

STORYBOARD



March 2008

FROM THE CHAIR

At our Committee Meeting on Tuesday 18 March we are charged with the responsibility of selecting the winners of the Best Photography, Sound and Editing awards as well as a possible Film Of The Year. We also have to choose the winner of the Alan Phipps Comedy Award. A long night!

It's been a good year for competition entries and our task won't be an easy one. All our trophies will be presented to the various winners by the Mayor of Spelthorne at our Annual Movie Show to be held on Friday 18 April, so please make every effort to be there and invite as many friends and relatives as you can. This is always a big and important night for our Society when our new movies are shown to the public for the first time.

I would like to remind all last season's winners that they must return their cups to Secretary Colin no later than Friday 28 March in order that the trophies can be engraved in time for the show.

March is always a busy month for us. We competed in the First Round of the Triangle Competition on Monday 10 March when our three films, 'Aubrey's Seat' (the revised version) 'Weir Here' and 'Vietnam' were up against movies made by Oxford and Finchley. Two of our members travelled to the Oxford venue at Kidlington that night, and there is a report from Graham inside.

'Aubrey's Seat', 'Vietnam' and 'Eye In The Sky' will be the Society's representatives in an event being held by the Shooters Hill club on Friday 28 March, the same night we have our annual show from Huddersfield. Unfortunately Jim and Nancy won't be able to be with us this year.

Tonight is also another big night for us in March when we host the annual Inter-Club Competition. Usually there are nine or ten clubs competing for the Silver Salver trophy. This competition always generates a very high standard of entries and this year we will be appointing two of our members to judge it. Come early as there's usually a full house!

At least this year there's one Friday night in March when we can take the night off as it's Good Friday on the 21st!

For how long will we remain a Society? Our AGM draws closer and closer, the night when the big decision will be made as to whether we change our name or not. I have a feeling that our AGM could become quite heated, so make sure you attend to make your feelings known. It's one of the biggest decisions we have ever had to make since we were formed in 1955.

And finally, a breakdown of the Documentary Competition (won by yours truly) appears inside this issue.

Have a Happy Easter!

Ken Ferguson

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Friday	14 Mar	Inter-Club Competition
Tuesday	18 Mar	Management Committee Meeting
Friday	21 Mar	NO MEETING
Friday	28 Mar	Visit by Huddersfield / Our movies at Shooters Hill
Friday	4 Apr	Guest Speaker - Tom Hardwick
Tuesday	8 Apr	Management Committee Meeting
Friday	11 Apr	The Chairman's Night

IAC TRIANGLE COMPETITION

On Monday 10 March Laurie and I drove to Kidlington, near Oxford, to attend the IAC Triangle Trophy Competition in which Staines were competing against the Finchley and Oxford clubs. The three films from SCVS – Laurie's 'Weir Here', Jeremy's 'Vietnam' and my 'Aubrey's Seat' all did very well against some strong opposition, Staines eventually achieving second place on the night. The format is that films from each club are entered in three different categories – 'documentary', 'open' and 'fictional story'. Each of the three judges gives one, two or three marks per film and the club with the highest score at the end wins. Finchley finished with 22, Staines 17 and Oxford 15.

In the first category, 'documentary', Laurie's film was judged best by one of the judges, while the others gave it two and one mark. So after the first round Finchley had seven, Staines had six and Oxford five. In the 'open' section Jeremy's 'Vietnam' was given three points by one of the judges and one point apiece by the other two. At the end of this round Finchley's score had risen to 13, Oxford had 12 and Staines 11.

When it came to the final section, the judges were unanimous that the Finchley entry was best with nine points, followed by 'Aubrey's Seat' with six, and Oxford picking up three points. Finchley's film, 'Ten Minutes Tops' was very well produced with two excellent actors; its plot based on the classic 'prostitute gets into a car and proceeds to blackmail the innocent driver,' scenario. In this version she ended up with his watch and cufflinks, but missed the engagement ring he had bought for his girlfriend. Adding in the documentary scores meant that Finchley won by five points overall, with Staines in second place.

Oxford put on a splendid tea at half time and Laurie and I drove home, disappointed that we had not done better in the contest, but fortified by the Scotch eggs, pork pies and sandwiches we had managed to consume courtesy of the home club. All in all we both felt the effort involved in getting to the competition was well worth while and that we should continue to participate as a club in future years. In our view if the standard of the films made at Staines continues to improve as much as it has in the last 12 months, next year we could do even better.

Graham Large

DOCUMENTARY COMPETITION BREAKDOWN

We had four entries into this year's contest. They were from Vic Stroud (his first entry since he re-joined us after a long absence), Margaret Stedman, David Peters, and Ken Ferguson who was the eventual winner with his movie about Ken Dalston and his many years as a Punch and Judy Man. Here is the breakdown of votes...

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THAT'S THE WAY TO DO IT (Ken Ferguson)

Sound 174 Visual 187 Editing 181 Entertainment 370 TOTAL 912 Average 39.65

THE CHINESE NEW YEAR (Margaret Stedman)

Sound 158 Visual 174 Editing 157 Entertainment 324 TOTAL 813 Average 35.34

MADAGASCAR WILD LIFE (David Peters)

Sound 129 Visual 155 Editing 133 Entertainment 280 TOTAL 697 Average 30.30

VIC'S VIEW OF VULCAN (Vic Stroud)

Sound 90 Visual 94 Editing 93 Entertainment 161 TOTAL 438 Average 19.04

23 members voted

Ken Ferguson

TEA ROTA



28	March	Margaret Stedman & Vic Stroud
4	April	Geoff Conway & Colin Hignett
11	April	Ken and Sheila Harding
18	April	Graham Large & Laurie Miller
25	April	Richard Enser & Dorothy Robertson
2	May	John & Betty Were
9	May	Jill Carr & Jeremy Holder
16	May	Bert Lee & Helen Mills

FROM THE WEBSITE

Jeremy 9.2.08: Have any of you heard about 'Skype'? I hadn't until last week. My secretary bought everyone in the office (6 of us) a Webcam (small camera) and headset for £4.97 from PC World and then showed us how to download **Skype** from the Internet free (very easy!). Now, when I work from home on Wednesdays anyone in the office can call me (and I can call them) free through my PC and I can see them and they can see me while we're talking! Magic! So now I've e-mailed my son Guy in Queensland to get kitted up and we'll be able to video conference together for the first time – and so very cheaply! Thoroughly recommended. Oh, I just thought, I'll get my sister in Houston on it too!

Graham 9.2.08: I very much enjoyed the studio groups' comedies – all were very very good indeed and must have taken a whole lot of work for the poor devils who agreed to edit the footage into shape and actually 'make' the film. Tim said it had taken him weeks, and I don't doubt it. But the great thing about this whole film making pastime of ours is that you literally get out of it what you put in; if you're lazy about editing and hope the audience 'won't notice' the tiny glitches, then the film is going to be flawed and almost unbearable to watch if you've let things go. Most of us know how that feels. There was an instance in the re-edited version of Aubrey's Seat, when I discovered on downloading what I thought was the completed film on to tape (on Friday evening) that in one sequence where the background birdies were chirruping away behind Laurie's voice-over, a split second's silence occurred where two sound clips hadn't quite joined. You had to listen very hard to hear the mistake, but it got more pronounced every time I played that bit back. I was sorely tempted to leave sleeping dogs lie, but finally bit the bullet and spent time I didn't have putting it right. I doubt whether anyone would have cared very much if they'd have picked up on it but the gap was starting to assume Grand Canyon proportions in my fevered imagination. I probably have missed a whole host of other things too, but at least this one isn't going to cause me to squirm in my seat every time the film's played. There were some interesting

comments after the showing, some to the effect that they preferred the original, but quite honestly I'd had so many negative remarks from judges in other competitions who were confused about what the film was all about that the new 'signposted' version is how it's going to have to remain. I'll just have to 'draw a line underneath it and move on' as they say (all too often these days) otherwise I won't have time to make any other films...

Ken (Ferguson) 12.2.08: I was most interested in reading Graham's item about his re-edited version of 'Aubrey's Seat' and was surprised that he concluded from comments made after we saw it the other evening that some members preferred his original version! I am not among them. I think the re-edit makes it far more comprehensible due to the added voice-over by Laurie. This makes the character played by Laurie more defined making the viewer identify more with him. In the original we saw him walking aimlessly around. We never quite knew quite why or indeed who he was. It seemed Graham was leaving it to the imagination of the viewer to come to their own conclusions as to what it might all be about. The re-edited version tells us exactly what the story is about and any loose ends are tied up very well indeed. I can only assume that those members who preferred his original version like a little ambiguity and mystery so that THEY can decide what the film-maker wants us to think. Nothing wrong with that, but I've always believed that the role of anyone making a film should be to leave his or her audience in no doubt as to what they have set out to say up there on the screen. A story which is well sign-posted, taking us along a path which builds all the way to a satisfactory conclusion. We need to know exactly who the characters are so that we can understand their various changing emotions in the story, and in the case of Graham's new version an audience has far more understanding of Laurie's character due to the addition of some excellent lines of script and delivery. Well done to Graham for taking notice of various judges' comments he has received and for taking the extra time to re-do his film which I think has been well worth it.



Well done to all the 'Studio Groups' for their fine efforts in making three very different comedies. It's now up to your Management Committee to decide the winner who will receive the Phipps Comedy Cup at our Public Show on 18 April. It will be difficult to keep it a secret until

then, but we'll try! With the important Inter-Club Competition coming up very soon the Committee has decided not to invite an 'outside' judge this year, but leave the big responsibility to two or three of our own members. This has worked well in the past (with Laurie and Graham, and with Geoff and Ann). So let's try it again.

Jeremy 13.2.08: Sorry Ken, I'm from the other side - but only just! It's Graham's first version that more inspired me, despite the revised version being so very good. I love films that are slightly mysterious and let one's imagination go. Film's that 'tell the exact story and tie up all the loose ends' tend to appeal to the older generation more than to the younger in today's world - judging by what we see on TV and at the cinema.

Tim 13.2.08: It speaks volumes about Aubrey's Seat that it has provoked so many comments and strong views. One might expect this occasionally from a documentary taking an extreme standpoint or about one of the great taboos, but for this much controversy to surround what is a very gentle piece about two people ruminating on their past loves and then finding companionship and a possibility of a future is quite astounding. It's clear now that all the signposts were there in the original film and any of us who weren't quite sure what it was about should be kicking ourselves. Perhaps all the original needed was a few more signposts (or more obvious ones).

The new version certainly makes it clear what's going on and leaves little to the imagination – and that's a shame in my view. I think the voice-over was a great idea and very well written, but I do wonder whether there was too much of it. I'd have to hear it again, but I've a feeling that the first few lines might even have been enough to give us the plot and maybe a few lines at the end could have added balance. The persistent narration meant that I found myself constantly trying to match up the words to the pictures (which was done beautifully, by the way) rather than "wallowing in the experience" as I did with the original.

Of course, I can say all that having had the benefit of hindsight and having seen the original three times. What independent judges who don't have that luxury might think is an entirely different matter and all credit must go to Graham for taking their comments on board. I'd imagine it takes a great deal of courage to rip apart a work you believe to have completed and reconstruct it based on received criticism.

If some of my remarks seem a bit over the top I apologise, but I make no apologies for saying that in my brief time at SCVS, whilst I've seen many good films, Aubrey's Seat is the only film I've seen made by our members that comes close to a cinematic experience. Best of luck Graham with the revised version.

Barrie 20.2.08: Hi all at SCVS. I am now in the USA preparing to shoot a wedding on Saturday. **I had a lot of trouble at the airport as the baggage system packed up.** So guess what?? **NO SUITCASE!!** So I may be going in my Birthday suit. Ha! Ha!

Tim 25.2.08: Re the Open Night. Tony's suggestion of a previous year's winning film at the start of a competition prompted arguments both in favour and against, and Jeremy's suggestions for (re)introducing a one minute competition and/or an advert competition were well received. There was a lengthy discussion which touched on a number of aspects of adding sound to video and we even managed a discussion about copyright which was specific, brief and to the point. The discussion about changing the judging system will be old hat to many, but to me, a newcomer, it raised a few points I hadn't previously considered – and it prompted a very interesting discussion between me and Steve (and later Ken F) in the car park about what makes a "good" film – as sort of subject vs content vs technical expertise.

Richard 4.3.08: I suppose I can be classed as an 'old hand' in respect of age and club membership! I joined in the mid seventies. The topics raised by some of the newer members and

discussed by all were very relevant and appropriate to our hobby. I suppose I can say that I *have* heard it all before. Over the years, I've seen ideas adopted, they've flourished and finally withered for lack of support. I'm not against progress but I feel it must be based on experience gained from the past. Vic's sound problem was specific to him and his equipment so it needed specific treatment. I would like Roy to enlarge on his workshop idea and explain the type of workshops he envisages. In the days of film, the equipment was a camera, and editor/viewer a pot of glue and a projector. Sound was as ever the hurdle and again user specific but it just had to end up acceptably mixed and intelligible.

Nowadays, the simple editor/viewer has been replaced by the complex computer and its associated multiplicity of editing programs, titlers, special effects and more. So, as everyone seems to have a different system or variations of a similar one, it occurs to me that a workshop can only deal with the universal basics common to all. I would suggest these are photography (use of the camera for the gathering of images only in order to assemble a structured movie), those to comprise establishing shots, camera angles, close ups, big close ups, cut-aways, cut ins, crossing the line awareness, steadiness, framing and lighting balance and usable live sound. Then come the principles of editing adding appropriate sound and titling advice and completion for projection.

As regards Jeremy's idea for a one minute film competition and someone's suggestion for a spoof 30 second commercial, leads us down the path of a defined category which needs support to survive. Any member can make either of the above and always could have and entered into the Unclassified competition, but in recent years no member has. Remember Mike's sole entry in the 4 minute. I think we have sufficient defined competition headings for all our needs.

Moving on to Tony's judging ideas, I really cannot see what it will achieve over anything that hasn't gone on before and been discarded. Despite the various criticisms of our present method can anyone truly say that it hasn't turned up the right result on the night? We have the three objective headings and one subjective. Either of the objective observations being below par will spoil the subjective. Of the first three, I would rate sound content and intelligibility very important, editing comes next and visuals last. Although it isn't a movie without visuals, the eye is very forgiving. The sound is a smooth analogue but the picture is a sequence of frames but the eye doesn't know. Think of the impressionist paintings. Get close up and they are just a splodge of colours but distance lends enchantment. The ear is unforgiving so the sound reproduction is so important. The new HD fashion doesn't improve idea, the plot, the storyline, the structure, the acting, or the pleasure of the content - but lousy sound can kill the lot.

I remember one member commenting on the entertainment definition we use. What was entertainment? Although it has a dictionary definition, it means different things to different people (subjective again). People go along to the cinema to see a thriller, others like comedies and some disasters. Examples, `James Bond`; `Chitty Chitty Bang Bang`; `Towering Inferno`; `Titanic`; `Laurel & Hardy` etc., and come away `entertained` but not necessarily splitting their sides. As the resulting entertainment value relies upon the component parts and leaves the dominant impression, I think it should be upped from out of 20 marks to say out of 30. This would offset (swamp) the objective `marks` awarded by (may I say it) the less knowledgeable in the finer art. That's all I want to add. To sum up - we've attracted new members in our present form. So if it ain't broke don't mend it.

Steve 5.3.08: I would like to encourage members to have a look at the website www.hollywoodcamerawork.us. The site promotes a training DVD on camera work techniques as used in Hollywood. If anybody in the club is interested in learning some of these techniques we may be able to have a club evening and view some of the material.

Mike 6.3.08: Just doing a little straw poll amongst some members, including our Chairman Ken, many seem to agree that the number one factor that is used to judge competition entries is ENTERTAINMENT! If one looks back as far as possible to past competitions, just using

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entertainment gives the same result as adding the other factors to the equation. So why not drop all except Entertainment. After all people only use their own subjectivity to vote. Even Ken admitted that film critics (the real ones) use their own subjectiveness on the subject - hence the range of opinions one reads every week in the dailies. Should we on the odd occasion end up with several entries with the same "score", most unlikely, what's the problem? Just draw lots! It's only a hobby, isn't it? To sum up Entertainment score 1 to 5.... 1 = poor...5 = very good. QED for the Latin speakers.

Tim 7.3.08: Mike - I can see an advantage with giving films one score, be it out of 5, 10 or 100 but have just a couple of reservations. Firstly, having sound/visuals/editing acts as a useful aide-mémoire to ensure people at least consider different aspects of the film. Secondly, I wouldn't like to see the sole category being called entertainment. There are many films (and I'm thinking here of the Internet - YouTube etc - and TV shows such as "You've Been Framed") which are extremely entertaining but are technically and/or artistically dire, some to the extent of being painful to watch or listen to. I agree totally that "entertainment" is the MOST important factor, but "watchability" must also be taken into consideration. So, if we have one score, please let's not call it "entertainment".

WAL-MART APPLICATION

This is an actual job application that a 75 year old senior citizen submitted to Wal-Mart in Arkansas. They hired him because he was so funny.....

NAME: Kenneth Way (Grumpy Old Bastard)

SEX: Not lately, but I am looking for the right woman (or at least one who will cooperate)

DESIRED POSITION: Company's President or Vice President. But seriously, whatever's available. If I was in a position to be picky, I wouldn't be applying here in the first place.

DESIRED SALARY: \$185,000 a year plus stock options and a Michael Ovitz style severance package. If that's not possible, make an offer and we can haggle.

EDUCATION: Yes.

LAST POSITION HELD: Target for middle management hostility.

PREVIOUS SALARY: A lot less than I'm worth.

MOST NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENT: My incredible collection of stolen pens and post-it notes.

REASON FOR LEAVING: It sucked.

HOURS AVAILABLE TO WORK: Any.

PREFERRED HOURS: 1:30-3:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday.

DO YOU HAVE ANY SPECIAL SKILLS?: Yes, but they're better suited to a more intimate environment .

MAY WE CONTACT YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYER?: If I had one, would I be here?

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DO YOU HAVE ANY PHYSICAL CONDITIONS THAT WOULD PROHIBIT YOU FROM LIFTING UP TO 50 lbs.?: Of what?

DO YOU HAVE A CAR?: I think the more appropriate question here would be "Do you have a car that runs?"

HAVE YOU RECEIVED ANY SPECIAL AWARDS OR RECOGNITION?: I may already be a winner of the Publishers Clearing House Sweepstakes, so they tell me.

DO YOU SMOKE?: On the job - no! On my breaks - yes!

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE DOING IN FIVE YEARS?: Living in the Bahamas with a fabulously wealthy dumb sexy blonde supermodel who thinks I'm the greatest thing since sliced bread. Actually, I'd like to be doing that now.

NEAREST RELATIVE?: 7 miles

DO YOU CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE IS TRUE AND COMPLETE TO THE BEST OF YOUR KNOWLEDGE?: Oh yes, absolutely.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Nobody really cares if you're miserable, so you might as well be happy.
- *Cynthia Nelms*

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Barrie Wright

Editor : Jill Carr Shambria Woodvill Road Leatherhead Surrey KT22 7BP

Tel:

email