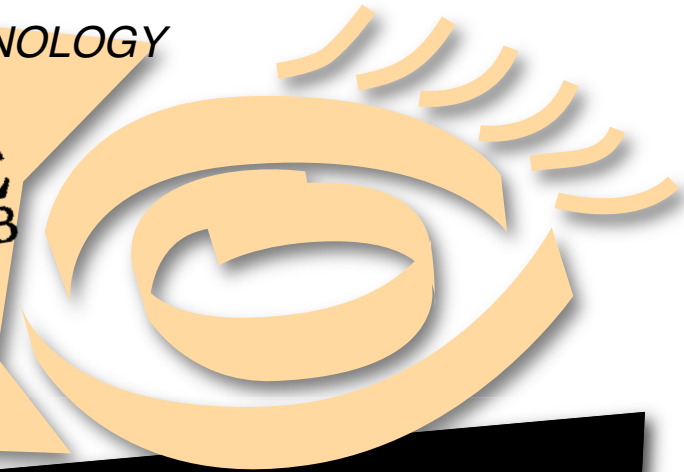


ENJOYING VISUAL TECHNOLOGY

**NORTHSIDE
CAMCORDER CLUB**
SYDNEY



ELECTRONIC EYE

N E W S L E T T E R

2008

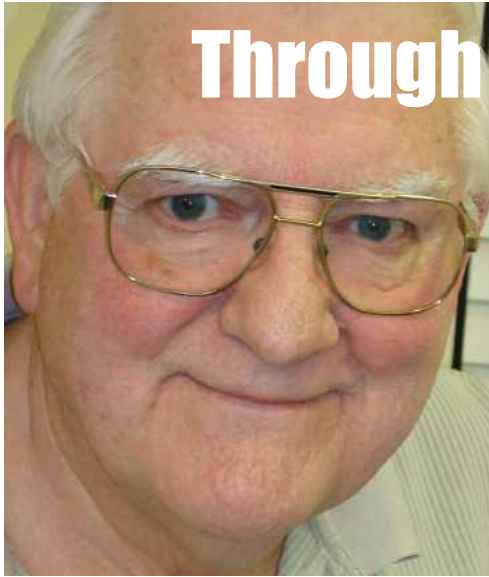
June 2008

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**Next Meeting
WEDNESDAY
25th June**

www.ncc.asn.au



Through the (vice) President's Lens

Peter is still on a holiday in Europe so I am still using his lens to look around the club on his behalf. As a matter of interest we had a “mid travel saga” E-Mail from Peter whilst he was in Venice. All is well and he will no doubt return with lots of excellent Travel Videos to show us in the near future.

June focus night was very interesting and well attended with about thirty devotees coming along to hear about computer graphics for use in videos. I am indebted to Kent Fry for standing in at short notice to organize the content and conduct of the evening and the results were excellent.

Thanks Kent

Thank you all for your support on the raffle we ran on the May club night. The Treasurer was very happy with the takings at over \$100.

Glenn Booth and Ernst Chung are continuing with the work on the website upgrade and are ready to review new graphic layouts with the working team, to see if their ideas match the club's objectives for the website. As soon as we have something to show I will put them

up on the notice board. Don't forget if you have any suggestions about the website redesign please let Glenn or a committee member know so we can incorporate your ideas. To date we have not been overwhelmed with suggestions.

Looking ahead to July club night, Mike Elton our Competitions Manager, will be dealing with competition matters and aspects of judging. He will be reviewing criteria and the judging process. Later, using subject video produced by videographers outside the club, Mike will run a "hands on" judging session where we can all do some judging and discuss how our own appraisals match with those of others. Judging is always an interesting and sometime controversial subject.

Looking a bit further ahead our AGM is in September and there are two important points of note. Firstly, in accordance with the Club Constitution, our current President must stand down. Now we cannot function without a President so please all start thinking about nominations for the position. Of course we need some committee members as well, not only to replace any who will be standing down but also to swell the committee ranks and share the job of running the club. The second point about the AGM is that it is the opportunity to amend our constitution if we want to, but only if we notify all members in advance. Properly notified proposals are then discussed and voted on at the AGM. So if you want to see any alterations submit your suggestion to any committee member for early discussion and inclusion in the AGM agenda. Remember the constitution is on the club website if you want to review it.

Oh! don't forget VOTY is not too far away so keep up the good work on your entry development and production.

Ian Scott

Vice President NCC

KILLER BEES, PLANE CRASHES AND RAMPAGING DINOSAURS



June focus night was very interesting and well attended with about thirty devotees coming along to hear about computer graphics for use in videos. I am indebted to Kent Fry for standing in at short notice to organize the content and conduct of the evening. The results were excellent.

Kent kicked off the evening program himself with a brief resumé of pertinent facts about “computer graphics” from the point of view of the video maker. To illustrate some of the principles and show just what can be done Kent showed us how he is producing a swarm of “killer bees!” (at least that’s what we branded them for him). He very carefully drew one bee body complete with legs and other essential parts using Adobe Illustrator ?. The initial bee was then copied many times with varied leg and wing positions. Then a planned combination of the varied frames linked together in Adobe After Effects produced flying or walking bees when run as a stream. Before we knew it there were lots of them swarming on the screen superimposed onto a bit of normal video to demonstrate the finished effect. Altogether a very interesting and informative demonstration of just what can be done if you are prepared to spend quite a bit of time combining vector and raster images with video animation tools. Thanks Kent.

Some time ago Jim Whitehead secured himself a copy of GIF Animator and has been using it to produce special effects in titles. He was anxious to show us what can be done and proceeded to develop a title scenario on the

spot. A still image of a Cessna airplane was grabbed from a video clip and transferred into Adobe Photoshop to strip off the background and just leave the aircraft as an image on a transparent background.

A Qantas Boeing image was obtained from a website and similarly processed to get a usable image. Jim's plan involved superimposing the two aircraft over a map of South Australia, sizing them appropriately for the map scale involved and then using GIF Animator he set up key locations and defined what motion and duration he wanted from each image. The end result,



whilst a bit morbid, was a very effective plane crash. The Boeing won, the Cessna vanished forever into the Gulf and the big bad Boeing continued its journey unperturbed to Adelaide. A sort of a mid air hit and run. In another venture an image of a Labrador was used. The mouth was altered with GIF a few simple setting and hey presto we had a talking dog to compete with the RAMS ad on TV. Altogether very worthwhile

demonstrations of what can easily be achieved with lower cost software packages. Great demos Jim, thanks.

One of our newer members, Tom Benjamin, works for the Centre for Learning and Innovation and was anxious to show us



a bit of the work he is doing on Video Games of all things. Now these are not your everyday games. They are DIY games for use by school teachers and their pupils. What! You say I'm trying to get the kids off the computer to do their homework, so what gives? Well, if you think about it, if you were to produce a customized video game that made the kids pay a bit of interest to the Mathematics Teacher, well then, may be it might just be a good thing. Overseas educational practice technologists are seriously studying the concept of using video games to improve the education process, no doubt with a substantial grant from Microsoft. The upshot was that Tom was able to show us some very neat animations that he produced in minutes, yes minutes not hours! Using low cost software packages like REALLUSION and KAHOOTZ. Essentially these are out of date low cost versions of much more sophisticated and expensive computing power hungry modern version software. The up to date versions are as used by the makers of animated movie. Hence Tom was able to quickly make an animated video clipi about Dinosaurs romping around out in his backyard. Very impressive stuff, not sure if the educational strategy will work, but great Software. Thanks Tom, I am sure you will be bombarded with questions.



Our next focus night is on the subject of digitizing old 8mm films. Phil Brighton has had some success with elementary equipment and is anxious to share his technique with others.

Thanks to all involved in putting on such an interesting night.

Ian Scott VP.



Korean BBQ Outing By Mike Elton

Remember the outing to the Mongolian Restaurant last year? We have decided to have a restaurant outing on Tuesday the 22nd July 2008. We are going to a Korean BBQ and having their self serve meal a smorgasbord which costs \$30 for the meal and \$2 corkage.



If you want to go please e-mail me with your name, as I need to have the numbers so that I can book the restaurant. My e-mail address is mikeelton@iprimus.com.au



Well the Club year is ripping along and here we are already at June. In the not too distant future we will be starting the detailed planning for our annual major event which takes place on **November 28th**. It is opportune to consider the format of VOTY and take on board any improvement suggestions from members.

The last couple of VOTYs have been reasonably successful and unless there is input to the contrary we are planning to use the same format for **VOTY 2008**. The following points for improvement were noted immediately after VOTY 2007.

- *Start a half hour earlier to allow more socialising at the start.*
- *Commence ticket sales in August and advertise the event more extensively to increase attendance numbers.*
- *Provide reduced quantity of same sort of finger food. We had to discard some last year.*

The Film Australia Theatre venue has served us well and is very appropriate for our event. The 2008 booking for the venue was secured in February this year so that we don't miss out.

Please think about VOTY, both from the point of view of preparing your entry and also from the point of view of event format. If you any suggestions to improve the format please let me know as soon as possible so that we have time to react and incorporate those improvement ideas.

Ian Scott VP, VOTY Organiser.

WHAT'S IN A NAME

In discussions about the club and its future direction the Club name is frequently questioned. Many members feel that “Camcorder” in the name does not impart to a prospective member that we are into “Video Cameras”. It may also be that the Northside descriptor is too limiting to attract prospective members from a wide enough area of Sydney. There may even be aspects of our name that limit web searches by “club seekers”.



The Club is legally registered as an Association with the NSW Government and the name is defined in our Club Constitution. If we do plan to change the name, various “new names” must be discussed and put forward in time for a decision by members at the September 2008 AGM.

The Committee will give consideration to possible new names and publish them for comment and hopefully stimulate members to input further suggestions. If you have any firm ideas about the club name please drop an email to the Secretary with the details. Please include any arguments in support of your ideas so that your rationale for change or non change is understood. Such comments will assist greatly at discussion time to focus on the factors about the Club name that members consider to be important.

Secretary NCC.

Competition Corner

With Mike Elton Competition Manager



The latest competition entries, *Autobiography*, were shown at the last meeting. On the whole they were entertaining but more entries are needed to make this a real competition.

“Mi Casa” Juan Maravillas’s entry showed his house and music, it was interesting but I owe Juan Maravillas an apology because while transferring from a MiniDV to DVD (to send to judges) I somehow cut out a few vital seconds. Especially as the part missing was of Juan’s wife and a clever use of blue screen. I really don’t know how this happened, it wasn’t deliberate. In view of this we are going to show the video again at the next meeting.

One thing I have found is that when dealing with things like *Autobiography* you have to be able to be open and not afraid that people will see what you feel. This can be difficult if you are basically a laid-back sort of person, like me. But in making videos you have to forget this and present your work anyway. This was how I was able to make a video of “My Special Year“. The overall competition winners were the BES again with a clever story called “Looking Back” about the start of Mme Deja Vue and how she became who she is today. It was written in verse and used our biggest cast so far. Phil Brighton was at his stunning best as the heroine of the story. He was also the writer of the story. Making a story like this great fun but needs a lot of effort as it involves. Writing, rewriting and re-working scripts. Gathering and directing the cast. Making and assembling props. Planning shooting schedules and finding sites. Editing the video. Re-shooting missing bits and assembling the final result. A lot of work

but also a lot of laughs. That's why BES likes to make videos. It is also why a group is best suited to make a scripted video.

In June we will get entries for *The Chase*. I hope there will be many more entries than this time. Don't wait until VOTY to try out your skills. Talking of VOTY, it is not too early to start putting in entries.

I hope you are working on *Flashback* our **next competition** with entries due in **August**.

This won't be easy but should give people plenty to think about. At one time every film used to start with a Flashback. It means starting at the end and then going back to the beginning telling the story of how the hero arrived at his final predicament.

Also we are holding a competition for a *Music Video* concurrently with *Flashback* and this is **also to be entered in August**. What is different about the Music Video entries this time is that they have to be music videos. That is the video should describe the music and not be travelogues with music or documentaries with music. Although it can contain elements of both. Think of many current music videos on TV or remember Fantasia that Disney cartoon which was probably the first music video. The music can be Classic or Contemporary but must be copyright free or the fee must have been paid for its use. This is easy for musicians in our midst but the rest of use can use free music or GarageBand. Play your chosen music and sit back and imagine what images it raises in your mind. Then film or assemble these images.

Remember to connect music to image. The length of this should be no longer than 3 minutes. The video does not have to tell a specific story it can be free flowing but it must be tidy with a beginning, middle, and end like all good videos-except the end is the end of the music.



Some notes on competitions....

By Mike Elton

It is time to consider entries for VOTY. Details are on our website, but it's worth having a closer look. Usually entries are ten or less minutes in length and they must be in one of 5 categories.



Screenplay: A video that is scripted and tells a story. It usually includes one or more actors and is most often fictional. It can be in a particular style such as comedy, drama, musical, etc. And music either free or copyright paid can be used to enhance the story.



Music Video: this is the most contentious category because often documentaries about music or travel with music are entered in this section. The centre and main focus of a Music video is the music! There is little or no dialogue. The images used can be abstract but should describe the music. The length of the video should match the length of the music. Music can be free or performed but copyright permission must be obtained. Music can be of any kind classical or modern. Videos entered that aren't really music videos as described will be transferred to a more appropriate category



Documentary: A video describing a subject in a concise informative manner. It should preferably concentrate on a theme or item of significance. Dialogue or interviews should complement or refer to the subject of the video. The video can be instructional or informative.



Travel: a video about a location visited by the video-maker. It should have one or more distinct themes of significance. It could include getting to the travel spot as well as the travel spot itself. Music can be used to enhance the video but it should be copyright free or be recorded live in a location where it is available to anyone passing by.



Animation: a sequence of video images of inanimate objects produced by the author of the video, which when played gives an impression of movement and life. Images just downloaded from the internet cannot be used, as the video author does not make them.

continued...

Some of the above invites discussion. So if you have a particular axe to grind. Contact me or see me at the club where we may initiate a discussion.

Entries are preferred on Mini-DV's, as they have to be transcribed together with others onto a DVD so as to forward them to the judges. Please leave room at the beginning of the Mini-DV of at least ten seconds to avoid losing the first few seconds of your video. €€

Need a fast PC?

If you are considering upgrading your computer sometime (late) this year you may want to get together with a few others and increase our buying power in a group purchase.



You can still choose your own specifications / price point that you desire in a PC but we are anticipating a price drop around the 4th quarter.

"Quad core" is the technology that we seek as it is most suited for editing, please refer to our April 08 newsletter for further information or email robncc@hotmail.com.

[Rob Nercessian](#)

NCC Tropfest Team Entry



As was mentioned in last months EE, a team of NCC members are getting together to produce a Tropfest entry, prompted by a script written by ERNEST CHEUNG.

The theme has been announced as “Spring”.

The latest news is that ROB NERCESSIAN is to be the producer, and he is looking for a director, a script writer to help fine tune the script, and the following actors:

- Male (main character) age 40-50
- Female (wife of main)
- Teenage boy 13-15 (son of main)
- Female (mistress)
- Male (Doctor)
- Female (neighbour) mature age

Everyone cast your net wide and help the search for would be actors who will enjoy the filming environment.

Who knows, this could be your ticket to Hollywood!

Rob

€€

Apologies, Chris

In last months EE focus night article, Chris Saville's name was misspelled, and was not picked up by the editor. Sincere apologies.

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