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PANORAMA

OF AMATEUR FILM & VIDEO

SUR LE FILM ET VIDEO AMATEUR



The Publication of the SOCIETY of CANADIAN CINE AMATEURS / SOCIETE DES CINE AMATEURS CANADIENS (Inc. 1969)

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Photo by Joseph Bochsler Jr.

Fred Briggs, FSCCA

"information you can use"

The SCCA Board of Directors is constantly striving to improve PANORAMA to make it a highly desirable publication, and we think we have been having some success. We have redoubled our efforts to feature articles carrying "information you can use", some of which you will find in this expanded issue. We promise you more of it in subsequent issues, and will continue the increase in the number of pages if we are successful in finding enough good material to justify it.

Lou Lanser, a long-term member from Vancouver, mentioned on the phone that he had not received an answer to an earlier letter, which we apparently didn't receive, and promised to send another copy. Lou had two suggestions, both of which the Executive has considered.

One idea was that the SCCA acquire a good script and then sponsor a competition between the clubs for movies made from that script. As I pointed out to Lou, the SCCA Competition does have a contest for

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Front Cover:

photo by Joseph & Joan Bochsler



PANORAMA

is published four times a year by the Society of Canadian Cine Amateurs, an association of video and film makers.

PANORAMA is devoted primarily to informing Canadian movie and video makers of the activities of society and developments in the realm of amateur motion picture making. It aims to provide information about new equipment and methods, and offers a forum for discussion of topics affecting the interests of amateur and video makers.

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CLUB NEWS

By Joseph Bochsler, F.P.P.O.

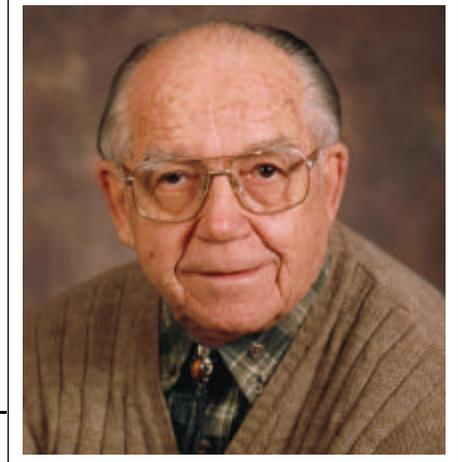


Photo by Joseph Bochsler Jr.

At the January meeting of the **Brant Videomakers**, my wife Joan asked the members: "What do you expect at a video club meeting?" An instant reply from the gathering was: "**More video and less talking!**" Are we getting a message from this answer? I'm firmly convinced most of us would like to see **more videos** at our meetings, especially our members' videos. The BRANT CAMCORDER NEWS, edited by Laurie Ross, had Peter Janssen show us how he edits using a computer program. One of his tidbits of information was that using a SCSI driver is faster for editing. The slang for that is "scuzzy drive". Don Bradley gave a great presentation interspersed with video on the proper use of the video camera. We learned many good tips. Joan Doroshenko, our Librarian and Critics' Corner chairperson, showed us three videos, which we then critiqued. They were on a CANUSA tape. Suddenly there was a lot of shouting about Dan Kennaley and it looked as though a couple of members were angry. But it was a ruse to introduce "Dan Kennaley Appreciation Night" Laurie Ross gave a complimentary speech about Dan, Joan Jacquemain presented an engraved plaque. There was also a huge cake that said "Thanks, Dan!" which everyone enjoyed. What a surprise!

In the Jan.-Feb. issue of the SAVAC Monitor, Malcolm Colditz, President of SAVAC, urges all video makers to resolve for the New Year to produce a scenario-based movie. "Draw on your own life experiences and unfold a tale that will entertain us all."

He also suggested that we develop a theme. This is the reason behind the

story. He gave an example where boys stole a street sign, but the theme was about the inherent kindness of people, including the police officer who apprehended them. A few thematic examples could be love, revenge, greed, guilt, forgiveness and atonement. He referred to the movie "The Window" by Joyce Axelrod, which was screened at the 2000 Convention. The movie showed several of these themes. Bernard Wood is the Editor of The SAVAC Monitor, which is published bi-monthly.

Victoria Video Club, Victoria, BC. Editor Sheila Perkins reports that Bruce Ralph of Soho will demonstrate the iMac for them. He will show all the things the iMovie (software program) can do. The club members were asked to bring their Sony Hi8, Digital8 and Mini DV camcorders and also bring some video footage (unedited) to the meeting, so that he could demonstrate editing with it on the iMac. They would also have a question and answer session.

Congratulations go to Dave and Joan Fuller! Their video titled, "How to Win Grampa's Heart" won Honorable Mention in the Ten Best of the West Contest, in San Jose, California.

Winnipeg Amateur Moviemakers, a cine/video club bulletin: 1935-2000, 65 years as a Club. Editor Ron Braun, mentioned that Wally and Jeanette Robertson have stepped down as Secretary and Editors of the WAM Club Bulletin, *[The PANORAMA misses them too! Wally has also resigned as Club News Editor of PANORAMA. We thank him for his hard work on our behalf. Ed.]*

Al Ross, Club President, writes on prospective new members. When we

have guests or prospective new members out, let's continue to make sure we curtail our "normal-member-friends" conversations. Instead, we approach these guests and make them aware how happy we are to have them attend our meeting.

This means too, we might ask them what interest, if any, in movie making they might have, or how we might share with one another. We should find out if it is easy for them to attend meetings. And let's make sure they meet some of our other members and give them the opportunity to join in conversation with them.

Networking like this usually gives a newcomer a better feel for the club as a whole and some of its members in particular. If they are comfortable with leaving us a phone number, where they can be reached, you might ask if they would appreciate a "reminder" call for our next meeting, and then make sure you follow up on this.

Perhaps we should bring some spare newsletters to our meetings to hand out to our guests, so they will have at least, the names and phone numbers of our executive, should questions or concerns arise.

Al Ross mentioned in the December WAM that they enjoyed their fall vacation in the Maritimes and the Celtic Colours 2000 Festival, a Festival so good, they wait till "all" the tourists are gone. Different top notch performing artists performing in different towns one night after another. Get the C.D. by the same name-you won't be disappointed!

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Hamilton Video/Film Club's
REEL NEWS, edited by Fred Briggs.
Jon Soyka, President of the Hamilton
Club, talked about change at the
December meeting. The changes that
are coming in our hobby, with digital
cable in most of our homes now, an
accelerating movement to digital
camcorders and nonlinear editing, and
HDTV rising on the horizon. Even our
holdout President has finally signed up
for email! And change is coming
within our Club.

This marks the first month in which
those who can receive REEL NEWS as
an email attachment will not be mailed
a hard copy. We have also removed
from the mailing list all members
whose membership fees, due in
September, have not been paid. But it
wouldn't be fair to continue to deliver
REEL NEWS by email to members
who haven't renewed their
membership, so as a corollary, those in
arrears will also no longer receive the
email attachment. (Our courtesy
exchange with other clubs will not be
affected, of course, except that if we
can replace a printed and mailed copy
with an email attachment, we will
remove duplication there also.)

Program Chairman Dave
FitzGibbon, announced among other
things that that day's Hamilton
Spectator had carried a large picture
and lengthy article about Jack Carey
and his videomicrography. (There's a
new one for the spelling checker!) Jack
records the antics of the wee creatures
found in pond water, on videotape
through a microscope. Some might be
tempted to refer to Jack's tapes as
microvideography, but that would be
incorrect as the videos, and the tapes,
are both of standard size.

Dave FitzGibbon made note of the
fact that a course for new purchasers of
camcorders will be offered by
Fotovideo for the education of their
customers. Fotovideo has asked for
volunteers from H.V./F.M. to speak at
the course. They may choose their own
subject, within reason. Those
volunteering were asked to contact
Dave or Louis Seguin so they can be
placed on the course schedule.

Buffalo Movie and Video
Makers, organized in 1934. In their
newsletter CAMERAMA, edited by
John P. Weiksner, said that they were
fortunate to gain new members,
bringing the membership to almost
forty.

From Queens, New York, Brian
Gelding writes, "Here" Starring Lee
Majors, the film that Phil Utech and I
worked on last year as production
assistants, is done. I have a copy of it,
so if I make it to the meeting, I hope I
can show it to everyone.

After several years of generously
hosting BM-VM at his facility, the
Screening Room Cinema and Café, we
formally acknowledge Bob Golibersuch
as an Honorary Member of the BM-
VM. Bob accepted this distinction in
person at their January meeting.
Congratulations Bob!

Get ready for an evening of fun! The
67th Anniversary Banquet is scheduled
for Saturday, April 28, 2001. This year
the event will begin at 6pm at the
Dandelions Tavern & Eatery at 1340
North Forest Road, Amherst, NY. The
evening will start with a cocktail hour,
then dinner, rounded out by a guest
speaker, presentation of awards, and a
screening of the winning entry from
the annual contest.

The **IAC Film and Video Maker**
CLUB GOSSIP reports under "Coming
soon" that the Circle 8 Film Group are
in the midst of some very heavy
weekends shooting the final major
sequences to its latest epic. "Tales of
the Pilgrims Way" due for its premiere
at the Electric Theatre at Guildford.
Booking and advertising a public show
is a very strong motivator to get the
film completed after working on it for
seven years. The film tells a number of
historical tales of events that
supposedly took place on or near the
Pilgrims Way, the track from
Winchester to Canterbury. The Circle 8
Film Group plans to produce a
write-up of the whole epic. [IAC
means the Institute of Amateur
Cinematographers, and is based in
England. Ed]

The Quinte Videography CLUB
NEWS of Belleville, ON, edited by Ted
Johnson, in their Autumn 2000
Newsletter mention that they meet the
first Wednesday of each month, Sept.
through June at 7pm at Loyola College.

Camcorder hobbyists are welcomed for
sharing, learning and enjoying good
fellowship.

Bill McCormick's Edit Suite column
in the Quinte Club News, says he got
to thinking about how small they are
making camcorders these days. What a
difference from the early models,
which required two large units to lug
around! How much smaller will they
be able to produce a camcorder? When
you think about it, the space for the
actual circuitry and boards needed to
control and process the video signals in
the camcorders we have now is very
small. The bulk of the camcorder body
is necessary for the mechanical parts
such as: the lens, cassette recorder and
the battery.

The Vancouver Video
Production Club publishes REEL
TALK, whose Editor is Cathy Caravan.
In the December 2000 issue, "Setting It
Straight" Pat Sheridan says that he
almost had a seizure when he saw the
pictures in his column last month
displaying a couple of still images
taken with his TRV900 Sony
Camcorder. Anyone who doesn't
realize the challenges involved in
producing and printing a newsletter
might have been led to believe that still
images from a camcorder leave a lot to
be desired. He wished to set everyone
straight, that the original digital
images were fine.

In the January 2001 issue of Reel
Talk, Craig McDowall says that Apple
has just announced their newest
updated G4 model computer, which
will be available in late March. Apple
currently markets two lines of
computers directed at those who want
to edit digital video in a non-linear
format. The smaller version is the iMac
line featuring 5 different models. Two
models are built with firewire
capabilities. The top of the line iMac is
the DV Special Edition; a 500 MHz
model with 128 KB and a 30 gig hard
drive which comes with iMovie 2
software program proprietary to Apple
for video editing. iMacs with the
iMovie bundle are directed at the
hobbyist videographer. Both iMovie
software programs are very easy to
learn and a full description of iMovie 2
is reviewed in the February 2001
edition of Computer and Camcorder
magazine.

The Toronto Film and Video Club's SHOTS & ANGLES, edited by Sam Spence, reports that the computers have had and will continue to have an effect on how we will do everything from banking, games, communication, and even how we pursue our hobby of videomaking. Gone are the good old days when a "cut" meant actually cutting the film and splicing together scenes. Mostly the film movie cameras are now relics and sit unused. Even if we wanted to, film is unavailable. Our Club has kept up with, and taken all these changes in stride. When we "cut" our video, it is now done on an electronic device. We can dissolve, flip, rotate, slow motion with the best of them and we should feel proud. Even with all this new technology, it is still important to remember that the basic rules for a good production is not in the equipment, but in the understanding of composition and a well planned script.

Sam Spence, writes (That couldn't happen to me) The telephone rings a few times, and on answering it there is a charming voice on the other end. She exchanges a few niceties and then identifies herself as a telephone technician who is conducting a test on telephone lines in your neighborhood. The nice person that you are, you are more than willing to help. What do I need to do? The friendly voice explains that all you need to do is dial 9 and then 0 followed by the # sign and then hang up. That sounds easy enough, and you do as requested, nice person that you are. By pushing those or any other numbers suggested by the nice voice, you are giving the individual full access to your telephone line allowing them to place long distance calls and then bill them to your home number. Believe it or not, you have just been the victim of a scam. If you do receive such a call, do nothing--JUST HANG UP.

The London Videography Club's "IT'S A WRAP" edited by Thom Speechley. Bill Henderson, in his President's message mentioned: "Why Video?" Recently, as late as yesterday, I celebrated an anniversary. What has this to do with video? Well, for the first time in eleven years, we got out our wedding photo album. Oh,

it would have been so easy to have stuck a tape into the VCR, but no, we had to dig through a pile of stuff to find an album. You see, for you younger people there was no video back when the earth was still cooling. This is just one of the scenes that comes back to me through a golden haze of memory. There was a group of laughing family members traveling across the country, high up in the mountains or looking over a valley stream. With some of the videos I again experience the sheer exuberance of those days as I watch our family grow, the warmth of the sun, the scent of new cut hay and the freedom we all felt in those younger years. There are the many birthdays and Christmases and many other special occasions which I can see clearly on tape that my foggy memory does not allow me to see. Unlike a dream which vanishes, the video is there to see. I strongly suggest as videographers you continue to record those special family memories on tape and store them properly, as video will remain when memories and dreams are only fleeting and will vanish before it can be captured. That is "Why Video!"

In the December newsletter "It's a Wrap" the Editor suggests that you log on their Website www.members.net/speechley8505 for Phil McLeod's award winning video, "Seasons of a River". Other videos are also available. Questions and comments are also invited at their website by the Web Editor and club member, Thom Speechley.

The agenda for the Feb.2001 meeting was, "Let's Shoot a Little Video" This night's shoot served two purposes. The first was to produce three short instructional videos on the subject of video making. The second was to find out if they really knew enough to do the first! They were limiting themselves to "basic" camera techniques, production tips and lighting. The three productions would be edited before their March meeting.

The Start, Middle And End Video Club, meet at Fonthill, ON. Members are from the Niagara Region. THE NEWSLETTER is edited by Bob Wiley. Bob says:

A New Century and a new Millennium has begun. It would be

impossible to imagine what form Video will take in the next Millennium or Century. Indeed, we may not even guess what is coming in the next few years. Did you know that Video has been around since the beginning of time? From the first paintings on rocks and cave walls to the earliest photography of the 1800's we have had Video Aids. Video in motion actually was invented by the Austrian military during the 1830's. The evolution of Video did, however, move painstakingly slowly until the 1900's when progress took off like a rocket. Besides the obvious improvements in Video quality and ease of use, one of the most notable changes is that we no longer need a government or military budget to get involved. Most of you are now familiar with the term "non-linear editing," the future of Video. Complete non-linear systems (turnkey) cost less than ever and are becoming easier to use. If you now have a good computer, you can start using it for your Video, with less expense. These topics are discussed each month at our regular meetings. We also have get-togethers at members' homes for non-linear work when needed.

If you have a full blown linear system (as this Editor has) and it works for you, you do not have to abandon everything just yet. Like all technology camcorders and video editing methods are rapidly getting better and less expensive. What you decide for yourself is the best time to jump on the bandwagon. ■

Notice to Club News Editors.

Please mail or email a copy of your Club Newsletter to Editor of Club News, Joseph Bochsler,

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Caledonia, On. N3W 1E3,
or
Email river 1 @ infinity.net

Where Have All The Flowers Gone?

By Stan Whitsitt

Dateline: January, 2001

The year 2000 is history! ... is "Toast"! ... is "Kaput"! "So what"? you may well ask. "Ahem!...Good question", he replies. (Bear with me folks, I'll get to the point after awhile.) 2000 was a momentous year in several respects. It ushered in a new century, and a new millennium. It also brought this writer to his eightieth birthday, and in so doing, launched him into the exalted status of "Geezerhood". (Can you say prunes and metamucil?)

A letter from Editor Bochsler requesting an article created a crisis. I guess one would have to call it an identity crisis. Eighty seems too old for a mid-life crisis. Considering the fact I haven't written anything for two years, I'm no longer a writer. Also, inasmuch as I haven't made a film for two years, it is difficult to pose as a film maker. It seems a new persona is necessary.

In light of those revolting developments, I have decided to become a **pundit**. (Remember, you heard it here first.)

As we look around our world it is obvious to anyone with the IQ of bread sticks, we are living in the age

of punditry. We are up to our wazoos in pundits. They are exuding their expertise from every TV station, newspaper, and magazine. If there are doubts that we have an overabundance of pundits, one had only to observe the presidential election in a certain unnamed

DICTIONARY to check the definition. There it was, as we used to describe our movies, in glorious black and white.

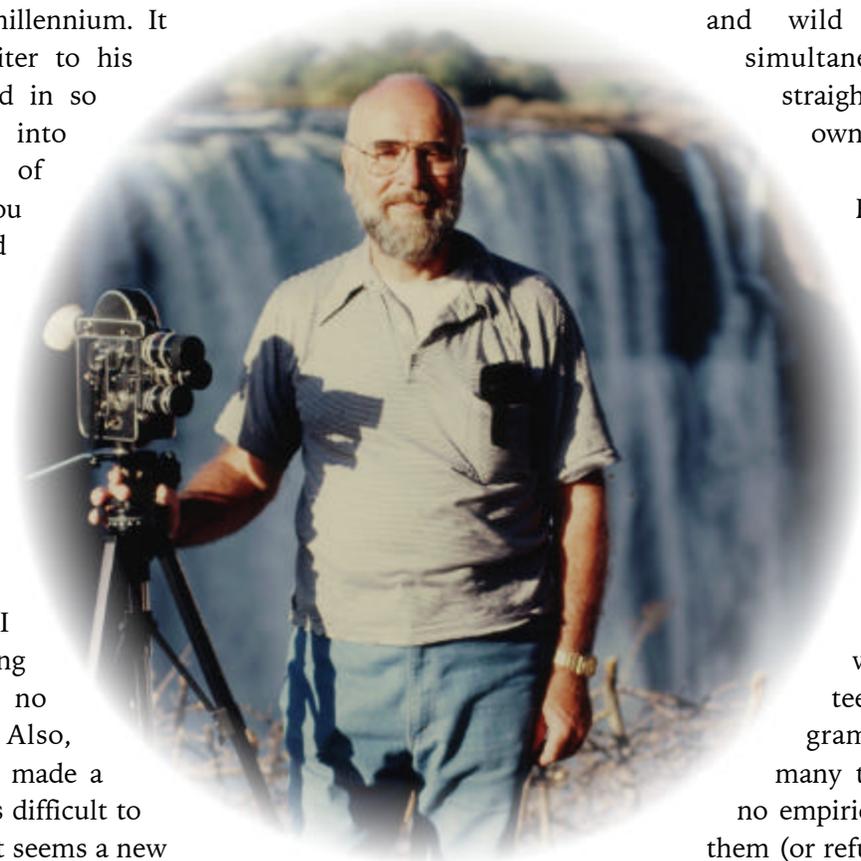
Pun-dit (pun/dit), n. One who gives opinions in an authoritative manner.

EUREKA! There was my new calling! I feel when it comes to making profound pronouncements and wild speculations, while simultaneously maintaining a straight face, I can hold my own with the best of them.

In her letter, Editor Bochsler stated, "**You must be aware of the declining rate of clubs and charities in our society. Perhaps you have something to say on this matter.**"

That is a subject a pundit can really sink his teeth into (or "into which he can sink his teeth", if you are a strict grammarian"). There are many theories and practically no empirical evidence to support them (or refute them).

Isolating our (movie clubs) situation, that assessment definitely applies. Examining my own geographic area, which I think is probably typical, there is a definite decline in the number of clubs, and members thereof. In 1973 when I became active there were ten clubs



"Banana Republic" in this hemisphere. Oh well! What the hell! There's always room for one more.

To insure I wasn't claiming to be something for which I was not qualified I went to my handy-dandy WEBSTER'S NEW COLLEGIATE

in our Los Angeles area, all with substantial membership rolls. Today there are five remaining, all with reduced membership. By the same token, membership in the Society of Amateur Videographers and Cinematographers (SAVAC) has declined over fifty percent since 1980.

There is no single reason we can point to and say, "There is the culprit". It can be attributed to a number of incremental factors whose cumulative total creates the current condition.

Partially to blame is the added complexity of making amateur movies, ushered in by the video age. In 1973, my first few 8mm movies were made with no editing equipment other than a splicer and a jeweler's loupe. In 2000 the movie maker has to master a complex combination of VCR's, computers, and other esoteric equipment that many people cannot comprehend, and others feel it is too much of a hassle to learn the operation of all the bells and whistles involved.

Hand in hand with the complexity issue is the C-O-S-T. Every month manufacturers spew forth a new generation of "must have" equipment. Folks, we are talking big bucks here. To me, and I suspect, to many others, \$10,000 plus is "too damned much" to pay for equipment to make home movies.

Then there is the segment of movie makers that grew up as photographers, loving the sharp images and clear crisp colors of film. No longer able to get services for film, they cannot reconcile themselves to fuzzy images and smeared colors of what they consider an inferior product, so they drop out. That complaint will be eliminated, but how long will it take

and at what cost?

"We need to attract younger people" is a common complaint about dwindling club members. I am afraid that is not going to happen. There are two reasons for that statement. Those reasons are financial and cultural. The cost factor previously mentioned is one drawback. The younger population targeted consists of students and those with families. The students don't usually have the wherewithal to acquire the equipment, and the ones with families have other more important needs.

Probably the biggest hurdle to overcome in attracting younger people is the cultural divide. We old-timers came up through the 60's and 70's which were pretty conservative times and our films were patterned after Hollywood's efforts which were relatively tame compared to current movies and television. Amateur competitions were governed by those rules. Anything considered pornographic or off color was out of bounds and still is. Then came television with its emphasis on "cutting edge", and "pushing the envelope". Movies followed suit. The young people pattern their work from what they see on TV and the movies. Thus, young peoples' films laced with TV type profanity and nudity get short shrift at our clubs' festivals, so the young folks don't hang around very long.

Over the years, on occasion, when young peoples' work was exhibited at clubs, many members were quite vocal in their disdain for it. Such a rebuff is bound to trigger a similar negative reaction by the young filmmakers, which is not conducive to bringing them into the fold. Young folks will not flock to the clubs unless there is a broadening of the

mind, or lowering the standards (whichever way one chooses to look at it) among the old guard.

Then there is the economy. This prosperity is killing us. Most club members are relatively well off, but there is a myriad of sources vying for our money and time, with their numbers expanding rapidly. Let's face it. Movie making is an intellectually challenging hobby. Daily we are deluged with attractive offers of fun stuff to do that does not require the rigorous discipline of serious film making. Only the very dedicated will go the distance, and the very dedicated has always been a minority among the general population.

Finally, it boils down to one final significant fact. The clubs are faced with what industry euphemistically calls "attrition". In plain English, many of the highly motivated members are "dying off". That cadre of devoted artists, in the words of Kipling, has become **"a thin red line of heroes"**. Those few dedicated workers have kept the clubs viable entities over the years. It remains to be seen if the current climate will produce the Ben Andrews, the Fred Briggs, the Jack Ruddells the Margaret Chamberlains, the John Careys, and others of their stature to carry the torch into the 21st Century.

From the foregoing, one can surmise that all is not well in our little world. A pessimist would say there are problems. An optimist tells us there are challenges or opportunities. **I won't comment either way, or offer any solutions. Pundits merely give opinions in an authoritative manner.** ■



Videographer's Prayer.

by Trevelyan Beard

Oh God, please help me tread successfully the path of the videographer.

Let me hear comments like "Fine show, my lad" and not "Damn stupid plot, was that".

Make me heft the tripod even tho' it weighs a ton.

Ensure I start shooting with an establishing shot, and mix middle and close-ups wisely.

Help me check the sound level, even if I don't know how.

Force me to set the white balance then gone will be clips that are too red in colour.

Jog me to pack the manual. Remember when I needed to set the date and couldn't figure how to?

Make me think of the rhyme "In case my battery does go flat, I've packed a spare, you can be sure of that."

And also "One tape, two tape, three tapes spare. Don't go without them if you dare."

Prevent me making too many zooms and make my pan shots smooth.

Credits cannot be done if I've not made note of names - pack me a pencil, I pray.

Remind me that close-ups are sacred and if I neglect to take a number of cutaways, send me straight to Hell.

But most of all, if nothing else, make sure before shooting that I switch to 'ON', the external mic.

If you will do this for me, I will stop envying my neighbours' films.

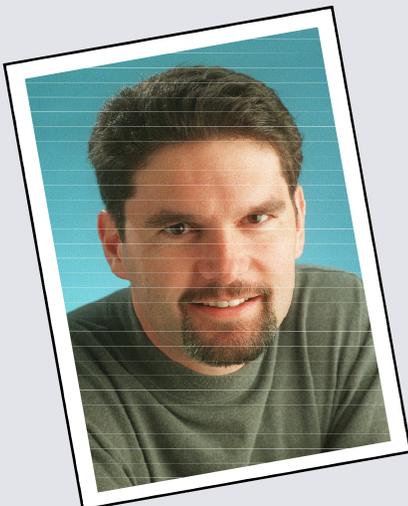
I will always use a tripod, even in a canoe.

I will not commit adulation of my own work and will cease my muttering

"Even I could do better than that."

And I will be profuse in heaping praise on others even though their work may puzzle me.

Amen



About Michael Robb

Michael Robb spent 10 years as a photojournalist, covering such events as the fall of the Berlin Wall. In 1985 he became a proponent of Macintosh computers after finding out he could get more work done on his Macintosh home computer than he could working on the newspaper's main frames.

It took him six months of carrying his home computer into work daily

before management finally realized how productive people could be given the right tools. Since then Robb has re-designed several newspapers. He continues as Presentation Editor of The Flint Journal.

On the internet, Robb has helped run and design one of the largest Macintosh shareware sites on the web. He has also written a weekly column dealing with subjects concerning the Macintosh community. An archive of his past articles can be found at: www.ohnodesign.com/column

K.I.S.S., the Macintosh way

By: Michael Robb,
Columnist for Tucows Mac

You need to fasten two boards together. You grab a hammer, position the nail over the board and whack it. With any luck you won't hit your thumb and, ta da, the job is complete.

Ten years-ago that's what you would have done. Not anymore. At this turn-of-the-century you need a compressor, an air gun and about \$500 to purchase it all. Make sure that you toss in a little bit of training so you don't shoot a hole in your foot and don't forget to read the user's manual.

It seems like manufacturers of electronic devices, whether they're power tools, cameras, computers or stereos, follow the same philosophy, that more is better. They take a task that is simple and add enough features to make it so complicated that it renders the device virtually unusable.

I've been shopping for a digital point and shoot camera. I use to think that the reason you purchased a camera was to take pictures. Nothing could be further from the truth. After two days of pouring over reviews online I knew more than I ever wanted to know about mega-pixels, CCD's and memory cards and some admittedly cool features like panoramic imaging, but not much more about how the camera would work for me. So, I decided to head down to the local camera store to get some hands on experience.

Now I'm not a stranger when it comes to photography. I spent almost ten years as a working photojournalist. I even considered naming our daughter Leica. Thank God my wife has better sense than I do.

My initial reaction to the spew of cameras behind the display shelf was that most were, well, visually

challenged, and after handling a few of them, I decided that they must have had a sale down at the button store.

Never have I seen so many buttons on a camera. I would have had better luck picking up a scalpel and removing the clerk's brain than picking up a digital camera and figuring out how to turn it on, let alone actually taking a picture with it.

Digital camera manufacturers must have made a bet with someone (probably a Wintel representative) that they, too, could get consumers to read manuals because without one you would be lost in data hell forever. Once again something simple has been made far too complex.

Manufacturers claim consumers want all those features. Maybe we do, but listen up boys there's a better way to go about designing cameras, and computers for that matter. Go buy an onion. That's right an onion. A big red one from Georgia will do nicely. Now take it and peel it. See how you can easily pull layer after layer off until you're at the core?

In other words, think the Macintosh way.

Make the user interface simple at the top layer. As you peel away the layers give the user more and more options and features. Make it elegant though, don't just throw a bunch of symbols and buttons all over interface and hope that the user will be able to grasp your concepts.

As you travel up and down the layers make it easier, not harder, for the user to navigate. Give them more power, not more headaches.

Apple's success with the iMac can be attributed to one thing, simplicity. In the 1980s that concept was almost Apple's downfall. Big business wouldn't give Apple the time of day because it thought that a computer that was as easy to use as a Mac couldn't be powerful enough to be taken seriously. They focused on the computer when they should have focused on how easy it was to get a task done using a computer.

While big business snubbed the Mac, the creative community embraced it. Why? Because it was a computer that allowed them to focus

on creating, not computing. Remember the end game is getting the job done, not putting obstacles in the way of users.

We recently had a user that had never sat down at a computer before in his life. He watched another user on a Power Mac for a little while but never asked any questions. When I checked back on him a couple of weeks later I was surprised to see him dragging icons around the desktop, launching applications and even ejecting CDs. When I asked the other user how much instruction she gave the newbie she replied, 'None, he just picked it up by watching.'

I know this user pretty well and I can say that he's no Einstein. As a matter of fact, he's not even potty trained. He's my two year-old son. For a computer to be simple enough for a two year-old to figure out, and at the same time publish most of this country's publications, it must be doing something right.

Take a look at a Windows machine and you'll find there's hardly anything intuitive or simple about the operating system. On some of the digital cameras it was hard to find the shutter. The same goes for Windows. Insert a CD on a Windows machine and ask somebody who's never used a computer to find it. Good luck.

Try renaming the hard drive on a Windows machine and not including a letter designation. Ya just can't do it. It is one of many things that a Macintosh user takes for granted. Nothing should be more simple than picking a file, folder or hard drive and being able to rename it something else.

So, technology developers all over the world try this test: Get a child, the younger the better, give them a task and the device to perform that task. Put the camera in their hands, show them how to point the lens at a subject and ask them to take a picture. If they can't figure out which button makes the camera go 'click,' then go back to the drawing board.

The most successful things in life follow the K.I.S.S. principle. Which has nothing to do with a bunch of guys with paint on their faces but means *Keep It Simple Stupid.* ■

SCANNING THE SCANNING SCENE

PART 1

The quality of flatbed scanners has risen so much, while the price has declined so far, that many more new computer users now have them than even just a couple of years ago. Unfortunately, new users have a great deal to learn about their computers in general, and the optimal use of a scanner isn't at the top of their list. To make matters worse, the directions which come with the scanner are usually barely adequate in telling the owner how to install the hardware and software, and instructions on how to get the best results are very skimpy or nonexistent. Because a scanner can be such a useful accessory for a video maker, they deserve consideration in PANORAMA.

The falling prices, and the occasional need to use stills in a video, have encouraged those without a flatbed scanner to consider the purchase, and I'm often asked "What's a good scanner, and which one should I buy?"

They may as well ask "How long is a piece of string?" The answer is another question: "What do you want to use it for, and how much do you want to pay?" There are many good scanners available at reasonable prices, and most of them would be suitable for their purposes. Still, some would be more suitable than others, for a number of reasons.

However, I don't dare recommend any particular scanner, or even a brand, because the answer changes constantly with improvements in scanners and declining prices. By the time you read this, or at least by the time you went shopping, the price of the recommended scanner would most likely have fallen, some better scanners which formerly cost more would then cost less, and you would be able to buy more scanner for the same money.

You'll probably find Agfa, Canon, Hewlett-Packard, and IBM scanners, among other brands you will recognize. And you'll definitely find even more under the names Microtek, Mustek, Plustek, and UMAX, and others you may not recognize, but don't make the

mistake of selecting on the basis of brand familiarity only. The latter three companies produce most of the moderately priced scanners sold, and manufacture many of the others for the big brand companies.

Price also is an unreliable guide, with scanners in this class falling into the \$100 to \$300 range, depending to some degree on features and quality and only partly on brand. Therefore, it would be more useful to explain the features and benchmarks, making recommendations regarding the significance of each, and let you compare for yourself the models offered.

In the interest of getting this written in a reasonable time, I'm going to quote from many sources, with credit to the sources.

THE BASICS

"For simplicity, we will discuss flatbed scanners in this document; however, the basic principles apply to hand scanners and sheet fed scanners also.

"You begin by placing a document face down on the glass of your scanner and closing the lid. When you press the scan button, the scanhead inside your scanner's chassis begins to move.

A fluorescent light on the scanhead shines light upward onto your document or picture. This light is reflected downward and hits a mirror in the bottom of the scanhead which reflects it towards a Charge Coupled Device (CCD) inside the scanner's chassis.

"The CCD contains an array of photosensitive cells which read the intensity and/or color of the light that hits them. The CCD works with an analog to digital converter to convert the light to a level between 0 and 255 (0 being darkest and 255 brightest).

"The CCD is what determines the Optical Resolution of your scanner. The most common scanners have a 300 dot per inch CCD. This means that for every inch of width in the image, the CCD can sample 300 individual dots of color.

"The scanner reads one line of data from your document at a time. If you are scanning a 6" wide photograph at 300 DPI, the scanner will send 6 x 300 or 1800 individual dots to the computer for the first line of data. The motor will then move the scanhead to the next line. If your photograph is 4" tall, the scanner will produce 4 x 300, or 1200 individual lines when scanning at 300 DPI. Each of these dots may be a different color and they are actually more like tiny squares than round dots.

"If you were to take a large number of tiny ceramic tiles made in a wide variety of colors, you could arrange them in such a way that they would show a picture. When viewed from a distance, your tile mosaic would not look jagged at all. But if you came up for a closer look, you would see jagged edges between various colors. The image produced by your scanner is basically a tile mosaic made of many very small square dots. Using the example above of a 4 x 6 inch photograph, the scanned image would consist of 2,160,000 dots. This is the product of 1200 x 1800 which were calculated in the above paragraph. Your scanned image does not appear jagged because the dots are very small. ...These tiny squares of color are the data that a scanner sends to the computer. Once you get the dots into your computer, different software applications handle them in different ways."

<http://www.mustek.com/Imaging/support/helpdocs/doc2020.htm>

The first point glossed over above is that of flatbed versus hand scanners and sheet fed scanners. My first scanner was a hand held model. It seemed like a good idea because I thought it would be easier to scan the pages of a thick book with it. I was wrong. Nothing was easy

with it.

Sheet fed scanners are only suitable in situations like an office where there are a great number of loose-page documents to digitize. They can't handle books or magazines at all. Note that I'm not recommending that you copy published material illegally for use in your video projects, but there are legitimate uses for scanning from a book just as there are for photocopying the same material. (The other choice, unmentioned up to this point, is a drum scanner, a very high quality instrument used by imaging professionals and printers, and far beyond the financial capabilities of any amateur but the most affluent.)

RESOLUTION

The second point raised above is Optical Resolution. While there are still some 300 dot per inch (or more correctly, pixels per inch) scanners in people's homes, most in the stores now have an Optical Resolution of 600 or even 1200 ppi. Note that Optical Resolution is for the horizontal scan line only. The vertical resolution is mechanical and depends on the precision and accuracy of the stepping motor. It is not uncommon to find that the horizontal and vertical resolutions differ. This is explained more clearly than I can write it in the following quote from the same source.

"The resolution of a scanner is determined by the Optical Resolution of the CCD and the Stepping Speed of the scanner's motor. A 300 x 600 DPI scanner has a 300 dot per inch CCD and a motor that goes slow enough to scan 600 lines per inch as it travels the length of the bed. If you scan at 300 DPI on such a scanner, the motor runs twice as fast as it does when scanning at 600 DPI. If you scan at 600 DPI on such a model, the motor runs slower and the scanner's hardware interpolates the horizontal data from 300 up to 600 DPI. Basically, an integrated circuit chip in the scanner generates new data where there is none through an algorithm by averaging the color of adjacent dots and creating a new dot between them of the average color. This is Hardware Interpolation and it allows a 300 x 600 DPI scanner to produce a 600 x 600 DPI image." <http://www.mustek.com/Imaging/sup>

[port/helpdocs/doc2020.htm](http://www.mustek.com/Imaging/sup)

When judging the resolution capabilities of a scanner you are interested in the Optical Resolution and the Vertical or Mechanical Resolution. Most manufacturers also quote a less meaningful figure, Extrapolated Resolution, generally 9600 X 9600. You needn't pay much attention to these numbers, as explained here at the Mustek site.

"Software Interpolation can increase the resolution even more than Hardware Interpolation. Software Interpolation is performed by the TWAIN driver within the Computer's CPU. This type of interpolation is quite misleading. It does not create sharper images. Image quality and sharpness is always limited by Optical Resolution. Software Interpolation merely increases the amount of data in a scanned image. It is roughly equivalent to scaling an image to make it larger." <http://www.mustek.com/Imaging/sup>

[port/helpdocs/doc2020.htm](http://www.mustek.com/Imaging/sup)

TWAIN

And what is TWAIN?

"TWAIN is a computer industry standard which specifies how image acquisition devices such as Scanners, Digital Cameras and other devices transfer data to software applications. TWAIN allows software applications to work with image acquisition devices without knowing anything about the device itself. If a device is TWAIN Compliant and a software application is TWAIN Compliant, the two should work together regardless of whether or not the software was bundled with the image acquisition device when it was purchased.

Before the advent of Windows and TWAIN, users and developers faced the difficult dilemma of drivers. For every hardware device owned, you would need a driver for every software program you owned. When there were only three different printers and three different programs, only nine drivers were needed. But as the number of printers, programs and other devices grew, so did the number of drivers needed.

There are currently over 200 different printer types, over 20 image editing packages, and over 20 different scanners. If every image editing

program was to work with every scanner and every printer there would be 80,000 different drivers to make everything work with everything. Obviously the market couldn't survive like this, either some items would go unsupported or the industry had to find a better way. Enter Windows.

Windows changed the way people looked at peripherals. All printers are essentially the same, varying only in details and implementation. What Windows did was to develop generic print services. So any program that wanted to print would just print to the generic device and let Windows handle the specifics.

TWAIN is the standard that does the same for scanners. All scanners basically produce the same type of information, varying only in detail and implementation. The TWAIN specification was written by a group of eight hardware and software companies. The acronym means Toolkit Without An Interesting Name. TWAIN driver, TWAIN interface and TWAIN module are all synonyms for a software module that allows image editing, optical character recognition, desktop publishing and fax software to deal with the scanner in a generic way. Users don't need to determine if, "XYZ" program supports scanner "ABC" before they buy it, instead they just look to see if both support TWAIN. Through TWAIN and Windows, the number of required drivers drops from 80,000 to a mere 220... now that's progress!" <http://www.mustek.com/Imaging/sup>

[port/helpdocs/doc2010.htm](http://www.mustek.com/Imaging/sup)

[The TWAIN Working Group advises that TWAIN is not an acronym for anything.]

COLOUR DEPTH/ BIT DEPTH

Another pertinent piece of information to consider is Colour Depth.

"To represent image information for display (monitor) or output a computer uses units of picture elements, or pixels. Computers record the intensity and color of a pixel in 1 or more bits of data. The number of bits used to render a pixel is referred to as bit-depth. There are many different formats used to encode bit depth in files or on screen,

the most common being one-bit, 8-bit and 24-bit. In general, more bits-per-pixel indicates a greater number of possible colors.

One-bit files are the simplest, using just one bit of data to record each pixel. A bit is either on or off -- 100% of a color or 0% of a color. One bit images



are typically used for depicting line art or other one color images.

8-bit files enable the computer to record intensity or shades, but if more than one color is present, the files will not be able to convey photo-realism to a monitor or output device.

To model and render a photo-realistic color image, most systems use a 24-bit color model. This system uses three 8-bit models, one for a red color channel, one for a green, and one for a blue. By storing the various combinations for the three 8-bit models simultaneously, each pixel can display any of 16.7 million different colors.

This model is the standard for depicting photo-realistic color." <http://www.mustek.com/Imaging/support/helpdocs/doc2020.htm>

A few years ago we noticed that scanner manufacturers were advertising 30 bit colour depth, and soon after that, 36 bits. The latter translates to about 68 billion colours. Now 42 bits are claimed (4 trillion colours), and even 48 bits (281 trillion colours)! Can we see that many colours? Will our monitors, printers and television productions be able to use it?

"All computer monitors use dots of red, green and blue to represent the colors of an image. Current Video Card technology only allows 256 intensity levels for each of these dots. Therefore, current computer monitors can only display 24-bit color or 16.77 million colors. I doubt that this will ever change because the human eye cannot distinguish more colors than this. There also would be a quadruple increase in file sizes which would clog the "arteries" of your computer if video card technology advances to 48-bit technology (the next logical step). Keep this 24-bit limitation of your video card in mind as it is quite important when we get to the discussion of 30-bit and

36-bit scanners.

"Video cards allow you to run your monitor in several different modes. You can set your monitor to display 16 colors, 256 colors, 16-bit color (65,000 colors) and 24-bit color (16.77 million colors). Some video cards have a 32-bit mode, but this is merely a speed trick. Computers move information in 16-bit or 32-bit chunks. When a video card allows 32-bit mode, it is storing 24-bits of color information in 32 digits merely to make data transfers faster. The extra 8-bits contain null information.

"The amount of colors your computer monitor can display is dependent entirely on the video card you have installed. If your computer is more than 4 years old, you probably don't have a 24-bit capability. Most machines purchased within the last few years are capable of displaying 24-bit color.

"The amount of RAM on your video card limits the color depth for each resolution of your monitor. Most current video cards can display resolutions up to 1,024 x 768. That is 1,024 pixels horizontally by 768 pixels vertically. (A pixel is one set of three dots, one each of red, green and blue. A pixel can display one dot produced by the scanner.) If your video card has 1MB of RAM, you can display 24-bit color at 640 x 480 resolution. If you set a 1MB video card to 800 x 600 pixels, you will only be able to display 16-bit color. If your video card has 2MB of RAM, you can display 24-bit color at 800 x 600 resolution. It takes 4MB of RAM on your video card to display 24-bit color at 1,024 x 768 resolution.

"Those of you who have purchased a 30-bit or 36-bit Mustek scanner may have noticed by now that it only produces 24-bit files. If you understand what you have read so far, then you already know why it does this. But you must be wondering why we even make scanners that go higher than 24-bits.

"The main reason for going higher than 24-bits is because 24-bit scanners typically produce slightly dark images. It is possible to make them scan lighter, but then you lose detail in the shadow areas of your image. 30-bit and 36-bit scanners produce lighter images by default. Additionally they give the operator control over shadow and highlight detail which 24-bit scanners don't give.

"A 30-bit scanner collects 10-bits of data each for the red, green and blue

color components while 36-bit scanners collect 12-bits for each. The scanner driver allows the operator to control which 24 of those 30 or 36 bits are kept and which ones are discarded. This adjustment is made by changing the Gamma Curve. Gamma settings are accessed through the Tonal Adjustment Icon on the TWAIN Interface. Mustek's 36-bit scanner, the Paragon 1200 SP Pro comes with calibration software which interfaces with the TWAIN driver to select the 24-bits of data that best represent the original image. <http://www.mustek.com/Imaging/support/helpdocs/doc2050.htm>

"You may see some of the newest scanners touting up-to-48-bit color depths—far higher than the traditional 24-bit color. The problem is that the added color depth buys the average scanner user very little (if any) image quality. Unless you're a high-end graphics pro, you probably won't be able to use the extra color information, and you're stuck with much LARGER scanner files that you actually need. In fact, many basic image-editing utilities can't even interpret the additional color data. Unless you have a specific professional need for the added color depth, and the software to use it, save yourself some money and stick with more conventional 24-bit or 30-bit scanners."

<http://www.computeruser.com/articles/daily/8,8,1,1005,00.html>

Few of us are average. (Remember, the average Canadian has one testicle and one ovary!) And neither are our needs. This, like everything else in this article, will depend on YOUR needs. If you just want to use your scanner to send pictures of the baby to the relatives by email, or put some low-resolution pictures on a web page, the advice above is probably sound. However, most of us are into video, and our needs may be higher. But read the fine print!

"The Be@rPaw features some of the highest software enhanced resolution ever seen. It has an optical resolution of 600 x 1200 dpi with a maximum software enhanced resolution of 19,200 dpi! The Be@rPaw's patented BDIT (Bit Depth Increased Technology) enhancement captures a 42-bit color image and enhances it to a brilliant 48-

bit palette with over 281 trillion colors!*

* Most monitors and graphic adapters display up to 24-bit color. 48-bit color can only be used with imaging programs capable of input above 24-bit color, such as Photo Express SE." <http://www.mustek.com/Imaging/index.htm>

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The remaining scanner features are easier to understand.

A few years ago there were two options with regard to the interface with your computer: you could buy one with a parallel port interface, or one with a SCSI (pronounced Scuzzy) interface. The latter was considerably faster, and was the first choice of Macintosh and Amiga users. For PC users, the SCSI version came with a SCSI board that you had to install in your computer, which gave it enough of the SCSI capacity to run the scanner, but not enough to equal the SCSI interface that was already built into the Mac's and Amigas.

I presume that SCSI versions are still available for the Mac users (and diehard Amigaphiles), and I know that parallel port versions are still available, but the trend now is to the Universal Serial Bus (USB) which is a standard interface on modern computers. These too are faster than parallel port interfaces, are plug-and-play, and can be connected and disconnected even while the PC is running. Fastest of all are the Firewire compatibles which are just beginning to appear.

It is a good idea to choose a flatbed scanner with a removable lid, or at least a lid which is hinged in such a way as to allow you to scan the pages of a thick book, or even three dimensional objects.

The first job of a flatbed is to scan opaque pages, but you will occasionally need to scan 35 mm. slides (mounted or unmounted), larger transparencies, or even negatives. Some flatbed scanners have a built in capacity to scan transparencies or offer a transparency adapter, and some are better at this than are others. However, a 600 X 1200 flat bed resolution will produce about 787 X 1050 pixels which can be cropped to 720 X 480 for video, but it

can't be cropped very much. It is also more than enough for a 640 X 480 computer screen but it won't fill the screen at 800 X 600, the current average, and the situation is even worse at 1024 X 768. The worst surprise would come when you tried to print it on a printer where anything larger than real size will be seen to be wanting. If you expect to handle large numbers of slides, it would be better to purchase a dedicated slide scanner, in addition to the flatbed scanner. Slide scanners are quite expensive (and even worse, very expensive), so this is likely to be a later purchase after most of your scanning needs have been provided for reasonably well with a less expensive flatbed scanner.

Almost all the affordable scanners have an 8.5 inch by 11 inch (or just a little larger) glass bed. A select few have an 8.5 by 14 inch (legal size) bed. A very few have an "A3" size bed of 11 inches by 17 inches. The latter will allow you to copy both pages of an opened 8.5 X 11 magazine at the same time, or, more importantly, an 11 X 14 photograph. There aren't many of those around though. A discontinued one that I have only has 300 X 600 ppi resolution, but that's enough for bigger pictures because I won't be using them at that size after they are scanned. Luckily 300 ppi is high resolution after I scale down the size to 720 X 480 pixels for a video screen. (More about that later!)

If you aren't able to find a larger size scanner you can make more than one scan and then "stitch" the separate scans together with software to cover the whole picture. Even if you do have one you will need to use that technique to copy something really large, like a road map (though I have no suggestions as to how you could print it full size)! To this end you are better off with a scanner whose glass plate is not recessed, but flush, or nearly so, with the surrounding housing, so you won't wrinkle the picture.

Up to this point, except for the TWAIN driver, we have been talking about hardware exclusively. Every scanner manufacturer also includes a proprietary program for running his scanners. These programs making it very easy for the beginner to get reasonable results right off the bat. Often they concentrate on making it almost automatic to send your scan to

your printer or fax machine or hard drive, and they are sometimes a good starting point towards achieving top notch results. They frequently also "throw in" third parties image editing programs that work with any scanner and allow you to edit your pictures in a surprising variety of ways. These are usually "light" versions good for starting out, but as you progress you will probably want to graduate to a full-blown image editing software. There are several good programs which we may find space to discuss later, among them Jasc Paint Shop Pro 7 (US\$109), and two Canadian entries, MGI PhotoSuite 4 Platinum (US\$50) and Corel Photo Paint 9.0 (US\$349). But the program of choice among professionals (and very serious amateurs) is usually Adobe Photoshop. The latest version, Photoshop 6.0, costs US\$609.00. The "bundles" are not usually so good that they should be the critical factor in your choice, but if a high level program like Photoshop is offered it could be a determining factor to say the least.

So you can now go out and look for a 1200 X 2400, 48bit colour, A3, Firewire compatible scanner with a removable lid with a capacity for transparencies, for about \$100, with Adobe Photoshop 6.0. (If you find one, please get two and I'll pay you for mine later!) In the next issue of PANORAMA we'll look at various uses for the scanner (Printing and Publication, Web Sites and email, and Video Production), their different resolution requirements, and the different file formats suitable for those uses.

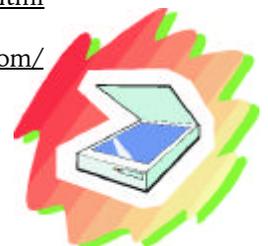
For more information on the subjects discussed above, visit the sites above and those listed here.

<http://www.hsdesign.com/scanning/types/types.html>

<http://www.uni-link.com/scan.htm>

<http://www.flatbed-scannerreview.org/index.html>

<http://www.jasc.com/tutorials/scantip.asp>



scripts, which doesn't usually attract many entries. The Intercities Competition, for which we supply only a "title or theme", doesn't usually have many entries either.

After much consideration, the Executive agreed that if a suitable script is entered in the SCCA Annual Competition, it will be given to the clubs (in place of assigning a title) for a modified Intercities Competition the following year.

Lou's other main suggestion was that the SCCA should publish a questionnaire for all members, to learn more about what they would like to see in PANORAMA. (Lou didn't say that he was responding to my questions in the Summer PANORAMA, "What do you want in PANORAMA, in Conventions, and in other activities in which you think we should be involved? What do you think the others want?" but he may have been. If so, he was the only person to respond. If not, there has been no response to those questions, and no comment about possible Dissolution of the SCCA.) The letter contained many suggestions regarding the questions and their wording, and they were discussed at length by the Executive. We had many questions of our own. Remember that only six people filled out and returned the proxy for the past AGM, most were late (some very late and some still in arrears) in paying their Membership Renewals, and only about twenty-five to date have returned the Registration Form with any information at all. How many people would fill in the questionnaire and mail it back? What do we hope to learn? Are the statistics significant? What will we do with the information? Our Problem is not culling through a wealth of ready material to find that which is most relevant to the greatest number of members. Our Problem IS trying to satisfy EVERY member, at least some of the time, with the few articles that are submitted voluntarily, and obtained by the Editor's arm twisting!

The discussion did elicit some interesting information about the wording of questionnaires in the London Videography Club which we will try to incorporate in any polls we

may take in the future. Your PANORAMA Editor is undertaking an informal questioning of members of local clubs to ask what they hope to get from their club. Your President will construct and mail a questionnaire to representatives of a large group which we are hoping to add to PANORAMA's readership in the future. The proposal to quiz our own members was shelved until we feel the time is right and the information to be sought is worth the effort.

I'm using this platform to answer Lou Lanser so that all our membership will understand that we value and encourage input from all quarters. While not every idea will be adopted, it will be heard, considered, and discussed. Many suggestions originating with members of the Executive, (including especially the President) are rejected for various reasons by the combined wisdom of the Executive together, but a few trigger modifications which make them feasible, and others spark brand new ideas which everyone hopes will be winners. So please don't hesitate to write down your ideas and suggestions which might improve some aspect of the SCCA, and send them to either the Secretary or to the Committee Chairman most responsible for the activity concerned. But don't be discouraged if you don't get immediate results: we meet only once a month and always have a lot on our agenda.

Some times there is just so much on the plate that something has to be pushed to the side. I have to apologize personally for the deplorable state of disrepair of our two web sites. Alas, the CIAFF.org site (which does now carry updated Competition Rules and Entry Form reflecting a change in Ben Andrew's address, among other things) still doesn't list the winners of the past two competitions!

When I posted the corrected Rules and Entry Forms I attempted to send an announcement to everyone on the CIAFF email list. That list was compiled from the Entry Forms submitted with the CIAFF Entries over several years, and laboriously entered onto a list administered by a free hosting service. The list was gone! Lost by the host (possibly during a move to bigger and faster servers)!

In searching for that list, I also checked the much shorter SCCA Members Only list. While always much smaller than the CIAFF list, it was now reduced to only a handful of names. I will be able to rebuild the SCCA list and keep it on my own computer, but that very large CIAFF list will not be replaced easily.

The S-C-C-A.ca site also has serious problems. We were using another free service to host the "Links" page. Over a long period of time I submitted a large number of links, complete with descriptions of each site which I wrote myself. The service organized them hierarchically in the categories I designed, and notified me when dead links were found by a regular automated check. One day I tried to use the links and found the whole thing dead. The internet is sometimes intermittent, as all users know, but after checking it periodically and never finding it working again, I telephoned the company who supports the service. They had dropped the service, without warning or announcement, and since then I have read that the company has since been sold. All my data, collected over more than a year, has been lost, and it will take me some time to reconstruct it and modify the site to incorporate links that work again.

Perhaps the most alarming part is that no one informed me. Not just the service who dropped out, but SCCA members! Are any of you using these sites? Does anybody care? There were a lot of wonderful links on the SCCA site. Didn't you miss them? I posted an item for sale on the Classified Ads Page and so did Stella Magic, but they finally expired, and to my knowledge, no one has put up a free ad since! No one has posted anything on our Discussion Forum since I put up a new welcoming message last October. Do you ever look at the President's Choice on the SCCA News Gathering Service? Or doesn't it work for you? And if not, why didn't you tell me there was a problem? If you only looked at the SCCA site in the first few weeks, and find no reason to return, maybe I should simply remove it instead of fixing it. ■

*We'd love to hear from you.
Really, we would!*

WHAT'S *New* IN EDITING EQUIPMENT?

By Bryan Belfont



This is the second of a two-part discussion on choosing video equipment. I hope you enjoyed my article "What's New in Camcorders" in the Fall 2000 issue of Panorama [please note: two corrections - Hitachi VHS model should be VM-8500L and the Panasonic AG-456 is an S-VHS model]. Now, we look at what's new in *editing equipment*.

Just as the new millennium marked the transition from analog to digital camcorders, it will also mark the change from linear editing "Black Boxes" to computer editing with a PC.

1) VCRs

a) Analog

With linear editing it is essential to start with a VCR that has flying erase heads, audio and video inserts and a jog/shuttle. Each year there seems to be fewer and fewer analog VCRs available for linear editing. This year, there is only one **VHS** VCR and four **S-VHS** VCRs available.

Sony has the only **VHS** editing VCR with full video editing features. Sony continues to offer one **S-VHS** model with LANC; but has discontinued its entire line of **8mm** and **Hi8** VCRs.

JVC has discontinued their **VHS** editing VCRs; but they have three new **S-VHS** models this year.

Panasonic has discontinued all of its **VHS** and its **S-VHS** consumer editing VCRs.

b) Digital

More and more digital VCRs are appearing on the market. **Sony** has just released two **Digital8** VCRs: both with LANC and Time Code and Firewire and a 20 program edit control; but neither model has Audio Insert! Sony also has three **DV** VCRs available - all with LANC, Time Code, Firewire, audio insert and built-in 20 program edit control. However, no other manufacturer has a DV VCR yet.

JVC has just released a dual-deck **DV / S-VHS** VCR. The rumour mill has Sony bringing a similar model later this year.

2) LINEAR EDITING WITH BLACK BOXES

Sony has discontinued its entire line of editing equipment: the XVAL-100 Edit Controller; the RME-1000 Edit Controller and the XVD-1000 Video Mixer.

Videonics is the only manufacturer of a complete line of linear editing equipment with two Edit Controllers, two Titlers and three Video Mixers.

3) COMPUTER EDITING WITH VIDEO CAPTURE BOARDS

Pinnacle continues to dominate the entry-level field with their "Studio" products: a series of analog and digital video capture boards.

ADS has a Pyro Digital Video Board similar to Pinnacle's "Studio DV".

Dazzle has recently introduced a DV Editor similar to ADS "Pyro Digital Video".

4) TURNKEY COMPUTER SYSTEMS

Apple and **Sony** have now entered the consumer market with a number of models dedicated to Video Editing called "Turnkey" systems since all the components you need for video editing - capture card, software, firewire - are already configured on the system.

5) STAND ALONE VIDEO EDITING APPLIANCES

These "appliances" are mini computers with only one application: Video Editing. You can think of them as a "Black Box" which combines video capture, video editing, transitions, titling and special effects. **Draco's** "Avio" and **Applied Magic's** "Sequel" are two models currently available.

These two articles, "What's New in Camcorders" and "What's New in Editing Equipment", were extracted from the texts I write and use for my video courses with the Continuing Education Program of the Vancouver School Board. "Volume 1: Video Camcorder Techniques" and "Volume 2: Basic Video Editing" are available for \$20 each plus postage: contact Bryan Belfont of Video Instructions at 3793 West 18th Avenue, Vancouver BC V6S 1B3 or by phone/fax at (604) 228-0464. For more information check out our Website at www3.telus.net/belfont or contact us by e-mail at belfont@telus.net.

I hope the following "Buyer's Guide" will help you decide.
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VCR BUYER'S GUIDE - JANUARY 2001

MAKE / MODEL	PROTOCOL	FEATURES	PRICE
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VHS

SONY SLV-999	Control-S in/out / Infrared No LANC	Jog / Shuttle (playback) Audio and Video Inserts	499
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S-VHS

JVC HR-S4800	J Terminal / infrared	Jog / Shuttle (playback) S-VHS-ET Audio and Video Inserts	499
JVC HR-S7800	J Terminal / infrared	Jog / Shuttle (playback) S-VHS-ET Audio and Video Inserts	599
JVC HR-S9800	J Terminal / infrared	Jog / Shuttle (playback) S-VHS-ET Audio and Video Inserts	799
SONY SLV-R1000	LANC / Control-S Infrared / Pre-Roll	Shuttle Control (record/playback) Audio and Video Inserts	1499

D8

SONY GV-D200	LANC / Firewire / Time Code DV in/out / Analog in/out	20 program Edit No Audio Insert	1199
SONY GV-D800	LANC / Firewire/ Time Code DV in/out / Analog in/out	3" LCD Screen / 20 program Edit No Audio Insert	1499

DV

SONY GV-D300	LANC / Firewire / Time Code DV in/out / Analog in/out	20 program Edit Digital Audio Dub	2199
SONY GV-D900	LANC / Firewire / Time Code DV in/out / Analog in/out	5.5" LCD Screen / 20 program Edit Digital Audio Dub	3199
SONY DHR-1000	LANC / Firewire / Time Code DV in/out / Analog in/out	Jog / Shuttle (record/playback) Digital Audio Dub/ 10 program Edit	5999

DV / S-VHS

JVC HR-DVS1	Random Assemble Editing 8 Program Edit DV in / out - firewire Analog in / out	Jog / Shuttle on remote Audio and Video Inserts Wipes / Fades	2500
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MULTI STANDARD VHS VCR

Samsung SV-5000W	Record and Playback NTSC, PAL, SECAM Worldwide AC power operation	HiFi Stereo Jog/Shuttle on remote Front AV jacks	749
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Sony has discontinued all Hi8 VCRs.

**Bold models have flying erase heads and audio/video inserts.
These features are essential for linear editing.**

LINEAR EDITING BUYER'S GUIDE - JANUARY 2001

AUDIO MIXERS

MAKE/MODEL	EQUIPMENT NAME	INPUTS	PRICE
PRO-2 M-150	STEREO SOUND MIXER (LED Meters) Master Volume Control	3 Audio, 1 Mic)	149
RADIO SHACK 32-8208	STEREO SOUND MIXER (VU Meters) Audio Cross Fades	2 Audio, 3 Mic	169
Videonics 2000	SOUND EFFECTS MIXER Digital Sound Effects	2 Audio, 1 Mic	Bundled with ThumbsUp

EDIT CONTROLLERS

MAKE/MODEL	PLAYER	RECORDER	TIME CODE	GPI	SCENES	PRICE
VIDEONICS Thumbs Up	4 LANC Control-M	Infrared	RCTC VITC	√	200	499
VIDEONICS Edit Suite #	4 LANC4 Control-M	LANC / Infrared Control-M	RCTC VITC	√	100	499

TITLERS

MAKE/MODEL	FEATURES	GPI	S-VIDEO	PRICE
VIDEONICS PTM-1	PERSONAL TITLEMAKER 28 fonts/size 4,000 characters million colors	√	√	599
VIDEONICS TM-3000	VIDEO TITLEMAKER 200 fonts/size 16,000 characters million colors	√	√	1099

VIDEO MIXERS

MAKE/MODEL	FEATURES	GPI	S-VIDEO	PRICE
VIDEONICS MX-1 #	Video Mixer: 4 inputs Audio Mixer: 4 inputs	√	√	1499
VIDEONICS MX-Pro (Analog)	Video Mixer: 4 inputs Audio Mixer: 4 inputs	√	√	2599
VIDEONICS MX-Pro DV (Digital)	Video / Audio 4 inputs Firewire inputs	√	√	3999

MONITORS

MAKE/MODEL	FEATURES	S-VIDEO	PRICE
Commodore 1702	13" CRT, front composite input	option	100

Discontinued

BOLD models are Recommended

COMPUTER EDITING BUYER'S GUIDE - JANUARY 2001

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS	FEATURES
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PINNACLE "STUDIO DC10 Plus" ANALOG \$160	
Pentium 133 MHz PC or equivalent 32 MB RAM Windows 95/98 256 Color DirectX 5.0 Graphics Card DirectX 5.0 Sound Card 150 MB disc space for 1 hr. Smart Capture video 6 GB disc space for 1 hr. FULL capture video CD ROM and Mouse	Composite and S-Video inputs/outputs Reads RC Time Code Adds titles / cuts / transitions / dissolves Three audio tracks: ambient, narration, CD music Video capture 640 x 480 Software: Smart Capture, TitleDeko, SpiceRack Codec: MJPEG

ADS "PYRO DIGITAL VIDEO" DIGITAL \$155	
Pentium II 333 MHz PC or equivalent 64 MB RAM Windows 95 or 98SE (Second Edition) AGP Video Card Sound Card One free PCI slot 12 GB disc space for 1 hr. FULL capture DV video CD ROM and Mouse	Firewire Cable for DV or D8 camcorder Reads DV Time Code Software controls camcorder Adds titles and video transitions Adds voice over and music Supports NTSC and PAL standards Video capture 720 x 480 resolution in 24-bit color Software: Ulead Video Studio Codec: DV

DAZZLE "DV Editor SE" DIGITAL \$140	
Pentium II 333 MHz PC 64 MB RAM Windows 98SE, 2000, Me 256 Color DirectX 6.0 Graphics Card One free PCI card slot 12 GB disc space for 1 hr. DV video CD ROM and Mouse	Firewire Cable for DV or D8 camcorder Reads DV Time Code Software controls camcorder Adds titles and video transitions Adds voice over and music Video capture 720 x 480 resolution in 24-bit color Software: Ulead Video Studio Codec: DV

PINNACLE "STUDIO DV" DIGITAL \$165	
Pentium 233 MHz PC or equivalent 64 MB RAM Windows 95 or 98SE (Second Edition) 256 Color DirectX 6.0 Graphics Card DirectX 6.0 Sound Card One free PCI card slot 150 MB disc space for 1 hr. Smart Capture video 12 GB disc space for 1 hr. FULL capture DV video CD ROM and Mouse	Firewire Cable for DV or D8 camcorder Reads DV Time Code Software controls camcorder Adds titles and video transitions Adds voice over and music Video capture 720 x 480 resolution in 24-bit color Software: Smart Capture, TitleDeko, SpiceRack Codec: DV

Codec is the video compression

"TURNKEY" COMPUTER SYSTEMS - JANUARY 2001

SONY

"VAIO" Digital Studio						
MODEL	CPU	MEMORY	HARDDRIVE	CD - DVD DRIVES	INPUTS / OUTPUTS	PRICE
PCV-J120	Pentium III 700 MHz	128 MB SDRAM	20 GB ATA/66	CD/RW	Firewire USB	* \$1499
PCV-RX270DS	Pentium III866 866 MHz	128 MB SDRAM	40 GB ATA/66	CD/ DVD- ROM CD/RW	2 Firewire2 2 USB	* \$2399
* Monitor extra: Sony HMD-A200L 17" Monitor \$549						
Included Software: Sony: DVgate, Picture Gear, Smart Capture, MovieShaker Other: Adobe Premiere LE (Light Edition), Adobe PhotoDeluxe						
Optional Software: full version of Adobe Premier \$849						
Available from: Sony Stores, London Drugs, Future Shop						
Sony website: www.sonystyle.ca						

APPLE

iMac Computers						
iMac DV +	450 MHz	64 MB SDRAM	20 GB	CD/DVD ROM	2 Firewire	\$1999
iMac DV SE	500 MHz	128 MB SDRAM	30 GB	CD/DVD ROM	2 USB	\$2299
15" Monitor built-in						
Included Software: iMovie-2						
Power Mac G4 Computers						
G4	400 MHz	64 MB SDRAM	20 GB	CD/DVD ROM	2 Firewire	* \$2399
G4	440 MHz	128 MB SDRAM	30 GB	CD/DVD ROM	2 USB	* \$3799
* Monitor extra: 17" Apple Studio Monitor \$599						
Included software: iMovie-2						
Optional: Software: Adobe Premiere 5.1 \$849; Apple Final Cut Pro \$1499						
Available from: Chris Marlow, Simply Computing, 1690 West Broadway, Vancouver. phone: 714-1450						
Apple Website: www.apple.com/ca						

APPLIED MAGIC

Sequel						
Video Production System	Power PC	20 GB	CD / ROM	2 Composite 2 S-Video		\$3290
DV upgrade	v	v	v	Firewire		\$1369
Included Software: Transitions; Titles; Special Effects; 3 Stereo Audio Tracks						
Optional Software: Upgrade to "Screen Play" \$1369						
Available from: Mick Smith, Commercial Electronics. phone 669-5525						
Applied Magic website: www.applied-magic.com						

DRACO

AVIO						
ST version	Intel Pentium MMX	MPEG-2	20 GB	Smart Card	Composite / S-Video	\$2195
DV version	v	v	v	v	Firewire	\$2895
Note: Avio uses any TV with video inputs. No computer monitor required						
Included Software: Transitions; Titles; Special Effects; 3 Stereo Audio Tracks						
Available from: Howard Uyede, BMS Communications 2880 Production Way, Burnaby. phone 420-7799						
Draco website: www.draco.com						

Creativity CORNER

Quote from Wallace Robertson.

"Remember your degree of creativity is limited only by the extent of your imagination." So let's get out our imagination and dust it off!

Connections, Update:

An article in HomeMakers magazine caught my eye. In the current February March issue there is a story "The Troubles They've Seen" about photojournalists getting stories and video in the world's little war zones. Now aren't these our brother and sister videographers? This could either whet your appetite, or scare you spitless!

Updating the Hamilton video supplier giving classes to camcorder buyers. They're having

their second meeting as I write. Number has increased to 25, which is what they wanted. Local video club members have been invited to take part. This connection is doing very well!

Thom Speechley and Keith Gloster are still involved in persuading clubs that video can be used to showcase any club's activity.

When Joseph Bochsler started reading all the video clubs' newsletters, he found that they interact quite a lot. More connections!

If you find any connections involving video club people, please share with us.

Change of Direction



Jeanette & Wallace Robertson
photo by Joseph Bochsler

Wallace and Jeanette Robertson are still very busy. But at 65, Wallace has a new family project under way. All at S.C.C.A. thank them heartily for their years of help, and wish them both Godspeed in their new endeavour. We hope they will share some of their new adventures with us at PANORAMA, time and energy permitting.

Joan Bochsler, Editor.

The Last Word...

Almost became The Lost Word this issue. Space is at a premium, even after adding four pages.



At the two club meetings I attended this month I made an appeal to the members. My question: "What do you expect at your video club meeting?" The answers varied. Brantford wanted more videos and less talking! (see Club News) Hamilton people were interested in making videos, but also mentioned the camaraderie within the club. Lots of networking goes on at the break, and people share expertise on editing, and other problems. Club library tapes move at this time as well.

There has been a move toward making a Video Club questionnaire about "Where are we going?" Perhaps we just need to stop and ask everyone at the meeting, and get our answers immediately!

A reminder about the theme subject for this year's SCCA competition. "My Town" Let's all compete, and brag about our own corner of Canada! Or scare people so they won't move in and spoil your spot in the sun (or snow).

This issue we have some heavy stuff, about Scanning, and about Attrition, and about buying equipment. We also have some lighter stuff, and I hope you like the balance. There will be some more serious stuff about Macintosh later.

Next issue we are hoping to start a letters to the editor space, and also a spot for Video tips. Pay us back, send us some problems or solutions. You could even tell us what you would prefer to have in Panorama.

Bye for now. ■

Joan Bochsler, Editor.