

Cine Chat

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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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About CINE CHAT

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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 2014 - 2015

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Stewart Emm

Vice-President:

Peter Dick

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Peter Wilson

Secretary:

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Subscriptions:

Brian Whitnell



LIGHTING THE FUTURE...



By ECVS President Stewart Emm

2014 seems to have passed in a flash, and here we are coasting into Christmas and the New Year.

Film Making has never been more popular, if you consider that during the course of year YouTube

estimated that 100 hours of video are uploaded to its site every minute. According to published statistics more than 1 billion unique users visit YouTube each month and more than 6 billion hours of content are watched monthly.

Video is everywhere. Access to production equipment is no longer a barrier to making video. Mobile phones can produce high quality still images and video footage that seriously rivals many consumer camcorders. The internet facilitates distribution, and the World Wide Web provides a global audience.

In this grand scheme of things, where does the ECVS belong? How do we interact with it? True we have our web site and videos on YouTube. However, the original objectives of the ECVS to “provide amateur moviemakers the facility to study, promote and encourage interest in all aspects of the visual arts concerned with and expressed through the medium of moviemaking”, seem now to have been overtaken by events. The term amateur is definitely out of fashion, ‘Indy’ or ‘Independent moviemaker’, is preferred today. The “facility to study, promote and encourage interest in all the aspects of the visual arts” is now paralleled within the realm of the Internet.

We have an ECVS programme that was designed to inform and encourage interest in moviemaking, but our numbers are not increasing. Who do we interact with? Using Google I come across many Internet based moviemaking individuals and groups in and around Edinburgh. However, most are wanting to use crowdfunding to finance their next production and using the Internet to recruit crew and cast for their next movie making venture.

ECVS seems to be invisible to this sizeable indigenous moviemaking/filmmaking population within the Edinburgh area. This presents an opportunity for the ECVS to connect with them and, find out what we need to do as a club, to explore common requirements which, hopefully, should result in a growth of our membership.

I would suggest that to expand this theme we need to approach one or more of the Universities to ask for assistance in carrying out a study into this culture of filmmakers. The results may not be what we want to hear, but I’m sure a third party looking into our situation may provide some valuable insights and opportunities for us to pursue.

Some food for thought before 2015 begins.

Have a great Christmas and Prosperous New Year!

How much camera equipment do you take?

By Hugh Trevor

In November 2014 I went on a trip to North-East India to visit a diocese of the Church of North India with which Lothian Presbytery (LP) is twinned. Within both those two districts are 12 churches/parishes, each of which has an individual twinning with a church in the other district. In a visit of two and a half weeks, it was my job as Twinning Coordinator of LP to visit all 12 of the Indian churches and take video footage of the people and activities in each - footage which will be made into 12 individual DVDs, one for each the Lothian churches so they could see the activities of 'their' twinned Indian church.



HOW MUCH CAMERA EQUIPMENT SHOULD I TAKE?

The weight allowance for hold baggage on most overseas flights is 20 kgs with cabin luggage 5kgs or so. For most internal flights in India the total baggage allowance (hold and cabin combined) is 15kgs.

First question, do I take my tripod? For a film destined for a competition, a tripod is essential, but is that standard necessary for church showing? Probably not, but I took mine anyway. I also took a little spider type of stand.

Do I take my monopod? I usually attach one to my hand-held camera to increase steadiness, but do I need it if I take the tripod? I did take it.

How many tapes do I take for my Canon Legria camcorder? I was due to spend 3 days in Istanbul on my way back, where I might do some videoing, so I took 23 mini-tapes.

Do I take a spare camcorder in case something goes wrong? I was taking my Lumix camera for photos and that takes video too; was that enough backup? My Panasonic HCX900 twice has had to be returned to the maker for repairs, so is not reliable, but I took it, too, to be on the safe side.

Do I take my wireless microphone and receiver? They weigh quite a lot, but may well be useful in noisy situations.

What about lighting? I may well be in situations (visiting



farms or churches at night) when I need a video light, but my new five battery LED one is rather large and my older ones too heavy. (Through the kindness of Peter Dick I got a medium sized LED one on the day before I went).



What about re-charging fittings and spare batteries? What about adapters? It is a pity that British plugs are so clumsy and heavy and always need adapters, and what sort of adapters are needed for India anyway? I took all I could think of.

That was just my camera equipment. I had footwear, clothes, and personal items to think of too.

Going, my hold luggage weighed 23 kilograms, was marked 'Heavy' at the airport, and my cabin luggage was 7 kgs. Coming back I had 21 kgs in hold baggage and 9 kgs in cabin. I was not charged extra on Turkish Airlines either way, but I was on the Indian Domestic flight, both ways. My tripod (the heaviest item) sometimes went in my hold luggage, sometimes in cabin luggage, whichever I thought would cost me least!

I did use my tripod quite often (and I never used the spider). I did not use my monopod as much as I

thought, as it was such a bother to keep getting it out and fixing it on – my standards started slipping! The microphone and receiver were most necessary in several situations. I used the light Peter had got me several times and would have missed out without it. I took 17 hours of video footage in India and not a single second in Istanbul where the weather was mostly dull, wet and windy. My Canon Legria worked fine, but I did loan my Panasonic to an Indian friend who took some footage on it – a useful supplement I hope to what I have taken.

Altogether the trip seemed to have been a success weightwise. I have not yet looked at the footage I took, nor done any work on editing.



HDMI does it work?

An investigation by Peter Dick

HDMI - does it actually work?

The answer is yes and no!

What kind of answer is that?

Let me explain....



This purpose of this article is to raise awareness of the difficulties that can be encountered and that simple logical techniques can not be relied on to resolve them.

Have you tried to use HDMI to connect a camera to a screen and it did not work first time? Did you have to turn something off and then on to make it work? If the answer is yes then you have encountered some of the deficiencies of HDMI.

The good news is that once it is working it is likely to keep working. If a change is made, and you are unlucky, then it may stop working.

A look into the history will reveal a series of bad decisions and flawed engineering that underly the unreliable nature of HDMI. I will highlight one of the many factors that illustrate the problem.

Televisions originally had two connections to them, power and an aerial. Consumer electronics evolved and the requirement for extra connections grew to support video recorders, games and computers. These originally had a device in them called a modulator which was a miniature television transmitter that was set to an unused channel. This worked, through the aerial connection, but the results were not very good. If a direct connection existed then the results would be noticeably better. The SCART (Syndicat des Constructeurs d'Appareils Radiorécepteurs et Téléviseurs) connector was designed to provide all the possible connections needed. This worked well but the number of wires in the cable made it thick making the use of large plugs necessary. SCART was entirely an analogue connection.



Nowadays television and all the associated accessories are digital. The designers needed a digital replacement for SCART. They wanted to get away from the thick cable and the large plugs. At this point computer developers rather than television engineers made the specification for the new connection format. This is the first and by far the most serious mistake. The television industry had a robust connection called SDI (Serial Digital Interface) and a High definition version called HDSDI

(High Definition Serial Digital Interface). This used a simple length of coaxial cable. This opportunity was missed and some sort of specification was produced for, what we now suffer from, HDMI (High Definition Multimedia Interface). The computer developers decided to modify an existing standard for connecting digital monitors to computers DVI (Digital Visual Interface). The film industry, mainly in the Hollywood area insisted that this connection could not be used for producing perfect digital copies of their work. This added a tier of extra computing to the specification in the form of HDCP (High-bandwidth Digital Content Protection).

Computer developers do not understand the old engineering term KISS (Keep It Simple Stupid) and created rafts of additional unnecessary complexity. They tried to make it do everything. If it all worked perfectly then all would be fine, alas it does not.



SCART cables have 21 connections HDMI has two less at 19, at this point I will remind you that SDI has 2. One of the main objectives that the consumers wanted was a simple neat lead. How could this be achieved with 19 wires in the cable? Simple use skinny wires! Well that is fine for very short distances but not so good for longer runs. The HDMI specification also required power to be carried down the cable but this was only loosely specified. With such a loose specification there was wide range power levels provided by different equipment manufacturers. Using this example alone one can start to understand why one combination may work and an other will

not. In the case of it not working none of the equipment or the lead is faulty! Change any one and it could start working. This example is a warning that nothing is a simple as it looks and, without a deeper understanding, things can be mystifying. Nothing can be taken at face value. This example was based only on the power parameter. Alas there are a number of software issues that will also prevent reliable operation, as in the power example no individual item is faulty, just that particular combination.

I am aware of a number of the shortcomings of HDMI and that why when visiting speakers to ECVS ask if we can provide an HDMI link from their equipment at the front of the auditorium to the projector my reply is a guarded yes. I tell them that it usually works but I can not guarantee that it will work with their equipment. The only way to find out is to try it!

The conclusion. If you are confused, I apologise, HDMI defies logical analysis and is a product of bad engineering. Unless it is redesigned from scratch it will never be reliable. I suggest that if you have problems then best procedure is to try changing ANY of the equipment and cables that are connected by HDMI (even if it is switched off!). Do not try and use the logical process of testing and eliminating each individual component. That is unlikely to work. Just substitute each element until it starts to work. Be well aware that the element that appeared to be faulty may actually be fully functional, but not in your system.

Leads are the most likely suspects and the cheapest element so I suggest changing them first. After that all I can say is -

“Good Luck!”

Foley Evening

By Stewart Emm



After Alan and Sean's entertaining and excellent Foley presentation I thought it would be a good excuse to write an article on the black arts of Foley. For the uninitiated Foley is the process of getting additional sound effects to add extra quality to images. Often foley effects are added because certain sounds were not picked up well on location.



If the sound is general one, such as the sound of clothing or a footstep then it must relate to a specific event or action. The specific sound effect of a bubbling flask of chemicals was created by blowing down a straw or section of polythene tubing into a tumbler of water. Creating these specific sound effects is the real fun of Foley. They allow you to create a sound that mimics the actual bubbling effect in an enhanced way. From the red faces of the individuals, Foley is also a lot of hard work!

You will need many props for your Foley tracks (whatever you see in the film). It's impossible to say what you will need until you see the picture!

For the amateur filmmaker the easiest way is to use your camcorder to record your sound effects, using an external mic or recording onto a digital audio recorder. To get the most authentic sound you need to double record the sound. Use a mic splitter that plugs into your camera, this lets you plug in two mics into it. The first mic is the one closest to your sound source. The second is a boom mic placed much further away, picking up the general room ambience. The combination of these two tracks recorded together gives much more depth than a simple sound effect. From a trawl of the internet the following sound effects can be created using some time tested tricks such as:

Bats flying: quickly open and close an umbrella, recording it from four feet away. For birds a pair of gloves sounds like wing flaps

Punches: hit rolled-up newspaper with a stick. Or try punching the palm of your hand, then adding some treble and distortion via your audio software.

Crunching bones: stuff a cooked chicken with thin wooden rods, then beat with a hammer. Vegetarians can use frozen whole carrots or fresh celery.

Elevator door: close a filing cabinet while a single bell rings.

Human mutilation: stab into a watermelon. For serious beatings, use a broom handle hitting a mattress.

Walking: on snow, lay a piece of carpet on some gravel and walk gingerly. For moving through a swamp or mud, use your hands to imitate footsteps in a small tank of mud and water. Crunching snow, fill a small leather bag with flour or small seeds and push down.

Robots, moving: photocopiers replicate that convincing whining, almost hydraulic, sound.

Underwater explosives: record a toilet flushing and slow down to half speed with reverb.

Creaking sound: A water soaked rusty hinge when placed against different surfaces makes a great creaking sound. Notice how various surfaces act as a sounding board to amplify and change the sound.



We didn't have much time on the Foley night to explore the world of sound effects. There are many sound effects libraries available on the Internet, some offer free sound effects to download as a taster, and charge for subsequent downloads; other sites are a subscription based service. However there is a sense of satisfaction about being able to manufacture and record your own to enhance the audio track of the video you are producing.

Some additional notes, to help you on your way.

For each specific sound take a recording. Some recordings may last the whole length of the scene (snow crunch or lapping water) while some effects are very short (a match strike or a punch) so planning the tracks is very important.

The microphone should be placed about three feet in front of the sound source and if a person, away from the face to reduce the sound of breathing (the mike is so sensitive it can easily pick up the sound of a breath).

The idea is to recreate the sound at such a volume and originality that it cannot be distinguished from the actual sound; the actual sound may need replaced for many reasons, interference from other sounds, not loud enough, etc. The final judge will be the audience who sees your final production. You can minimise any critics by using a good set of loudspeakers or earphones to monitor your sound track.

On a final note if anyone would like to add to the above list of how to create Foley sound effects please email your contribution to:

emmedin@btopenworld.com

Choice of the Clubs Competition 2013 - 14

The Final of the Edinburgh Cine and Video Society 'Choice of the Clubs' competition was held in the ECVS clubrooms on 20th February 2014, and we are pleased to announce the winning entry was the ECVS Members Film "<<<REWIND<<<!"



The final results were as follows:

Placing	Votes	Club	Entry
1st	101	ECVS	<<<REWIND<<<
2nd	81	Northern Ireland	Tribute: The Boys of '42
3rd	67	Carlisle	Water - Water
4th	66	Perth	Islay, The Intoxicating Island
5th	63	Dundee	Em No' Happy!
6th	35	East Renfrewshire	Moving House
7th	7	Stewartry	It's Going to get Sticky!!

Pilgrim Trust 2014 Results

The Judge for this years Pilgrim Trust competition was Mr Brian Dunckley of Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

The winner was Tony Grant for his film titled 'The Nith Valley'.



Announcing the Pilgrim Trust 2015



The Pilgrim Trust Competition 2015 will be held on Thursday 2nd April, 2015 at 7.30pm in the ECVS clubrooms.

Entries are now invited for the competition and the entry form can be downloaded from our website: www.ecvs.co.uk

The closing date for entries is Friday 26th February, 2015

ANNUAL COMPETITION 2014 - THE RESULTS

The ECVS Annual Competition was held in the ECVS clubrooms on Thursday 13th March 2014 and Friday 14th March 2014. This years judge was Mrs Daphne Barbeiri.

This years top award (Lizars Trophy) was won by Alan Brown, for his comedy sequel 'What a Mess 2 - Attic of the Clones'.



The ECVS Annual Competition Trophies

The runner-up film, and winner of the 50th Anniversary Trophy was 'Herculaneum and Pompeii' by Jim Closs.

Top Film

(Lizars Trophy)

What a Mess 2 - Attic of the Clones Alan Brown

Runner-up

(50th Anniversary Prize)

Herculaneum and Pompeii Jim Closs

Best Documentary	Herculaneum and Pompeii	Jim Closs
Best Travel Film	Even in Misty Weather	Hugh Trevor
Best Imagination	What a Mess 2	Alan Brown
Best Sound	What a Mess 2	Alan Brown
Best Editing	What a Mess 2	Alan Brown
Best Fiction Film	NO AWARD	NO AWARD
Scotia Quaich	Tusitala	Bob Bell
Best Holiday Film	NO AWARD	NO AWARD
Best Comedy	NO AWARD	NO AWARD
Best Animation	In The Jungle	Sean Groat
Judges Choice	Herculaneum and Pompeii	Jim Closs

No entrants were eligible for the George Maran Plaque, or the Novice Cup (prizes reserved for new film-makers) this year.

On both the Thursday and Friday evenings the audience got the chance to vote for their favourite films, the results of which determine the winners of the Vice-Presidents Prize, and the Frank Walker Salver. The winners of these awards were:

THE FRANK WALKER SALVER : What A Mess 2 - Attic of the Clones (Alan Brown)

THE VICE-PRESIDENT'S PRIZE: Herculaneum and Pompeii (Jim Closs)

ECVS Annual Competition Prize Winners Receive their Awards

ECVS Award Winners were presented with their trophies by ECVS President Peter Wilson in the ECVS clubrooms on 26th April 2014.



*Sean Groat receives the Elena Mae
Trophy for Best Animation*



Jim Closs accepts the Douglas Trophy



Bob Bell receives the Scotia Quaich



*Stewart Emm accepts the Budgie Cup, for
best still photograph in that competition*



*The audience on tenterhooks as the
awards are presented!*

Cine Chat



"WANTS"

YOU

To contribute articles,
news, comment, etc.

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

The Making Of.... Props

An often overlooked aspect of amateur film-making (at least until the day of the shoot, when the realisation often dawns with a cry of "oh, if only we had a...") is the need for props, or to give them their full name 'Theatrical Properties'.

The first known props were stylized hand held masks, called Onkoi, used by performers in "Greek Theatre" and have become symbols of theatre today, commonly known as the "comedy and tragedy masks". Many props are ordinary objects. However, a prop must "read well" on-screen, meaning it must look real to the audience. Many real objects are poorly adapted to the task of looking like themselves to an audience, due to their size, durability, or color under bright lights, so some props are specially designed to look more like the actual item than the real object would look. In some cases, a prop is designed to behave differently from how the real object would, often for the sake of safety.

More obviously required in the production of drama, props can also be useful in the production of documentary films, e.g. for illustrative purposes where it may not be possible/safe to obtain footage of the genuine article. In a documentary about a nuclear reactor for example, obtaining footage of a real Uranium rod is probably not an option, but a glowstick being lowered into a 'reactor core' might be just what's required!

Over the years, many ECVS and ECVS Members productions have made use of various props, some every day items, and others especially constructed for the film.

In this series of articles I hope to take a closer look at some of the latter, how they were constructed, and how they appeared on screen.

Our first featured prop is one of our most recent. The club film 'Last Breath' required a patient to be connected to an oxygen cylinder. Stewart Emm rose to the challenge and constructed a fake oxygen cylinder using a 2 litre cola bottle, some black and white paint, lengths of clear tubing obtained from B&Q, a babys bottle, some metal tubing, and various labels and dials printed from the internet!



One can see that the finished article looked pretty convincing, and although it features for just a couple of seconds in the finished film (now available to view at www.ECVS.co.uk), it was absolutely essential to the plot!



WEYMOUTH MOVIE MAKERS WELCOME ENTRIES TO THEIR "PENNY CUP" COMPETITION THURSDAY MARCH 12th 2015 (Closing date 22nd January 2015)

1. Any film on Blu-ray disk, DVD or Mini DV may be entered into this amateur competition provided it is nominated by a Club or Society.
2. The winning entrant will receive a Cash prize and hold the Penny Cup for one year.
3. There will be a miniature plaque awarded for the highest placed Drama entry.
4. The number of entries from any club is not restricted.
5. All entries, together with entry forms and fees, must be received by the closing date.
6. In the event of there being insufficient entries received to run the competition by the closing date, the competition will be cancelled.
7. If there are too many entries to be shown on the night of the competition, an elimination contest judged by the committee will be held prior to the event.
8. This competition is for films made by individuals or groups for pleasure and not for commercial gain. Public or private exhibition or sale are permissible where the proceeds are solely for the benefit of clubs, regions and bona fide charities. Any sponsorship must be used only to cover production costs and the expenses of the production team and actors; Not for paid assistance from professionals. If it is discovered either before or after making any award that the film infringed these requirements, the organisers will have the right to disqualify it, revoke the award and reclaim any prizes.
9. The committee of the Weymouth Movie Makers will rule on all matters concerning the competition. Their decisions will be final.
10. A film may only be entered once in the Penny Cup. Films entered previously in the Penny Cup competition are not eligible.
11. Maximum running time fifteen (15) minutes - including titles and credits.

Fee per Entry : £ 5. Please make cheques payable to WEYMOUTH MOVIE MAKERS and send to the Competition Organiser Anne VINCENT, 14 Mandeville Road WEYMOUTH DORSET DT4 9HW. E-mail for entry form : annevincentvsw@fsmail.net



**IAC BRITISH INTERNATIONAL
AMATEUR FILM COMPETITION 2015**
CLOSING DATE JANUARY 31 2015

The 2015 BIAFF competition is now open for entries!

The closing date is 31st January 2015.

All entries are judged in February and winners announced in March.

The winning films and as many other entries as possible are shown at BIAFF 2015 the British International Amateur Film Festival which will take place on 17th to 19th April 2015 at Sittingbourne, Kent.

Please see the IAC website for further details: <http://www.theiac.org.uk>

Next Issue

The next issue of CineChat is (tentatively) scheduled for April 2015, if you have any articles, letters, advertisements for inclusion, they would be very welcome. The deadline for submission (either electronically, or in hard-copy) for the next issue is:

Friday 13th March 2015

