

# Cine Chat

June 2005

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

**Meet the Committee**

Page 2

**The Copyright**

**Minefield** Page 4

**Member Survey**

**Results** Page 5

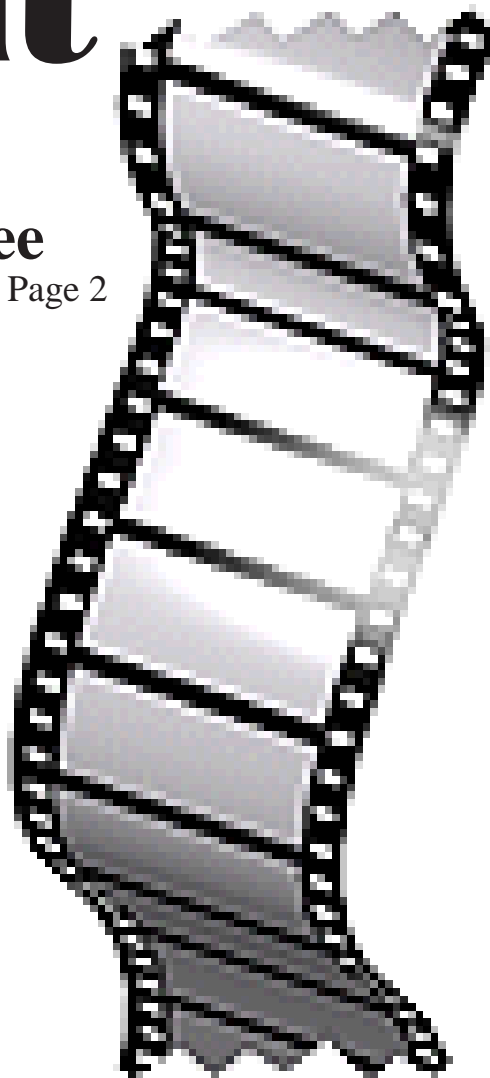
**The Joys of DVD**

Page 7



**ECVS Members'  
Awards**

Page 6



<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.

The club meets at 7:30pm on both Thursday and Friday evenings between September and April. Movie-making competitions are entered and ECVS has won many top awards. Full details of ECVS programmes, competitions and other club events are contained in the society's current syllabus, available free from ECVS, or at many good camcorder stores in Edibnburgh.

### **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



### **About CINE CHAT**

#### **EDITOR:**

Alan Brown  
23A Fettes Row, Edinburgh EH3 6RH  
Email: [alan@broon.co.uk](mailto: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 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 2005 - 2006**

<b>President:</b>	Frank Ramsay
<b>Vice-President:</b>	Alan Brown
<b>Past President:</b>	Bob Bell
<b>Secretary:</b>	Hugh Trevor
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Vic Young
<b>Subscriptions:</b>	John Henry



## **EDITORS COLUMN**

Welcome to the new-look Cine Chat! First of all, apologies for the delay in this issue going to press, but finding myself a little in at the deep end regarding what was required in putting this newsletter together, I perhaps under-estimated the amount of work involved! Thanks to everyone who has contributed articles for this issue, and apologies in advance if I have missed any out/introduced spelling mistakes, or edited them a little severely for your liking! Of course we need articles and feedback from you, the members of ECVS, so if you have anything you would like printed, or just general comments to make, please let me know. You can contact CineChat by either emailing me personally

at [alan@broon.co.uk](mailto:alan@broon.co.uk), or if you prefer, leaving a submission in the Cine Chat submissions box, which you will find next to the kitchen door in the club rooms. All contributions gratefully recieved!

As you will notice, we have changed the format of Cine-Chat this issue, reducing it to a handy A5 pocket-sized edition. This was for a number of reasons, discussed by the committee, and it was eventually decided that the new size would be easier to send out, allow more content, and cheaper to produce. I hope you agree, but again, any comments about the new format, please let me know.

In this issue, we have a colour guide to this years committee, the results of last years member questionnaire, an indepth investigation into the minefield that is copyright law, news of member awards and achievements, a viable alternative to DVD production, news from the Guernsey film Festival, all you want to know about the North vs South competition, and a humourous story from John Clark, with lessons to be learnt from past mistakes!

Already I find myself at the bottom of the page, so there's no more spare for my witterings except to say I hope you enjoy the new-look, and look forward to your contributions for the next edition!



## The President Writes...

At our April AGM I was honoured that I was elected as your President. I hope that I can achieve for our Club what you would want me to. To this end I have the backing of a great team in the form of the Committee, but feel deeply that we all must play whatever part we can to keep the Club in the forefront of the Video community.

Last year saw a great deal of activity in the Clubhouse building on the facilities we have. Many thanks to all those who were involved with it, the works completed are great. This year we hope to continue that work with the construction of a new projection screen. This is a big task but one that would compliment the new projection system we installed.

But, even more important to the club than the facilities, are the members themselves. This coming year we are hoping to get members much more involved in club film making. We have superb recourses in the accommodation we have, in the Blue Screen (chromakey) facility that has been installed and in the equipment that is available to us. But (and a very important But) I feel we desperately need to increase our membership. It would be wonderful if we could make any sort of film using talent from within our club. To do this we would need to expand the present membership and attract a wider spectrum of people. Please each of you do all you can to encourage others to “come and join us”. We have a full programme planned for the coming year and it would be great if we could get lots of people involved in it.

One of the first projects we are trying to get off the ground is the making of Club entries for the North v South and the Strathclyde competitions. The themes set for this year are “Tell us About It” and “Escape”. By the time this Cine Chat is in print we will have had the first of our meetings to discuss these productions, but please, all of you who can, get involved in helping us to make these entries successful. To be part of a team that creates a film is a wonderful experience, to be part of a team that produces the winner is even better!

I look forward to the coming year and hope that between us we can continue to make our Club an enjoyable experience for us all.

All the best, Frank Ramsay



## THE GUERNSEY LILY FILM FESTIVAL

### October, 2004

This event is an amateur international film and video competition which has been running for thirteen years and is open to any amateur film maker. Each year six Guernsey Lily trophies are awarded for the six best films, the top award taking the form of beautifully crafted glass Guernsey lilies, the others being engraved plaques. In addition, there are other awards for story documentary, animation, etc. categories, as well as prizes for acting, youth, photography, etc. All entries get a Certificate of Merit - Very Highly Commended, Highly Commended and Commended. A detailed crit is also returned with some well constructed comments by the experienced adjudicators.



A party from Edinburgh has been to the Festival for twelve out of these thirteen years, and this year it was Elise Lornie, Elise Phimister, and Dorothy and Norman Speirs. Two

other Scottish members also went, but they come from the west of Scotland. We usually add a few days on to the festival to see more of the island and revisit some of our favourite haunts. People ask us whatever there is to do on such a small island (barely 8 miles by 5) and even in twelve years there is much that we haven't seen. Apart from the films, we just love to take things easy and soak up the sunshine and the scenery, with picnics on the cliffs and occasional sight-seeing.

The event starts off on a Friday night with a "Vin d'Honneur" held this year in the imposing mansion, Saumarez Manor. This is really just a kind of reception with plenty of wine, and gives you

a chance to meet fellow visitors to the Festival. Saturday afternoon sees the showing of the runner-up films with the winning programme on Saturday evening followed by the presentation of the trophies (most of which are kept by the winners) and a Gala Dinner. On Sunday there are presentations of many more films entered and this gives a wide perspective of the standard of entries. In the statistics of the competition, there were 98 films entered, 65 came from England but Scotland were next with six - all other countries had only five or fewer.

The winner was a black and white animation film from Germany - with the translated title being "Magic Times". It was a dramatic and moving little film with no dialogue whatever, so it is truly international in its appeal. Perhaps your Committee might consider showing some of the Guernsey Lily films in a future programme - but better still, why not come to Guernsey for the Festival in October, 2005?



# The Copyright Minefield

John L  
Clark

*This brief reference to copyright for video makers is by a layman who hopes that by writing it he is not infringing copyright.*



Copyright is the legal protection given to a certain type of property, known as intellectual property. It protects original intellectual property of the literary, dramatic, musical or artistic forms. As with any other type of property, intellectual property can be stolen. It can also be bought, sold, licensed for use, inherited, given away or destroyed.

To give copyright protection to an intellectual property its owner must create it in a permanent form; in legal terminology it must be *fixated*. Unlike patents and trademarks, which have a registration procedure there is no registration procedure in force for intellectual property and here lies a major problem. There are methods by which an original work can be dated and attributed to an individual. Whether these methods would satisfy a judge is another matter. One example often quoted is to lodge a sealed and dated copy or details of the work with a solicitor. But some experts think that you might just as well tell your auntie. Other methods can be left to your imagination. It is interesting to see that some of the latest books being published carry an endorsement similar to the following. "The right of Joe Bloggs to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted in accordance with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988". Make of that what you will, but please don't ignore it! Some recently manufactured quality, video editing software allows the editor to watermark the movie. So, it would be possible, for example, to have ECVS at the top left corner of each frame. Would you really want that?



One of the consequences of not having a registration procedure is that disputes over copyright which cannot be resolved between the 'parties in dispute' usually end up in the Civil Courts. There they are judged, taking into account the determinations of historical cases: this is known as *case law*. Whatever else the merits of this method might be, the court is an inordinately expensive place, if you are on the wrong side of a dispute. The

best way to avoid such adversarial disputes is to use our built-in mechanism which alerts us to the difference between right and wrong. It should be enough to prevent us falling foul of the Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988. Incidentally, the Act, published by HM Stationary Office, is copyright. Work that one out, if you can! Two descriptions from the Act should be of interest to video makers and are worth remembering. As these descriptions are in the public domain, it is right and proper for the public to be aware of them. There is no infringement of copyright in referring to them here.

A property right exists as a separate or individual right in the following descriptions of works:-

**Sound recordings, meaning a recording of sounds of all or part of a literary, dramatic or musical work regardless on which medium the recording is made or the method by which the sound is reproduced.**

**Film, meaning a recording on any medium from which a moving image may be transmitted by any means.**

That explanation might seem to be self explanatory; but is it? Well, in audio not really, as several individuals may have separate copyrights for lyrics, music and recordings. In 1996 the duration of a copyright was changed from 50 to 70 years after the death of the copyright owner. Just to complicate the matter further, the durations of copyrights for recordings and performances last for 50 years from their date of release.



The Act shuts the door on any custom and practice of “borrowing” little bits or even big bits of someone else’s sound or film. (I use the word borrowing in preference to any other). Although, in the event all is not lost because usually you can buy a key to the door: this allows you to use a little bit of music - but normally not for profit. Even copyright free music normally does not allow usage for profit. As far as film is concerned, those who have tried will confirm that the door is not only shut, but firmly bolted. You have little or no chance of gaining entry.

Under the Act the first owner of a copyright is the author of the work. That person is taken to be:

**In the case of a sound recording or film, the person by whom the arrangements necessary for the making of the recording or film are undertaken.**

The exception to this is where the person is an employee; in that event the employer is the first owner. In its Constitution, ECVS states one of its objectives as, “Object (c) to make movies (to become ECVS property) using its own funding”. It, therefore, follows that when ECVS arranges the making of an ECVS film, it will be ECVS property. (*The ECVS Constitution, which was revised in 1996, is a set of regulations consistent with Clauses 5.5.4; 5.5.5 & 5.5.6 of The Articles of Association of ECVS Ltd*).

Members of ECVS making “Club Films/Videos” should bear in mind that any “borrowing” of other peoples’ intellectual property could result in a retrospective financial charge against the “Club” or indeed the “Club” facing court action. This is fact not fiction! Should it be judged in court that the “borrowing” was not an infringement of copyright, it might, if you had put “Copyright ECVS” against it, be judged as *passing off*: a form of legal protection related to



copyright, designed to prevent passing off someone else's work as an original work. This is probably as serious as infringing copyright.



Over the years ECVS has charged TV channels and production companies for the use of its copyright footage. For instance, on one occasion £240 was charged for the use of 40 seconds of our footage to be used in two broadcasts. More recently £72 was charged for the use of 24 seconds. This is an ongoing practice and in the realm of intellectual property it is a two-way practice – there are and should be no exceptions. On the other hand, more and more we are seeing court action taken for infringements of copyright – although not always

successfully. According to the press, 24 of 26 individuals in the UK who had been summoned to appear before the courts for allegedly uploading copyright music to Peer-to-Peer sharing websites each paid £2,000 to settle out of court. In all of the cases their children had been the guilty parties. The other two individuals have refused to pay: in due course their cases will be heard in court.

As a film/video maker you should be aware that you have entered the copyright minefield, so take care and tread cautiously. In the minefield you make your own luck!

### **E.C.V.S. ON TELEVISION?**

One night recently I was switching on our T.V. for the BBC Ten O'Clock News and hit the end of a previous programme - I think it was the series called "Silent Witness" - when I was struck by two familiar names appearing in the credits. Over the years, we've become accustomed to seeing the odd name in credits dating back to their E.C.V.S days but this is the first time I've seen two! They were Stuart Fyvie as "Colourist" and Gordon Hickie as "Director of Photography".

Stuart was one of our young members in the 1980's and won the Waverley Plate (for fiction films) in 1986 with "Dangerous Waves". This film also won the top SAM prize, The W.S. Smith Trophy, the same year with this film. He made it along with Alan Maxwell and both of them subsequently went into television professionally. Alan Maxwell's name has appeared in the past in the STV credits for "Dr. Finlay's Casebook" as "assistant cameraman".

Gordon Hickie is the son of Jim Hickie and in the 1960's they won many E.C.S. trophies between them and also got the top Open Award in the IAC with their famous film "The Flee Market". Mostly they did documentaries, and Gordon went into Yorkshire Television (but has obviously now switched to BBC). As a professional, he has won a prestigious third place for a documentary on the life of Michael Faraday. He has also been involved professionally as Director of Photography on the feature film "Leon, The Pig Farmer".

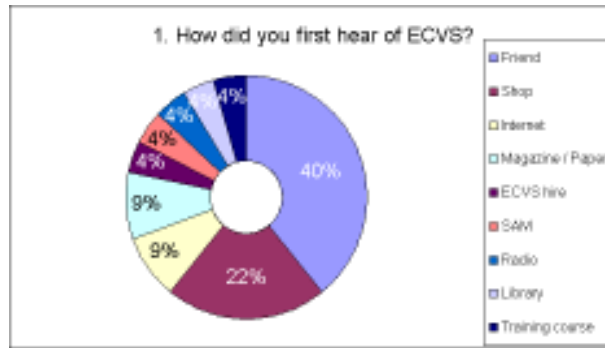
Keep your eyes open: you will never know who's name you are going to see next!



# OUR SURVEY SAYS...by John Adair

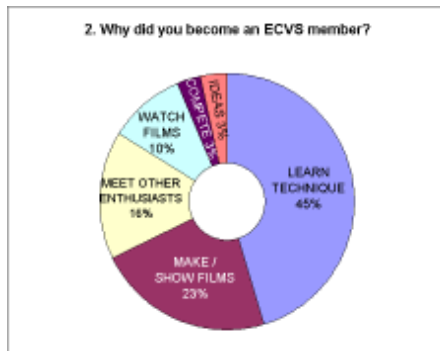
Well, what do you think of your club - dear old ECVS?

First, let me express my sincere thanks to those of you who took the time and trouble to respond. Self-examination is invaluable if the club is to improve, grow and thrive well into the future. As you read this article, please note that it's intended as a summary of the many views expressed by you in your responses and not those of the author.



Did you know:

- 1 Most members joined because a friend invited them or through an advertisement at an equipment shop
- 2 67% joined to learn how to use equipment and make films
- 3 Although most members own a video camera, in the last three years eight members have not shown a film they have made, in fact
- 4 most ECVS / member's films shown in the last few years have been made by **only a handful** of members



Why is this so? Are you bothered about this? What will happen if this trend continues and fewer members make / show films they have made?

The improvements you suggest could be made at ECVS include growing the membership perhaps to include a more diverse cross-section and age distribution as opposed to the current imbalance. The club must grow not only if it is to thrive but more importantly in order to survive.

To do this, you say that more group / club films should be made. This means greater cooperation and communication. We must rely on each other more. Cast aside inhibitions and personal likes and dislikes. Take the plunge and try something new or unfamiliar. Close reliance and friendship will come through shared interest and responsibility.

Continued on Page 12...

# Meet the Committee

The 2005 ECVS Annual General Meeting was held on the 28th April 2005, and saw the election of the 2005/2006 committee. But just who are this plucky band of men and women who are responsible for the running of ECVS over the next 12 months? Cine-Chat presents a no-nonsense guide to who's who.



**Frank Ramsay**  
**President**

As President, Frank chairs the committee meetings and oversees the running of the club.



**Alan Brown**  
**Vice-President**

Alan is this years Cine-Chat editor, and is also involved in the programme committee for Thursday nights.



**Vic Young**  
**Treasurer**

As Treasurer, Vic maintains an iron grip on the purse strings and the finances of ECVS.



**Hugh Trevor**  
**Secretary**

Hugh minutes all the Committee meetings, making these available to all members and deals with all club correspondence.



**John Henry**  
**Subscription Secretary**

John is responsible for collecting member subscriptions, and keeping in touch with members old and new.



*Outgoing President Bob Bell hands the chain of office to this years President, Frank Ramsay*



**Bob Bell**  
**Past President**

Having dutifully stepped forward to take the role of Club President last year, Bob becomes ECVS Past President.



**Peter Wilson**  
**Committee Member**

As well as being a committee member, Peter is responsible for the Friday night programme for the coming year.



**Pauline Johnson**  
**Committee Member**

Amongst other roles, Pauline is a member of the Programme Committee, ensuring a varied Thursday night selection.



**John Adair**  
**Committee Member**

A new member of the committee, John is on the Programme sub-committee and also currently involved in making club productions.



**Euan Greenan**  
**Committee Member**

Euan is a member of the Programme Committee, and also controls the keys to the club, as well as being an active fundraiser.



**John Clark**  
**Committee Member**

John is a member of the house committee and makes sure the club rooms are maintained and up to his high standards.



**Jim Closs**  
**Committee Member**

Jim assisted with the Thursday night Programme design, and is always on hand to give advice and support to members.



**Stewart Emm**  
**Committee Member**

Another new member to the Committee, Stewart maintains the ECVS website amongst other roles.

---

## **CONGRATULATIONS!**



Congratulations to Dorothy and Norman Speirs, who were recently awarded a rather special UNICA Gold medal at the BIAFF (British Amateur Film Festival). It is for a long standing contribution to film making, particularly in IAC, SAM, and UNICA, as well as in ECVS.

## OUR SURVEY SAYS...(continued from page 9)

Significant numbers of new members are unlikely to just walk in off the street. Word of mouth has worked well in the past so why not promote ECVS through your friends, family and work colleagues.

**A**pathy: remember why you are involved with ECVS? To make films? Well, they won't happen if you sit on your behind waiting for someone else to generate ideas, tell you what to do, take the lead on a group film, write a script or develop a training session.

Let's not rely on a few stalwarts who have held / are holding the club together with sticky tape and bandages. Every one of us can show our support by getting more involved in the running of the club, making films or pushing our comfort zone and trying something you haven't done before or you haven't done for years. I'm a great believer in what you put in is often reflected in what you get out of something. We don't give to receive but who can dispute the pleasure of seeing your (part in) creation flicker into life on the silver screen! Let's make this a great year together.

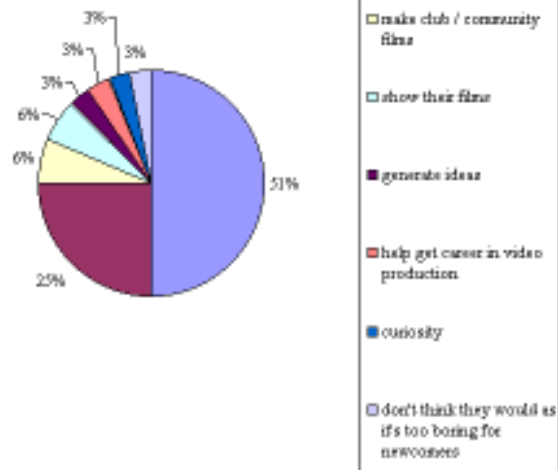
### Questionnaire Results in Full

Thanks to all those who took the trouble to respond.

Approximately half the membership chose to respond to this survey (including one new, not-yet-a-member).

Of the 23 members who responded, 4 chose to remain anonymous.

15. Why will people join ECVS?



#### How did you first hear of ECVS?

Friend	9
Shop	5
Internet	2
Magazine / Paper	2
ECVS hire	1
SAM	1
Radio	1
Library	1
Training course	1

#### Why did you become a member?

Learn	14	67% joined to learn & make films
Make / show films	7	
Other enthusiasts	5	
Watch films	3	
Compete	1	
Ideas	1	

How long have you been a member?		don't show other clubs films on Thu	1
less than 2 years	3	more amateur films shown	1
2 - 5 years	4	more technical training	1
6 - 10 years	4	more on film-making techniques,	1
11 - 20 years	7	ensure club films made for competitions	1
21 + years	5	more discussion of external films	1
How often do you come to ECVS?		vary routine, i.e. don't sit & wait for bell...	1
every week	19	How many members do you think are in ECVS?	
once a fortnight	1	less than 50	17
once a month	2	(Currently 44 full-paying members)	
special occasions	1	51 - 70	3
Which night do you normally attend?		71+	2
Thu 13		Do you think we need more members?	
Fri 5		no	0
Both 5		1 - 20	9
Why do you attend on Thursday		21 - 40	6
Learn	6	41+	6
Make films	5	Why do you think anyone would join ECVS?	
Watch club films	2	learn video/audio/film-making techniques	16
Don't know	2	meet other enthusiasts	8
Watch films	6	make club / community films	2
Social	3	show their films	2
Do you own a working video camera?		generate ideas	1
yes	18	help get career in video production	1
no	5	curiosity	1
What is missing from our club that you would like to include on the programme?		too boring for newcomers	1
nothing	13	How would you attract new members?	
crew interworking	6	advertise in local free papers	5
IAC winning films	3	shops (at point of sale)	3
Industry expert	1	colleges, clubs, mediabase,	2
Script writing	1	re-introduce beginners' training / tuition	2
making a DVD slideshow	1	"informercial" e.g. on website	2
printing DVD covers	1	group film making / more hands on	2
discussion on film construction	1	better visibility of club / activities	2
What is your primary reason for coming to ECVS?		motivated committee members	1
learn video techniques	9	showcase best films on internet	1
social night	6	more family orientation	1
make films	5	half-price membership in 1st year	1
show your films	1	How many different films have you shown at ECVS in the last 3 years?	
What makes you miss a Thursday / Friday night?		none	8
work / family commitments	12	1 - 5	7
not interested in topic that evening	6	6 - 10	5
bored with club	4	more than 10	3
If you could change 3 things about the club evenings, what would you change?		Have you made films but shown none at ECVS? If yes, why not?	
nothing	9	yes - personal interest only	
more teamwork & hands-on	5	2	
better organisation	5	yes - new member	1
re-introduce beginners' training	3	yes - don't have editing equipment	1
division between Thu & Fri	3	yes - personal prejudice	1
more structured feedback	2		
more diverse film-making	2		
lack of motivation	1		
get out & about on location	1		
more young people	1		

Continued on Page 19...

## ECVS on Location

*(A personal view seen through tinted, but not rose tinted, glasses)*

To be the Director or not to be the Director, that is the question? For this ECVS video movie location is definitely no place for the faint-hearted, the thin-skinned or the temperamental. It's a place where the production team is evident by its numbers, where storyboards are not considered indispensable, where every cameraman is a director and every actor a scriptwriter. The devil's advocate is always present and every shot is approved by consensus which emerges only after animated discussion. Compromise is paramount: "that door should be open: no, that door should be closed". When the door is finally half way open or half way closed the cameras roll for take one. This is the evidence that democracy on the set works. Someone, who shouldn't be, is in shot so we do it again; the cameras roll for take two. The actor fluffs his lines, or did he decide to change them? The cameras roll for take three; it looks and sounds better - maybe he was right to use his own lines.

As the evening wears on we need lighting. The question, "Who is on lighting" reveals that "Who" has gone on holiday. Why hadn't we noticed? ECVS members are nothing if not versatile, so another takes over. Problem: the property used as the location was built in 1911. In estate agent jargon, it has many original features, in fact, it has all the signs of being caught up in a time warp. No TV, no telephone, only the odd five amp, two-pin power socket to be found. Nevertheless, it's an ideal film location for our story. There is concern however that our lighting might overload the ancient power circuit. A debate is called, the outcome is that we agree to cut down on mains lighting and supplement it with a battery light. We agree to modify a five amp, three-pin plug to work in the two-pin socket. But democracy on the set

is time consuming and soon it's time to go home: our members have work in the morning. We apologise to the disappointed actors who have not been called - perhaps next week! Then we reflect positively (never negatively) on the fact that our programme for the evening was not too long, it was merely that our timescale was too short. Perhaps we should start earlier next week! "The director will be on holiday next week: do we really need him?" We drive off into the sunset.

Our next scenes, scripted to take place in an office, are filmed in the Clubrooms/Studio. After some debate we decide to use the front room. It needs substantial rearrangement - so we now become furniture removers. Desk, photocopier, etc, nothing is sacrosanct, all are on the move as the props are gathered together. Posters and displays appear and filming is soon underway. As it progresses we notice the telephone conversation scene is one sided. A debate starts; the consensus is that a new scene should be inserted - the other side of the telephone conversation. Filming finished, we again double as furniture removers to restore the clubrooms to normal. The actor playing 'Nigel' looks dismayed as he clutches his script, he hasn't been called. We promise Nigel that it will definitely be next week.

We have managed to start five minutes earlier and a debate on a tricky shot is underway. The debate lasts fifteen minutes, the shot lasts fifteen seconds. When it's played back we are pleased with the result, but maybe we should do it again from two different angles. We are in 'perfectionist mode' as the cameras roll for take two. The actors are suffering the chill of the evening, but they are suffering for their art. The crew is oblivious to their suffering while its debate continues. Everyone throws in twopence worth, the laughs come thick and fast then a broad consensus emerges.



mocracy is slowly wending its way forward. The radio mic seems to have limitations on this location. The boom mic leans against the wall unused. "Do you want the boom?", asks the sound man. A debate starts on the subject: ultimately the consensus is that we revert to the on-board camera mics. The sound man is made redundant.

"Are you from TV?", asks an interested neighbour, who has walked her dog half a dozen times past the gate hoping to catch our attention, "We've seen you here filming before". No, I reply, we are not TV, we are film makers making a blockbuster. "Who's in it?", she persists. Douglas Richardson is the leading man, I reply. "Oh, he was in 'House of Cards', he's very good!", she exclaims. .... I excuse myself and beat a hasty retreat.

The next scene is indoors. It calls for a wall safe to be seen first in a long shot and then in close-up. Short of fixing the safe to the wall with nails (and this is not something the property owner would welcome) there is no way this shot can be done. The outcome of a short debate is that the long shot is dropped. As I hold the safe against the wall with numbed arms for a close shot the camera avoids my hands - it's just as well the safe is made from polystyrene. The leading lady, kneeling on a cushion, reaches up through my open arms to remove money from the safe. She slips it into her dressing gown pocket then exits through a doorway. Another problem has been solved: another scene is in the can. Clutching his script 'Nigel' hangs around waiting for his call, but not tonight, because everything takes longer than we think. We drive off into the sunset promising 'Nigel' that it will definitely be his turn next week.

The lighting man is back from holiday. He moves around the set confidently with an air of professionalism as he adjusts the lighting to eliminate shadows. This is Nigel's big scene: it's a police

'stake-out'. According to the script, as he opens the safe door in the darkened room the alarm sounds. The police crash into the room that is immediately floodlit: there is a struggle: Nigel picks himself off the floor and stares in horror at the handcuffs on his wrists. He protests as he is led off to the police station: another scene should be in the can. But the reality is: as the cameras roll Nigel opens the safe: the alarm sounds: the police throw open the door, and on cue the lighting man operates his switch. The room is floodlit for an instant then plunged back into darkness: the monitor and electrics shut down: Nigel falls over a chair. Chaos reigns on the darkened set for the few moments the property owner takes to help me locate and repair the ancient ceramic fuse. This is proof positive that a 1911 fuse board can cope with a 1997 overload. We explain to the lighting man the need for supplementary, battery lighting (determined by debate during his absence on holiday) then the cameras roll for take two.

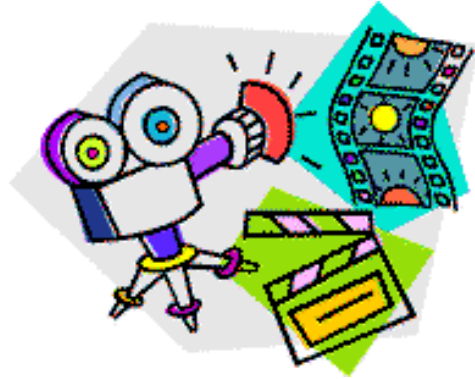
As my mind returns to the original question, to be or not to be, I muse over the thought that I might not be cut out for this particular occupation. I can see I might lack the essential qualities required. As undeniably it's a task for a table-thumping bully with tunnel vision who views progress in black or white. One who never looks back; who can cut a swath through any distraction as he charges hell-bent towards the final credits. Perhaps it's time for me to change tack and make a go of being a camera man. There is something to be said for warm colours interlaced with shades of grey!

**This article was originally written by John L Clark regarding the 1997 ECVS Strathclyde Competition Entry 'The Intruder' but the points remain equally**

**15**valid today!



## **WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ENTERING THE NORTH VERSUS SOUTH COMPETITION**



1. There will be two Leagues, one for the North and one for the South. The geographical demarcation between the two Leagues is an East/West line drawn through Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire.

2. Every club or society in each League should produce an SVHS, VHS, mini DV or DVD(-R) original video to a chosen theme selected by previous judges.

3. The host club for each League will be responsible for collating the video movies, arranging the venue and choosing the judges for the pre-judging to select five video movies from each League to go forward to the final. In addition, the host clubs will be responsible for organising The National Final.

4. The five selected movies from each League will be sent to the organiser of The National Final for judging. The movie chosen as the winner will hold the N v S John Wright Trophy for one year. The trophy will be engraved with the name of the Club and the League. The result will be announced at simultaneous final presentations on a mutually agreed date. The theme for the following year's competition will also be announced then.

5. The organisers retain the right to make video copies of all the finalists for distribution purposes and ultimately to present video copies to the IAC, The Film & Video Institute Video and Film Library. The copyright of all entries remains with the producers.

6. It is the responsibility of each entrant to ensure copyright clearance of music etc. and the organisers reserve the right to request evidence of such clearance.

7. All movies entered for the competition must bear a clear visible relationship to the set theme.

8. All movies must be the original work, in all disciplines of the production, by the Club/Society with the exception of acting and scripts. Published scripts will not be acceptable.

9. Movies must not exceed 20 minutes in length "from black to black".



**10.** The final judging of each competition will be arranged alternately between Newcastle ACA and Orpington Video & Film Makers before an independent panel of judges. The judges will be asked to provide written comment on each movie.



**11.** ECVS is on the NvS mailing list and an entry form and covering letter should arrive at ECVS premises by early summer.

Closing date for entry fee cheque (c.£5) and (advised) registered posted entry is usually 31st October. The five movies from each League are usually selected in November before an audience of members of participating clubs. The Northern League awards the Vic Williams Trophy to the movie chosen by audience vote as the most enjoyable.

The National Final is usually held in January and is also before an audience.

**12.** Entries not collected at the end of the public show are deemed non-returnable, although I have found that enclosing a stamped, addressed envelope and a note requesting a video's return with the entry form has been successful always.

**13.** ECVS's Northern contact is: John Andrew, Newcastle ACA, Tel: 0191 236 3930  
email: john@jandrew.wanadoo.co.uk

A.S.

---

## IAC FELLOWSHIPS

The Fellowship of the IAC is a very special award: you cannot acquire it yourself however hard you try: it is only awarded to a full member of the IAC who has been nominated by another member or by the local Regional Committee. The nomination is carefully scrutinised by the Fellowships Officer who has the power to make any further investigations and he then submits the nomination to a special sub Committee set up for the purpose. If this Committee agrees, then the nomination goes to the full National Council of the IAC and if approved, the Chairman will write to the successful nominee.

So who is considered for a nomination? It is a recognition of long standing devotion to the IAC and movie-making in general and for outstanding work done above and beyond the normal call of duty. Film-making ability is an asset but not essential in the consideration of a possible nomination. We are indeed happy to announce that we have a new FACI (for that is the designation which may be added to your name) in E.C.V.S and our congratulations go to Elise Lornie for her achievement. The official presentation took place at the AGM of the IAC held in Lytham St. Annes on 24th October, 2004. Elise is one of three Scots to receive their awards at Lytham: the others are Ken and Jean McDonald, from Dundee and SAM.

# The Joys-? of DVD

Jim Closs

I'm sure that many readers, like me, will have heard or read about the joys of the latest format in video storage - DVD. VHS is going: CDs are virtually redundant - everything now is on DVD. You must have heard it all yourselves.

Like most people these days, I film on Mini DV and enjoy the high quality that modern digital cameras can produce. I then edit on computer and when the project is completed, I write out a Master Copy on to MiniDV tape - which, I am reliably informed, is the highest quality standard available to us amateurs. For normal playback, however, I have had to produce VHS copies for showing in places where they don't have MiniDV projection available. What about trying DVD instead?

I've spent the past couple of months experimenting with DVD as a replacement for VHS. The experience has not been good. I've used a number of DVD writing software packages - DVDit, EasyDVD, Ahead Nero, Ulead Movie Factory, Ulead DVD Workshop, and a couple of others I've forgotten. Of ten discs burned, eight have been failures. On my first DVD, the video and audio parted company after two minutes. This was a choir singing and it was both comical and depressing to watch the lips go up and down while the music cheerfully went its own particular way. Next I had video jumps. One scene had two people walking out of a narrow and high walled gorge. One minute they were half way out of the gorge: two frames later they were right out! Then I had pixellation. The video would play for 15-20 minutes of high quality picture and sound - then suddenly the picture became spattered all over with multi-coloured pixels. Indeed I had more pixels than picture.

One problem with the process that I had not anticipated was the time required - about 3-

4 hours for writing a 40 minute video to DVD disc. I found having my computer out of action for half a day a major irritation.

Recently, I was reading some email correspondence among IAC members about their experience of DVDs and someone mentioned, as an aside, set-top DVD recorders. These are a bit like Video Recorders which you connect to your TV set so that you can record programmes on to DVD discs instead of on to VHS tapes. I decided to explore this option.



Cutting the story short, I now have a LiteON 5001B set-top recorder - cost £170 from Currys. It has firewire input as well as composite. It is simple and limited but it works! My 40-minute test video burns in 40 minutes - and produces flawless picture and sound. It is just like running off a VHS copy. What's more, all I need to do is to hook up my MiniDV VCR to the LiteON and leave them to get on with it. I don't need to use my computer at all!

So where's the drawback? Well, I don't get a sophisticated menu generator. DVDs are designed for storing lots of videos on the same disc with a menu system that gives you instant access to whichever one you want to play. But then I don't need that. The LiteON machine has an extremely crude menu system but, with a bit more experience, I think I can probably make this do what I want.

Others I know are able to produce DVDs on their computers without all the problems I have experienced. Despite their sage advice I have failed to do so. Maybe I am missing something important by going down this route and a year from now I may be telling a different story. But right now, I am enjoying the fact that I can get ten out of ten DVDs to work, instead of two out of ten!

( I can also use the machine to record programmes off the TV. Howsat??)

Continued from page 13...

How would you improve the Thursday evening programme?

re-introduce (beginners') training / tuition	4
more teamwork	3
more amateur films for discussion	2
show less non-club films	2
idea generation & planning	1
encourage members	1
script writing / storyboarding	1
film-making reviews / directing skills	1
start Thu mtg on time	1

Would you like more or less club films to be made?

more	18
less	0
don't know	5

Can you write scripts or would you be prepared to try?

yes / would like to try	8
no	16

What role(s) would you like in club films? (circle as appropriate)

no response	10
camera	10
script / screenwriter	8
editor	8
director	7
sound	4
continuity	4
actor	4
would try any	3
none / no time to commit	2

Do you think members' 5 minute films are fairly assessed?

yes	11
no -critique is too variable	6
no - should aim to analyse	1

How should members & club films be assessed?

structured assessment	4
use a ticklist / written assessment	2
1st by club members, 2nd by independent reviewers	2
how enjoyable is the content to watch	1
by peers with solid film-making reputation	1
assess quality / faults	1
current method is of general help	1
without personal prejudice	1

1 can only be assessed in competition which is subjective

Do you think the club helps you improve your films / technique?

yes	13
no	4

If yes, how? (e.g. by constructive criticism, fresh eyes, helpful editing tips)

fresh eyes	8
more direct, constructive criticism	7
study other film-makers work	5
more technical evaluation	5

How can the committee run the club better?

more openness	6
spread the responsibility	4
helpful advice	3

What do you like about ECVS?

shared interest / friendly atmosphere	12
facilities	3
helpful advice / informative sessions	2
opportunity to make / showcase films	2
not much at present	1
films shown (internal & external)	1
enthusiasm	1
comfort zone - know others	1

What do you dislike about ECVS?

nothing	4
---------	---

In addition, how can we make ECVS appeal to younger people too?

not enough young people	4
cliques - has caused some resignations	3
non-contributors & apathy within the club	3
late start to meetings	2
lack of (regular) newsletter (Cine Chat)	2
need wider spectrum of views	2
too many non-film-makers	2

1 films with no talent / effort

1 not enough attention to club / member films  
poor programming (insufficient ownership)

Any other comments?

need larger membership  
Varied, regular communication is vitally important. Listen and act on views expressed.  
Members not made sufficiently aware of problems facing club; poor committee communication  
distribute newsletter more quickly to those

who

can't attend  
more group hands-on sessions, e.g. on-location filming, compare films later & critique to committee needs to be fully alert to

learn any

dissatisfaction by individual or groups of members on how the club is being managed.

Would you like to be more involved in the running of the club? If so, how would you contribute?

no	14
yes	9