

Cine Chat

April 2008

The Journal of Edinburgh
Cine & Video Society
23a Fettes Row, Edinburgh,
EH3 6RH



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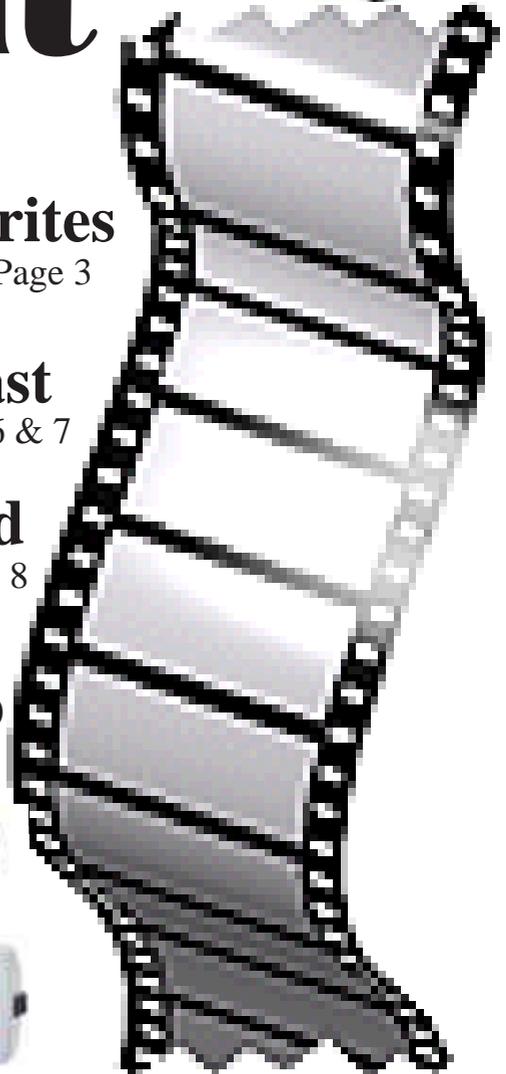
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<http://www.ecvs.co.uk>

About ECVS

Some things you might like to know if you are new to Edinburgh Cine and Video Society

The Waverley Cine Society which became Edinburgh Cine Society was founded in 1936, and is the oldest amateur movie-making society in Scotland. The Society has occupied premises in Fettes Row, in the New Town of Edinburgh since its inception. The society met in rented rooms until 1938, at which time, for £500, it purchased both the ground floor and the basement of number 23, Fettes Row to become the only Cine club in Scotland to own its own meeting rooms.

Escalating maintainance costs over the years forced the society to sell the ground floor of the building in 1975, and move downstairs to its existing clubrooms in the basement, which the society still owns. The clubrooms consist of a kitchen, toilets, and four main meeting rooms, one of which is fitted out with cinema seats for viewing video and cine films projected onto the large screen from the clubs video and cine projectors. The other rooms are used as a lounge and two multi-use studios or instructional areas, with video equipment and computer editing facilities installed.

CLUBROOMS

23A Fettes Row, Edinburgh, EH3 6RH
Website: <http://www.ecvs.co.uk>

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To whom all communications in connection with Cine Chat should be sent. Alternatively, members may leave notes in the Cine Chat Post Box, which will be available in the ECVS clubrooms at all times.

POLICY COMMITMENT:

To publish informative and entertaining articles, features, news, comments and opinion about movie making in general and ECVS and it's members in particular. Never to cause intentional offence, but not to be afraid of occassional controversy. To publish members letters, comments, rights of reply, and submitted articles, as accurately as possible and to correct in the first available edition, any errors or omissions which may have inadvertently occurred in previous editions. COST: Free to members of ECVS unless and until the Committee decide otherwise.

ECVS OFFICIALS 2007 - 2008

President:	Stewart Emm
Vice-President:	Bob Bell
Past President:	Alan Brown
Secretary:	Hugh Trevor
Treasurer:	Vic Young
Subscriptions:	John Henry

The President Writes...

Another year is nearly over and the AGM is only a few weeks away. However let us not dwell on change, but can you answer this question - Have you ever wondered how others perceive you while you are making your video. Many of us are observed as we set up and shoot our scenes. However far more people may see the results of our efforts compared to those who see us as we make our videos.

You may get a mention in the credits in your video and once in a while may be even asked to talk about the making of your video. But nothing communicates more vividly with the public as the act of you or an club production team making a video.

This could be the key to getting the ECVS better known within the wider community and promoting the activities of the club. I noticed an old notice in the club rooms which stated in bold letters “Edinburgh Cine Society Film Making in Progress” an updated version of this could be made up for using with outdoor shoots.

Another idea would to have some sort of business card to be handed out while carrying out videoing in public places to hand out to the curious passersby. So if you are going out and about, to shoot your video, you could help advertise the club and may recruit one or two new members as a result.

I am sure that some of you will think this is a not a good idea, but it may be worth a try. If you have any other suggestion to promote the club, over the summer months, please let me know.

The summer project we need to put some time and effort into is the making of Club



entries for the Strathclyde and North vs South competitions. The themes for these are “Job Done” and “Be Prepared”. We will be holding meetings to discuss these productions. The first meeting will be shortly after the AGM, so keep an eye on the notice board and website www.ecvs.co.uk for further details.

Thank you all for your support over the year and good luck with your summer projects!!

Well that’s all for now.
All the best.

Stewart Emm

Cine Chat

WANTS
YOU

**To contribute articles,
news, comment, etc.**

Please email to alan@bison.co.uk, or leave in the Cine Chat submissions box at ECVS.

The Making of.... 'LINK FROM THE PAST'

By Bob Bell

The Strathclyde competition theme, 'Hot and Cold', had been chosen. It must have been preying on my mind as an idea came to me during the night! I saw the script and was focused on how the film should progress. I had a set of cufflinks shaped as a pair of taps, one marked red for hot, the other blue for cold. These would play a significant part in the film. I wanted a mystery story where the audience would be kept guessing as to how the plot would unfold, as portrayed in the popular American television series of the 1970's, Columbo. The viewer would see the murder, see the culprit in action but wonder how it would be solved.



The Storyline



Police are called to a house where the body of a woman is found in the hallway. Blood is coming from a head wound. They suspect a boyfriend may have killed her but it remains unsolved.



Ten years later a man, David Adams, confides in another criminal that years earlier he had inadvertently killed a woman after breaking into her house. The 'friend'



decides to contact a Police Inspector he knows with this information.

The Inspector takes up the case and learns that an unusual cufflink had been found near to the body. This was to be a valuable clue. A nearby house had been broken into around the same time. The Inspector visits the



daughter of the late householder. He notices a photograph on a table. It shows her father being presented with a trophy at a Plumbers Federation dinner. He takes possession of the photograph.

The police obtain a search warrant and confront David Adams at his home. He denies involvement but the police carry out their search. A Detective Constable finds a

trinket box in a cupboard and notices something of interest amongst the contents. He takes it to the Inspector. This was the clue they had been seeking. Adams is formally cautioned and told he is being arrested on a charge of murder. He challenges the Inspector to prove it.

The Inspector opens an envelope and produces the cufflink found beside the body, a perfect partner for that found in Adam's home. He then shows the photograph of the man at the Federation dinner wearing these cufflinks.



Making the Film



The film opens with a police officer standing under the glare of a revolving blue light at the scene of the crime. The bloodstained head of the corpse is shown followed by a newspaper headline 'woman brutally murdered'.

After a fade out the scene moves to ten years later with two men drinking in a beer garden. This was filmed on the bench owned by the Club's neighbour, Mr Carter, who seemed pleased to be of assistance. Babble from an old wedding video hotel lounge proved useful in dubbing the background noise. The viewer intentionally does not hear the conversation. Adams leaves and the other is seen pondering. He uses his cell phone to call the police station. He informs a trusted Detective Inspector that David Adams has admitted to him that he killed a woman ten years previously and he is now showing remorse. The scene moves back and forwards from the Inspector to the informant. There is small talk between the informant and the Inspector as notes are taken.

The next scene is a Police Incident Room where a Superintendent is briefing officers of the murder ten years earlier. He holds up



the cufflink which had been found at the scene. Whilst he is speaking, the viewer sees the murder taking place, but in black and white as a flashback. This was processed on the Casablanca Avio 11 DV in the monochrome effects panel. If watched carefully, the cufflink can be seen falling from the murderer's pocket as he takes out a handkerchief to wipe the blood.

Filming the scene where the Detective Inspector is seen interviewing the daughter whose father owned the cuff-links was fairly straightforward, but emphasis was placed on the camera angle as he homed into the photograph on the table.

The police visit Adam's home. On Adams answering the door the officers almost force their way inside, suggesting an element of confidence and control.

A cursory search is made with Adams watching over, with almost a hostile look on his face.

A detective opens a cupboard and picks up a small box. Inside he spots the clue and palms it before taking it to the Inspector. Both men are pleased with the find.



The suspect's attitude changes as he is formally cautioned and implicated in the murder. He challenges the Inspector to prove his allegations. Camera close up shots are shown of his uneasiness. When the envelope is opened the camera zooms in slowly. The photographs of the man wearing a cufflink and the red tap cufflink found in the hall cupboard is placed alongside the blue. The shots which are very close up show H and C on the taps. The viewer should realise the significance of the cuff-link clues for the first time. The Detective Inspector, however had known about them all along. This is followed by a sharp cut to black. Dramatic music is heard and is followed by titles in the form of information on the Adam's conviction at Court.



John Henry played the Detective Superintendent, with the role of briefing the other officers.



This was done in the Club room using white boards and photographs as props. I used a 'teleprompt' with a laptop computer scrolling the lines on Microsoft Powerpoint. The camera stood alongside close to the laptop. A few seconds of officers in a real police station situation were used as inserts as he spoke.



The Detective Inspector was played by Murray Petrie, an amateur actor with Saughtonhall Drama Group.

The murderer, David Adams, also from that drama group, was ably played by John Webster.

Ishbel Shand the third member played the daughter of the old man who appeared in the photograph.

ECVS members played supporting roles. The murder victim was played by Ann Sutherland who managed to 'stop' breathing long enough to film her facial injuries. Alan Brown played the informant, complete with crass sovereign rings and Sean Groat played the keen Detective Constable.



The photograph was re-produced by Pauline Johnson. The ECVS banner was an ideal mask to be later changed to the Plumber's Federation in Adobe Photoshop. Norman Speirs and John Clark enjoyed dressing up in their best suits.

Our Club premises proved ideal. The culprit, David Adams rang the doorbell, placed his hand on the handle, waited until the victim was heard to turn the mortise lock, then forced the cylinder lock boss head from its fixing. As the door swung open, the inside

handle struck was made to look as if it hit the victim in the eye socket with such force, her skull was fractured. Actually a chair padded with cushions stopped any damage inside from the swinging door. Theatrical fake blood was carefully applied to Ann's face and head. Blood also spilled onto a matching offcut of the carpet had the desired effect. Short cutaways of the hands, lock and boss head were taken.

The film which had intentional very sharp edits lasted eight and a half minutes.

It was entered in the Strathclyde competition at Lanark on Sunday 4 November 2007.

It was voted second place.

Feedback from the actors was interesting. None had any idea as to how much work and preparation was involved in making a film. Even when they had not a part to play they asked to attend the locations and seemed intrigued at the whole process. A special preview evening was held. The three main actors were each given a personal copy of the finished DVD.

Next years theme is 'Job Done'. Does anyone have any ideas?

North vs South Competition

This years North vs South competition was won for the third year in succession by a club from the North. Tynemouth Video Society had the winning film entitled "Grant Aid" - their second win in three years!

Sadly, the number of entries for this nation-wide competition have dwindled in recent years, and more support (in the form of increased entries) is needed if the competition is to continue beyond next year.

Next years subject is "BE PREPARED", films should be up to 20 mins in length - so let's get our thinking caps on, and help maintain the chain of wins for Northern -based video clubs and societies!

Getting Animated!



On the 15th November last year, our Thursday night attendees took part in 'Animation Night' - the idea being to learn a bit about a genre of film making that we don't tend to see much of within ECVS.

After a brief introduction to the history and concepts behind different animation techniques, we concentrated on the Stop Motion Pro product for the PC. A free trial of this software is available at www.stopmotionpro.com, and results can be achieved in a few simple steps, as we later discovered in a practical demonstration!

For those who missed the evening, here's a recap, and a glimpse of our first experimental test-film!

First we connected a camera to the PC, any camera will do, a cheap webcam, a digital stills camera, or as we used, a miniDV camcorder (via firewire)



Next we point the camera at our subject, in this case a plasticine figure.



Now we press the capture button to capture a frame to the PC.



We move our subject a tiny amount.

We press the capture button again, and repeat the last two steps, until we have a large number of frames.



Finally, pressing the PLAY button plays the animation, and allows us to save the final video sequence.

Not a speedy process by any means, but even in the short time available to us on the night, we succeeded in producing a first-attempt introduction where our actor, Frank, opens a jar of plasticine letters which then wriggle around the table until they spell out 'ECVS Presents...' - not bad for a nights work!



Let's see what masterpieces we can come up with next!

Scouting Around

By Stewart Emm



Consider this: a scene in your short video takes place in a coffee shop. You know that your living room will never pass off as a local “Cafe Nero”, so you decide to shoot that scene on location. You gather your team and gear and hit the road to find the right spot. However there are several issues to keep in mind:

Get Permission

Once you have found the ideal location for your shoot, you will need permission to shoot there. Many people will be okay about letting you use their property for your production, as long as they know exactly what you are going to do and how long it will take.

When asking permission it is always a good idea to:

- * Be upfront about the number of people involved and time requirements.
- * Explain that he will get publicity by the use of his premises in the video and it will be noted in the credits.
- * Check that you are dealing with the person who can grant you the permission to shoot on the premises.
- * Be polite!

Identify your Power Sources

Power outlets in some locations are very limited and if you are setting up any lights then you need to check the location out carefully.



Ask yourself:

- * are there enough outlets?
- * do I need any extension leads?

Gaffer tape to secure flying power leads to the floor is a must for all on location work as the working area must be kept as safe as possible.

Evaluate lighting Conditions

So you find a suitable coffee shop that has the look and feel that you want. Check the natural lighting and its direction at the time of day when you will want to make your shoot. If you are carrying out a night shoot inside is there sufficient lighting or do you need to augment it Will infill/mood lighting. Some questions you may want to ask:



- * will you use the windows as a light source?
- * do you need any light blocking material or gels to fit to the windows?
- * where are the lighting control to turn off the internal lights?

Anticipate Audio Problems

Few locations are totally devoid of sound and you should take your time to check out your location to see how quiet it is. Better still stand still with your eyes closed and just



listen. Can you hear the fluorescent tubes buzzing, is the fridge humming in the background, is there a high level of traffic noise.

Can you make changes on location to minimise the unwanted noises?

* Can you turn off, unplug or cover up any unwanted noise source? (with the correct permissions)

* where is the quietest spot and is it a good place to shot the scene



Bring a selection of microphones to use in the location to give you the best sound. Check wireless mikes for electrical or other interference.

Consider the Time and Day of the Week

Most places look and feel differently at different times of the day. What may be a quiet spot in the morning may be an extremely noisy one in the evening. Consider the day and time that may be of the least inconvenience to the owner, you may have to compromise, but it will allow you to get the shots you need.



Finally leave the place as tidy, if not tidier, than you found it and a thank you letter will go a long way to maintain the goodwill of the owner/occupier. You never know when you may want to shoot another coffe shop scene!

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Dates for your Diary

**E.C.V.S. ANNUAL
GENERAL MEETING**

**Thursday 24th April
2008**

**ECVS Clubrooms
7.30pm**

**All members welcome
to attend.**

**E.C.V.S.
AWARDS NIGHT
2008**

**Friday 25th April
2008**

**ECVS Clubrooms
7.30pm**

**View this years competition
entries, hear the judges comments
and chosen winner, and vote for the
audience-choice award!**