

Members then enjoyed two enchanting films shown by Vice-Chairman, Peter Matthews, from his archive of community films including a memorable solo performance by an 11 year old who played Maria in a school production of the Sound of Music.

The evening continued with the showing of an entry for Reed International's 2014 Short Film Competition which had the theme 'Family Business'. This three minute piece, 'Appy Families' was written and produced by new member, Geoff Baier and filmed and edited by Brian O'Connell. With Brian's help and experience Geoff was able to complete this project in just twelve days to meet the competition deadline.



Covent Garden Entertainer

The Clubs monthly meetings give members a chance to meet and discuss all aspects of movie making as well as to enjoy the more formal programme of activities, lectures, workshops, film shows and competitions to stimulate and encourage more successful movie making. Topics run from writing of film scripts to film production on DVDs. Members capture video using camcorders, pocket 'still' cameras and even iphones to make films. On Friday 7th March the club are looking forward to an evening with Terence Patrick on "70 Years in the BBC".

Border Post-Its

This is your forum for posting your production needs, or any other notes on subjects that you would like to bring to the attention of members. If you're planning an epic and you need others to join and help, let the editor know. We'll post it if you email it (at the editors discretion) or you can contact any member of the committee - see back page!



For April 2014 Issue, email to:
editor@surreyborder.org.uk

PRODUCTION TEAM WANTED URGENTLY

We urgently required volunteers to join our team for a fantastic filming opportunity. On Sunday 16th March we have the job of filming the Fleet Half Marathon! www.fleethalfmarathon.com Official 'vests' will be available and the use of a platform by the finishing line. What we need: at least 4 cameras. Mics that can be used outside to record contestants. Helpers to feed questions to the contestants.

Please contact the Secretary in the first instance if you are interested in being part of this team.

BSC Expo 2014 by Alan Brown

At the end of January, the British Society of Cinematographers (BSC) held their annual showcase of the latest products for the film and TV production industries at Warner Bros. Leavesden studios (home of Harry Potter). It's an impressive 200 acre purpose built site and the show was held on the massive 31,000 sq ft 'C' stage.

Interestingly, Leavesden studios only came about in 1994 when Eon Productions needed a large studio to make the Bond film Goldeneye and Pinewood was fully booked. So they took over the old Rolls Royce Aero engine factory at Leavesden and converted the buildings into stages. Warner Bros. subsequently bought the plot and spent £100 million on refurbishing it!

This event is similar, but slightly smaller, than BVE Expo at the Excel and it tends to exhibit top-end equipment only, unlike BVE which has products for everyone.

Star of the show seemed to be the recently unveiled Arri Amira camera. This is a pick-up-and-shoot documentary camera which features the same sensor and image quality as the Alexa, recording HD 1080 or 2K pictures (but without Arri's RAW recording format) with a dynamic range of 14 stops and speeds of up to 200 fps. It's lighter and slightly more compact than the Alexa. Prices start at £26,000 and it's not available until April (what a shame....!!!).

All the usual big names were at the show, Panavision, Sony etc. and there was a lot of great kit to have a play with even if you couldn't afford it. Of course, 4K was much in evidence but it was interesting to note that 3D didn't seem to feature much at all – hmm, I wonder why? There were also several workshops available including an interesting one on Cloud based production.

The only downside to the show was that you had to walk to Watford for the loos (or, at least, that's what it felt like....!).

Seriatic Film Festival - Sunday 5th April (Reminder)

Ron Prosser, Chairman of Seriac has written to remind us of this years Seriac Film Festival and AGM.

He further adds: "I was very pleased to see a bumper bundle of movies entered into this year's SERIAC film festival: 58 in total with a total running time in excess of 7 hours, not a record but a very creditable entry. They have now all been pre-judged and have been forwarded to the final judges and what I have seen of them we have the makings of a very entertaining show on 5th April. We can, however only show a total of 4 and a half hours on the day due to time constraints so if your film is chosen to be shown that will be a feather in your cap so make sure you have the date in your diary to attend - 5th April 2014.

The SERIAC AGM will be held during the supper break and it would be good if we can get two or three extra volunteers to sit on council. Sorry to bang on about this but Your SERIAC Needs You. Please put yourself forward and help us. PLEASE!

This year we have secured funding from the IAC which allows us to offer all visitors to the SERIAC festival a half price ticket. So this year the entry fee will be £5 which will include our usual magnificent buffet. In addition to this, the grant allows all new members of the IAC who have joined in the last two years free entry. So please come and avail yourselves of these fantastic offers.

April looks to be a busy time for movie watching as BIAFF follows on the 11th to 13th April and two weeks after this, on April 27th is the Albany competition at Plumpton Green. All the details can be found on the SERIAC website <http://www.seriatic.org.uk/>. Please come and support this competition with either an entry or your presence as like all things it needs your help to continue".



RUSSIAN ARK

Written by Peter Frost

It was one of those casual comments about video production at a Christmas party and my interest in video gadgetry, and in particular cranes and steadicams, to a friend who said "Ah, the Steadicam - I've got a film you should watch" and he went to his extensive DVD library and lent me the film.

Let's first take a look at a Steadicam which enables the camera operator to walk around while shooting, with the camera 'floating' smoothly as he walks. Many of you will be familiar with this. The cameraman wears a harness which supports the unit, its sprung counterbalanced armature enabling the camera to 'float', and it can include a monitor for him to view as he goes. It's no lightweight and requires a specialist to operate it as shown in the example on the right!

Now consider these production requirements for this amazing film, made in 2001, *Russian Ark* by Alexander Sokurov in which a contemporary film maker and a cynical 19th century French diplomat take an extraordinary tour through Russian history:

1. Shoot a costume dramatisation of 300 years of Tsarist Russian history starting in the 1700s set inside St. Petersburg's



Above: Steadicam Operator John Fry with Master Steadicam flying Arri Alexa HD digital cinema camera and Angenieux PL mount zoom lens*

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beautiful and huge Hermitage museum, working through a series of 36 rooms and connecting corridors in a flowing filming session.

2. The entire shoot, including rigging hidden lighting, sound, building sets and removing unwanted elements throughout the route of the shoot and then breaking down and clearing and reinstating removed elements within the 36 hours that the museum was closed to the public.
3. Use a cast of 2,000 actors and extras, made up and dressed in period costume.
4. Shoot all ninety minutes in ONE UNEDITED TAKE from beginning to end with a single Steadicam operator, Tillman Büttner.

Here are a few more statistics relating to this production:

- 4 years to develop
- 22 Assistant Directors
- 50 Electricians
- 50 Makeup Artists
- 2,000 detailed period costumes
- 10 buses of extras
- 1.5 kilometers covered by the filming route
- 3 failed starts - 4th shoot was the last chance

If you've not seen it and are interested, the film is available on DVD at around £3.00 - Russian/German language with subtitles. I found the documentary about its making really fascinating - what a monumental logistical tour de force!

New Members Evening by Rita Wheeler

In February we held a New Members Evening. Colin Lewis, John Hunt and John Mills joined Committee Members Mike Sanders, Sir Paul Holden, Maggie Ledwidge and Rita Wheeler for an informal evening chat.

Colin Lewis is a GP with an interest in acupuncture and several years ago started making films for the Acupuncture Society which meant getting involved with the creation of the films as well as editing. He has made holiday films, documentaries and has uploaded films to YouTube. He joined a course at U3A (University of the Third Age) and met Bob Lambert who encouraged him to come to Surrey Border. He has a Panasonic. Uses Pinnacle 12 and Sony Vegas for editing. He is enjoying being involved with the Pioneers Film-in-an-Evening group and the North -v- South team.

John Hunt had a career in catering then became a projectionist and for several years worked for the Odeon Cinema in Guildford. Now retired he works part time in Morrisons. He has made home movies about family and holidays. He joined the club to get help with editing.

John Mills has had a varied career having been in the Household Cavalry, then involved in Financial Services and he has also run a marketing company. He now provides support for disadvantaged adults and he and his wife take in disadvantaged young people from the ages of 16 - 21. He helps at the You Trust in Winchester and Andover. Film-wise he started off with Super 8 and video, filming family and holidays. He enjoys sharing his enthusiasm with members of the club. He is happy in front of the camera, he used to work as an Extra. He has also done public speaking.



John Mills, Colin Lewis, and John Hunt.

Food for Thought by Rita Wheeler

Just to show that making films is not all physical, and much of it is planning and preparation where members have to meet up to discuss how they are going to go about it.



The OddBods; Gillian Gatland, Jo Jones, Fred Hawkins, Mike Sanders, Geoff Baier, Paul Redman, Al and Rita Wheeler enjoying a brainstorming supper the other week. Now it is time to translate the ideas into writing the script!

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 ample parking.



Dates for your Diary

Friday 7th March 2014: '70 Years in the BBC'. An evening with Terence Patrick.

Friday 4th April 2014: Film in an Evening – the theme is: Two Sides to Every Story.

Friday 2nd May 2014: Surrey BAFTA. Surrey Border Artistic Film Tributes Awards. An evening of celebration with OSCARS. Outstanding Surreyborder Creative Arts Reels

Friday 6th June 2014: A selection of short films, with discussion.

Letter to the Editor

A Belated 'Thanks'

It passed before we knew it but I was rather surprised that we didn't have a vote of thanks for last year's committee at the AGM last meeting. I've been there and done that, as have many other members of SBMM, so I know that there's a lot of personal free time donated to the smooth running of the club by all committee members, so on behalf of all those present at the AGM let's offer our 'thank you's' even if rather belated.

Peter Frost

Amazon Associate

Please support your Club. For those members who are not already aware of it, our Website now advertises Amazon, with a link to the Amazon site. So if you are going to use Amazon to shop, please pause before you do so, go to our site first, and then click on the link to Amazon. This will not cost you anything but will help to pay for our club website.

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Border Post

Your contributions for inclusion will be appreciated together with photographs if possible. Please send them to the Editor, Alan Wheeler, for the April 2014 issue at this email: editor@surreyborder.org.uk