

# Potters Bar FilmMakers

The Video Club for East Herts.

<http://www.pottersbarfilmmakers.co.uk>



Summer Newsletter 2018

Affiliated Member



The Film & Video Institute  
North Thames Region

# Tales from behind the camera

## Talk by Geoff Glover

Geoff Glover had a career spanning just short of 50 years as a film camera operator and on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> March

He shared some of his reminiscences across the varied time he spent in the film industry.

As a child he had been a film buff and, after RAF National Service, he got a Union card and began working at MGM studios in Borehamwood as a trainee camera operator with good pay.

After working on the TV series of “Robin Hood” starring Richard Greene, he began to go on film locations for films such as the 1957 movie “The Admirable Crichton” in Bermuda. He worked long days and was away from home for extended periods. Occasionally key shots would go wrong as in the Otto Preminger film “St Joan” when actress Jean Seberg was nearly burnt after her pyre was ignited with too much calor gas during filming.

Geoff enjoyed working on the Stewart Granger 1958 film “Harry Black” in India but the 8 weeks shoot extended to 3½ months and he



had to have an injection against bubonic plague. The tiger featured in the film became so friendly that it came up and gave him a

fright when it licked him!

Working with Robert Mitchum was enjoyable as was his time filming several movies with Peter Sellers. Sellers was interested in the technical aspects film making and liked being with the crew and was quite generous to them.

Geoff worked on the 1961 film “The Guns of Navarone” and was friends with actress Gia Scala who chatted to him about her personal problems.

“One Million years BC” starred Rachel Welsh who Geoff described as a beautiful but independently minded star. For much of the film she wore a leather bikini style costume but when she had been photographed in the sea it drooped revealingly!

Geoff found documentary film making hard as there were often technical problems with film and footage. Film sent from locations had to go to labs to be processed but studio made films could be done overnight so the “rushes” could be viewed the following morning.



Geoff enjoyed a total of seven years filming in Ireland but found American films often overran, he went to do a day’s work with John Cassavetes and stayed 8 weeks!

The filming of the parachute drop in the 1977 Richard Attenborough movie “A Bridge too Far”



was complex as river traffic on the Rhine had to be stopped, the weather needed to be clear and the Dakota aircraft had to be tracked for filming using compass points.

Geoff enjoyed doing second camera work on “Star Wars” on location in Tunisia and the final work in his long career was using “blue screen” for TV productions.

Geoff’s final story was about the 1978 film with scenes including Marlon Brandon. He said that Brandon refused to learn lines and expected his dialogue to be held up on boards for him to read, on one occasion directly in front of veteran actor Trevor Howard who laughed! Geoff brought a collection of photos of his work, some signed by the actors he filmed, which club members browsed through as he chatted about them.

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# Internal Competition - Holiday - 5th April 2018

The club's annual "Holiday film" Competition was held on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2018. This year there were to be six entries. Unfortunately there were technical problems with Andrew Saunders' film format that meant it could not be shown on the available equipment, so only five films were judged.

The first entry was "Malaga Hola", a 14 minute film by Graduate Dominic Lobo. It began with shots from the aeroplane and continued with the shopping side streets of the city.



Roof top views of the castle were followed by beach scenes using coloured filters in post-production to give interesting effects. Discussion after the film reflected on music to narration sound levels and editing.

Dominic's second film was the 3 minute "Walk on" which showed a variety of walkers, some with sticks or injuries, walking over different terrain.



Much of it was filmed from the rear and was shot from the knee down or as distance footage. Comments afterwards praised the music and the interesting shots of a wide group of people.

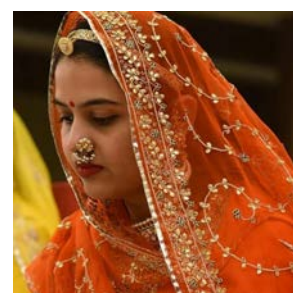
The remaining three entries were all Advanced film makers. "Don't be a crab in a bucket", a 7 minute film by Max Bender, showed how an old hotel building in Bol on the island of Brac in Croatia, wrecked during the war within the old Yugoslavia, had been put to a new and vibrant use as a canvas for

graffiti artists. The audience liked the pictures but there were narration sound level issues and a lot of pans but no still shots.

"Rajputona" was a 9½ minute film by Andrew Tweed. It showed the rural farming economy of that area of India with flower sellers and vegetable markets in the towns. Andrew and his wife had filmed this on a walking holiday which had given them many opportunities to get to know the local people and film needlework and water collection.

The warmth of the people shone through as did the designated roles of working women within the social order.

Comments following the film focused on the very effective footage, often in close up, of the people.



The final film was John Astin's 11 minute film, "A postcard from Fuerteventura".



The film showed the tropical vegetation around the coastal tourist resorts which contrasted with the arid interior.

The production of aloe vera was shown and the desalination plants which supply fresh water to the island and its tourists. Sea lions were shown playing with the visitors and old footage of salt production was explained. The island benefits from a very good road system but little traffic. The club members noted John's comments afterwards that the lack of very much activity on Fuerteventura during the winter season had made it a difficult subject to make a film on.

# Internal Competition - Holiday - 5th April 2018

## Results

### Graduate

Winner - Dominic Lobo - Walking On - 68%  
2nd - Dominic Lobo - Malaga Hola! - 57%

### Advanced

Winner - John Astin - Postcard From Fuerteventura - 88%  
2nd - Andrew Tweed - Rajputana - 85%  
3rd - Max Bender - Don't Be A Crab In A Bucket - 73%  
Andrew Saunders's film - Ati AtiHan- could not be shown for technical reasons

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## Analysing Films 2 – Andrew Saunders

On Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2018 Andrew Saunders gave a second presentation looking at how directors create tension by the selection of images and editing with music. After each sequence there was time to discuss what we had seen.

First we looked at the trailer to Alfred Hitchcock's "Psycho" which was made in black and white in 1960.



The shower scene is most famous and was precisely edited from 78 separate shots to create horror but pass the film censors of the time. We heard Hitchcock interviewed and watched the second murder of the detective on the stairs, done in longer shot and slower. Hitchcock used music carefully to create tension and after a long career in film making, he died in 1980.

The next film extract was "The Hill" a Sidney Lumet film starring Harry Andrews, Michael Redgrave and Sean Connery. A sadistically cruel story of a military prison in the desert, it used the hill as a form of torture for the inmates and gave Connery a very different role from James Bond.

Following that we watched the extraordinary 7 minute continuous shot from Joe Wright's "Atonement". It was filmed with a steady-cam weighing around 160lb and was achieved in a



day with only two takes.

After that, we watched clips from a German film "Das Boot" about a 2<sup>nd</sup> WW submarine. Suspense was created by shots of the depth dial as the submarine slowly rose to the surface and the pitch of the accompanying music rose at each 100 metres.

Another use of music was featured in the shaving scene from "The Great Dictator" (1940) by Charlie Chaplin which was choreographed using a Brahms Hungarian Dance. We also watched a clip from "the Migrant", another Chaplin comedy.

Two clips from "Singing in the Rain" showed the dance skills of Donald O Connor and Gene Kelly but also the clever tricks and edits to achieve these famous routines on film. Finally we watched two sequences from "Ice cold in Alex" to conclude the interesting evening of film history..

# BIAFF Awards for PBFM members...

## 4 stars...

The City for the Dead by John Astin

Hola Canaria ! by John Astin

Close Call by Alpha Productions.

(Kim and Gill Harrold, Penny Love, Christine Collins, Max Bender).

## 3 stars...

Astride the Atlas Mountains by Andrew Tweed

From the Centre to the Sea by Andrew Tweed

I want it All by Andrew Tweed

Under the Shadow by Andrew Tweed

Evanthia by Christine Collins

## 2 stars

The Flower Show by Ed Kinge

Great Britain by Andrew Tweed

Who'll stop the rain by Ed Kinge

Stolen Property by Moonlight Productions,

(Bob Chester, Christine Collins, Max Bender, Penny Love, Phil Elmer)

Fantastic number of entries by our folk and must be a record number from one club. Congratulations to everyone who entered.

## Film of the Year 2018

On Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2018, twenty two members and guests of Potters Bar FilmMakers met at the Old Manor for their Annual Dinner. After a pleasant meal, they moved over to the Wylyotts Centre for the “Film of the Year” awards.



This year Andrew Tweed organised the event and the films that had been entered into the competition were judged by Lowestoft Film Club. They provided a list of category winners and some feedback to individual film makers. The winners in each category were announced and trophies awarded to the winning film makers.

## Film Maker of the year 2018” contd.

The results were;

The John Parkes Shield for “Film of the Year” was awarded to John Astin for “City of the Dead” and he was awarded “Film Maker of the year 2018”



1<sup>st</sup> Runner up “Film of the Year” – “Evanthia” by Christine Collins



2<sup>nd</sup> Runner up “Film of the Year” – Ffestiniog and West Highland Railway” by John Astin

## Film Maker of the year 2018” contd.

Best Sound – “City of the Dead” by John Astin

Best camera work - “City of the Dead” by John Astin

Best editing - “City of the Dead” by John Astin

Best Graduate film – “Barefoot in the Park” by Max Bender

Penny was thanked for organising the meal and Andrew was thanked for organising the judging and ceremony. The Wyllyotts provided coffee to conclude the evening. A feedback form was given to members to assist with planning the catering for the 2019 event.

“1<sup>st</sup> Runner up “Film of the Year” – “Evanthia” by Christine Collins



Best Graduate film – “Barefoot in the Park” by Max Bender

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# The 2018 NTR. KO. Final

The K.O. Final took place on Sunday 20th May 2018. The competing Clubs were Staines V. M. South Essex Film Makers, Colchester F.M. and Bourne End F.M. The Event took place at 1. 00pm. at The Egham Room, Bourne end Community Centre, Bourne End.

## This Years Final was won by Staines M.M



The K.O. Final Judges Dennis Kelly, Ben Simon & Geoff Harmer, Discuss their decisions with the referee Brenda Granshaw FACI.



**A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE NORTH THAMES KNOCK OUT**  
**COMPETITION FINAL ON 20<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2018**  
**WHICH BOURNE END HOSTED.**  
**FROM PENNY LOVE.**

Bob, Christine and I set out about 11.15am on the very sunny Sunday morning to watch the final of the KO competition. This Bourne End is the one in Bucks not Herts. so a bit of a trek but as Bob had volunteered to drive we passengers just had to sit back, listen to his sat giving her instructions and enjoy the scenery, as well as putting the world to rights of course.

It was a very good set of films and the finalists were Colchester Film Makers, Bourne End Film Makers, Staines Video Makers and South Essex Film Makers. Subjects ranged from a lady making KROOST, a kind of twisted pastry strip cooked in hot oil and served with sieved icing sugar over them, (looked delish), a river in Cookham in flood, a very big close up of a cataract operation, (not as gory as it sounds but very interesting), to Tim Stannard's animated film 'Miracle on the Mantelpiece'.

We had a rather special guest too, a lovely King Charles Spaniel called Alice, (my Mum's name), who was as good as gold and only 'spoke' once just before one of the films started. Was this her opinion I wonder or was she getting ready for a loo breaks?

The judges gave their opinions about each film once each club had shown their entries and the tea break gave us all time to catch up with the gossip with other audience members who we hadn't seen for some time. Staines won so its down to them to host the final next year, but no doubt more info about that nearer the time. Hopefully PBFM will be in that final too. Brenda Granshaw, North Thames Chairman, said that the actual trophy had been 'left at home in error' by last years winners so Staines had to make do with our congratulations in the meantime.

As we had had an earlyish start to allow for travelling to the venue, ready for the 1pm competition start, and no time for a proper lunch, we three stopped at a very nice restaurant on the way home before tackling the dreaded M25 but even that was all running well so a good end to an enjoyable afternoon.

## AN INTERESTING EVENING.

It was an interesting and enjoyable evening on the last day of May which started off with John A showing off our new, all singing all dancing DVD player. Leo has been saying for quite a while that the other one was out of date so John volunteered to do some research and report back.

This he did and found that there was one that met all our requirements but was also the last one in the country. We agreed that he should grab it quickly but the company was in Chester !!!!

To make sure that nothing drastic happened in sending it to us he decided to go up by train to collect it. (Hon Treas is still getting over the shock of the total expenses claim.....).

Anyway, its here and we had a quick demo. Lots of stuff now comes up on the screen but once you realise that there's no need to panic, its very good and even linked it to the Wyllyotts wi fi system so we watched Leo's film directly from 'you tube'.

More than likely most of you are not too bothered how it works but Robert and I will need to when we go with John to give outside shows so notes to the fore. He does the chat while we operate the equipment.

The rest of the evening was a show reel from Cheadle and Gatley. An excellent link to each one was spoken by a chap, maybe their chairman, in full walking gear and trundling over the hills while telling us a bit about each film and their maker.

There was a good selection starting with one called THE HATTING METROPOLIS about the hatting industry, which must have been of special interest to Margaret as her family was in the same profession. The historical content was in black and white of course and showed how hats and caps were made. The guide in the museum said her mother had worked in one of the factories and her father was the maintenance man. He was on call all the time of course and if he had to work on a Sunday one of them took his roast dinner to him on a plate but with a separate jug of gravy.

Another was STRAIGHT UP AND DOWN, made for a 5 minutes competition and showed how a present of a mysterious kit was made up. Plastic components of smalls balls with holes in and little rods which fitted into the holes in the balls, cut to music while being assembled The final product was a game where you put another small ball in the top and it rolled down to the bottom.

A RIGHT TO DO, in black and white this showed some kids who kicked their footy ball on to a house roof which Dad had to retrieve. You can no doubt guess what happened, the ladder slips and he is stuck on the roof, has to jump down and lands on the ball which bursts.

NO PLACE TO WALK A DOG I had seen before and was filmed at an old Tudor house supposedly haunted by Henry VIII. Lovely pictures of the gardens and lakes with the ducks and geese wandering about but then we had some Dinosaurs and other pre historic creatures taking over so no one went there anymore until they were all blown up and things went back to normal. Very clever green screen stuff of the creatures in the grounds of the place. Ended up with a skeleton dancing to the record of 'I'm 'Enery the 8<sup>th</sup> I am, 'Enery the 8<sup>th</sup> I am I am'.

Very powerful music, Finlandia, was the background to the next one, SALUTE TO SEBELIOUS, (hopefully the right spelling), showed his sculptured head in some metallic material, and a series of different angle shots of a very modern sculpture, again in the metallic material.

A bit of a creepy one next, DOWN IN THE WOODS. A young chap running through woods looking behind him now and again as he was sure he was being followed, which he was. He hides behind trees and under a bridge and hears footsteps overhead. He thinks its Ok to come out of hiding but then we heard a shot fired and he was hit. Not as drastic as we had thought though as it was a plastic 'arrow' which had hit his forehead and we see that he was 'playing' a game with another person so then says its his turn to be the chaser.

*By Penny Love*

## **Distribution Dates for Next News Letter.**

**Please send your Articles or Comments for inclusion**

**In the next Newsletter to:-**

**The PBFM Editor – Ron Jones FACI**

**By the dates listed below:-**

### **Autumn News Letter**

<b>Last dates for Hard Copy Input to the editor</b>	<b>16th. August 2018.</b>
<b>Last dates for Contributions by e-mail</b>	<b>23rd.August 2018.</b>
<b>e-mail Distribution Date</b>	<b>30th. August 2018.</b>
<b>HARD Copy Distribution Date</b>	<b>6th. Sept. 2018.</b>

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