

Cine

Chat

November 2010

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

The President Writes...

Pages 4 & 5

The Making Of...

Green Team Preservation

Pages 6, 7 & 8

Cinema History

Pages 9 & 10

End of an Era?

Pages 11, 12 & 13

Project Update

Page 5

Pilgrim Trust 2010 - 2011

Page 14



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 maintenance 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>

E.C.V.S. is a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee
Reg. in Scotland No. SC227261
Scottish Charity No. SC009670



EDITOR:

Alan Brown
23A Fettes Row, Edinburgh EH3 6RH
Email: alan@broon.co.uk

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 its members in particular. Never to cause intentional offence, but not to be afraid of occasional 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 2010 - 2011

President:	Peter Dick
Vice-President:	Hugh Trevor
Past President:	Sean Groat
Secretary:	Alasdair Bryson
Treasurer:	Vic Young
Subscriptions:	Alan Brown

EDITORS COLUMN

Welcome to another issue of Cine-Chat! I'm pleased to say that for once, this issue is ahead of schedule, as the next issue wasn't planned to be until the New Year, but we had quite a lot of material which just missed the last issue deadline, and some new articles submitted meaning we were able to bring this one forward by a couple of months!



We're only about a month into the new season so far, but already we've had some very interesting evenings. Following Presidents Night, when our new club President, Peter Dick, gave a very interesting talk on the use of DSLR cameras for making films, we were treated to an evening on sound from Malcolm Auld. Malcolm brought a lot of kit along with him on the evening to demonstrate the different microphones required in different situations. He also gave us a demonstration of audio editing, something which many of us know we should spend more time on, but which often takes second place to work on the visuals. I personally found Malcolms talk very informative, and am pleased to say that I now at last know the meaning of such cryptic phrases as 'hard limiting' and 'normalisation'! Our guest speaker the following week was Paul Bruce of Oaty Hill Productions, his evening was well attended and it was very interesting to hear of some of the pitfalls and problems he had encountered when making some of this films. One can often learn from one's mistakes, but it's a lot less painful to learn from someone else! It was also good to see some of his productions. In addition to the Thursday night programme of course, Peter Wilson has been working tirelessly to provide a packed Friday night programme, and attendees have already been treated to several excellent evenings, as well as having the chance to see Peter's new High Definition projector in action.

So if you haven't yet made it along to an evening this session, I hope you can make it along soon, as we have a lot more excellent items coming up in this years programme! (we'll also be featuring some more write-ups of club evenings on our website - www.ecvs.co.uk - in the News section, for anyone who wants to catch up on anything they've missed)

That's all from me for this issue, as always if you have anything for inclusion in a future issue, it would be gratefully received!

Cine Chat

WANTS
YOU

To contribute articles,
news, comment, etc.

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

The President Writes...

By Peter Dick

My entry into the world of moving pictures started in the late seventies. I chose video rather than film based technology as I had a basic understanding of television. About that time JVC (Japan Victor Corporation) introduced the VHS (Video Home System) video cassette recorder. This along with a black and white vidicon tube based camera was my first method of recording images. Being mains powered it limited the scope of subjects that could be recorded. A couple of years later I acquired, in an exchange, a portable reel to reel VTR (Video Tape Recorder) with a black and white camera. This allowed portable recordings to be made and some



Peter Dick, ECVS President 2010/11



The JVC HR330

losses that crippled consumer level of equipment. It was in 1998 when I adopted DV.

I have always had a keen interest on how television worked and have been developing a reasonable, but not exhaustive, level of knowledge. I have gained camera and editing skills through watching the work of others. I had been lucky to have been given a series of holidays in South Africa, and knowing the last one was to be Christmas 2006, I felt that this merited the change to HD (High Definition) somewhat earlier than planned.

Later I was shooting some footage near the observatory on Blackford Hill when a member of ECVS approached and started a conversation. I had never heard of ECVS before, I followed up this encounter by attending as a visitor. Although I have already stated my



Sony SL-F1UB

strengths were in the technical areas, I am not strong in the creative and artistic aspects of production. I saw ECVS as a source of expertise in all areas of film production and hoped to learn from this. All my efforts in production have so far been restricted to specific audiences, such as my family, and not a general one.

I soon realised that today's ECVS consisted of two sections one concerned with making films and the other studying and enjoying the work of commercial filmmakers.

Those who made films tend to work alone as this suits their individual style and subject

choice. After saying that there is a degree of collaboration when individuals combine their efforts in projects that can not be achieved single handedly. The results of this effort can often produce a reasonable production. I have seen a number of them, but not all, during my relatively short time as an ECVS member. Until joining I was completely unaware that there has always been a history of competitive filmmaking. The wall of the clubrooms shows testament to the past efforts in this area. This made me wonder could ECVS produce another competitive film?

The skills are there and the technology is available.

Edinburgh Hospital Heritage Project Update.



Elsie Inglis 1864 - 1917

The following videos are still work in progress which should be completed in the spring of 2011:

The History of Bruntsfield Hospital
The History of Leith Hospital.

There will be a showing of video of Leith Hospital's history at the South Leith Parish Church Hall on the afternoon of Thursday, 18th November and the evening of Saturday, 27th

The Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh, Lothian Health Services Archives, and Edinburgh Cine and Video Society have undertaken a collaborative project to make a series of documentary films on Edinburgh's Hospital Heritage.

The project has researched and completed the following videos:

The Life of Elsie Inglis
Elsie Inglis Memorial Maternity Hospital
Sophia Jex-Blake.

November.

The showing will be followed by an appeal for additional information in the form of images etc, that can be used to enhance the video of the hospital's history.

Project participants:
Mr. Iain Macintyre RCSEd
Dr. David Wright RCSEd
Rosie Baillie LHSA

Green Team Preservation

THE MAKING OF

By Alan Taylor



In this edition of Cine Chat, I take a behind the scenes look at my short promotional film I produced for the Green Team which has had recent success in this year's annual competition.



Since 2006, I've actually been involved with the Green Team as a volunteer helping out on a variety of conservation projects throughout the Lothians which includes wild places such as Vogrie Park and the John Muir Country Park where I was involved in either Sunday day projects or weekend residential projects. These would typical begin meeting up at New Parliament House and loading our mini bus with all of the tools required for the tasks which can include anything from planting trees to cleaning out smelly ponds. Trust me though, working with the group has been great fun and I've met some fantastic people along the way and I'll always have time for the group. I initially became involved as part of my service section for the Duke of Edinburgh award which I've almost completed, all except the final qualifying expedition due this summer. I worked with them for two years up until

the latter end of 2008. During college in the third quarter of the course, I came up with the idea of producing a video to promote the team and shortly afterwards spent a month developing the idea which is where the production began.

The film took three months of work to produce with the first month consisting of writing a treatment and script which I passed on to Penny, the Green Team manager who I'd worked closely with before so I didn't need to be too formal approaching her. She was extremely interested in having a video made and so it worked out as a perfect opportunity for my course.

During the planning stages, I looked at other examples of videos promoting similar charity organizations and took into account how I wanted the final video to look. The main elements I wanted were interviews with the participants and leaders along with lots of cutaways of what the team do. Before filming began, I had to arrange sending forms to Penny to distribute to the parents of the participants on the Green Team project to allow me to film them on the projects and interview them. We didn't have any problems with parents which made it easier for me to concentrate on the filming. I had to arrange getting together a crew so put out a call to my class where I received a few people interested. The team consisted of about five different people which helped on the project at various stages.

Luckily at college, I was allowed to use the equipment for free to carry out the shoot which made the budget much easier as in reality, this was a 1,000 pound budget project if done independently and professionally, paying the crew and feeding them on location, something which many producers neglect and are a serious problem for the industry.



Filming took place in April which was a great time to do it as the weather was fairly good although caused some problems earlier on. The shoot took place over two weekends and one Monday evening to film cutaways of a Green Team meeting. The first weekend, I met up with John Craigen (Camera Operator) and Mel (Sound Recordist) along with myself for the shoot (Producer, Editor). We started following the teams activities and filmed their team games and loading of the van; all of this footage was cut from the finished film as I felt the camera work wasn't up to scratch and the weather was cloudy so stood out from the rest of the film. One of the difficulties I came across on working on the project was knowing what the camera operator was filming and trusting in them to carry out the role with good results. I hate to say it but I wasn't convinced with the rushes which forced me to arrange a second shoot for this part of the day.

The rest of the day at this point had more problems. As we arrived at the conservation site on a piece of land at Old Dalkeith Road, the rangers explained to us that the team would have to move to plan B as a murder weapon had been found in the area we were about to dig and was surrounded by police when we arrived! Luckily, we found another area which required the Green Team at Peffermill road in Craigmellar. Here we managed to film the team at work and carry out interviews with the leaders where more challenges were up ahead. I

found that many of the participants were shy about being interviewed so I had to find a way of making them feel at ease which can be very daunting when there's three of us with a big boom and camera on a tripod. We managed to get a few people interviewed and all of the rangers then disaster struck when I made a check on the sound of the interviews which were being recorded. Four interviews were totally ruined as the sound was distorted after having the mixer set to mic instead of line (which you must set if using the mixer). I initially had sickening feeling in my stomach but knew I had to find a solution. I first tried to find out what happened and it became very clear what had occurred. I asked Mel if she had recorded on line and she replied saying that she had and even argued with me to say that I had already asked her that at the beginning of the shoot. I explained that I wasn't convinced and that I wanted to check it myself. It turned out that she had been wrong about it being on line for the whole morning. The next minute she decided she had to meet someone and, to my horror., left the shoot!

I learned from this one that you should always have a test session with your team before sending them out to film even with prior experience. She was actually in the year ahead but had no idea to how to carry out 1st year tasks!

The solution I came to was simple, we had to re-film every interview again which thankfully worked well in the end. The Green Team were very helpful and didn't mind too much about doing them again. I felt humiliated by my crew but glad that John had decided to stay and help rather than leave with Mel with whom he was friends with.

In the evening, I checked over the rushes and my instincts told me that I needed more footage to make a good five minute video. A few weeks later, I arranged a second shoot with the team with myself only this time as Director/Camera where we traveled to the Pentlands to clean some drainage spots on the hills. I really enjoyed the day and it was first time filming up high which is something I'm definitely going to do in the future. All of the sound on the hill was recorded using the on camera mic where I was using a HVX200 panasonic camera in the 4:3 format which is the last time I used that with technology changing. All of the material on the hill was dubbed over as the wind noise was fierce. I'm glad that was mentioned in the awards critiques as I spent a good time fixing this in post.

I took a tripod along with me on this day but decided to leave it in the van and not climb the hills with it as it would have been too heavy, the tripod being fairly weighty. Upon completing the filming, I looked at the rushes and then planned a final shoot day of a few hours taking various static shots from the top of Calton hill and of some buses in George Street rerouted from Princes Street during the ongoing tramworks chaos. I also did some filming in the Figgate Park near Portobello for the opening shots of the flowers.

I edited the video using Sony Vegas Platinum 9.0 which I find is an extremely reliable piece of software as well as being affordable at £80. If you already have a good specification computer then Vegas is right for you. If you don't have a computer then it's a choice between this or using a stand alone kit like the Casablanca.

The editing of the video took about nine days with the complications of the AVID suite at college taken away finally after two years of utter nonsense having to find someone with a key just to add a jpeg into your project. I captured the footage directly from the camera before returning it to college the following day. Finding music for productions today is very easy with the internet. There are hundreds of sites offering good priced music which you can use for your films. I've used incomptech.com mostly of late which is completely free but there are others offering higher quality music such as Royaltyfreemusic.com and Freeplaymusic.com.

The commentary was recorded using a £20 headset which I bought from a computer shop on the corner of Meadowbank place which managed the job well.

I'm pleased with the final result, I feel that I've achieved what I was aiming to do with one of the skills I learned from the project was managing your crew and editing the video to it's shorter form rather than dragging where my video could easily have been ten minutes long.

If you have the time please check out my extended review on my blog and visit the Green Team's website to learn more about the team.

<http://www.1989adventures.com/>
<http://www.greenteam.org.uk/>

Edinburgh Cinema History (Part 3)

*Compiled by Stewart Emm with help from the
Edinburgh Room of Edinburgh Central Library*

The Edinburgh Film Guild

The Edinburgh Cine Society was founded in 1936, but even older is the Edinburgh Film Guild founded in 1930. The Edinburgh Film Guild prides itself as being the oldest continuously running film society in the UK. The Guild was founded “to bring together those interested in the development of film art in Scotland and for the exhibition of films of artistic merit not generally shown in the ordinary commercial cinema” (Mr J.H.Whyte, *The Scotsman*, 28th October, 1930). The original idea was to include a film in the normal weekly programme of a commercial cinema, but this was not successful so the Guild changed over to regular, private Sunday viewings for members.

For the first full season two cinemas were used. Initially The Princes Cinema, 131 Princes Street, and then the Salon, 15 Baxter’s Place.



The Princes Cinema

The Princes Cinema was originally opened by R.C.Buchanan on September 14th 1912. It

seated five to six hundred, with a six piece orchestra, a tearoom and a smoking room. In the mid-twenties it was taken over by the Lucas family and closed on the November 10th 1935.



Salon Cinema, to the right of Planet Out

The Salon Cinema was opened on October 2nd 1913 and sported a Persian theme and a tearoom. It survived the decline in cinema attendances, showing mainly second run westerns and closed in November 1974.

In October 1931 The Guild moved to more acceptable premises at the Caley Picture House , 31 Lothian Road. To forestall the difficulties of showing a foreign film on a Sunday, the small band of some 250 members welcomed the then Lord Provost, Sir Thomas Whitson to the screening. The Caley opened on the January 1st 1923 and originally seated 900. It was subsequently enlarged in preparation for the talkies and it's capacity increased to 1800. It was converted in 1984 to a nightclub.



The Caley Picture House

When war arrived in 1939 the Guild kept going, showing any films it could get its hands on. By this time cinema going was the nation's favourite pastime and the cinemas were considered an integral part of the community. However at the outbreak of war they were temporary closed as an emergency measure. Once re-opened they were initially well attended and did not start to slope off in numbers until 1948.

In 1946 the Guild started using the Gateway Theatre for additional weekday

performances. Two years later it had a membership of 2,500. Premises were bought at 6-8 Hill Street and these became Edinburgh's first Film House and opened in August 1947.

The Film House consisted of two eighteen century houses previously used as lawyer's offices. Campbell Harper Films bought one and shared certain facilities with the Guild. In 1947 the first Edinburgh International Festival of Music and Drama was staged. There was no film content and a group of

enthusiasts set to work and organised and ran an International Festival of Documentary Films during it. This festival was run and financed by the Edinburgh Film Guild. John Grierson opened the eight day event.

From this humble beginning the Edinburgh International Film Festival is now the longest continuously run film festival in the world.

Part four of this series will be featured in the next issue of Cine-Chat.

Corrections

We have a couple of corrections resulting from our last issue this month. Apologies for these mistakes, which sneaked through our usual rigorous checking, in the rush to produce CineChat before the start of the new season!

In Part 2 of our series on Edinburgh Cinema History, we inadvertently missed out a credit for the interior image of the Picture House. Credit for this image should have been attributed to the Cinema Theatre Association Archive, to whom we are very grateful.

A second apology goes to Sean Groat, as we mistakenly referred to his competition film 'Heroes of Longhope' as 'Heroes of Longthorpe'.

End of an Era?

One of my most enduring memories of attending the local cinema in the 1970s as an impressionable youngster wasn't the actors, the popcorn, or even the films themselves (although the decidedly low budget '*Killer Fish*' (1979) left me emotionally scarred for several weeks).

No, the one constant in all these exciting trips to the cinema was the reassuringly familiar 'Pa-pa-pa-pa...' music of the obligatory Pearl and Dean advertisements before each and every 'Feature Presentation'. Even now, there are few people who won't recognise the familiar 20 seconds of music, called incidentally, '*Asteroid*' and still evoking sufficient nostalgia for Pearl and Dean to make it available via their website.

(www.PearlandDean.com)

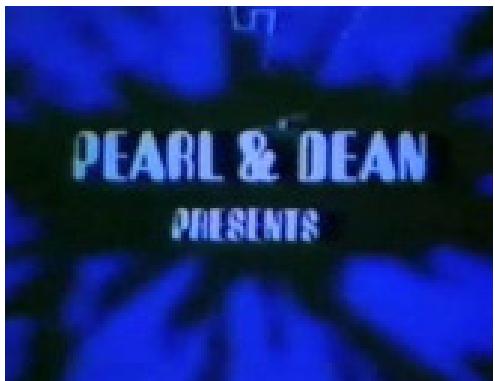
It was with some sadness then, that I read in the BBC Magazine on 21st April, that Pearl and Dean, longtime purveyor of a distinctive style of local advertising, was to be sold for a paltry £1.

Pearl and Dean had been making a steady loss for some time, mainly due to a contract signed in 2004 guaranteeing minimum payments to VUE cinemas for advertising time, on which they had been unable to maximise revenue.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/8634158.stm>

While Pearl and Dean will continue to operate, under new owners, it seems the day of the decidedly amateur local advert has well and truly passed.

Thankfully, only a few days later, on April 23rd, the BBC Magazine ran a second story,



to commemorate the hey-day of local advertising in in cinemas, and in particular Pearl and Dean's contribution to it, they asked readers to make an advertisement in the style of old, for publication on the site.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/magazine/8638701.stm>

Not one to pass up on such a challenge, and wanting to go one better than the previous occassion when I produced a 'Public Information Film' spoof for the BBC, and then forgot to stick my name on it, I got to work!

The first question was what to advertise? The original Pearl and Dean adverts were for local businesses, so one of the obvious ideas was for a local restaurant. Another idea was for a local barbershop. As often happens with these projects, several heads were better than one, so after a call to some friends (Andrew Bawn, Magnus Knight, Sean Groat) we decided to merge the two and invent a restaurant where you can have your hair cut **WHILE YOU EAT!** Thus providing the industrious businessman (who apparently still has time to visit the cinema) with a time-saving opportunity to satify his hunger, and get a quick short back and sides at

the same time!

With the idea in the bag, and only a week to produce the film, the only other requirement was that the finished film couldn't be more than 30 seconds long. I'd produced some 1-minute comedy films before, so knew that the editing would have to be pretty tight. Even in a 1 minute film there's not much room for manoeuvre. To try to tell a story, no matter how basic, in only 30 seconds, might be tricky!

On 25th April all four of us made our way to the ECVS clubrooms to make the film, which had now been entitled 'Souper Snips'. The initial idea was to make use of the blue-screen to chromakey a restaurant background, but on arrival we decided that the front room would double up as a restaurant admirably.

We filmed the required shots relatively quickly, an establishing shot of the businessman sitting at a table, with other diners in the background, a shot of the menu as he reads it, the waiter taking his order, the barber cutting his hair, and then shots of the soup being delivered to the table and eaten, with the final shot straight to camera delivering the advertising message.



In keeping with the style of the original advertisements, we decided to (badly) dub on the name of the restaurant later.

In all, the filming probably took a couple of hours, and then it was back home to try to edit it into a 30 second commercial. This is where it got tricky! The running time of my initial draft version was over a minute long, and I thought I had pretty much cut it right down to the bare essentials. I had to be extremely brutal with my editing to try to get the whole film down to 29 seconds, with a second left at the end for a still frame of the name of the restaurant (and my all important credit, I wasn't going to forget that THIS time!)

Eventually I got the running time down to the required 30 seconds, but discovered that in doing so the viewer wasn't really left with time to take in the images, it's more of an

impression that you create - a flash of a menu, a flash of the hair clippers. It's quite a different technique to making a longer film where you have the luxury of allowing the viewer time to take in the whole of the screen. I was relatively pleased with the final result though, and think it still makes sense. (Although only viewers with their fingers on the



freeze-frame button will see all the little jokes we added).

We submitted the film to the BBC on the 26th April and heard nothing more about it until the 4th May, when an email appeared in my inbox from a BBC Feature writer saying that they were going to publish our film on the BBC website! They kindly wrote;

“You guys were by far the best and are the only people we went with in the end” - which I think is a polite way of saying that ours was the only entry!

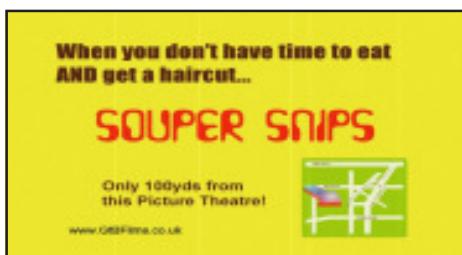


Our finished film (in all it's extremely short glory) can be viewed here:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/magazine/8660458.stm>

It was an interesting afternoons project, and I think well worth doing, even if only as a lesson in extremely brutal editing!

Alan Brown



EDINBURGH CINE AND VIDEO SOCIETY

This years ECVS Christmas Party will be held on Friday the 17th December in the ECVS Clubrooms, tickets available soon!



**CHRISTMAS PARTY
7PM (FOR 7:30PM)
FRIDAY 17TH DECEMBER 2010
ECVS CLUBROOMS**



THE PILGRIM TRUST AWARD 2010

The Edinburgh Cine & Video Society Pilgrim Trust Award competition has been running since 1980. The theme of the competition is “Scotland” and almost any film made in Scotland or on a Scottish subject will be accepted.

The Pilgrim Trust Award Competition for 2010 will be held on Thursday 31st March, 2011 at 7.30pm in the Edinburgh Cine and Video Society Clubrooms, 23a Fettes Row, Edinburgh.

Entries are now invited for the competition and entry forms can be obtained by:

- i) Downloading an entry form from our website at www.ecvs.co.uk
- ii) Email to myself at emmedin@btopenworld.com
- iii) Writing to Stewart Emm, c/o Edinburgh Cine & Video Society, 23a Fettes Row, Edinburgh, EH36RH.

The closing date for entries is Friday 25 February 2011.

The rules of the competition are as follows:

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

Next Issue

The next issue of CineChat is (tentatively) scheduled for March 2011, 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 18th February 2011

