ENJOYING VISUAL TECHNOLOGY

SYDNEY VIDEO MAKERS CLUB

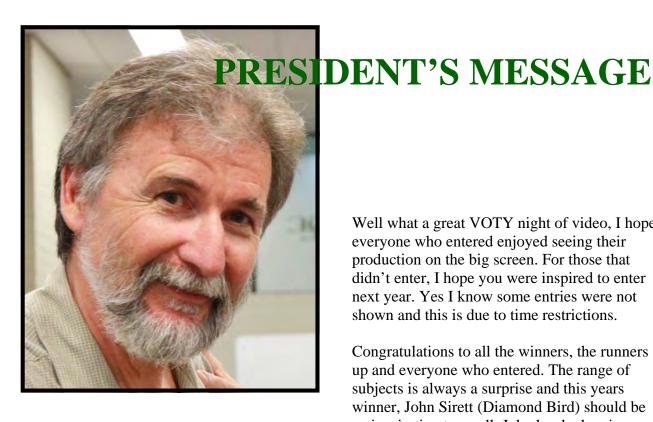
ELECTRONIC

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Next Meeting Wednesday 18th January, 2012



Well what a great VOTY night of video, I hope everyone who entered enjoyed seeing their production on the big screen. For those that didn't enter, I hope you were inspired to enter next year. Yes I know some entries were not shown and this is due to time restrictions.

Congratulations to all the winners, the runners up and everyone who entered. The range of subjects is always a surprise and this years winner, John Sirett (Diamond Bird) should be an inspiration to us all. John has had major

medical problems this year and it is amazing he was able to even submit an entry. It looks like he is now on the mend and we all wish him well in his recovery. His subject was a charmer and so well done. John was able to create an engaging story using great shots and an amazing amount of patience. John seems to be specialising in these bird videos as he won with another bird video a few years ago. But don't underestimate how difficult it is to video native birds. Chris Saville & I did a bird watching video series a few years ago and it ended up taking us about 18 months to capture all the material we needed.

There has been a constant concern about judging ever since these competitions started. I believe many of us get too hung up on the scoring. My approach is to accept the judges opinion and learn from their comments. While you may not agree with it, it's how your video was viewed by someone else. For those members who may be scratching their heads with the judging sheets, read the feedback and take a comments as a way to improve your videos. Eddie Hanham is looking at ways to possibly improve judging so if you have some suggestions see Eddie. By the way our judging sheet has been reviewed many times in the past and the current version represents a lot of hard work and debate on how best to judge a video.

Thanks to last years committee for all their hard work. We are fortunate to have a few committee members continuing on the committee, their experience will be invaluable.

Your new club committee had a planning day early December. We took the feedback we received from members and team leaders then looked at what was possible in the year ahead. I will present the program at our first club meeting.

Obviously with the club now having some really good audio equipment available for members we need to ensure everyone knows how to use it properly. This seems a logical place to start so our first few Focus and Club nights will be centered around audio. Its often taken for granted but is just as important as capturing a good image. I have included an article with some tips for capturing good audio in this month's Eye.

Teams could do with a shake up so we are reviewing make up. Geographic location, members availability (e.g. working or retired) was never considered when teams were formed. So there is an opportunity for members to move between teams and work with different people or form new teams. I realise some members may not want to be part of a team and that is fine as well. I have the role of team co-ordinator so please let me know your wishes.

I hope everyone enjoyed the break, and we look forward to seeing everyone at our first club meeting on the 18th January.

Stay Focused Andy President

Jan 2012

NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS

Owing to the long week-end our monthly meeting will be held on the 18th January. April will also change so refer to your calendar. (page 22).

Please remember that fees are now due. There is no change from last year, so please refer to 2nd last page for details.

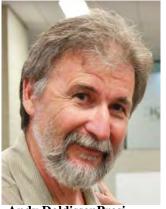
We are looking for a new caterer or a sub-committee to help with the catering, if you could help please come and see me at the meeting.

This year we will be looking into Judging, so please have your say.

Margaret Tulloh

Editor

2012 COMMITTEE



Andy DoldissenPresident



Gerry Benjamin Vice President



Ian Scott Secretary & Public Officer



David Rogers Treasurer & Member Sec.



Glen Booth Web Master



Phil Brighton Actor Liaison & Audio Director



Ian Howard Presentation Team Leader



Margaret Tulloh EE editor Competition Manager



Graham Sainty Librarian



Mike Elton Social Organiser



Gwen Roberts Visitor Co-Ordinator



Neville Waller



Stuart Plant

CLUB AUDIO EQUIPMENT

I am sure that all our members are aware that thanks to a Government grant and the energetic committee that submitted the application, we were able to purchase some very useful audio equipment.

We are in the midst of working out how to "loan out" and look after these new toys. It is very likely that we will purchase additional quantities of some of the items so that they can be issued as an "Audio Equipment Set" to a team. It may be that the "equipment set" can remain under the protection and care of the team, but still be available to others on arrangement. Further information on this later as it is discussed and confirmed.

The items purchased:

Item #	Item description	Quantity
1	Rode 3.3m Boompole	2
2	Rode NT-SM5 Shotgun Mic Mount	2
3	Rode NG-2 Shotgun	2
4	Blimp	2
5	Sound Devices MixPre-D Compact Field Mixer	1
6	Skater Floor Dolly for DSLR Cameras	1
7	ProAM DVC50 4ft Crane Jib Boom	1

Now you say, what does one do with all this stuff? Well to find out come along to the Focus night on February 8th and find out. You might even like to bring your own camera along to make sure you know how to connect up and set the camera up correctly. If you do make sure you bring your camera manual so that the relevant information is to hand to resolve any set up issues that arise. In fact it would be

helpful if you came along knowing how to set your camera up for an external mic input and also how to control the mic input signal level.

The most technologically challenging device is the Field Mixer. If you want to do a bit of pre reading you will find the instruction manual on our website, you can even down load it and have your own copy.

A word on decibels. The Bel is the basic unit of sound named after Alexander Graham Bell, originally used to measure the loss of sound in telephone circuits. The bel is too large for practical use, so the decibel, one tenth of a bel, abbreviated to db, is used in practice. We have a sound monitor meter with its maximum value as O db and the –db values below that to measure loss of sound. Without needing to know precisely what a db is in absolute terms we can observe the levels in our system. In modern digital equipment we are interested in sound levels and the scale is renumbered for convenience and simplification. On the digital scale 0 is set equal to -20db, which is the sound level of a normal human voice. Sound levels in the range 0 to +6 on the digital scale are "normal levels" and digital signals should be controlled to stay within that range. Incidentally the scales are logarithmic to base 10 so that a +12 sound is 60 time louder than a +6 sound, not double, conversely -6 is one 60 th of the 0 level.

All you need to know is, keep your normal sound level inputs and outputs within the acceptable range between 0 and +6 (-20db and -14db). These values are standard and exist in all modern digital systems.

Items 6 & 7 on the list are not of course audio devices but will still be there for you to examine and experiment with.

So come along and "hear all about it"

I Scott.

Secretary

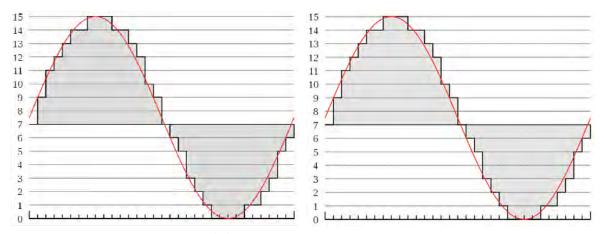
Recording good audio

Audio is often the neglected side of our video productions but it can make such a difference. If you don't believe me take any action movie and turn off the sound, what happens? Suddenly all that impact has disappeared!

You can turn a good video into a great video by combining well recorded sound, appropriate music and properly balanced audio levels.

How it works

Digital recording is converting an analogue signal to a digital signal, a series of 0's and 1's. The following diagram shows the analogue signal in red and the stepped digital signal in black. The higher the sampling rate (eg 48kHz) and the higher the bit rate (eg 16bit) the more closely aligned the digital signal will become. Video generally records sound at a sampling rate of 48kHz while for a CD it's 44.1kHz.



RED: analogue sound wave BLACK: digital sampling - Source Wikipedia

Your ears

Your brain filters out unwanted sound without you even being aware. For example you walk into a room full of people talking and begin a conversation. Somehow you are able to focus on one voice and hear it above all the background noise. However, if you try to do the same with a microphone it picks up everything. That one conversation is almost impossible to hear. So how do they do it in the movies? Easy! Those people in the background look like they are speaking but really they aren't, the only conversation going on is between the main actors.

No matter where you are recording sound it is important to listen with good headphones. The closed design is best, completely covering your ears so you only hear what is being picked up by your microphone. Try to listen through the sound not to the sound. You need to be aware of every background noise. Think of a great photo, there is a subject and a background, both need to be good for a great shot. With audio it is similar, a good subject needs to be bright and clear and a good background needs to be ideally no noise at all. So listen through your subject to the background all the time.

When using a good shotgun microphone you will find it can pick up lots of background noises - cars driving past, aircraft, lawnmowers, leaf blowers. You may have no choice but to call a stop to recording and wait until the offending noise stops. Remember those background noises are almost impossible to remove at edit time so it is crucial to listen carefully all the time.

Audio equipment

Select the right audio gear for the task.

Examples of some different setups:

- Outside and windy use a blimp/zepplin with a fluffy cover to reduce wind noise
- An interview a mic on a stand or tripod may be easier than holding a boom pole
- A presenter walking towards the camera choose a radio mic

Using a separate person specifically for audio has many advantages. It allows the camera person can concentrate solely on the vision while the audio is being monitored continually. If any noise enters the recording it will be picked up there and then and not later in the edit.

The position of the mic can be continually adjusted to capture the cleanest audio.

If you are unfamiliar with any of your equipment I recommend doing some practice testing. Connect everything up and do a variety of recordings. Then drop them onto your computer and analyse the results. This is the easiest way to see if there are any problems. Look closely at the waveform either in a sound or video program. Check if the recording is clipping/distorted (too loud), if the waveform is close to flat (too low), and that it sounds the way it should. You will be then build the confidence to achieve good results when it really matters.

High signal to noise

The most important rule is to get the microphone as close to your source as possible. So how close is close enough? If you are using a boom then position the microphone about 1-2 metres away from your sound source. This will give a strong enough signal to your mixer but be careful you don't creep into shot. A good practice before you start recording is to move the mic slowly into shot and let the camera operator tell you when your microphone is in the viewfinder, then note that position and back off slightly. Always ensure the mic is pointed to the sound source, so if you have two actors in conversation the boom operator will be quite busy twisting the boom to each actor in turn.

Remove background noise

Switch off sources of hums and background noise e.g. air-conditioners, fluorescent lights, grandfather clocks and mobile phones. If booming with a shotgun mic remember these mics are very sensitive you may pick up noise in the distance which you don't normally hear. By varying the position of the mic, above, below, left or right you may be able to reduce this noise.

Set Audio Levels

Before you start recording you need to be aware of the range from soft to loud of your sound source. Ask the actors or interviewees to project their voice and musicians to play the loud passage. Then set your levels on the mixer and also on the camera so they won't over record.

Record ambient or atmos sound

If you are recording a drama or an interview it is recommended to record some of the ambient sound. This is just basically the sound of the room for a minute. It becomes very useful in the edit as it allows you to insert a cutaway and retain continuity in sound instead of an audio gap.

Record specific sounds separately

If you have a doorbell ringing, a tap dripping, a glass breaking then record this sound separately. In the edit you can use these recordings to emphasise these events.

Voice over

Write your script out and before you record go through each paragraph underlining the words to stress and use "/" s to indicate pauses. Make sure your voice is well modulated putting stress

where needed and bringing the words to life. There is nothing worse than listening to a boring monotone voice.

Terminology

What is the terminology we use when referring to audio? It's no good just saying 'that sounds good' or 'that's lousy'. Here are a few definitions that may be useful

Distortion An unwanted change in the audio waveform, causing a raspy or gritty sound quality. The appearance of frequencies in a device's output signal that weren't in the input signal. Typically this is caused by an over-recorded signal.

Highpass filter A filter that passes frequencies above a certain threshold (e.g. 80Hz) and attenuates frequencies below that level. This is also referred to as a **low-cut filter** which is useful to reduce unwanted wind noise.

Hum An unwanted low-pitched tone (60 Hz or 50 Hz and its harmonics) heard in the monitors. Hum is caused by such things as placing audio cables near power cables or transformers, faulty grounding, poor shielding, and earth loops.

Presence The audible sense that a reproduced instrument or voice is present in the listening room. Some synonyms are closeness, definition and punch.

Reverberation Natural reverberation in a room is a series of multiple sound reflections (echo) that make the original sound persist and gradually die away or decay. A **reverb effect** simulates the sound of a room—a club, auditorium, or concert hall—by generating random multiple echoes that are too numerous and rapid for the ear to resolve.

Andy

President

Andy Doldissen—Bio



Born in the first half of last century, I am one of those baby boomers. I have always had an interest in photography and movies. My first camera was an old folding Kodak 620 with black and white film, a hand me down from my Mum. I think I put one roll of colour film through it at great expense with disappointing results. My first movie camera was a Canon 318 Super8 without sound. I managed to buy it at a garage sale and played with that for a couple of years until video came on the scene. I purchased a Panasonic VHS camera with an over the shoulder VCR that was a real pain to lug around. But that's all there was and I shot many VHS tapes of family events, cycling and running. Like most members when the next video development was released I upgraded to a Sony Hi8 camera with increased quality and greatly reduced camera size, good for travelling. Then came along MiniDV - I still have my trusty Sony VX1000, one of the best cameras made. I currently own a Panasonic HVX202 which is a high definition camera with P2 cards using DVCPRO HD. This camera is the portable P2 camera in the range but has a great selection of pro features including scene files which allow you to shoot with a particular look e.g. day for night, Velvia (vivid), high contrast, ...

So what about me? Uni degree, spent a year travelling overseas, Mexico, Europe, Japan in '68. Returned to Sydney, did a few months teaching, then started a career in IT. Spent most of my time with Qantas developing computer systems to support the airline. I also worked with Work Cover and EDS. So yes I am very familiar with computers - although most of my working career was with mainframes. Today I use a Mac and love it - after starting with an Amiga then moving to PCs, I will never return to the PC. The Operating System on the Mac is so superior to Windows, it is the key to its robustness.

I joined the Northside Camera Club in the mid nineties so have been involved with the club a long time. I remember the first VOTY at Killara High School theatre after we had video'd their fund

raising concert.

I recently began to focus on improving audio as I realised the importance of good audio to a successful video. I have been slowly purchasing quality gear over the years as the budget allows. So I now have a reasonable audio kit that is perfect for a two person shoot.

Chris Saville & I have made a number of documentaries in the last few years. The documentary on the Voyage of La Pérouse required a lot of research and background reading to come up with a structure and decide what story to tell. It took over a year to film all the material and conduct the interviews. Our most recent doco was done on toxic waste remediation at Sydney Olympic Park and Rhodes. Once again filming took us around 18 months to capture all the material and then the edit compressed it down to 10 minutes. You are sometimes unsure when or how some of these longer term projects will end. That just makes it more interesting.

The photo shows a precarious shooting position on an Elevated Work Platform wearing a safety harness many metres above ground at Botany Industrial Park. It felt pretty safe until we started driving down the road. The driver was next to me on the platform. This was part of the toxic waste remediation documentary, which is still in progress.



The documentary is a format that appeals to me, developing a way to tell a story that may not have been told before. Video is an excellent medium to illustrate any story, with photos, drawings even telling a story where no video footage exists - it can bring things to life.

My career has been one of continual learning; with IT there are new developments all the time. It is the same in many fields and even now with video developments and digital photography the rate of change is increasing. You can either jump on the train or get left at the station. I'm still aboard and still learning, trying to improve my video skills every time I go out with my camera. I prefer to travel not in the first carriage of the train, and wait until most of the bugs are removed from new software or technology before I adopt it.

My other interests are Bushcare, which I have been involved with as a volunteer along the harbour foreshore for the last 17 years. If anyone is interested in local native plants and also weeds have a look at my bushcare website http://members.optusnet.com.au/~andyd17/

I have always been keen on keeping fit, by running, cycling, swimming and bushwalking. I used to do a lot of running, 33 City to Surfs, and a dozen or so marathons: New York, London, Sydney, Canberra. My personal best was 2hrs 53min for the marathon - my goal was to break three hours and it took a while to achieve that but it was an amazing feeling to reach that goal. Anyone who has run a marathon knows what a physical and mental challenge it is. The running was getting too hard over the last few years so I am now mainly cycling and swimming. I currently cycle about 100kms each week just to stay fit. I own a vintage Colnago racing bike and enjoy early morning rides along with a coffee with some lycra clad old friends.

and as I always say
Stay focused
Andy



Photos provided by Andy Doldissen.

COMPETITION CORNER

Thank you all for the great quality of videos entered into Voty 2011. It surprised me how many were entered but a few had to miss out as we only have a certain time.

If you can think of any way to improve Voty please get in touch with the committee, by either emailing or seeing one of us at the club meetings.

The next competition is **Open** and will close on 22nd February. No more than 5 minutes.

The competition for April will close on 26th April. Title to be **Excellence in Audio**, either a **Interview or a Musical Rendition or both.** No more than 5 minutes.

The third competition will close 27th June **Drama** and titled "Who done It".

The final competition is due on 22nd August and to be a **60 second Ad.** titled "**Roadside Service**".

I would like to thank all the Judges for their help in giving of their time to take on judging the entries during 2011, and looking forward to working with you all in 2012. You have made my job easier.

If the members or Judges can think of any way to improve judging please don't hesitate to get in touch with me as I know some were not too happy this year. The committee is also looking into the format.

(my email address is - mtulloh@bigpond.net.au).

Margaret Tulloh

Competition manager.

VOTY 2011

This was our sixteenth VOTY held at the end of the twentieth year of the club's operation. All agreed that the quality of entries was the best ever. All that technology and technical discussion is obviously having a positive effect. The event was well organised and run. A big thank you to all of the member volunteers who worked hard to ensure that the evening was a success.

The social gathering before the screening was very enjoyable and as you can see from the photographs everyone sampled the nibbles and Champagne. (*pages 18-19*) This year's main winners were;



Video of the Year Diamond Bird John Sirett

John Sirett with Merv Blanch (MC)



Ted Northover Trophy Special Delivery NUTS Team

Phil Brighton & Ian Scott the Nuts Team



Audience Choice Diamond Bird John Sirett

Mery Blanch with John Sirett

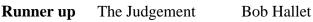


Drama Special Delivery NUTS Team

Phil Brighton with Merv Blanch



Bob Hallett with Merv Blanch





Ron Cooper with MC Merv Blanch

Music Video Tchaikovsky Vision Ron Cooper



Runner up If the Whole World Ami Levartovsky

Ami Levartovsky



John Sirett with Merv Blanch



Runner up Fight to Survive Gordon Davis

Gordon Davis



Travel A Natural Gem Max Milgate

Max Milgate and Merv Blanch



Runner up Up and Down Merv Blanch

Merv Blanch



Ruskin Spears

Special techniques Toooo Much Brotherly Love

Free Trip Runner up **Ernest Cheung**

Special Awards:



Neville Waller with Merv .

Gwen Stoney Award Neville Waller



Excellence in Photography

John Sirett

Packers

Merv Blanch & John Sirett



Best meeting Night Videographer Ruskin Spears

Ruskin and Merv



Chris Saville (Packers) and Merv

Our congratulations to all those winners, runners up and to the third place getters not listed here. Recognition is also due to all the entrants who contributed to such an excellent evening of video screening.

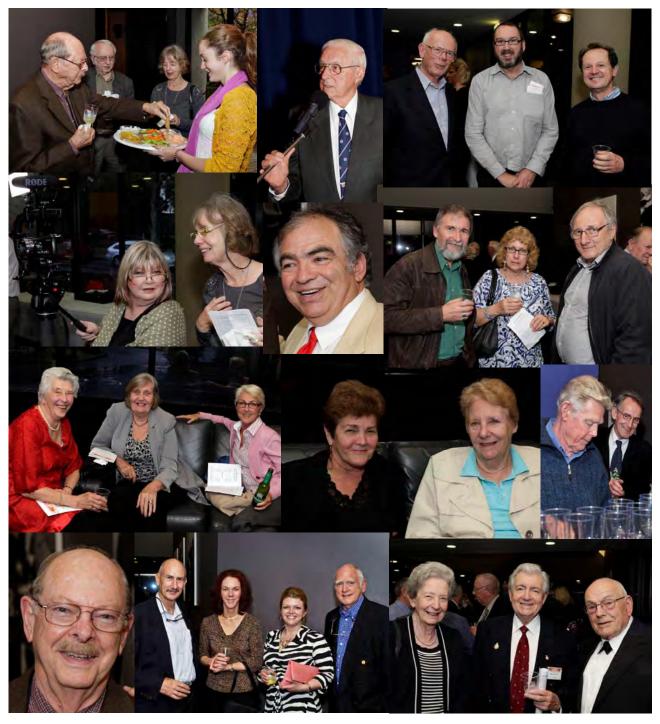
Time does not allow for all entries to be screened on VOTY night, so entries are ranked by final score to determine which of them will screen on the evening. Our January Club night has a time slot devoted to screening all those entries not seen at VOTY.

There will be a VOTY 2012 to be held on November 30th 2012, so now is the time to get started on a team or individual entry. If you missed attending this year's event take note of that date and get it into your diary now.

If after having attended VOTY you can suggest any ways to improve the event please let a 2012 committee member know, or just sent an email to the Secretary, so that we can take to suggestion on board.

ARE YOU HERE ??





(all Photos by Neville Waller)

If not - start now on the winning entry and join us on 30th November, 2012 for another great night.

I would also like to thank Merv Blanch for being the MC. What a job well done. Congratulations John Sirett on taking out the top Awards, Well done John.

Margaret Tulloh. Voty Organiser

DIARY 2012



Month	S M T W T F S		Month	SMT <u>W</u> T FS
January	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21	No focus night	July	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21
	22 ^{2:} 24 25 <mark>26</mark> 27 28 29 30 31 1 2 3 4	Aust. Day		22 23 24 <mark>25</mark> 26 27 28 29 30 31 1 2 3 4
February	5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29		August	5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31
March	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	QS*2	September	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22
	25 26 27 <mark>28</mark> 29 30 31			23 24 25 26 27 28 29 AGM 30
April	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21	Easter	October	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 Lab day 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27
	22 23 24 <mark>25 26</mark> 27 28 29 30	Anzac day		28 29 30 31 VOTY Comp close
May	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31		November	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 Focus party night 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 VOTY
June	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	Queens Bdy.	December	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Planning session 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 No club 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 or focus nights 30 31
	Committee meeting Focus nights 7.30	•)pm	Club nights 7.30pm 10.30pm School holidays NSW Public holidays
	Focus Night meetings	s are held in the (Craft Room	Dougherty Centre, Victor Str. Chatswood

Focus Night meetings are held in the Craft Room, Dougherty Centre, Victor Str, Chatswood

Club Night meetings are held in the Main Auditorium, Dougherty Centre, Victor Str, Chatswood

Club night competitions close and screen on Club nights shown.

	1 2	Feb Apr	22 26		Look under competitions on the club Website for more detail about comp.
	3	Jun	27		themes.
	4	Aug	22		
22		_		As per VOTY	
	5	Oct	24VOTY	rules	See website for complete details.

Presi	dent:
Andy	Doldissen

Vice President: Gerry Doldissen

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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Catering	To Be Decided	

Please address all correspondence for Committee Action

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