

ENJOYING VISUAL TECHNOLOGY

**SYDNEY VIDEO
MAKERS CLUB**



ELECTRONIC EYE

N E W S L E T T E R

JULY 2012

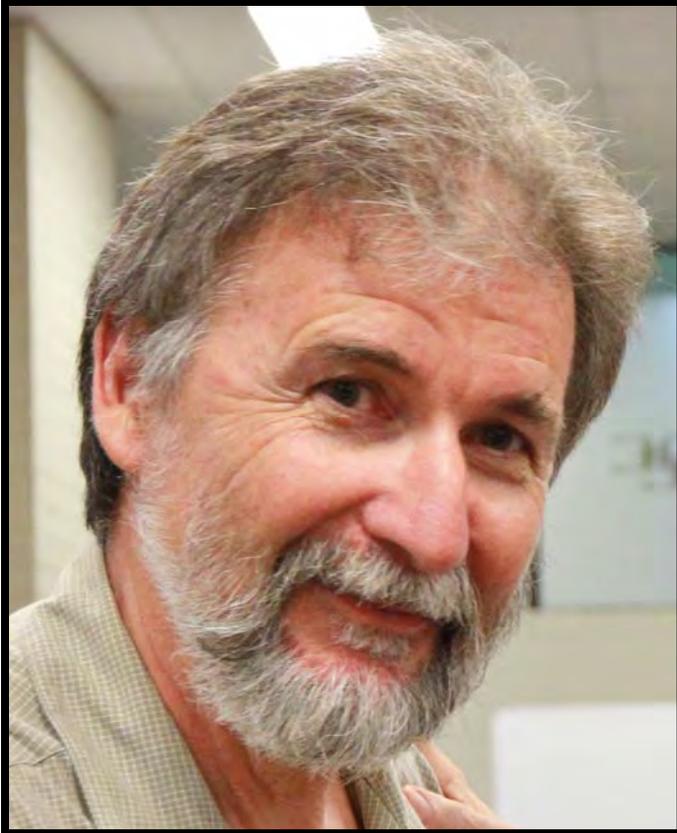
2012

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**Next Meeting
Wednesday
25th July, 2012.**

www.sydneyvideomakers.org.au



Welcome

We have just returned from a short holiday in the Kimberley, so I would like to thank the committee for keeping the club running smoothly while we were away.

This month's club meeting will be on 'creative content' and we have Tim Artlett the producer from the Channel 7 morning show coming in to talk to us. Tim has also worked as a video journalist for the Daily Telegraph where he was filming, editing and promoting short segments to the companies websites. These are situations where deadlines are very tight and there is pressure to get the video on the site with

as many hits as possible before your competition. So it will be interesting to hear how "creative" one can be under these conditions.

We will also be screening our last competition "Who done it?" at this months club night.

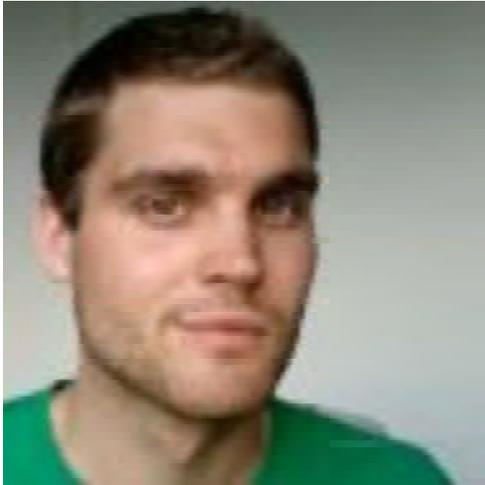
A reminder that the competition entry form states "five (5) DVD copies and one .avi or .mov copy on CD/DVD disc is attached to this entry document." This has been ignored in some cases and it makes the Competition Managers job that much harder, so please ensure you include a .avi or .mov CD/DVD as requested. This will ensure the original quality of your production is maintained for screening.

Stay Focused

Andy

President

July 2012



Tim Artlett

Line Producer at Seven Network Limited

Tim started his career with nearly four years as a video journalist at the Daily Telegraph where he was filming, editing, interviewing, scripting and voicing videos for the News Limited group's websites.

Tim is currently a line producer for the Seven network where he is responsible for putting The Morning Show to air each weekday from 9am.

Tim's has spent several years working in different mediums - print, online and broadcast – this has given him a wealth of experience.

He is passionate about producing television and his specialities are: producing, writing, editing, camera work

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2012

In accordance with the club constitution an AGM will be called in the month of September 2012. Notice is hereby given that the AGM will be held during the September 22nd 2012 club night. All positions in the elected management Committee of the Club will be declared vacant and a new management committee elected for the period 1 December 2012 through to 30 November 2013.

Nominations for committee office will be accepted in writing, email or off the floor. An AGM agenda and the club financial statement for the year ending 30th June 2012 will be published in the August edition of the EE journal.

Any financial member is entitled to introduce any matter for discussion at the AGM, however any such item must be on the agenda published at least 21 days in advance of the AGM to provide due notice to all members. Additional items are not permitted to be introduced off the floor during the AGM. Please ensure that details of any item to be included is lodged with the Secretary not later than Sept 3rd, together with an indication of who will speak on the matter, so that it can be reviewed at the Club management Committee meeting to be held on the 5th September for inclusion in the final AGM Agenda to be published in the Sept EE.

At the time of publishing this notice there are no known matters of business to be conducted other than the election of officers to the club committee.

Ian Scott

Secretary SVMC

15 July 2012

FOCUS NIGHT 11TH JULY, 2012

The theme for this evening's content was a comparison between three Non Linear Editors (NLE's). Two fairly popular ones, Pinnacle 14 & Apples' Final Cut Pro and one high-end NLE, Avid Media Composer 6 were looked at to see how they handled a common piece of work. That is to say they were all loaded with an identical suite of clips so that we could see



Chris Saville , Jim Whitehead, Ian Scott & Phil Brighton

how they fared in a fairly straight forward edit.

First, Jim Whitehead took us through the basics with his Pinnacle 14 and demonstrated some of the facilities available on that NLE. This is what might be described as a middle of the road outfit in terms of facilities and price but is sophisticated enough to enable quite technically advanced edits to be performed and would satisfy almost all the requirements of the majority of users. Included in the

suite are plenty of both Audio & Video effects as well as Smart Sound music. Titling is well catered for and output can be directed to a variety of destinations. DVD's in particular are fairly straight forward to produce.

After a short tea break it was Chris Saville's turn to present Apples' Final Cut Pro. As the name suggests this NLE is limited to Apple computers. A number of club members use this NLE and all seem to swear by it (rather than at it!). Immediately it could be seen that the two NLE's operated in a similar manner and was just a different way in which to achieve a very similar object. Chris was able to demonstrate a clip in need of colour correction



Chris Saville & Ian Scott

due to an incorrect white balance setting (deliberate). One attractive feature was the ability of to do an automatic correction based on a clip that was properly colour balanced. This would be much quicker than getting involved in doing the balance manually as anyone who has done it this way will testify. He also demonstrated stabilisation of a shot handheld whilst walking. This can also be very handy for those times when a tripod cannot be used. Time prevented Chris from demonstrating the many other facilities available on that NLE.

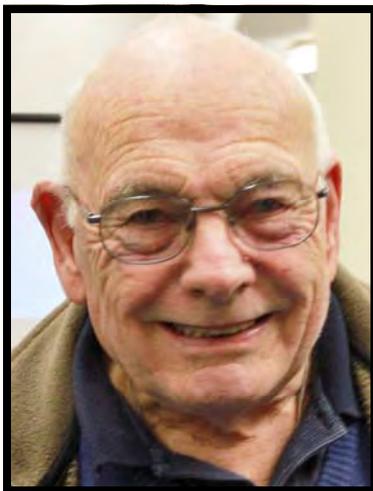
After yet another short tea break we were introduced by Ian Scott to Avid Media Composer 6, a high end professional NLE. This NLE is widely used in the professional field. Again, despite its reputation in the industry, immediately we could see the similarities in the way that the system operated when compared to the other two NLE's. However, Ian warned that to achieve success with the Avid, a



Ian Scott

very steep learning curve would have to be negotiated. A very sophisticated system with a hefty price attached and definitely not one for the faint hearted! A very nice feature is the ability to handle audio well and to interact directly with such programs as Sony's Sound Forge. We are fortunate in our 'NUTS' group to be able to call on the services of Ian when attempting some of the special effects that we incur. However, the main point was that all of the NLE's operated in a similar manner and if desired, one could migrate upwards with a fair chance of success.

The meeting closed just before 10pm with a well deserved round of applause to Ian for a well prepared and detailed presentation.



Phil Brighton

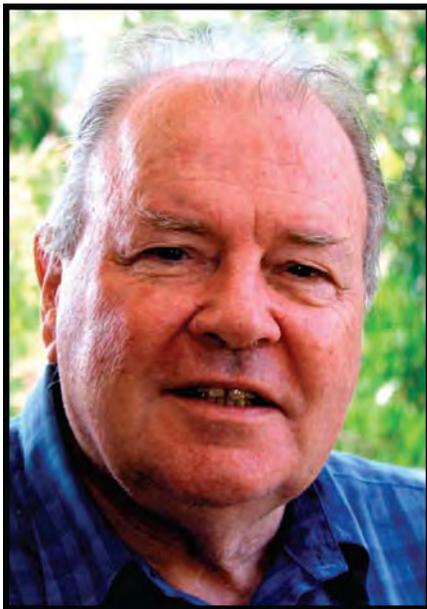
Voty.

On the 30th November this year we will have a Voty Celebration, our twenty first. It started all those years ago when John Urquhart suggested that each year we would have a party and handed out the Presidents award for the best videos of the year (Voty). This was started at Killara High School Theatre. It turned out to be a popular night and has been ever since.

Prizes started with the Presidents trophy handed to the best video of the year but has expanded to various categories including prizes for the best in Documentary, Drama, Music Video, Travel and Special Techniques. In addition several special prizes are awarded ,for best fiction, most improved videographer, Best Meeting Night Team and Best meeting night individual. And an audience award selected and awarded on the night.

The awards are held in the "Roxy Theatre" part of the Film Australia Facility at Lindfield. and are given all the glamour needed for a big night. Champagne and nibbles are supplied and served and a good time is had by all. Don't forget to enter your masterpieces on the 30th October, Club Night and get ready for a great night of fun and camaraderie.

In 21 years we have certainly come of age.



Mike Elton

EFFECTIVE CINEMATIC TECHNIQUES FOR DIRECTORS

Cinematic techniques, like the camera are not just used to record the scene. Instead, they are responsible for advancing plot and revealing character. Those techniques can manipulate our emotions without our immediate knowledge. The techniques often operate on our subconscious and it is difficult to catch and rarely obvious. That is why they are so effective and engaging and are used by most of the top directors a lot of the time.

A) While watching the screen, our eyes move comfortably from left to right as this mimics reading. However, when an object moves in the opposite direction, which is from right to left, we are less comfortable.

Therefore in most cases, the good guy will enter screen from the left side. When the good guy moves left to right our eyes move comfortably. Subconsciously, we begin to make positive inferences.

On the other hand, the antagonist usually enters from the right. This direction of enter makes us uncomfortable. The director exploits this by transferring our learned discomfort to the character. This subtle irritation directs audiences to see this character negatively.

B) Gravity aids the motion of descending. If our protagonist descends from left to right, the descent seems easy. Once the motion starts, it is hard to stop. Subconsciously, the audiences know that our protagonist will reach his destination with not much trouble.

Gravity works against ascending. The right to left ascent is the most difficult of all screen directions. It goes against the reading eye and works against gravity as well. The audiences will feel that this trip will not be smooth.

C) When the camera operator pulls focus, he shifts the focus from one focal plane to another. In so doing, the audience's attention shifts from objects situated on one plane to objects on another. By creating a shallow depth-of-field, the camera effect can selectively redirect the audience's attention anytime during the scene. It is often used to effect surprise through a sudden reveal, usually an important plot point.

D) A picture should persuade your audiences and hold their attention. Effect lighting can give a picture dimension – depth, solidity, texture etc.

Light and dark function as visual signposts. What is important is lit, what is unimportant is left in darkness. It can make the subject stand out from the surrounding. In this way, the

director can direct the eye of the audience to focus on what is intended and dramatically significant.

E) When the basic rules of viewer orientation are broken, they draw attention to themselves. For example, introducing a character upside-down clearly breaks the rules. Also seeing an extreme close-up, such as an ear or an eye is similarly disorienting. When purposefully used, disorientation can be highly effective.

F) Slow motion effect can create a number of heightened dramatic ideas. Slowing down reality is often used to show how a character sees the world when in the midst of a traumatic event. An example is a boxing scene. When slow motion is coupled with a POV shot, it can greatly increase the audience sympathy.

G) When a camera shoots through objects like stained glass, water, fish tanks etc., it alters the photographic properties of the image. Great creative opportunities can be evolved from this.



BY Ernest Cheung
Our man in Hong Kong.

Suggestions from a Judge

Some suggestions for SVM Members who wish to improve their movie making techniques.

Having judged a number of the clubs videos one aspect becomes apparent. Members are not spending enough time on the planning stages of their projects.

A good starting point is to storyboard the action, then discuss and rehearse it with your team well before any shooting has commenced.

A common error in club movies is continuity. This can be the actors delivery of dialogue, their movements, direction, camera placement or the contents of the set/scene (props)

It is very difficult for the editor to put together a story if the above elements have not been carefully planned.

I would suggest that when shooting a sequence where you intend to cut from person to person, you try to use at least two camera's. Arrange the cameras at different positions in such a way that they are out of view of each other then run both/all for each take. This will give your editor a choice of cutting points that can be adjusted to suit the action or dialogue to ensure the scene flows smoothly.

If the person directing the movie is not satisfied with a performance, or someone forgot to replace a prop, then do it over until it is right. With today's digital cameras one can shoot as many takes as needed and view the results instantly, unlike the old days when film cost money and you had to wait a week for it to be processed.

So, please remember, obvious errors lose points in judging as well as audience interest....

COMPETITION CORNER.

Results of the current Competition will be shown on Wednesday 25th July, with the next Competition Entries due. This will be the last Competition till Voty. Please remember to Provide 1 MOV. (Format) Disc Plus 5 Discs. Six altogether.

Please all remember to refer to the web if not sure of the criteria.

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Margaret Tulloh.
Competition

Manager.

CATERING

This months Catering is to be supplied by G7 Group.
August Catering is to be supplied by Margaret Tulloh

**WE ARE STILL LOOKING FOR A PERMANENT
CATERER**

CREATING DVD'S AND DVD MENUS.

The acronym DVD stands for Digital Versatile Disc, and although it was designed and released quite a few years ago now, indeed away back in 1995 it is indeed a versatile system. The designers at Sony and Philips who created the system did a very good job of incorporating considerable functionality into the menu which can be incorporated on the disc to control the viewing experience. The length of time that the DVD player and disc interface has remained stable is a tribute to the effectiveness of the system and the foresight of those original designers.

A DVD can be used as a data storage device for archiving computer files and it has a much greater capacity than a CD Rom disc. Video makers are however much more interested in its role as a disc able to store a full length video in a standard storage arrangement so that it can be played in any DVD player. It is essential to have a “menu” on the disc, so that various selections can be made before the movie is “played”. Interaction between the DVD player and its remote is the preferred method, particularly by couch potatoes, to make disc selections and initiate play.

A well designed menu with artistic graphics is a fitting forerunner to any production. Creating the menu is the focus of this article and also for our August focus night. Newer technology in the form of Blue-ray discs is now with us. Whilst the blue ray looks similar in the physical sense, it uses improved blue laser technology to pack much more data onto the disc and it thus able to store and deliver HD movies. We will not deal with Blu-ray in this article however the disc graphics issues are identical.

Let's consider the DVD menu itself. It comprises a background and superimposed on the background we have buttons. These buttons may be small picture elements from the video linked to the button, or just lines of descriptive text. There can be multiple instances of buttons, picons or text on the menu. The only limitation is clarity of presentation and maintaining a prescribed space around the buttons so that selections are not confused by the electronics in the system. When a large number of links are required it is better to create a second or even a third menu is then via a “Next menu to avoid confusion and improve visual presentation. Access to the second and third menus menu” button and on those latter menus a “Return to previous menu” button is required.



The menu can be made quite appealing by animating the background as a short two minute loop which repeats endlessly until a selection is made or a set time out is reached. The animated background can be associated with an in sync audio loop. The button picons can also be animated and have some audio in sync as well. One does have to ask the point in having numerous picons all animated with audio in sync. It is up to the menu designer, to decide what design best suits the visual presentation required. Two very simple layout arrangements are frequently used;

- Animated background and sync audio with static picons in buttons or text strings for selection.
- Static background with one animated picon or text for selection.

The first is found in most commercial movie DVD menus, with text selectors. The latter is more common as a “One button” menu for short videos, as one might find in a video club. There are several work flows for producing the DVD graphics and the DVD image file. They vary related to the DVD creation SW in use. As one might expect if the SW is basic the menu created will be basic in function and on the other hand if you want to produce a high level of DVD menu function and appearance you must expect to be using a more extensive SW package, in which, no doubt more dollars have been invested.

The most common option paths are;

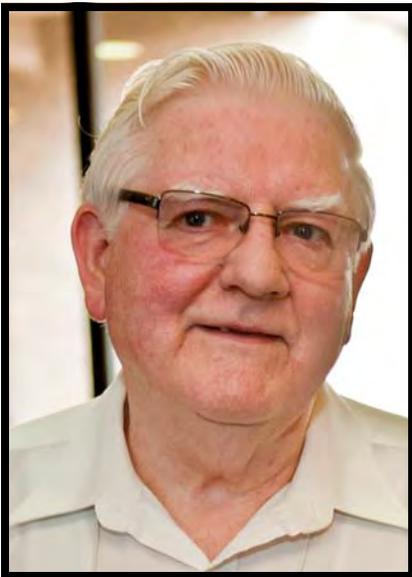
- Use the freebie SW included with your Windows OS. Very basic no real appearance flexibility allowed. Multiple menus are not likely to be supported. Mac users do win here as the built in SW is reasonable, at least better than the Windows offering.
- Use the function provided by your NLE. This is quite a good level of function. A library of templates is usually provided along with an editor which enables the templates to be modified to suit your use. Appearance can be enhanced by importing “Other Graphics” for your backgrounds.

- Export the rendered timeline data to a DVD menu creation and disc burning SW package such as Roxio, Sonic or Adobe Encore. Extensive template libraries and editing facilities permit a good level of menu customisation. Multiple menu solutions are also supported.

On focus night we will be demonstrating the latter two paths.

The workflow paths above are not capable of producing extensive graphics or complex animations requiring compositing. If you are competent with Photoshop and After Effects you can create complete menus able to be integrated into dedicated DVD creation packages. The particular SW package provides a protocol specification for graphic image sizes, layer hierarchy and nomenclature.

So if you are interested in the creation of DVDs with Menus come along on August Focus night, listen in and share in the subject.



Ian Scott

Secretary SVMC
14 July 2012

FROM THE BUSH TO THE CITY WITH “EASY” HOWARD

I was the first child born in a family of 4 children in Western NSW and grew up on the family property in Gilgandra. I was educated at the local school in Gilgandra and when I finished I went to work the land with my father. It was a wheat, sheep and cattle property and during that time, with little drought was very prosperous. It was during that time in my late teens that I developed a passion for flying, taking me all over the eastern seaboard and the outback for recreational purposes. In my early twenties I enlisted in the army reserves for 2 years which taught me self sufficiency and discipline.

At the age of eight I was given my first box brownie camera. I then got my first taste of photography. With much enthusiasm I embarked on taking photos around the farm activities and of course all the family in various poses. My parents still have many of those photos today. At eighteen years I bought my first Pentax camera and at 24 I bought my first Super 8 Movie Camera. What a thrill. I filmed out of aeroplanes, more farm activities, like harvest time, and general family holidays. Recently I have put one Super 8 Film onto DVD producing a really ordinary movie...but still fun to watch the old days.

I married in my early twenties and had two children. Later divorced and moved to Sydney where I met my partner Lesley of 24 years. We commuted back and forth to the property fortnightly and I established a home repair business in Sydney. Life became quite hectic and very time poor for my photography/film hobby. Naturally that had to be put on hold. Lesley and I decided that the Gilgandra option was becoming impossible so we bought a property “Easy View” in Bulahdelah on the Myall river which was only 2.5 hrs away from Sydney. There I run breeding cattle and I now spend week about between Sydney and the farm. On my 50th I was given a Sony handy cam video camera. My passion for film making was Reignited. Taking 20 hours of film of our trip to England and France took no time at all. Naturally my next purchase had to be a computer with the Pinnacle Software for making films. Here enters the eternal frustration of my life. Never having used a computer before, let alone understand Pinnacle Software, I spent many hours day and night teaching myself the computer. I have mastered some of the system but to this day I still have my frustrating moments. Once all our grandchildren arrived—9 in total—I decided to buy a Sony HDR-FX1E to film their every move and to make movies of them growing up. I found that this movie camera was too heavy to carry around and take films of active children so I reverted back to my little Sony handy cam and now I only use it for making films with the movie group and our travels to the inland.

Around 2009 I became aware of the SVMC and decided to join. I was included in the Toolang Group later to become the Phoenix Group. It has been with the Club that my learning curve for film making has increased with the technical nights and the shared knowledge imparted to me by the members.

With my 60th Birthday imminent Lesley has given me a New Canon 7D to help with my photography and filming. She is expecting great things. We have recently been out to Central Australia and travelled the Strezlecki track and the Birdsville track. The colours and landscape were breathtaking. A photographers dream. We are inspired to travel out there a lot more in the coming years.

I have enjoyed the video club and meeting people with the same interest in movie making as myself. I look forward to the challenges of competition and Voty during the year.



Ian “Easy” Howard

CLUB MEETING 27TH JUNE, 2012





Photos by Marg. Tulloh

President:

Andy Doldissen

Vice President:

Gerry Benjamin

Secretary:

Ian Scott

Treasurer:

David Rogers

The Club meets on the **FOURTH WEDNESDAY** of each month (except for November & December) at 8PM at the Dougherty Centre, Victor Street, Chatswood. Tea & Coffee are available from 7PM. **FOCUS** nights, which usually cover technical subjects, are held on the **SECOND WEDNESDAY** of each month (except January & December) at 7.30PM at the Dougherty Centre, Victor Street, Chatswood.

The Committee meets on the **FIRST WEDNESDAY** of each month. Members are always welcome to attend, and for meeting time and venue, see any committee member.

Member's guests may be invited to meetings; the first visit is free, subsequent visits are \$5. New members are always welcome. Annual membership is single \$56, self and spouse \$76, country member \$28 - with an initial joining fee of \$10.

Note: Equipment brought to a Club night is not covered by the Club's insurance. Members should study their household insurance and check whether their video equipment is covered away from their premises and consider whether their cover should be extended.

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Visitors Coordinator	Gwen Roberts	0422 034 251
Copyright Registrar		
Video Director		
Team Coordinator	Andy Doldissen	0403 838 783
Catering	To be Decided	

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