

# Cine

# Chat

March 2011

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



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## 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>

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### **EDITOR:**

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To whom all communications in connection with Cine Chat should be sent. Alternatively, members may leave notes in the Cine Chat Post Box, which will be available in the ECVS clubrooms at all times.

### **POLICY COMMITMENT:**

To publish informative and entertaining articles, features, news, comments and opinion about movie making in general and ECVS and 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**

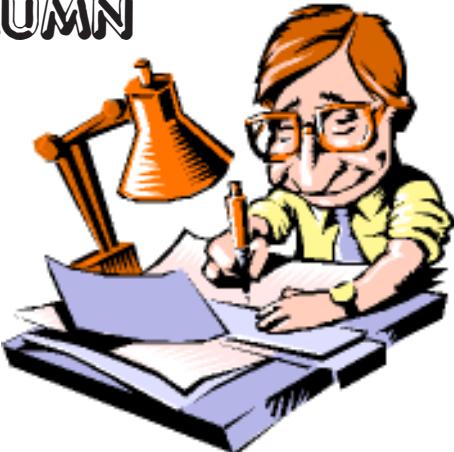
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<b>Subscriptions:</b>	Alan Brown

# EDITORS COLUMN

Welcome to the March 2011 Edition of

CineChat! In this issue we have some excellent articles, many thanks to all our contributors. Bob Bell issues a challenge in 'Imagination Equals Creation' and we go behind the scenes of a recent production with Jim Closs, in The Making of "A Useful Dog". Peter Wilson tells us about his new projector, and we have the latest instalment of our 'Edinburgh Cinema History' series.

We're entering the last couple of months of this years season now, where our syllabus traditionally contains a wide selection of competitions and viewings. There's no better time to encourage friends and relatives along to ECVS to see what it's all about, and view a wide selection of amateur films.



This year I'm hoping to produce an issue of Cine Chat during the summer, so if you have any articles for inclusion, please send them to the usual address. All material is much appreciated, on any subject related to film making.

I hope you enjoy this issue of CineChat!

## Letters

Dear CineChat,

The Aesthetica Short Film Competition 2011 is now open for entries! It's a fantastic opportunity to get your work broadcast to a wider audience and Aesthetica are keen to see entries from both new and established filmmakers who are driving short film forward. The winning film receives a fantastic prize package including:

- ~ £500 prize money
- ~ Screenings at film festivals across the UK, including Rushes Soho Shorts (London), Glasgow Film Festival (Glasgow) and Branchage (Jersey)
- ~ A weekend filmmaking course, courtesy of Raindance
- ~ 12 months membership to Shooting People, the



international film network

~ Inclusion on a DVD that will be distributed to all Aesthetica readers (60,000 viewers)

The runner-up will also receive £250 as well as DVD publication. Films should be no longer than 25 minutes but can be any genre including artists' film, music videos, dance films, horror and comedy or anything you can think of!

Entry is £15 per film. No limit to the number of entries permitted. Please visit [www.aestheticamagazine.com/shortfilm](http://www.aestheticamagazine.com/shortfilm) for more information and to submit.

Deadline 31 April 2011.

# IMAGINATION EQUALS CREATION

by Bob Bell

I know throughout the country there are many able and talented film-makers. I also know many of these seem reluctant to show their projects. Are they shy or are they merely afraid their films may be badly received and adversely criticised?

Speaking with friends and colleagues within our Club, I often hear the phrase 'I don't have the imagination for making films'.

Do you enjoy watching films? If so, what type do you prefer? Some of you may enjoy drama, some comedy. Others may prefer documentaries, social or historical. Think of the people who took the time to make the film you are watching. Could you create something similar, albeit on a smaller scale?



Television shows us some wonderful dramas, although too elaborate for us to emulate, they can help to generate ideas. A recent BBC2 documentary series showed Michael Portillo travelling the country by rail, visiting various towns en route. The idea was taken from a book by a Victorian traveller and author, George Bradshaw. Bradshaw travelled in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century and visited almost every town in Britain, recording what life was like at that time. Portillo refers to the book regularly, uses

the recommended hotels, compares life now to then and the result is a fascinating film.

Many of you will know I enjoy making documentaries. The timetable required to make them is less urgent than in a project involving actors. In making a documentary you work at your own pace.



*The Story of the Union Canal* outlined the history of the route of the Canal from its source in the Hopetoun Basin at Fountainbridge to its end at the Falkirk Wheel. Researching the subject was critical and enjoyable but time consuming. Persevere with it. That film took me three years to complete. *The Water of Leith* is a film in a similar vein and also took three years to make. Both resulted in 30 minute films, complete with narration, historical facts and background music.

I consider making such films as creative. Like many other people, when I think it is finished, I think of ways to improve it.

For example, I am working on making a new version of *The Water of Leith*. I hope to revamp the narration, edit the shots differently and insert completely new scenes.

## I would like to throw out a challenge!

Write down at least one subject which you consider you could expand upon and make into a film.

What subject could I use for a film you may ask yourself. The answer is quite simple, whatever subject you wish! Any subject which interests you: a hobby, music, a sport, your family, a favourite holiday destination, etc.

Look around you and notice the changes. Buildings are constantly disappearing and being replaced by modern architecture. Try making a film of the old and new by filming today's scenes then dissolving into postcards or photographs showing the old, or this can be done in reverse. Add some historical facts and make mention the architects of today. In fifty or so years from now someone may appreciate your endeavours.

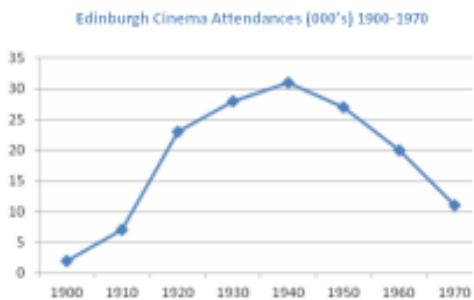
# Edinburgh Cinema History (Part 4)

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

### Edinburgh Film Guild Continued...

After a decade of success the Edinburgh Film Guild moved to larger premises at 3 Randolph Crescent. This three story townhouse was converted to provide a reception room, library, offices and 120 seat cinema. The new Film House was opened in time for the 12th Film Festival in 1958.

However by 1964 the Film Guild was facing competition from other city cinemas that were also operating commercially on Sundays and the Guild's membership was falling. The falling attendance at cinemas was a city and national trend and the graph below illustrates this decline in the Edinburgh cinemas between 1940 and 1970.



3 Randolph Crescent

In 1968 the premises were given a facelift for its opening in October of that year as the first Scottish Branch of the National Film Theatre.

Further financial problems ensued and Edinburgh Corporation granted the Guild a £50,000 lifeline in 1974. But it had become obvious that the long term solution to these recurring problems was to move to even larger premises – premises that would do justice to the Film Festival and the Film Theatre as well as securing the future of the Guild.

A new company, Filmhouse Ltd., was set up in 1975 to establish a national film theatre in Edinburgh. In 1977 the Guild's Randolph Crescent premises was sold and funded, in part, the purchase of St. Thomas's Church, Lothian Road. The following year the Filmhouse opened for the 1978 Film Festival with a small 90 seat cinema. Within the Filmhouse the Edinburgh Film Guild has its own cinema and clubrooms. In 1982, the British Federation of Film

Societies announced the Edinburgh Film Guild had won the Film society of the Year award in recognition of its achievements throughout its lifetime.

The Film Guild is run by volunteers on a non-profit basis and screens films three days a week from late September through to April. The programme is organised on the basis of mini-seasons linked by some common element, of director, performer, country, genre or theme.

### **The Filmhouse**

The Filmhouse went from strength to strength, with additional capacity added in August 1978, when Cinema 2 was opened using a temporary entrance in Morrison Street. In April 1982, phase 2 of the Filmhouse Project was completed with the opening of the main auditorium seating 238 viewers.

In 1985 the final phase, which included a new 280 seat auditorium and front entrance was opened by the Duke of Edinburgh.

In 1997 the functions hall was transformed into a third screen.

The present Filmhouse has 3 cinemas which are open to the public seven days a



*Filmhouse, Lothian Road*

week. Cinema One screens the latest international releases and presents special events with guests talking about their work in different branches of the film industry. Cinemas Two and Three include a wider range of material from the history of world cinema, 16mm, video and digital video work. The Filmhouse is a major venue for the Edinburgh International Film festival.



*Filmhouse Cafe/Bar*

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

### Acknowledgements:

Edinburgh Room,

Edinburgh Central Library

Scottish Cinemas and Theatres Project

[www.scottishcinemas.org.uk](http://www.scottishcinemas.org.uk)

# Forthcoming Attractions

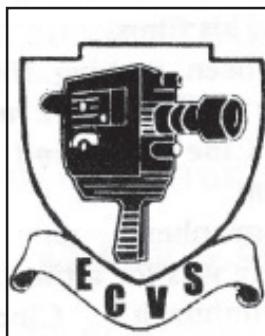
## ECVS Annual Competition

### 10th and 11th March

This years Annual Competition will be held on Thursday 10th and Friday the 11th March at 7:30pm in the clubrooms. The entries will be shown over both nights, and this years judges will be on-hand to give their comments and announce the results. The audience will also have the opportunity to judge the films shown,

as the Vice-Presidents Prize, and the Frank Walker salver are awarded to the films which obtain the most audience votes on the Thursday and Friday night, respectively.

Be sure to come along for what are always exciting evenings!



### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF EDINBURGH CINE AND VIDEO SOCIETY 2011

The 2011 Annual General Meeting of E CVS will be held in the clubrooms on Thursday 28th April 2011.

All members are encouraged to attend, and have their say!

### PILGRIM TRUST COMPETITION

This years Pilgrim Trust Competition (run by E CVS but open to all film-makers) for films with a Scottish Theme, will be held on Thursday 31st March at 7:30pm. It's a good opportunity to see the work of other film-makers.

### BRIDGES TROPHY COMPETITION

After E CVS' defeat to Dunfermline in last years Bridges Trophy competition, we'll be pulling out all the stops to reclaim the prize this year! It's our turn to hold the competition this year, and it will be held in the clubrooms on Thursday 7th April.

**Cine Chat**

WANTS YOU

To contribute articles,  
news, comment, etc.

Please email to [alan@btconnect.com](mailto:alan@btconnect.com), or leave in  
the Cine Chat submissions box at E CVS.

# Budgie Cup Competition Results

The Budgie Cup was held on the 18th February 2011. This year's judge was the vice president of The Edinburgh Photographic Society Edith Smith. The judge took time to review all the photographs and provided helpful advice in the art of photography.

Edith then produced a final selection of seven photographs.

The winner was 'Eric Liddell Centre North Window' by Bryce Morrison

The runner up was 'Bogsmill Bend in Winter' by Bryce Morrison



*Budgie Cup Winner Bryce Morrison is presented with the trophy by Edith Smith*

The following were recommended:

- ‘K.T.’ by Pauline Johnson
- ‘Can’t Escape the Election’ by Peter Dick
- ‘Formentera Sunset’ by Bryce Morrison
- ‘Underwater Photography Habit’ by Pauline Johnson
- ‘Abide with Me’ by Pauline Johnson



*‘Abide with Me’  
by Pauline Johnson*



*‘K.T.’ by Pauline Johnson*



*‘Can’t Escape the  
Election’ by Peter Dick*

# *Budgie Cup Competition Results*



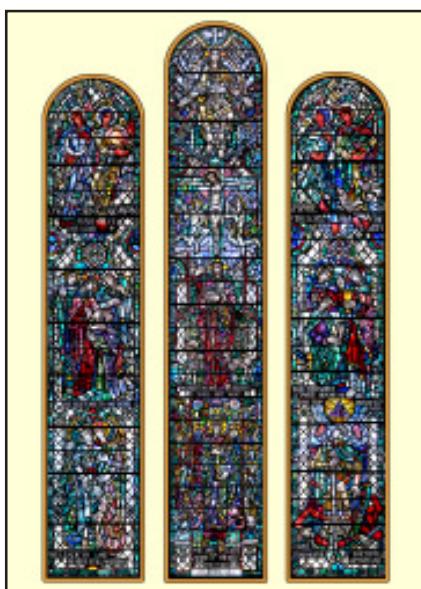
*'Underwater Photography Habit'*  
by Pauline Johnson



*'Formentera Sunset'* by Bryce Morrison



*'Bogsmill Bend in Winter'* by Bryce Morrison



*'Eric Liddell Centre North Window'*  
by Bryce Morrison

Edith presented the Budgie Cup to Bryce after the tea break. She continued the evening with a presentation of her own work. Her subjects covered Venice, Butterflies and insects, Birds and flowers. The presentation reinforced many of the hints and tips given earlier. It was also an inspiration to further encourage still photography. After the presentation general conversation reflected on the developing camera technology that is bringing the worlds of still and motion pictures closer together. Many of the newer still cameras produce excellent video. Also stills captured from high definition television cameras are now of good quality. This is in contrast with only a few years ago when results were always poor. Could we be seeing future entries into the Budgie Cup being taken with high definition cameras?

# *Way Out North*

*With Peter Wilson*

**H**appy New Year

- the snow and ice has gone, at least temporarily, and I have a massive hole in my bank account.

The main reason

for this is that I gave way to temptation and purchased a Panasonic PT-AE4000 projector. It may have cost me about £1800 but the results I have experienced from this machine have, in my mind anyway, justified the expense.



To add to my spending “crimes” I visited our local Asda a couple of weeks ago fully intending to do the weekend shop

and loaded my trolley not with two cases of baked beans but a Philips Blu-Ray Player instead. I convinced myself that a spare player connected to my television set would save me disconnecting my existing Sony player from my projection system and at a bargain price of £57 this was an offer that would be too good to resist. I was extremely delighted when I set my new player up at home that not only did it give superb results but the Philips loaded up the discs in record fast time, a function not offered by my existing Sony player which had cost me four times as much as the Philips! Incidentally, I revisited Asda a few days later and discovered that all the £57 machines had been sold - no wonder.

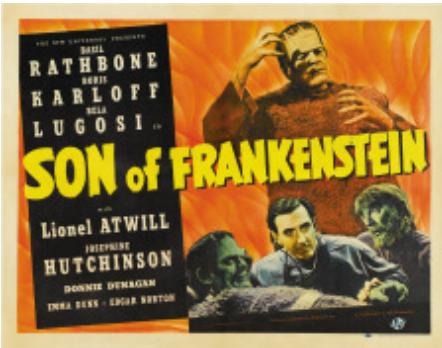
I have just realised that I had not reported back to you about the Film Fanatics’ last two “at homes” which took place just before the ice age hit us. The first of these

was at David Skelsey's home in Callander. David had surprised us at his last show by firing up his DVD projector. This time, however, he reverted back to his faithful 16mm Elf machine and kicked off his show with the MGM Pete Smith Speciality "Movie Pests" (too close to home that one!). He then reminded me of my happy times projecting my Super 8 copy of Disney's "Once Upon a Mouse"; for those of you who have never seen this one, it is a brilliantly edited animation featuring scores of scenes from shorts and feature films. Pure genius. A musical number followed this and then it was time for one of the Joe McDokes Warner comedy shorts "So You Want to be a Paperhanger". Another musical number this time featuring Fats Waller led us into the supper break.



Not only did David lay on a sumptuous feast but he entertained us with one of his famous card tricks. I did my best to catch him out on this but failed miserably! The feature film for the evening had Basil Rathbone returning to his infamous father's castle and proving himself to be a chip off

the old block in 1939's Universal horror offering "Son of Frankenstein".



Everyone agreed that we had enjoyed our night's entertainment and we set off home leaving David to practise his card trick for our next meeting.

Our next visit was to the Edinburgh home of Peter Kendrick. Peter was in an instructive mood. He was intent on educating us about the career of film director Elia Kazan and, in particular, his 1957 film "A Face in the Crowd" starring Andy Griffith and Patricia Neal. Halliwell's Film Guide describes the film as "painting a luridly entertaining picture of modern show business". 126 minutes later we were suitably educated. Oh, I forgot to mention that before the feature we watched the trailer for "A Face in the Crowd" and then an Elia Kazan biography which extensively covered the making of that particular film. In the interval David Skelsey again astounded us with yet another card trick. Keep them coming, David!

# The Hippodrome



*Spread the word about Scotland's first silent film festival: a weekend of classic and rare films with live accompaniment in the glorious Hippodrome Cinema, the original picture palace.*

*Enjoy a unique and friendly cinema experience with special guests and workshops for all ages.*

*Register for more information at the website.*

Of particular interest to ECVS members, are the following events, although there is a packed programme of events throughout the weekend.

## **Early Cinema in Scotland**

Discover how and when Scotland's first purpose-built cinemas were constructed, how cinema architecture and styles changed over time and experience some of the films early audiences would have enjoyed at this enlightening and entertaining illustrated talk including stills and film

## **Festival of Silent Cinema**

**Friday 18th March  
- Sunday 20th March 2011**

The Hippodrome, 10 Hope Street,  
Bo'ness EH51 0AA

Box Office: 01324 506850

[www.falkirk.gov.uk/silentcinemafest](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/silentcinemafest)

screenings presented by the Scottish Screen Archive and the Cinema Theatre Association.

### **Neil Brand - The Silent Pianist Speaks**

Using clips from some of the greatest moments in silent cinema to illustrate his 25-year career, Neil hosts a unique and memorable event celebrating the great silent filmmakers and the magic of the accompanists who breathed life and sound into their work.

### **The Scottish Screen Archive presents Silent Comedy Classics**

A specially curated programme of short films ranging from early comedy favourites to amateur comedy dramas and films made by Cine Societies and Film Clubs.

In addition we have films with Chaplin, Keaton, Lloyd, Laurel and Hardy and more.



ECVS will be producing a yearly newsreel again this year. Featuring a wide range of footage taken by ECVS members over the

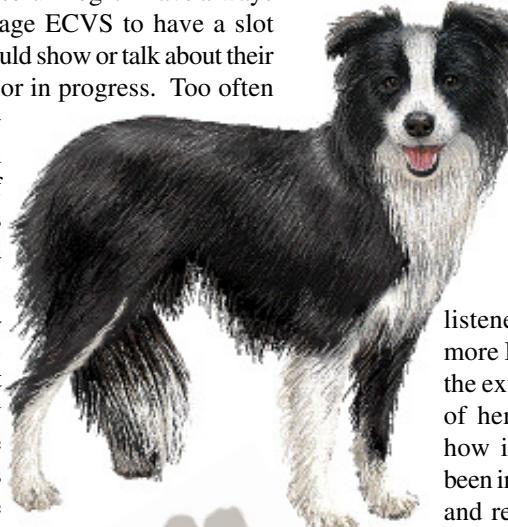
past year, the newsreel is intended to be a historical record of events, large and small, in Edinburgh and the Lothians.

If you have any material for inclusion in this years newsreel, please hand it to Bob Bell by the end of March 2011.

# *The Making of "A Useful Dog"*

By Jim Closs

At our February club night on 'Projects' I was able to show one of my recently finished films – titled "A Useful Dog". I have always wanted to encourage ECVS to have a slot where members could show or talk about their projects, finished or in progress. Too often clubs only show members' films in the context of competitions – as if a film only had merit if it 'won' something in a competition. What I enjoy most about our hobby is that through the films club members make you are introduced to all



sorts of interesting subject matter and ideas that you are unlikely to come across elsewhere. And our amateur films are only made because someone feels that they are *interesting, entertaining or important.*

In my case, the trigger was bringing a Border Collie pup – Jess - into our family. We've had dogs before but this experience was certainly very different. As Jess grew I thought it would be nice to make a short film about how intelligent and versatile the Collie is, so I set about recording some footage and talking to people who knew about these things – dog trainers, our Vet, and other Collie owners. One of the trainers advised me to talk to people involved in rescuing dogs like Collies from neglect and abuse and that is how I came to contact Border Collie Rescue

based in the small village of Bossall, near York. From that point onwards I began

to learn a little about the origins of the Collie and just why they are so different from other dogs, as well as how they come to need to be rescued. The more I read, listened, and learned, the more I began to appreciate the extent of my ignorance of herding dogs and just how important they have been in the lives of our early and recent ancestors.

I started the project in the autumn of 2006 and was well into it by the spring of 2007 when I was diagnosed with cancer and spent the next six months in treatment. That wasn't just a simple loss of my personal time. If you want to film the herding events in which Border Collies do their work, they are seasonal – like tupping, lambing, shearing etc. Miss the dates and you miss a year!

More difficult to handle were problems with access. I wanted to film Collies working sheep and doing mountain rescue work. People promised to fit me in but their busy schedules were focused on their work not my filming, so it took about eighteen months before I managed to film some mountain rescue work and –



surprisingly – even longer to get access to Collies herding sheep!

The upshot was that the project took around four and a half years to complete. But in some ways this may have been a blessing in disguise. It gave me more time to learn about the dogs and about the droving trade that was so essential in enabling ordinary folk in Scotland and elsewhere in the UK to eke out a living from a harsh agricultural environment. During that period I also made another film – an interview profile of a Yorkshireman, former Exciseman, and enthusiast for Scotland's mountains – called Irvine Butterfield. Sadly Irvine died of cancer shortly after the making of that film but he kindly gave me a set of 35mm slides he had taken in the 1960s of a re-enactment of a drove of cattle from Skye to Crieff. It was typical of his generosity and Irvine's slides enabled me to illustrate the story of the droving days.

During my research I came across stories of Collies being sent home at the end of a drove – from Liverpool, Lincoln or London, to find their own way back home to Skye or Shetland – or wherever. I found this hard to believe – as have many others. But the Scottish academic A R B Haldane who wrote the definitive account of the droving trade says that the drovers left money with innkeepers on their southern

route for them to feed the dogs on their way back north. If true, that story would be worth a film in itself.

I made the film because I wanted to tell the story of the Border Collie and put it on the record. For that reason I offered it to Scottish Screen Archive and have just recently heard that they have accepted it for preservation in their archives. I am pleased about that because the Collie is so often taken for granted, even by the people who depend on the dogs for their livelihood.

The Collie is such an exceptional dog that it deserves a bit of recognition from the humans it has served so well and so long.



## ***Next Issue***

The next issue of CineChat is (tentatively) scheduled for July 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 17th June 2011**

