



# HARROW CINE & VIDEO SOCIETY

www.harrowcinevideo.org.uk

## NEWS AND VIEWS

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FEBRUARY 2012

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### Enfield Challenge Shield Competition 2011

by Ken Mills

On Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> November, Dave and Jean Smith, and Anne and I arrived at St Stephen's hall to find the place packed with over 40 members from the 9 clubs competing for this shield. A 5 ft, 4x3 screen was fixed about 10ft up on the wall and we were greeted with Andre Rieu, his orchestra and about ten thousand fans all having a ball.

At 8pm Sid Dawkins briefly introduced the judge, Tom Dawson, and mentioned that this was the 20<sup>th</sup> year of the competition. The show started with the mini-dvs and our entry, "Where the water is White" by Aivar, shown 4x3 with no facility to monitor it so the countdown came up. At the end as the lights came up the judge leaped up, rapidly mentioned (sotto voce!) that the video had a good start and commentary, some wind noise on the sound track, the video held his attention and sat down.

The next offering was from Wanstead and Woodford called "Broadstairs - Kent" and made by Arthur Gatum, also projected at 4x3 but shot obviously in 16x9 but the mini-dv player didn't know that. It was a pleasant 6 min. documentary about Broadstairs and as the video faded the judge again leaped up and said it

had a good commentary, he wanted more people (those that were there were all slim and not so noticeable I suppose) and it was a well shot production and sat down.

Hornchurch CVClub's 1min. entry was next and started with a slow gentle pan across Derwent Water. Half way across up popped a very small "head" and "body" of the Loch Ness monster also moving smoothly across without a ripple, finally disappearing in a dark shadow as the video finished. The title - Nessy on Holiday! The judge got up and said "That was a short film, (in case we hadn't noticed) can't say much about it".

The last mini-dv was a musical- It's a Wonderful World, Satchmo "singing" to a series of pleasant shots of flowers which the judge thought went well with the music.

The DVDs were next, the player was connected up, a video popped in and nothing happened. The next 5mins were spent pushing, pulling and exchanging leads all to no avail. Sensibly, one of the ladies who had prepared a splendid feast of comestibles decided an early tea break was necessary, so put the kettle on while Sid went back to his car and found another DVD player and re-assembled the wiring.

"London Prepares" by John Astin was the Potters Bar entry which was shown letterboxed and the judge considered it to have good music and background, was well put together and very enjoyable.

St.Alban's entry was supposed to be next, but to the sound of a few raucous shouts of wrong one, Hemel Hempstead's video, "Jim's Clamp" appeared. Sid decided as it was playing OK to leave it on so having missed the title because we were looking for the St Alban's entry, the video we saw was about a flint knapper showing how he produced amongst other shapes, square flints for a wall design. The judge thought the work the knapper was doing was very interesting.

A story video from Ealing VFM followed called "The Bark!" about a chap who climbed up a ladder to clean a window and was surprised by a dog barking. He fell off, ended up in hospital, needed a new brain and was offered a man's at £1500 or a

woman's at £150. Why the difference – well, the woman's was used! Once again this was shot at 16x9 and shown 4x3, and was considered to have clear sound, nice choice of music with an interesting ending.

Luton MM's 1minute video didn't arrive so the last was from St Albans MM called "Weather Permitting". A girl wakes up, turns the TV on to see the forecaster quoting a hot sunny day, dresses for summer only to find it's wet, repeated on the next day.

On the third day she gets dressed in boots and mac, goes to the weather centre and douses the weather forecaster. The judge hadn't "heard" this one before, found it entertaining with a good ending but the sound was up and down.

His summing up was succinct, the winner for best content, camera angles and amusement was "The Bark" – but of course one never agrees with the judge anyway and the best thing about the evening was the refreshments!

## **An Evening with Dennis Kelly**

By Tommy Kovacs

This year is indeed important in HCVS calendar and our Monday programme is a true reflection of its significance. Coincidence or not, Norman Lewis' deft arrangement of the Monday evenings needs special mention. One previous evening we heard from Kevin Brownlow quite a lot about the ways films were made in the silent era and ways of the techniques of making the great early epics. Consequently, Dennis Kelly's introduction to modern computer aided film making completes the picture - how the commercial cinema industry achieves what we admire today when we go to the Movies.

The evening started with an introduction how the eye sees the

world. An ophthalmology professor once said:- if somebody would bring him an instrument like the human eye he would throw him out for bringing such badly designed equipment. But the combination of human eyes and brain makes humanity what it is today. Dennis proceeded to project a series of pictures to demonstrate how easily vision can be fooled. The reason that we can see moving pictures is based on persistence of vision. This means that the eye cannot distinguish a series of still pictures when projected rapidly one after the other. He showed some examples for seeing colours when there was none and bending lines when they were in reality parallel.

In the second part of the evening Dennis showed several examples when rapid cutting and camera angles can produce unusual and dramatic effects. There were examples of backgrounds that were unrelated to the middle ground and colour changes that added to the dramatic tension.

It was interesting to see how blue screen technique was applied in several of modern action films. In all studios there are blue screen stages where all walls, floors and ceilings are painted blue. Many scenes are then

shot against such a blue background and later in post-production the blue elements are made transparent. Into that transparent area any suitably scaled pictures can be substituted. In some other instances, sets are only partially completed leaving several blue areas which were then filled in using post production computer programs.

It was a pleasant evening, giving a difficult and complex topic an understandable make over and adding to our understanding of commercial movie making.

## **John Astin's Evening - 21st November 2011**

**by Derek Lucas**

We discovered, not for the first time, that John Astin is an expert film maker and an expert lecturer. The combination of the two gave us the enjoyable evening we expected.

John showed a number of his films and used them to illustrate the instructive points he made. He started with *The Lights*, a three minute film about Blackpool illuminations. He pointed out that the shots were on manual exposure to prevent the camera gain from zooming up and down, trying to compensate for the varying light levels. The pace of this film was obvious: it flashed from shot to shot at two or three second intervals. This gave John the opportunity to talk about pace.

### **Pace**

Three seconds maximum per shot was about right, longer takes could be split by a cut-away into two short parts, the centre part being omitted. He thought that none of our films should exceed 15 minutes in length. He advised us to take plenty of cut-aways to facilitate editing. He said that it was a good idea to cut fast moving things like this to the music.

### **Tripods**

He never took a tripod on holiday! It was cumbersome and prevented rapid

changes of viewpoint. In spite of this his shots were perfectly steady due to his using available supports such as walls or lamp posts. He also used image stabilizing software during editing. There are a number of such applications but he used Mercalli V2. He told me it came bundled with Edius. I looked it up on Google and saw the demo film: it was totally effective. You can imagine the price though, so if you want it you had better start saving NOW!

### **The Story**

He made the point that even holiday films should tell a story and have a beginning, a middle and an end. Merely saying that we went here then we went there is not sufficient.

Among the other films he showed I liked particularly the one about linking Key West to the mainland by bridges: it told the story so well. Another good one concerned the refurbishment of St. Pancras station. John did say though that such types of documentary date so soon. The future becomes the past and the commentary is no longer correct.

In summary: what a good evening!

# Chairman's Shield Competition - Nature & Story - 14th November 2011

by Wallace Jacobs

Excitement was generated by the Members as tonight was competition night. Not one of the most popular competitions, but most of the regulars put in an entry.

As usual the entries were in two categories, Gold & Silver.

There was only one Story Entry, a Gold Entry.

**"Enough is Enough"** by Dave Smith, A story of marital stress. For some reason this was the winner in the Story Class!

The Nature Entries were more plentiful.

## **The Silver Entries**

1. **"Fearless Fred"** By Alan Morgan, a story of an urban fox.

2. **"Bentley Priory Nature Reserve"** By Jeff Jessop A winter trip around a snow-covered Priory.

3. **"Cabo San Lucas"** By Tommy Kovacs. A wide variety of nature situations in Mexico.

Tommy Kovacs was judged 1<sup>st</sup> in this category.

## **The Gold Entries**

1. **"The Squirrel"** By Ludwig Levy. Ludwigs' non paying boarder, whom he keeps on feeding. Quite a lovable bushy tailed friend.

2. **"A Back Garden"** By Dave Smith. We were given a lovely trip around a beautiful garden.

Ludwig Levy was Judged 1<sup>st</sup> in this category.

Great fun, members - get a film ready for the next competition!

## ***PROGRAMME REMINDER***

**Meetings of the Society are held in the Canons Room at the Harrow Arts Centre**

### **JANUARY 2012**

30th Videos from Hemel Hempstead Movie Makers.

### **FEBRUARY**

6th An evening of IAC Movies - selected by Ken Mills.

13th "How to make a Winning Video" by James Webber.

20th Chairman's Shield Competition - Documentary

27th IAC Triangle Trophy Competition - 1st round (to be confirmed).

### **MARCH**

5th Chairman's Evening.

## **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

**Would Members please note that the Annual General Meeting, originally scheduled for April 30th, has now been moved to May 4th and the Annual Challenge Cup Competition brought forward to April 30th.**

# Epsom Cine & Video Society Showreel

by Geff Jessop

On Monday 28th of November we had the pleasure of watching the Showreel produced for Epsom Cine & Video Society. The **Eden Project** was the first film. It could have been enhanced with more information about the project, it was to long and fell between Holiday and Documentary and there was no clear direction.

**Pecorama** is the home of Pico Miniature Railway in Devon and John Ellis took us on a ride around the garden grounds. The middle section of the film could have been shortened as it had little to do with the Railway and they mention places we could not see.

**Sacred & Profane** was the next video and John Gannaway had been fortunate in getting an interview with master sculptor Philip Jackson. His work was set out and displayed in the grounds of Wells Cathedral, Somerset. This was an excellent film with a very informative and clear narration and was clever film making with subject matter that could have been boring but was in fact very absorbing.

**The Seer.** was a club production but the sound levels were poor, the acting was not convincing. Why do we need to hear the director shouting instructions, and the film needed an end title.

**"999"** by Norman & Sylvia Bull, was very entertaining and the little boy delivering the punch line was a stroke of genius.

**Just The Ticket**, was also a club film to demonstrate the principle of the Chromakey effect. Previously shot outside stills were blended with material shot indoors and edited together and projected onto a screen. The film was about a Police Officer who had stopped a motorist, and was a very good film with a very good punch line and a convincing Policeman. Unfortunately you could see (excuse the pun) the thin blue line of the Chromakey effect.

**Keukenhof 2002**, by John Gollop was a visit to the Dutch bulb fields. this was very well filmed the colours were vibrant and had a very informative narration.

**Just Sand** by Diggy Mottram, was filmed near Brighton Marina and it showed us some amazing sand sculptures. it was very well filmed it seems a shame that they will all get washed away after all the effort of producing them. the Epsom Showreel generated a great deal of discussion and it was widely agreed that the evening was entertaining and instructive.

## Welcome to Another New Member!

by Alan Morgan

We are pleased to welcome our second new member this season. **John Bartlett** joined us before Christmas and is interested in all areas of movie making. He saw one of our posters at Harrow Museum which prompted him to investigate and now join us. John has an older camcorder which he would like to update, and uses Apple Mac iMovie for editing, now the seventh Mac user!

His other hobby is sailing and as a younger man, competed in the 89-90 Whitbread Round the World Race completing all six legs and sailing over 36,000 miles. I think we might look forward to some more interesting videos. We wish John every success in videography and by the time this is published he will have had lots of opportunity to join in our refreshment break discussions on equipment and videoing techniques.



# Cleo Laine Concert at Pinner Parish Church

Saturday, 10th December 2011

by Alan Morgan

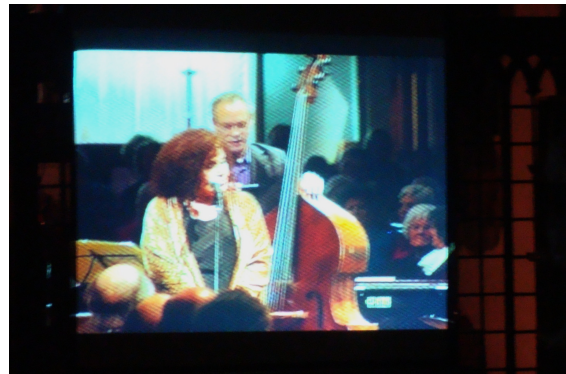
The Society had again been asked to help at a Concert with "**Cleo Laine and Friends**" being organised in the Pinner Parish Church and to provide closed circuit television in all parts of the Church so that more of the audience could see what was going on.

Alan Morgan and Jim Gatt agreed to help provide the necessary facilities on behalf of the Society.

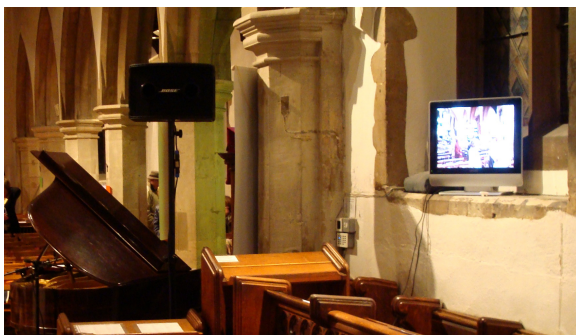
The set-up on the Saturday in the Pinner Parish Church included our two projectors and screens with an RT video link to three TVs provided by the Church in the Choir and Lady Chapel. Dame Cleo Laine performed alongside the pulpit with 'Her Friends' and the audience were seated all over the Church. It was said that the best view was not in the nave, but in the side aisles, Choir and the Lady Chapel on cctv!



Jim Gatt at work with his camera setup



Dame Cleo Laine pictured on one of our screens



Two of the Monitor screens in the Church

*Photos by Alan Morgan*

## **Christmas Celebrations**

The Christmas celebrations were held in the Canons Room of the Arts Centre at our last meeting of the old year on Monday 12th December.

No special entertainments had been arranged for this occasion but members were invited on arrival to take part in a wall quiz organised by Wallace Jacobs.

Refreshments were of the usual high standard and much enjoyed. After the refreshment interval we were entertained with some suitable comedy films to round off the evening.



**Margaret Barnes**

**27th August 1928 - 15th December 2011**

It is with much sadness and regret that we record the passing of Margaret Barnes, late wife of our last Vice Chairman, Peter Barnes.

A service of thanksgiving for her life took place at the North Harrow Methodist Church on Friday 6th January 2012 which was attended by a large congregation including many of our members.

A private family committal took place at Breakspear Crematorium following the Service. Our thoughts and prayers are with Peter and his family at this time.

# **“Reading Film” with David and Jan Watterson**

**by Geoffrey Foord**



David Watterson



Jan Watterson

This evening was about what Judges look for when judging films, both David and Jan being Fellows of the Institute and very respected judges.

The film they chose to make the subject of their evening was an amateur film made in France. It was quite ambitious compared with amateur films made in our country. But they explained that the French authorities sometimes give financial support for this type of project which is not given to the likes of amateur film makers in the UK.

The film was about a teenaged couple and several other children playing in woods. It was a birthday party. Whilst playing they find a large bruise on the forehead of one of the younger boys but like all children it was soon passed off.

The plot moves on and the younger children find an abandon car, smashed up but with a gun and money in it.

There are scenes of the older couple and later they hear shots being fired,

they run to discover the little girl has been shot.

The authorities are called and a policeman & ambulance arrive. The policeman sees the boy with the bruise and is suspicious of it all and sends the boy into the ambulance for examination. It is soon discovered that the boy has bruises all over his body. The father who had been summoned to the scene because of the small girl who had been shot and is also the father of the bruised boy is suspected of child abuse.

There are several themes running through this film and I thought it was very good.

The film was run again and paused at various points showing where criticisms by the judges should be made and to show us the sort of faults that judges look for. There were many clips shown and discussed.

It was a very enjoyable evening there were many examples of faults which could help us with our own films and what to try and avoid when making our own films.

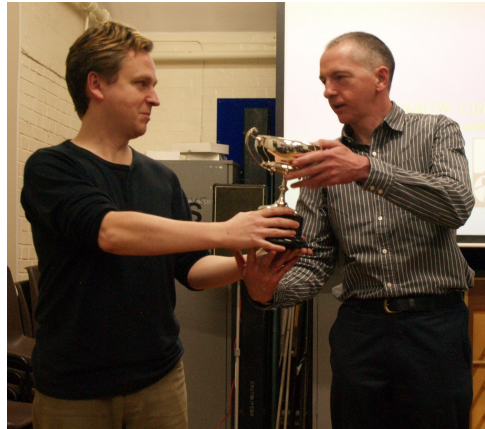


# JOE KAY COMPETITION

By Wallace Jacobs



Joe Kay Competition Trophy



A Judge presents the Cup to  
Borehamwood Camcorder Club

This trophy was presented in 1968 in memory of Joe Kay, a member of the Edgware Amateur Cine Society, who died in that year.

The competition is between the Borehamwood Camcorder Club and the Harrow Cine & Video Society.

Each Club presents a programme of films lasting no more than forty minutes. The winner is the Club which, in the layman judges opinion, puts on the most entertaining programme.

The Judges this year were Anthony Myers, Owen Cock brought by Harrow and Jenny and Barry Ellis by Borehamwood

## PROGRAMME

### HARROW CINE AND VIDEO SOCIETY

La Venetia - Ian Brown  
The End of a Dictator - Ludwig Levy  
Time is at your Convenience - Ken Gale  
The Glass Doctor - Ken Mills  
Birds in my Garden - Dave Smith  
Where the Water is White - Aivar Kaulins  
Kehlsteinhaus - Jeff Jessop  
Doctor's Warning - Club Production

These films have been previously reviewed in this Newsletter.

### BOREHAMWOOD CAMCORD CLUB

Borehamwood gave us six films,

**Apsley** - 26 minutes from Luton. A short (very) film of a river and a lock.

**Cassiterite** - A tour around a factory/mine, although it took some time to work out what was being mined.

**First Steps in Micro generation** - A very interesting film about the installation and running of solar panels in a private house.

**Cause for Alarm** - A spooky film about a burglary and a man who came to a sticky end.

**Pitthanger Lodge Charity Day 2011** - A full medieval costume film showing jousting, fencing, archers and pikemen. The finale being a duel of two Knights in a mounted battle with lances.

**Jack Dashing and the Tri-Spy Cup** - We were treated to a very fine story of school children acting like adults. It was a treat to see all these children acting in such a positive manner.

The judges huddled together and announced their result. We were told that the result was very close. The margin being one quarter of a point. With baited breath we heard that Borehamwood were the winners.

Not all those present could agree with that verdict.

*Photos by Maurice Twelvetreets*

# An Evening With Hemel Hempstead Movie Makers

by Dave Smith

On January 30th we were treated to ten films by Hemel Hempstead Movie Makers all of which were of a very high standard and most entertaining. Three and a half members from Hemel came along to the evening (the half member is a member of our club as well).

Guy Langdon of Hemel gave us a brief description of each film before it started.

First on the list was **"RETURN to the FORTIES"** and was filmed over a long weekend starting with a train journey (steam) to HALTON with everyone dressed in clothes worn in that era. One character a "spiv" had the looks and banter with watches inside his overcoat and a case full of black market goodies that were hard to get hold of in the forties. An unexploded bomb on the site didn't cause any concern as everyone was having a great time. The film started and ended with a bomber fly past.

**"LITTER"** By Brian Harris who sadly is not with us anymore gave us an insight into the how rubbish fills our lives. Plenty of black and white photos and the voice over from Brian making fun out of the footage being shown.

**"CALL at MIDNIGHT"** portrays a young woman getting drunk in a bar falls down getting to her car to drive home, she comes to her senses after a short drive stops her car and phones her mum on her mobile. Mums in bed and listens to the the daughter pouring her heart out saying that she's pregnant and sorry she never took heed of the advice she had. Mum tells her to wait in the car for the taxi to bring her home and the daughter agrees.. The twist to the film was that the girl had phoned the wrong number but was given some sound advice, and gave the mother thoughts on how to treat her own daughter.

**"BRICK WORKS"** gave us a good look on how bricks are made with clay and for this work coming only from the Chilterns still using an eighty year old machine to process the clay. Half the bricks at this plant were hand made and we were taken through the whole process from start to finish. Another excellent documentary film.

**"RAF HOLTON at HOME 2010"** every two years they hold an open day at this RAF camp and from the footage that was shown I will be paying it a visit. Plenty of old airplanes with wooden bits (propellers) spinning in front of their engines instead of hot air blowing out the back and paid flights could be had. If you wanted a trip in a biplane get along there when it's open.

**"SAFI"** a documentary on paper making at Nash Mills in Kings Langley.

**"COLD WAR"** another great spoof film by Brian Harris, it starts off with UR1 and carries on with tongue in cheek play on names etc, set around the Pentagon between 1947-1950 a spy spoof that was very funny.

**"RAINBOWS END"** set in 1879 - 1897 of the gold rush in AMERICA plenty of old footage well in keeping with the voice, over funny dialogue throughout the film.

Another masterpiece involving Brian Harris.

**"PSYCHOSIS"** opens up to a security officer bored with his job who sees an advert for a body guard what he thinks is a more prestige job, he gets the position but is still not satisfied and fantasizes about a more exciting life. All the things that happen to him are all in his mind as in real life he is a street cleaner.

**"REX"** gave an account of the restoration of a cinema in Berkhamstead that was closed in 1988 and saved from being demolished.. English heritage gave it a Grade- 2 listing. Funds were raised for the materials and volunteer labour did all the work. The cinema now seats 204 and the 1960 projector has been adapted to today's format, the new carpet has REX woven through. On the 5th December 2004 the cinema was reopened and the first film screened was that very famous film "The Third Man". I'm looking forward to paying this cinema a visit.

The program that Hemel Hempstead Movie Makers gave was one of the best I've seen for a long time, it contained plenty of humor thanks to Brian Harris and the documentaries were first class.

Thanks you Hemel.

# **Yet More New Members!**

**by Alan Morgan**

We are pleased to welcome another new member this season. **Judy Long** has joined us after seeing the Harrow Observer story of our Movie Show, meeting us at Pinner and now finding us at the Arts Centre.

She lives in Central Harrow and has recently acquired a Sony camcorder and a Mac laptop with the Final Cut editing programme, and would like to make movies. She is fascinated by the art of editing and declares a lack of knowledge of the entire subject of movie making, but is very keen to learn. Lots of support please, from all members.

After a year with only one new member, this year is a record - we now welcome our fourth new member this season.

**Syed Ahmed** joined us in January having heard of us through Pinner Village Hall. He is interested in making movies, particularly shorts but he hasn't mentioned anything about his editing system. He shares our interest in the hobby and would love to learn more about lighting.

As always with a warm welcome, we wish Syed many happy years as a member and we may even be able to answer some of his questions!

Another welcome this season as **Ted Cogger** joins us - now the fifth new member this season! His interest nowadays like most of us, is in video and his interests cover all areas of our hobby. He is working in DVD with his PC and would like to improve his proficiency in all aspects of movie making. His main hobby is photography which seems to be a good starting point for videos. He is also one of the few members who heard of us through the Harrow Observer. We welcome Ted warmly and trust he will find our company friendly and helpful.

**Are you up in the CLOUDS yet?  
Do you know your QR from your UP?  
Or has your Google been GOGGLES?  
Are you still looking for AURASMA?  
Hopefully all will be revealed in the next  
issue.**

**by Ken Gale**

# **An Amusing Contribution**

**by Jim Gatt**

(With apologies to Rudyard Kipling)

If you can come to a meeting when it's freezing  
And introduce another member too -  
If you can find the evening's programme pleasing  
Or, even if it isn't, see it through -  
If you can take an interest in the business  
And do the washing up or make the tea -  
If you can be the first with your subscription  
And not forget your badge or diary -  
If you can spare a thought about your neighbour ..  
Just have a chat, especially if he's new -  
If you can make some practical suggestions  
But make sure that you will help to see them through -  
If you can serve a term on your committee -  
Propose a vote of thanks, concise and clear,  
You'll be a very, very special member,  
And what is more, you'll be UNIQUE, my dear.

**The following rhyme or ode sounds OK when read aloud but,  
when examined, demonstrates how the spell checker may not  
be too reliable**

## **Anne Owed Two The Spelling Chequer**

Eye halve a spell ling checker  
It came with my Pea See,  
It plane lee marks four my revue  
Miss steaks aye dew knot sea.

Eye ran this poem threw it,  
Your shore reel glad too no.  
Its very polished inn it's weigh  
My chequer tolled me sew.

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