

Cine Chat

October 2015

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



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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 2015 - 2016

President:	Stewart Emm
Vice-President:	Peter Dick
Past President:	Peter Wilson
Secretary:	Alasdair Bryson
Treasurer:	Vic Young
Subscriptions:	Stewart Emm

The President Writes...

Dear All,

Now that the summer is over and the nights getting longer, you never know there might be an Indian summer in October, its time to review your summer photos and video footage. In other words, welcome back to the ECVS.

Enclosed with this Cine Chat is a copy of the 2015/16 Programme.. I hope that we have taken into account some of the members feedback in regard to the contents of last years programme. If not please speak up!

SAM has a publication called 'A Brief History of Amateur Cinematographers' (later becoming The Scottish Association of Moviemakers) written by Norman Speirs. The publication covers the early days of the SAAC or Scottish Association of Amateur Cinematographers, formed in 1949, when cine film was king, to the now titled SAM or Scottish Amateur Moviemakers.

According to Norman, there were some 36 clubs in Scotland which were active (more or less) and Dundee Cine Club was the first club known to have been formed in 1934 or 35. (ECVS next oldest, 1936). Copies of this excellent booklet can be obtained from Daphne Barbieri at £15.00.

Well that's a bit of history and now onto the future. In 2016 we will be celebrating our 80th anniversary and although we have shown an entry on the programme on the 3rd March, 2016, we have still to plan something to mark this important anniversary.

Some of the ideas being floated are to i) create and publish a booklet, ii) compile a programme from the archive material held by Scottish Screen Archive, iii) have a meal out. We are still looking for other ways to commemorate this occasion, so get your thinking head on and pass on your ideas at the next club meeting.

I look forward to seeing you all on October 1st and that we have many enjoyable and entertaining evenings throughout the coming year.

Best wishes

Stewart



By ECVS President Stewart Emm

What do you do?

By Hugh Trevor

What do you do when, hoping to make a video, you visit a city for the first time, (in this case Prague), which you know is said to be architecturally very beautiful, but will chiefly consist of buildings and bridges, which because they are stationary and predictable do not make for very interesting video. True, there may be groups of musicians playing here and there, 'living statues', the odd fountain or two and street markets, but even these do not promise much in the way of interesting movement, not if you are only a humdrum video-maker like me.



The photogenic city of Prague

As Czechoslovakia is a small country, many times in its history it has been buffeted around and invaded by its bigger, often aggressive, neighbours, so I thought that its history might provide some interesting subjects, and I came up with the idea of making a video of three people or 'events', which I would call 'Three Gallant Losers'. The earliest one would be Jan Huss, born about 1369, who was a priest, philosopher and leading academic of his day, deeply influenced by the 'Protestant' ideas of John Wycliffe, over 100 years before Martin Luther and the word 'Protestant' came into being. But Huss was betrayed, condemned as a heretic and burnt at the stake on July 6th 1415, just 600 years before my visit.

Another 'Gallant Loser' I thought of was Alexander Dubcek, who initiated the 'Prague Spring' in the 1960s to loosen hard-line communism, but he was pushed out of the Premiership by the Warsaw Pact forces.

For my third 'Gallant Loser', I thought there may be someone during World War II who would fit that bill, and I found that there were two! Operation Anthropoid was an idea thought up by Czech escapees in Britain;



Alexander Dubcek, 1921 - 1992

Gabcik and Kubis, who were Czech soldiers trained and armed in England, then parachuted in near Prague with the intention of assassinating Reinhard Heydrich, the brutal German dictator of Bohemia, known as the Butcher of Prague. Though they nearly failed, they did actually succeed in killing him, though the Germans initiated fierce reprisals.

Up to 5000 people were killed in retaliation, including 500 men, women and children of the village of Lidice, where even the buildings were demolished. Gabcik and Kubis almost escaped back to England, but while still hidden in a church they were betrayed, and killed by the Germans in a fire-fight .

Of course, these two were not ‘losers’ in that they had succeeded in their mission, so the idea of ‘Three Gallant Losers’ was not really holding together very well. I visited the church where

Gabcik and Kubis were killed, seeing the bullet holes in the church wall, and went round the museum that had been set up to remember their gallant action; I visited Lidice to see the museum and the statue set up to remember the children killed there; I even found the street



Jan Kubis and Josef Gabcik

corner where the attack on Heydrich was carried out!



Memorial at crypt where the Czech parachutists were trapped under fire

A local guide, to whom I had been introduced, spent 90 minutes with me, telling me details, including the fact that Dubcek is not regarded as a hero, because he backed down from the liberating policies that he proposed at first. Instead, two students, Jan Palach and Jan Zajic are honoured as they poured petrol over themselves and burnt themselves to

death in front of Prague’s Museum in protest against the Communist Government. Memorials to them have been built in Wenceslas Square and also in the pavement where they sacrificed themselves.

I visited all these sites, and took many video shots of it all. Of course, most of these are all stationery too (for instance, I wasn’t in time to get a real-life shot of Huss being burnt at the stake!), and what form of video I will be able to make I am not yet sure (perhaps you will see something later), but it certainly made my visit to Prague more interesting than it would have been otherwise.

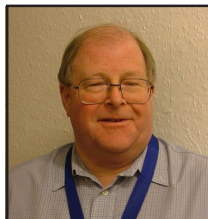


Meet The Committee 2015 - 2016



Stewart Emm
President

Stewart has been a member of ECVS for several years. Stewart does a lot of work publicising the club and encouraging potential new members to join. As this years President, Stewart is heavily involved in this years programme, and has some great evenings planned!



Peter Dick
Vice President

As well as being actively involved in the running of the club, Peter is also a prolific winner of awards and has a keen interest in photography as well as film making. Peter can often be found in the projection box, as one of our regular projectionists.



Vic Young
Treasurer

As Treasurer, Vic maintains an iron grip on the purse strings and the finances of ECVS. A keen diver, Vic is our resident authority on underwater filming techniques and is also involved in various club films and projects.



Alasdair Bryson
Secretary

Alasdair has been a member of ECVS for several years, this year he continues in the role of ECVS Club Secretary. As such Alasdair does an excellent job of minuting all the committee meetings and undertaking all the club correspondence.



Stewart Emm
Membership Secretary

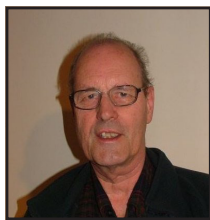
As well as the role of Society President, Stewart has also kindly taken on the role of Membership Secretary this year, and is therefore the man to go to with all your subscription fees!



Peter Wilson
Past President

Peter is widely considered one of the leading movie buffs, historians, collectors and presenters of cinema in E.C.V.S. He's also the clubs Past President and promises a great selection of evenings on Friday nights!

Meet The Committee 2015 - 2016



Jim Closs
Committee Member

Jim prefers making documentaries but sometimes has a go at one-minute videos which he sees as a real challenge. As a keen hillwalker he also combines both hobbies by making occasional mountaineering videos. Jim is also on this years Programme Committee, and has some exciting evenings planned!



Hugh Trevor
Committee Member

Hugh has been a member of ECVS for about 14 years, including 7 years as our club secretary. Hugh enjoys making travel films and documentaries.

Pilgrim Trust Award Competition 2016

As we move into our 80th year, 2016, it will also be the 36th year of the Edinburgh Cine & Video Pilgrim Trust Award competition. The theme of the competition is simply 'Scotland' and almost any film made in Scotland or on a Scottish subject will be accepted.

The Pilgrim Trust Award competition will be held on Thursday April 7th, 2016, at 7.30pm in the ECVS clubrooms, 23a Fettes Row, Edinburgh. Entries for the competition are now invited and entry forms can be downloading from the competitions page at www.ecvs.co.uk.

The closing date for entries is 10th March, 2016.

The rules of the competition are:

1. Entries will only be accepted from amateur filmmakers or groups.
2. The film must be about Scotland or a Scottish subject, although it is not necessary that the film is made in Scotland. e.g. The achievements of a Scotsman abroad.
3. The running time of the film must not be more than 20 minutes, including titles
4. The entrant is responsible to ensure there will be no problems with copyright for visuals or sound.
5. A £6.00 entry fee must accompany each entry with the return postage if the film is not collected after the competition.
6. The competition winner will be presented with the Pilgrim Trust Award to be retained for one year. An engraved quiche (Scottish drinking cup) will also be presented, to be retained by the winner.

DOCUMENTING OUR MINING PAST

by Jim Closs

You may not have noticed it but this year is the bi-centenary of the origin of the Miner's Flame Safety Lamp designed by Sir Humphry Davy. Neither would I except that I am a volunteer at the National Mining Museum Scotland at Newtongrange, which I would encourage you to visit if you haven't already been there.

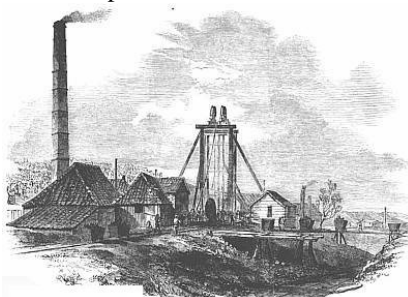
The museum has many artefacts in its collection and this seemed a good opportunity to use my filming experience to bring to life the story behind the original Flame Safety Lamp to help people understand what it was all about. The Museum has many examples of safety lamps in its exhibition area but looking at a static object doesn't always help you to understand what its function was and why it was created. This is where the filming comes in.



Early miners used simple candles for illumination underground. In the presence of methane gas or 'firedamp' these naked flames caused explosions and many deaths. So the search was on for a lamp which could burn a flame without causing explosions and deaths. Three men worked on the problem. Dr William Clanny, George Stephenson (of railway fame) and Sir Humphry Davy. All three produced lamps around the period from 1812 to 1815. Davy

presented his lamp design to the Royal Society in November 1815 - hence the bi-centenary. All three went on to develop improved designs in the years that followed.

In Scotland, the most widely used lamp was called the 'Glennie' - the name thought to be a corruption of Clanny. This lamp was originally used as a source of light in Scottish



pits but after the invention of electric lamps its main use was to test for the presence of inflammable gases.

With the help of a couple of friends we have now filmed two demonstration videos. The first shows how the Glennie lamp is constructed and how it was used as a source of light. The second shows how it was used to test for inflammable gases. These videos are completed.

Now I am working on a film that explains the background to the original Clanny,

Stephenson and Davy lamps and the different approaches they took to the problem. The script is finished but, as with all historical projects of this kind, you have to rely on graphical images from the past to illustrate the story. And this raises copyright issues - lots of them. So at the moment the project is navigating its way through or around the copyright issues.

Once these have been sorted out, the actual video editing should be straightforward.

THE MAKING OF... PROPS

PINEAPPLES!

One minute joke films are generally good candidates for club film-making exercises, there's usually not too much preparation required, little dialogue, and filming all the required footage in the few hours available is usually an attainable goal.

The major challenge always seems to be finding a suitable joke that will translate well to the screen – too many require exotic locations – desert islands, airplane cabins, submarines etc., some require excessive special effects – talking animals, exploding cars, sinking boats etc., and some just aren't particularly suited to a screen narrative – puns, knock knock jokes, etc.

So a joke which required only a handful of actors, a suitably dusty location, and a box of hand grenades, was too good an opportunity to miss!

The joke basically consists of two odd-job men turning up to a house looking for work. The elderly home-owner explains her husband, an ex-military man, has recently passed away, and she would like them to empty his cupboard of memorabilia, as she would find it too upsetting. Our two hapless heroes set about the task with gusto, until they discover a curious box marked 'PINEAPPLES'. Opening it, they are shocked to discover it contains three live hand grenades! *"We should take this to the Police Station!"*, the first man says.

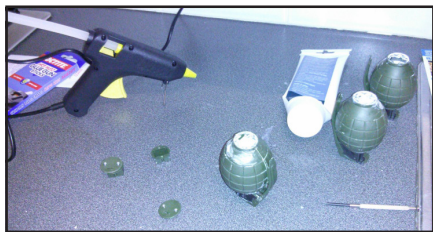


“But what will happen if one of them explodes before we get there?” worries the other. His friend ponders this for a moment before reassuring him *“If that happens, we’ll just tell them we only found two!”*

It was relatively simply to locate suitable children’s toy hand grenades on the EBAY website. Although the site frowns upon the sale of toy firearms, lest they be mistaken for the real thing, hand grenades seem to be okay!

I ordered three toy handgrenades, and as soon as they arrived, disassembled them to remove the internal sound-effect mechanism. As each also had ‘MADE IN CHINA’ prominently embossed on the side, a dremel tool was used to sand this off.

The casings were glued back together using a hot glue gun, and then filled with Polyfilla to give them a convincing weight.



Once the Polyfilla had set, the grenades were spray-painted military green and left to dry. The plastic pins were painted silver by hand.

The final grenades looked a bit pristine, so they were placed in a bag of (clean!) cat litter, and shaken up to scuff up their appearance and make them look a bit older.

For the box, an old wine presentation box was used, the original logo painted out and a stencil of the word ‘PINEAPPLES’

was made on the PC, using the **STENCIL** font, as large as would fit on an A4 sheet of paper - this was then cut out to be used as a spray paint stencil.



Finally, some straw was used as box padding, in the hope that this would look vaguely authentic for an item from WWII.



The prop only appears in the final film for a couple of seconds at most, but is essential in setting the scene, as well as explaining the title of the film. The grenades are now filed under ‘props which will no doubt come in useful again at some point in the future’!



Next Issue

The next issue of CineChat is (tentatively) scheduled for January 2016, 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 11th December 2015

