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January 2026

Editor: Philip Morley

Sub-editor: Brian O'Connell



Header Creation Peter Frost

Christmas Lunch at the Star Inn Bentley

*A good time
had by all!!*

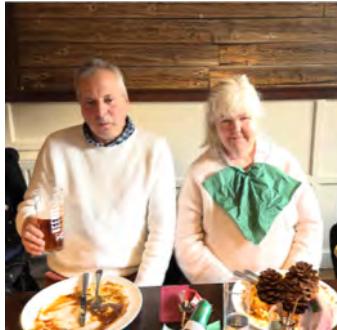


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SBMM WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS!



Phil Le Fanu



My name is Phil Le Fanu. I am a lifelong film buff but didn't do anything about it until I was nearly 32. In 2023, after an unsuccessful attempt to become a Maths teacher and then years out of work due to Long Covid, a location scout for the film 'The Salt Path' came round our house to inspect it as a potential filming location. Nothing came of it, but chatting

with the guy I realised that everyone in the industry is freelance, which would suit my Long Covid in that I could pick and choose how much I could work.

I drafted a CV to become a runner, but then I saw an ad on Facebook looking for actors for a student horror film. I thought 'sod it' and had a go at recording an audition tape, spending all day (and much stress for me, and also Mum who helped out) recording what ended up as a two minute video. To my surprise, I got the role.

Two years later, I am now starting a career as a professional actor. Fellow member Geno Cvetkov and I have shot our own short horror film this year; it is currently in post-production and we hope to submit it to film festivals.

A student film 'License to

Clown', in which I played the clown, was one of ten nominees for Best Drama at a national level student film competition this year.



This years winner, Phil LeFanu – License to Clown



It also impressed the judges at our SBMM December Film Club, winning best first-time effort and best film! Here I am in my Christmas jumper awaiting the results.

Mum discovered the Film Club a year or two ago, and at my first ever session, I walked in to see

twenty members ready to shoot and be directed by me, something I'd never done on any film before, let alone with a multi-camera team. Talk about a jump in the deep end! It's been great fun ever since!

My Spotlink link is below:

<https://app.spotlight.com/3810-5619-9373>

Matthew Collins



So what about me. My name is Matthew Collins. I am film maker and a photographer handyman painter and decorator and more, just a guy trying to get by, learning to live.

Who am I? I am from Harrow, North West London. Photography/film making is something I have always been into. I love how in one picture or one short film you are telling a story. I helped on two amateur videos in North London as a boom operator/sound and general crew.

In my day to day job I take pictures and short videos to turn them into YouTube videos, short or long. Sometimes at the right moment a fantastic picture will show itself and you have just got to take that picture.

WELCOME

If you are interested in becoming a member just Click [HERE](#) to find out more about joining this amazing group of friendly film makers.

Members Annual Club Competition 2025

By **Kathy Butcher**

The Club had a very impressive twenty films entered into the Members Annual Club Competition this year.

There was only enough time at the December meeting to show the eight winning entries which were selected by outside Judges Pip Critten from Teign Video Club.

Pip is also Chairman of the Southern Counties Region of IAC (Institute of Amateur Cinematographers) and a BIAFF (British International Amateur Film Festival) Judge. His co-Judge was Robin Slater from Sutton Coldfield Movie Makers who has been a BIAFF Judge for four years and an award winning film maker. Both kindly accepted to take on the task of watching and deciding which were the winning films and we thank them for their time and valued comments.

In the order of screening, here is the list of film titles, film makers and a brief description of the film and the awards they won:

'Moving Day' an animation made in conjunction with 1st year students in which Club member Dave Skertchly created the cartoons and sound – **The Ron Clements Award for Creativity**.

'Salt Flats Sunset' a documentary filmed in Uyuni by Peter Stratford – **The Arthur English Memorial Trophy for Photography**.

'The Memory Illusion' by Jim Reed – a documentary about how the brain works against Ai – **The Pat Doherty Award for Best Use of Sound**.

'Ship of Dreams' by Philip Morley – a holiday documentary about a celebration trip on the ocean liner Queen Mary 2 – **The David Goode Trophy for the Best Holiday Film**,

'Working with Ai' by Jim Reed – an informative film about the incredible uses of Ai – **Sir Paul Holden Trophy for Best Use of Commentary**.

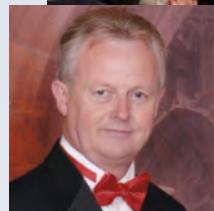
'The Return' a comedy made in just 24hrs with excellent acting by a new Surrey Borders team – **The Dick Hibberd Trophy for Best Camerawork**.

'License to Clown' made by Phil Le Fanu – an emotional drama depicting a clown attempting to make his mark by gaining a license to perform – **The Jack Stribling Trophy for First Time Winner**.

'When Things Go Wrong' by Peter Stratford – a light hearted travelogue which started out to be a serious documentary about the history of Uzbekistan but turned into an unforeseen comedy when another film crew unexpectedly photo-bombed the filming – **The Jackson Trophy for Overall Winner (3rd place)**.

'Memory Illusion' by Jim Reed – **The Jackson Trophy for Overall Winer (2nd place)**.

'License to Clown by Phil Le Fanu – **The Jackson Trophy for Overall Winner (1st Place)**.



Pip Critten FAcI



Robin Slater



Dave Skertchly

John Hawthorne



John Hawthorne

Peter Stratford

John Hawthorne



Matthew Collins

Jonathan Hill

Andrew Hillary

Jim Reed

John Hawthorne

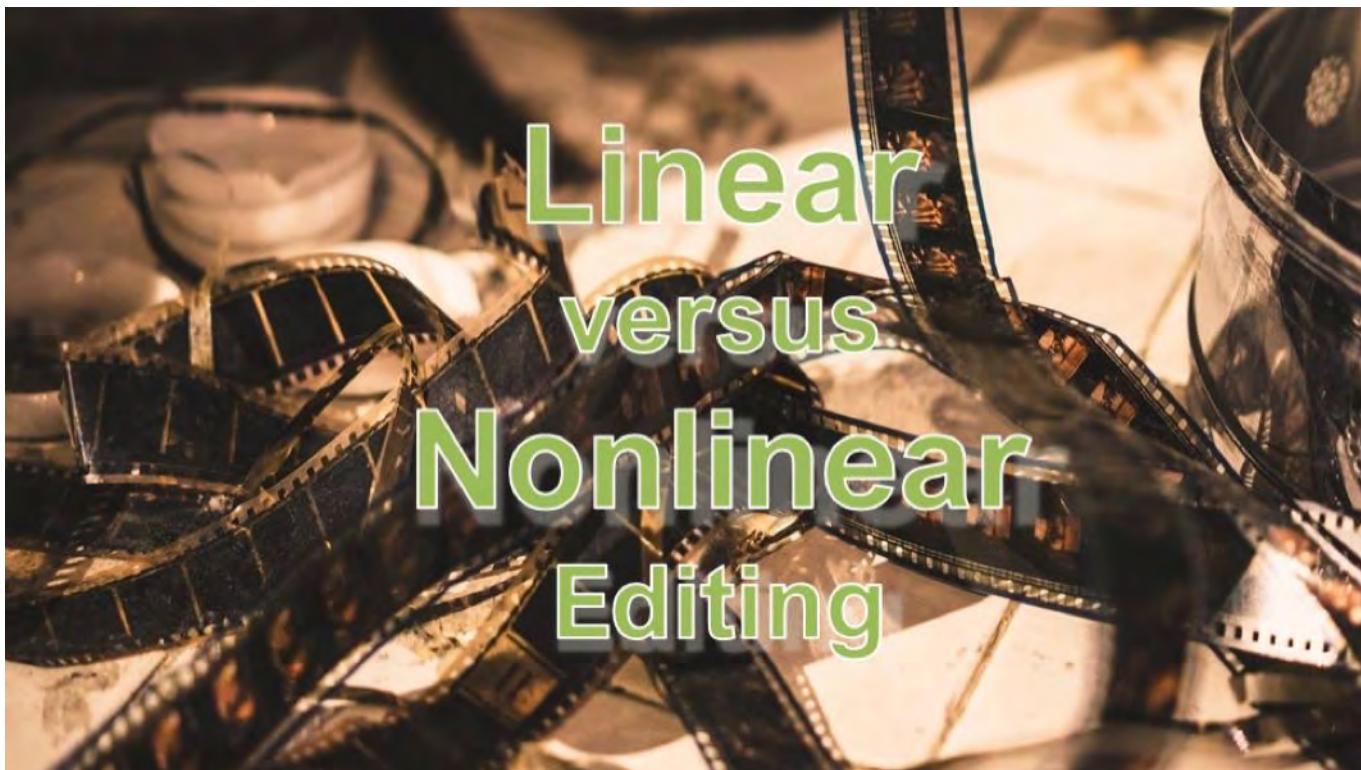


Phil Le Fanu

John Hawthorne

Understanding Editing

by Dave Skertchly



If there is one thing to take back from the excellent top five films, which dominated the Surrey Border Movie Makers annual competition, it is that the judges love high production values. Post-production is one of those behind-the-scenes skills that makes or breaks a film. Back in those olden days of reel-to-reel film stock, our

films would be cut into pieces and stuck back together while discarding all the rubbish. They were stuck together using a jig called a splicer and a glue called film cement and it must be said that a good sniff of film cement could keep you going for hours like it or not! The joints, I mean joins in the film, known as splices,



A Catozzo tape splicer for 35 mm Film

would rattle through the projector gate and with a bit of luck they wouldn't break!

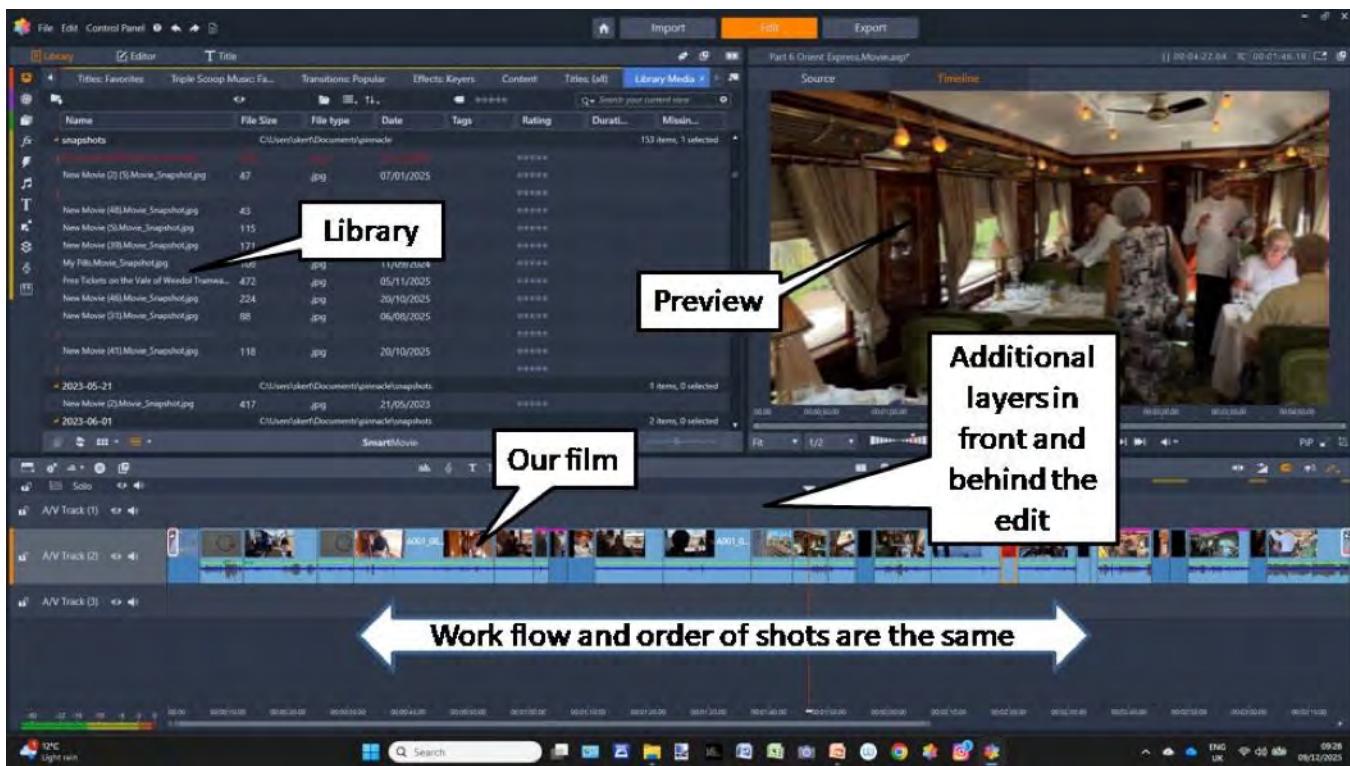


The first Nonlinear editor was the Quantel Harry introduced in 1981

With the advent of video things were not easy. Analogue video had to be edited on a video recorder with a flying erase head to keep the sync pulses in order. Cuts could often be as much as one second out as the erase head unwound for each cut! We could only look on in envy as Quantel introduced the computer based Nonlinear editor called "Harry" in 1981, even the BBC had one costing £250K in 1981 money, which is just about £1M today! Eventually home computers caught up, and we can all enjoy, or not enjoy depending on your own preferences, Nonlinear editing.

The early editing software although termed Nonlinear, reproduced the film editing process but in software. This is the software with which we are probably most familiar. The film is represented by the layer running left right and there are a few extra layers for titles, chroma key and cut aways. In effect the workflow follows the final film output. When introduced this was luxury and there is no doubt that many accomplished amateur movie makers successfully use this method to this day. While originally billed as Nonlinear this method is often referred to nowadays as linear editing.

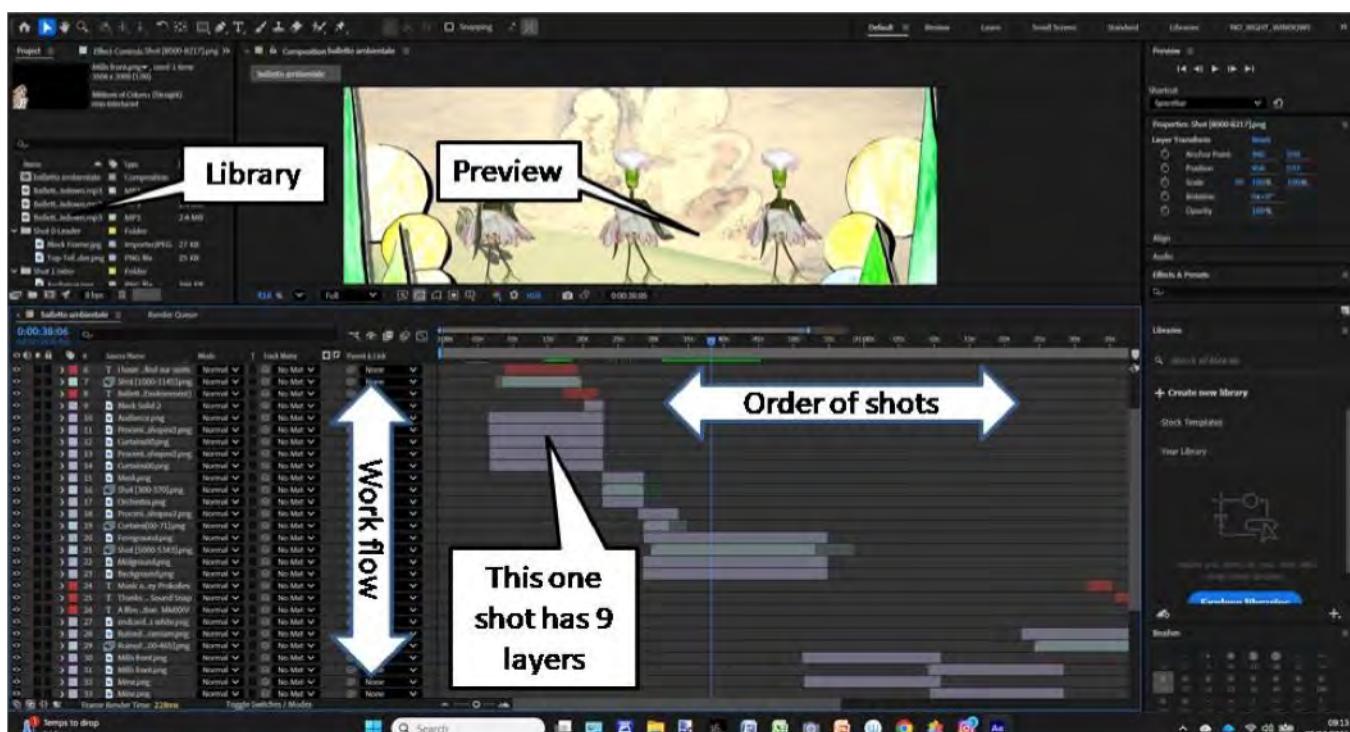




As computers and software became more powerful the software included more layers, and I am guessing that postproduction experts started to put their shots into separate layers so that these layers could be locked and each shot edited independently adding effects such as cutaways and adjusting colour balance also in separate layers. Things have evolved and there are now different software's for the new "Linear" and "Nonlinear" editing methods. Editors will in fact use both. Market leader for Nonlinear Editing is After Effects.

In the picture of the After Effects screen you can see the huge number of layers, nine in this case, which have been used for just one shot. In this case they include green screen action, several background layers, colour grading layers, special effects, titles and all these and more for just one shot. For the example shown there are a total 45 layers for just one minute of film!

Nonlinear editing in After Effects. The way in which the workflow and shot sequence are at right angles is obvious. There is so much to discuss and maybe we can persuade an expert to demonstrate the differences. I have very limited experience but here are some simple tips for us beginners to get started in Nonlinear editing:-



1. Place each shot or asset on a layer
2. Use the padlock icon to lock each layer in position and unlock it only when you want to work on it.
3. Don't be afraid to use lots of layers.

But hey, film cement can still be bought online for those late-night postproduction sessions!

(Only joking as we don't recommend the use of solvents!)

Green Screen-ish

By John Hawthorne

Over December we had the Green Screen Christmas challenge. One or two of you were not 100% certain how to achieve these effects. Whoops that was my mistake! So this article is me putting the cart before the horse.

Buster Keaton regularly risked death (eg the collapsing house façade in Steamboat Bill, Jr). He later discovered he'd broken his neck during a stunt.



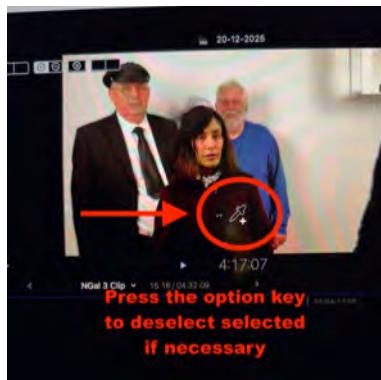
Harold Lloyd lost several fingers in a real-life prop explosion. The 1920s were pretty dangerous for film stars.

Nowadays film makers use CGI often overlayed onto a film using a green or blue screen.

However, many Apple users now use the **Magnetic Mask** in Final Cut Pro. I'll explain the easiest option first.

Magnetic Mask.

If you open the 90 Day Free Trial version of Final Cut Pro, on the 'Effects' tab there is a title "Masks and Keying". Press it! You will then see this:



Select Magnetic Mask and the screen will prompt you to use the eyedropper cursor to select any person or object you want to retain in your shot.

If the eyedropper selects an area you do not wish to retain, hold down the option key and deselect the area.

Then press **Analyze** to get the entire mask rendered.

Then press **DONE** and you will see this – A chair you can put against any background you wish:

With the help of ChatGPT or any photo App, you can adjust the colour and put the chair in any setting you wish....



Green Screen

However, the conventional way of achieving the same thing is to use a green screen background. (You can get them for about £30 from various famous online outlets such as Amazon):

In your video editor just select the "Chroma Key" colour (eg Green) and 'Bob's your Uncle', the green background becomes transparent. If the screen has been properly lit.

Then place a different video behind the first one – job done! Easy peasy..... You then can make cars fly like this...



Or a magic mirror that speaks back to you.... Any effect is more or less possible with a bit of imagination....

Good Luck with your 'Effects' journey!



By Jim Reed

Not sure this is festive cheer, but it probably sets the tone for the coming year!



18th December 2025 – OpenAI Releases GPT-5.2 CODEX!

OpenAI quietly released GPT-5.2 Codex – no flashy demo – no viral moment – no hype. But this is one of the clearest signals yet of where OpenAI is taking their GPT models next.

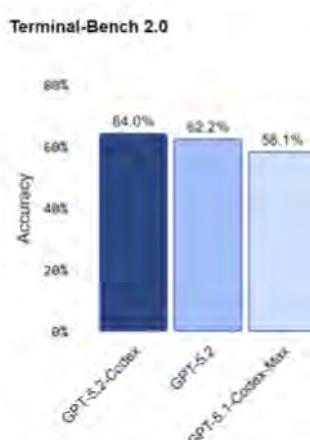
"Today we're releasing GPT-5.2-Codex, the most advanced agentic coding model yet for complex, real-world software engineering. GPT-5.2-Codex is a version of GPT-5.2 further optimised for agentic coding in Codex, including:

- Improvements on long-horizon work through context compaction.
- Stronger performance on large code changes like refactors and migrations.
- Improved performance in Windows environments.
- Significantly stronger cybersecurity capabilities."

GPT-5.2 Codex isn't just about code – it's an agent-optimised variant of GPT-5.2, designed for work that happens over time – not single prompts or short chats. It's built to handle long, multi-step tasks; interact with tools and environments; stay consistent across extended workflows; keep going instead of breaking halfway through. Credit: World of Ai <https://intheworldofai.com/p/openai-drops-5-2-codex>

This is about execution, not conversation.

Instead of testing Codex on creative prompts or short answers, OpenAI evaluated it on execution-focused benchmarks, such as Terminal-Bench 2.0 check it out [Here](#)



These benchmarks don't reward clever phrasing. They measure whether a model can operate inside real environments and complete tasks end-to-end.

That's where Codex stands out.

Why This Matters: Most models are optimised for one thing:

Give a strong response right now.

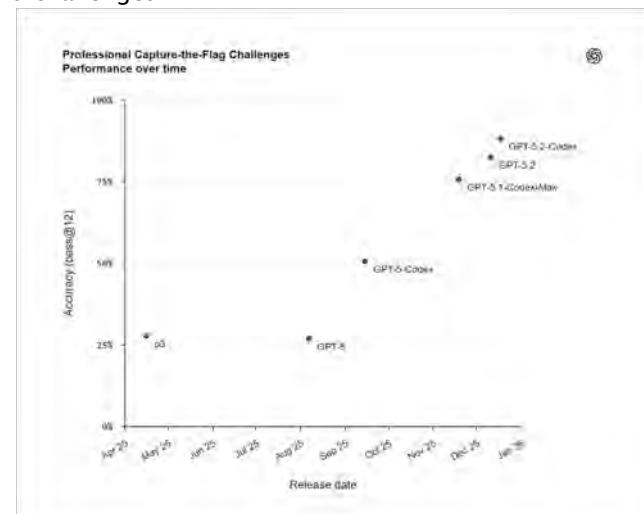
Codex is optimised for something else:

Keep working until the task is done.

That difference matters if you're building:

- AI agents
- internal automation
- workflow systems
- tools that need reliability over time

The Professional Capture-the-Flag (CTF) measures how often the model can solve advanced, multi-step real-world challenges.



This is infrastructure-level AI, not a toy.

It also explains why OpenAI is rolling Codex out more carefully.



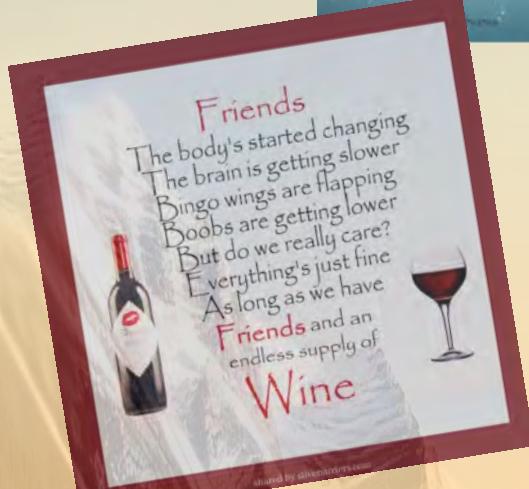
Rita's

Rib

Ticklers



Mindset is everything.

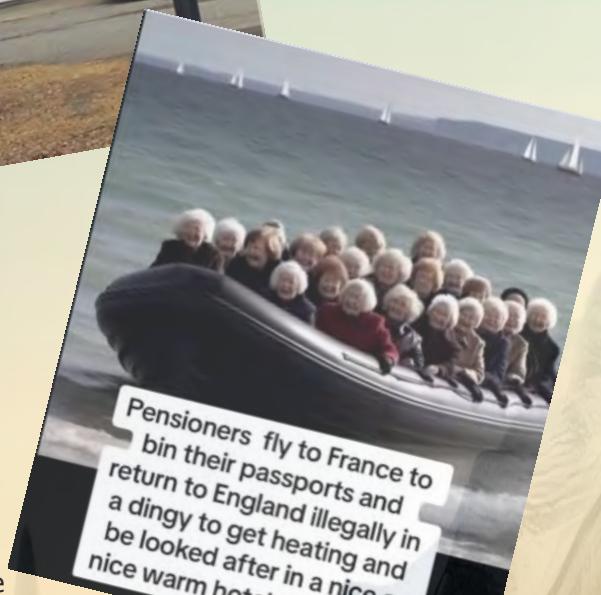


IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO BE WHAT YOU WANT TO BE. UNLESS YOU WANT TO BE YOUNGER, THEN YOU'RE SCREWED.



An old woman is sitting at a bar when an older gentleman sits down beside her.

"So," he says, "do I come here often?"



One big difference
between men and women
is that if a woman
says "Smell this",
it usually smells nice.



I just got pulled over by the
cops. He said " I can smell
alcohol "
I told him that's because
your not respecting social
distancing.



My husband cooks for me
like I'm a goddess—
by placing burnt offerings
before me."

Editor's Note

Hi Filmmakers,

We start this 2026 edition with an inspiring header from Peter Frost, which represents a wonderful picture of optimism for the start to the New Year. In all the tough challenges ahead for most people, a little bit of dream-like fantasy can serve to remind us of the sparkle and bubbles that we can put into our lives from creativity and imagination.

We also want to thank and congratulate Peter and Ian Absolom on the amazing series of articles on Animation and Cinema that have appeared since January 2024, yes for two years, reaching

a final conclusion in the December 2025 issue. Always so entertaining and professionally produced, they are sent to the Editors as completed pdf pages. Sometimes Border Post would have been very sparse without them. Superbly laid out with several links to movies, they continually raised the game for the publication.

We wish all of our readers every happiness for 2026, and 'Keep those articles coming'!

Philip and Brian



Contributors!

Thanks to all members and guests who helped us by contributing to this issue:

Rita Wheeler, Peter Frost, Brian O'Connell, Philip Morley, Jim Reed, John Hawthorne, Kathy Butcher, Phil Le Fanu, Matthew Collins and Dave Skertchly.

COPY DEADLINE! February 2026 issue

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



Next Meeting

Meeting on Zoom at
7.30pm on the
9th January 2026.
Details to follow

Future Meetings

February : SBMM AGM at
St Joans Centre

IMPORTANT INFORMATION



HOW TO UPLOAD YOUR FILMS

For future reference, all videos for club showing should now be uploaded via the website.

Simply click on 'Competitions', then 'Members Video Uploads', and then after you have read the simple instructions, click on 'Go to the online upload page'.

For even easier access, this is a direct link to the 'online upload page

[HERE](#)

Select the relevant upload choice.

Your Club Contacts

Name:

Chairman	Mike Sanders	chairman@surreyborder.org.uk
Vice Chairman	Philip Morley	
Hon. Secretary	Rita Wheeler	secretary@surreyborder.org.uk
Hon. Treasurer	Gillian Gatland	
Webmaster Slack & The Brain	Jim Reed	
Competition Officer	John Hawthorne	
Movie Projects Co-ordinator.	TBA	
Public Relations Officer	Kathy Butcher	
Editor - Border Post	Philip Morley & Brian O'Connell	
Social Events	Rita Wheeler and Gillian Gatland	

Your contributions for inclusion will be appreciated together with photographs if possible. Please send them to The Editor Border Post for the next issue: pffilms1@mac.com