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PANORAMA

OF AMATEUR FILM & VIDEO

SUR LE FILM ET VIDEO AMATEUR



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Photo by Joseph Bochsler Jr.

Fred Briggs, FSCCA

"Good News, Bad News"

As President, I enjoy the pleasure of announcing Good News, but with that privilege goes the responsibility of breaking Bad News. Life is filled with both, and this month I have more Bad News to share than Good News.

It seems that whenever people are asked "Which would you rather have first?" their response is almost always "The Bad News". I guess people can't enjoy Good News when they're concerned about Bad News Coming, so here it is.

I'm sorry to have to inform you of the passing of an active member, and an inactive member, as well as the resignation, for reasons of health, of another recently active member.

Walter Strickland, ASCCA, passed away on December 22nd after a long bout with Leukemia. Walter was a member of the SCCA for a very many years, and until the last few years when his health worsened, he was a perennial winner of the Len Cobb Trophy for Best Travelogue in the SCCA Annual Competition.

We will miss his friendship, and we offer our sympathies to his family.

I telephoned our old friend Walter in Montreal last month and was shocked to learn from his wife of his passing. I guess I wasn't that surprised by the

news, as his condition had clearly worsened, and he was in considerable discomfort when I last spoke with him, but it isn't the way you like to get news like that. Usually friends tell you of the passing of mutual friends, or you read about it in the paper. You certainly don't like to refresh someone's grief several weeks after the event by calling up and asking if you can speak to him! She was as shocked as I was, because her first words were "Have you been out of town?"

Walter was one of the two remaining members of the former Montreal Movie Club in the SCCA, with the other being Past President **Armand Bélanger, FSCCA**, still the easternmost member of our organization. (In fact, since the resignation of Jan Bekooy due to his poor health, Walter and Armand were our only members east of the Ottawa River!)

Walter wasn't able to participate in film making in the last few years, but he was a loyal supporter who still took an interest in the society, and read PANORAMA regularly.

Lois Fowler, FSCCA, passed away on January 8th at 81 years of age, after suffering from Alzheimer's disease for many years. She was a long-time member of the Ottawa Movie Club and the SCCA, but was unable to continue to enjoy membership in either because of her condition, which consumed so much of her husband Gordon's time that eventually he also had to resign.

Lois, an SCCA Patron and Founding Member, was a great asset to the SCCA, serving the society in many ways including organizing the CIAFF Gala in Ottawa for many years. After 61 years of marriage, Gordon and their five children will always miss Lois, though they will be relieved to see the end of her suffering.

We have also learned that **Jack Ruddell, FSCCA, FPSA**, has recently been admitted to a residence where he can get more care than his wife was able to provide alone. Jack has been declining and is somewhat confused. His wife Gerry tells us that he still knows everyone, and still has his sense of humour, but is unable to read PANORAMA anymore because of difficulties concentrating, so she has asked that we remove Jack from our roster.

For many years Jack held the Photographic Society of America record for the most wins in International Amateur Film Competition, and his lead was so great that his record probably

hasn't been surpassed even yet. For the past few years we have made a practice of screening some of the winning films from yesteryear's CIAFF, and Jack's 16 mm. films have been featured regularly.

We wish Jack and his wife a long and happy life together.

Finally, I have some Good News! While Armand Bélanger is now our only member in Quebec, and as far as I know we have never had any SCCA members, or clubs, in the Maritimes (with the exception of **Muriel Upton** who moved to Halifax after her husband Bunny passed away), we have suddenly become a society with members from coast to coast!

We have received an application for membership from **Hugh Damine**, a resident of Buchans, *Newfoundland!*

We don't yet know much about Hugh, except that he was a former member of the Toronto Film and Video Club for several years, and has moved around a bit. We welcome Hugh to the SCCA and look forward to coming to know him as well as we know several of the residents of the British Columbia mainland and Vancouver Island. Who knows! If he does a good job of recruiting new members for us on "The Rock", he might become our next Eastern Vice President!

We also welcome other new members this year. Please see the updated Membership roster included in this issue.

We have selected a time and place for the 2005 SCCA Convention. It will be held in Port Stanley, Ontario, a small and picturesque vacation community with an emphasis on the arts just a few miles south of London, on the weekend of September 23rd to 25th.

As explained in the Autumn PANORAMA, we will incorporate the CIAFF Presentation of Awards and the screening of some of the winning videos into the program. More details will be provided about the venue and the program in general will be published in the Spring Issue of PANORAMA, with final details and Registration Information and Forms in the Summer Issue.

The London Videography Club will be partnering with the SCCA on the arrangements for this convention and are very enthused about the project, so if there is the slightest possibility that you will be able to make the trip to Port Stanley in September, mark the dates on your calendar now and watch for more information. ■

CLUB NEWS

By Joseph Bochsler, F.P.P.O., A.S.C.C.A.

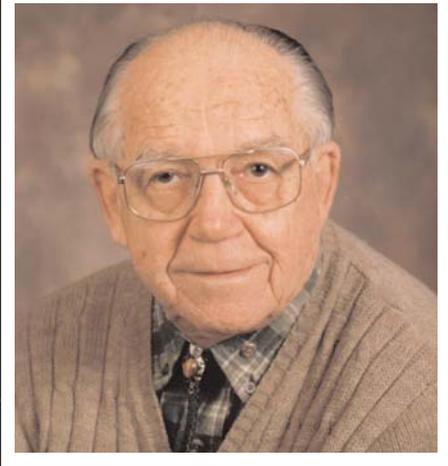


Photo by Joseph Bochsler Jr.

Another Christmas and New Year has gone by and I'm settling down to edit the club newsletters from across the country that I have received since the Fall edition of Panorama. I expected to receive my Christmas present in time to use over the holidays, but it wasn't to be. It arrived three weeks after Christmas, but it was worth waiting for! It was the Fugitsu Lifebook C2330 Notebook (laptop) with wireless capabilities, which means that I can use the laptop anywhere in the house or out on the patio and use my Email. I can also use it to edit my videos with the Microsoft editing program.

The Grand Heritage River, which passes our back yard, had an early ice break-up this year, which I documented with my Canon G1 2 camcorder as well as with my Canon PowerShot Pro 1 digital still camera. I prefer to use the Canon PowerShot Pro 1 as it has 8 megapixels and the Canon G12 Camcorder has only 1.7 megapixels. The rushing and piling high of ice on the banks of the river made for some good footage. A few days later we had a thaw and the ice in the river flowed freely again and allowed the geese and ducks to land on the water. We even had 4 white swans visit us: they were probably heading south.

We've had some changeable weather lately in southern Ontario: one day it's 18 plus, the next it's minus 15. If you need a video project to keep you indoors, mine is to copy the Christmas cards we received this past holiday season and adding narration and appropriate sound. Joan in her narration usually mentions some background history about the family.

A word to the wise, keep your camcorder batteries warm. Keep a spare in your pocket.

BRANT VIDEO MAKERS, BRANT CAMCORDER NEWS, Edited by Dan Kennaley.

We celebrated the debut of our "new" Sharpvision projector, which the Toronto Video Club sold us for an excellent price. Joe and Joan Bochsler made the arrangements and Keith Gloster picked up the projector in Toronto. The Toronto Club received a Trillium Grant and was able to buy new equipment. "It's a case of one video club supporting another and we are very grateful for their generosity," said Dan Kennaley. Joe Szaloky will be in charge of the projector. It is a two LCD format, three colour auto convergence, manual focus, auto cooling, with S-video and two RCA inputs.

The **one-minute video** competition was held at the last meeting.

- *Pie Eating Contest* by Joe and Joan Bochsler. Joe's great nephew, Daniel Bochsler, won the contest. These youngsters, ages 3 to 11 could sure wolf down a pie!
- *Documentary of Art Crain's Ancestor, Joseph Brant* by Frank Birch and Don Bradley. Art and his cousin were discussing their ancestry in the first part, and then Art took them to visit his sister and husband for an interview.
- *Thankfulness* by Dan Kennaley showed Dan and Alyce enjoying a Thanksgiving dinner with their son, Martin, and his family. Dan values his family very highly.
- *Jacob, The Reader* by Don Bradley. This charming video starred Jacob Bradley, Don's great grandson, "reading" a storybook word for word. He was not quite two years old at the time. What a treasure to have for posterity!
- *Once In Love With Amy* by Joan Jacquemain. Amy is in love with her beau who comes around early in the morning and leaves a rose for her under her car's windshield wiper.

Joan, the snoopy neighbour, hangs around like the paparazzi and videotapes her finding the rose.

- *Get a Life* by Alex Szatmary showed the juxtaposition of slums morphing into flowers. I think the abrupt sad ending showed the results of using drugs. I will ask Alex if that is the correct interpretation.
- *Las Vegas* by Martin Van Erd. Martin may be up for an Academy Award for his acting in this video. It was shot on location in Las Vegas by a company who cleverly superimposed Martin performing his manoeuvres over an existing video. He was flying on a magic carpet around and through the Las Vegas Strip with funny incidents happening along the way. It was very entertaining.
- *Silvie's Wonderful Minute* by John Taylor, John's daughter was taping herself on a web cam and performing many facial contortions and catching varying angle shots.

There was no declared winner of the competition.

The last video shown this evening was Jim Town's *Waldo*. It was of vintage airplanes. It was excellent! Jim is president of the London Club.

BUFFALO MOVIE-VIDEO MAKERS, CAMERAMA, edited by John P. Weiksnar.

North Park Theatre Shoot. It was a very cold and snowy Tuesday 12/21/04 for a scene from "*Tesla: The Accumulator*" to be shot. My initial concern was that the big old theatre was going to be too cold and the actors' breaths would be noticeable on DV tape. As Gary Marzolf (*Tesla*) and I were waiting outside the gig, Phil Utech arrived with his usual car full of goodies. I can't say enough about

Phil's exuberance when it comes to filming; it helps to calm the set so that creativity can commence.

We added multiple light sources and turned on the old Foghog Jr. 2. The outcome was beautiful. With rich colors and good staging, we knocked out two hours of movie magic. Usable footage is estimated at two minutes, which I am very happy with. By the way, the theatre was not cold enough to cause breath to be seen.

Remember, make movie magic every day! - - Archives Chair, *Emil J. Novak*

Idea From Gray. I had an idea for a future meeting. I've always loved good commercials. There are a bunch on TV right now that catch my fancy like the HP ads with the picture frames, the pedigree dog nose commercial, most of the Geico commercials, Toyota truck bed abuse, and others. Taking off on Bernie Rice's lead with his "for sale" video, maybe we could present a challenge to the members (besides Fred Calandrelli - - just kidding) to produce a 30 second commercial or public service announcement for a real or imaginary product. They could be humorous, serious, spoofs of real ads . . . take-offs on political ads, shrinking the head of Billy Fuccillo, etc.- - Member *Graham "Gray" Hayes*.

HAMILTON VIDEO/FILM MAKERS, REEL NEWS,

edited by Liz Stewart

Library Lament and the Loop. Just checked my Oxford dictionary for the meaning of "lament". Maybe the word is too strong for my purpose. But I do regret the lack of interest in the Video Club collections of videotapes and DVD. This has led me to look way back somewhere nearer to the beginning to find out more about our video club.

So I am checking out tape #43 "Hamilton's Original Proposal 1990." The tape also includes three short videos by Jan Bekooy of Ottawa. It was last borrowed 16 years ago. In this tape Fred Briggs has fewer lines, more hair. He reaches out eloquently to members of other video clubs. One of the comments made by him is that "competition is good, but co-operation is better".

The three short videos are delightful, especially the one with the treasure map in the tin can. Truly a classic production. Jim Small was responsible for this. Included on the tape is an interview by Jack Carey talking to Jim Small about his (Jim's) video equipment.

There are several CANUSA tapes available. These were made by clubs in the loop that was developed in the 90's so that video clubs could share their work. I will bring all the CANUSA tapes I have on hand to the next Club meeting. It's a good opportunity to see what others have done. Maybe it will provide a challenge to to-day's videographers.

So remember to check us out at the next Club meeting and don't forget to check out our photograph albums-you may find yourself there. Talk to Photographer Joe if you want a copy, By *Joan Bochsler, Club Librarian*.

CONTESTS.

JANUARY: Have our Christmas videos improved since those 8mm films that showed everyone around the Christmas tree as they opened their gifts? How would you now make a "Christmas" production? Will it interest everyone or put them to sleep. Running time on this theme is limited to *FIVE* interesting minutes or one very boring minute.

FEBRUARY: This is a test. Produce a "One Minute" video (including Graphics) that will be a stepping stone to the entry that you will provide for the *HALMAR ONE MINUTE* contest that is now a part of the club's Annual Video Contest. Practice your technique and refine your concept before making the ultimate one-minute production.

MARCH: Spring is springing ...but let's not forget about winter just yet. Titillate us with your best winter footage and create a longing in our hearts for a short summer so we can get back to winter again. How well did you learn to use your camera under harsh lighting conditions (manual exposure) as well as giving us a sense of the season.

APRIL: Can you manipulate your editing system well enough to produce a non-vocal, non-ambient video that uses *MUSIC ONLY* to set the mood and tell the story? This one is hard but you have plenty of time to work on it.

LONDON VIDEOGRAPHY CLUB, IT'S A WRAP,

edited by Robert Thorn.

The meeting started with the presentation of the SCCA awards by the SCCA Membership Chairman, Thom Speechley. Ron Jacob was presented with not just one, but two first place plaques. Ron was the recipient of the St. Kit's Award for the Most Humorous entry. He also was presented with the Calgary Club Trophy for the Most

Original Entry. His *Guy's Guide to the Kitchen* (the winner of both awards above) was also the First Runner-up in Class "B" Intermediate Class. Congratulations Ron!!!

The London Videography Club's answer to the Compulsory theme *The Chase* entitled *The Big 5-0* was the First Runner-up in the Compulsory Theme for The Inter-City Trophy and was also First Runner-up for the Garlick Trophy for the Club's Best Video. This was the video produced by Bill Dow, Harvey Hackland, Bob Plumsteel, Bob Thorn and Jim Town, with a little help from our friends at Hustler Billiards and Bob Thorn's son Christopher Thorn. No one had brought a still camera but Bob Thorn used his video camera to grab stills of the presentations. (Bob Thorn had not arrived yet-he had told us he would be late.)

With regards to the SCCA contest, I believe I have been mistaken about the compulsory theme, or the Inter-City Trophy category. I was under the impression that this was supposed to be a Club Effort, not an individual one. Subsequently perhaps some of you might have been discouraged from entering on your own. Let it be known far and wide that, until further notice, the Compulsory Theme Inter-City Trophy is open to all, whether you decide to make it a group effort or an individual one.

The *Garlick Trophy* is for what the Club believes is its best video. There is some confusion still in my mind about this category. We will consult Keith Gloster and bring clarification in the future (sometime before entries are due).

Jon Soyka, from the Hamilton Club, Chairman of the CIAFF and the shooter of the "shoot the *Bag Shoot*" arrived quite unexpectedly. He had read our newsletter, It's a Wrap. (See Bob, your work is appreciated and read by those other than our own Club members.) Jon read about our "Bag Shoot" project scheduled for the night's meeting and came to "shoot the shoot" He intended to edit his footage to show other Clubs what we are doing here in London, although the size and camaraderie of our Club make us somewhat unique and may not pertain to others, Brantford being one possible exception. Jon also re-presented the trophies to Ron, so that Bob will have a choice of shots in this periodical, (and also show others that Jon does visit other Clubs). By President, Jim Town

Space does not permit more detail of the

night's shoot. See <http://www3.sympatico.ca/robert.thorn/page1.html> or <http://members.rogers.com/speechley8505/>

OTTAWA FILM AND VIDEO MAKERS,

BULLETIN currently not published.

For the December meeting, we met at Hampton Park Plaza's Swiss Chalet for a scrumptious chicken dinner, and then convened at 191 Monterey Drive for the rest of the evening. Rashid suggested we put our Club on a web site. There were also 2 general discussions; 1) Re buying a DVD burner - agreed. 2) Re dividing the club into two groups for the end-of-the-season contest, a decision was postponed until January.

Next the evening's main event - our December contest. Members brought in copies of a video taped skit from November's meeting. Those not competing were asked to judge them on editing only. Hearty congratulations to winner, Christine McGregor. The meeting ended, along with light refreshments at 10.40 pm.

VANCOUVER VIDEO PRODUCTION CLUB,

REEL TALK, edited by Cathy Caravan.

I have a few things to report concerning my recent trip to Europe. The minute we arrived at the Amsterdam airport we were surrounded by gigantic posters advertising Sony's new wide screen camcorders. The European versions of the DCR-PC109E and the HC85E have a true wide screen mode. I say, "true" as some current models in North America say wide screen but these merely stretch the full screen mode using a digital conversion process to simulate a wide screen mode. The European models use the extra pixels on the camcorders with 1 megapixel or more to achieve a true wide screen mode. The LCD screen on these models is also wide screen 16 x 9.

The next generation of camcorders is the Sony HDR-FX1. This is the first High Definition camcorder available. Both the European and the North American models have true wide screen modes with a 16 x 9 monitor. Both cameras use the 1080i format with 1440 x 1080 aspect ratio in the HDV mode and 720 x 480 in the standard DV format. I'll get back to a deeper discussion of what all these numbers mean in my next article on HDTV televisions. In the meantime, remember that the resolution we have been using on our VCRs is

480i (interlaced) and the resolution on these camcorders is 1080i.

The other big piece of news is the ability of our being able to send our recorded DVD's to be played back in Europe. I took a DVD-RW to Europe and played it back in Germany and France. I tested it out on a computer, a stand-alone DVD player, and a Sony Play Station. It played back perfectly on all machines: both the video and audio. To further check out the compatibility I recently sent a DVD-R to my European friends and there was no problem on playback. I have asked them to send me a copy of DVD that they have burned on their machines and will let you know if it plays back on my North American gear.

If you are like me and cannot wait to get your hands on a Sony Hard Drive and DV Recorder, be patient. The only current model from Sony is the RDR-HX900 with a 160 GB hard drive with a recording time up to 200 hours with a list price of \$1,199. The new model in Europe is the HDR-HX1000 with a 250 GB hard drive, which can record up to 325 hours! Even if you don't buy the newer model you can expect the old model to come down in price.

For feedback on this article, please contact Bryan Belfont at belfont@telus.net

VICTORIA VIDEO CLUB,

BULLETIN,

edited by Sheila Perkins.
Where are We Going? It seems that we've recently been along this road. Now, again?

Our assets;

All of us enjoying our hobby, respecting one another's talents, encouraging one another and seeking to learn more about how to improve our skills. Among friends. Sharing and contributing. All old hat, I know.

Many of us with happy memories of our achievements in bygone days, and trying now to extract the most from being in a Video making club. Good times together.

The ability to organize, plan and execute a Convention, 70% of Convention work done with a handful of our Club members. Mark Levy, President of SAVAC, described this convention as the "most smoothly-run" one he'd ever attended. Victoria has its brand on it.

Frustrating decrepit, outdated, temperamental Club equipment. I know; I'm in the front line. A "fight" every meeting night with it, and to add insult to injury, we're looking at an image

quality that's not only obsolescent, but has become progressively "fuzzier."

Our Club Equipment: The DVD player we're acquiring will be about the only piece of viewing equipment that can do justice to the potential image quality of DV and DVD formats that we use.

Lets face reality. VHS never was much good from the day it became popular in the early 1980's. A workhorse for mass consumption, but...its image quality was compromised from the beginning.

We've had Hi-8 and VHS for 14 years, with its image quality twice that of VHS. Now, we have DV, DVD and Component - better again! I ask you - how far out-of-date is our Club equipment? And how good can a TV monitor from the 90's be? Technology "moves on"

Since we're a Video C-l-u-b, think how nice it would be to view our showings on up-to-date equipment. Our members are a discriminating segment of viewers, and so we value superior performance from a TV monitor.

Should we put up with the "junque" we have, should we wait another 10 years 'till many of us won't be fit enough to attend meetings - moved on -or dead - but the Club will still have \$700 in the bank?

In reality we haven't "gone backwards" financially so far this year. In fact, thanks to "that handful of Club members", over \$300 has been added to the Club account.

Hang on to your hats.

I propose:

1. Trade in our TV dinosaur for a 28 inch flat screen with S and component inputs. The old soldier has done his duty!
2. In the future, maybe in 2005, buy a small "lockable" cabinet, at a used-furniture store, about three or four feet high, with shelves, to store our VCR and DVD players.
3. Further to help fund the above purchases, I propose asking each member, i.e. per family, to contribute a one-time \$25 special levy. A mere \$25. This is like, for example doing without any one of the following:

.... A half tank of gas, or a one-way bus trip to Vancouver; or one night at a modest restaurant; or a half-dozen magazines; or a few overseas 'phone calls, or a half night's motel accommodation in a Two Star motel; or a few drinks on board a cruise...You can name more.

Epilogue:

I sense that our members came out

each meeting primarily to "Do and View and Learn" as well as chatting and sharing insights " Having a pleasant evening!"

Humble Scribe - *Dave "Frank" Fuller*

AMATEURS MOVIE MAKERS ASSOCIATION, AMMA

MONITOR, edited by Mark Levy.

Make Movies ...Make Contentious Movies

Festivals are the main opportunity we have to showcase our work and get feedback from the audience. A much more reliable indicator than those judges, unless of course they recognized the quality of our work and awarded it first place. This year's Festival was enjoyable with a wide range of interesting entries but as a foreigner (it's OK; I am a legal alien), I was struck by the absence of any films that would raise someone's hackles, bring boos from the audience or cause a fist fight in the bar in the evening. Not that I advocate violence, but it is nice to see movies that go straight for the jugular vein and give rise to dissent, discussion and irate or adulatory reviews. There were no films addressing pollution, climate change, prescription charges, the price of gas, immigration, lawyers, war, or a list of issues that would make fascinating subjects viewed from any angle, and particularly from a personal angle.

In the 1960's I (we, really, I will not reveal the names of the other participants as they are now pillars of society) made a film on Super8 titled "Last Lines" that looked at the growing world population, pollution and food shortages and suggested a nuclear cull as the solution. This was shown at a Festival in Montreal and the resulting riot halted the Festival for a couple of hours and gave rise to more discussion and ire than anything else I have been involved with. At the same Festival, one of my co-workers showed a film that purported to be a message from the Queen of England to her disloyal subjects in Quebec. He was present and had to go into hiding for the rest of the Festival. A year later at the S8 Festival in Toronto which we attended, we were subjected to an exhilarating mix of congratulation and verbal abuse that demonstrated the power of film. Later, after several large drinks, we appeared on Rogers Cable TV for an interview and gave a completely incoherent account of ourselves. Well, yes that was over 40 years ago and I should be older and wiser, but I fear I

am not.

All around me I see injustice, greed, fear, poverty, bigotry. The list goes on; these are subjects that we non-commercial filmmakers should be addressing. Documentaries do not have to be even-handed. If you have a viewpoint, then go ahead and make a film about it. I know that in polite society, religion and politics are regarded as taboo, but they are the most interesting subjects that impact us all and must be discussed in every way possible. It is far too dangerous to leave it to the professional media with its overt and covert agendas, its dependence on the advertisers and growing fear of offending anyone with an IQ greater than 50.

So go out and make a movie about something that really ticks you off. At our age it will probably be about the kid in the car with a sound system that can be heard and felt three blocks away. I think I will go do that. *Guest editorial by Ned Cordery, AMPS President.*

I.A.C. THE FILM AND VIDEO INSTITUTE

FILM AND VIDEO MAKER, edited by Garth Hope, LICI,

The Positive Image, by Tom Hardwick, FACI.

Not long ago I was asked to shoot a video of a 150-guest surprise birthday party and it's "unplanned" situations that you need eyes to left and right, in the back of your head, as well as on the viewfinder. Small children ran under your feet, adults sang and got drunk, unexpected things happened at odd times and I was expected to capture it all.

Lots of you know of my love for the sidescreen on modern camcorders. With a conventional viewfinder I'd have been as effective as one-eyed man with tunnel vision. I'd have had the viewfinder bashing against my eye, I'd have tripped over wriggling kids and I'd have missed a lot of what was going on around me.

The big and sharp side-screen on modern camcorders is a Godsend to anyone in such a situation. I can track forwards and backwards through the crowds with the camera while making sure I don't trip over small people. I can look left and right to make sure I'm not missing interesting action happening out of frame and I can get much more fluid "steadicam" footage by having my slightly bent arms take the shudder out of my walk. In such a crowded situation it's also a lot safer not having a 1.5 kg

lump of machinery being an extension of a valuable eye.

With the camera at my eye (Super-8 Sony TR2000) people were very aware that they were being filmed and many reacted accordingly, becoming unnatural and even losing the thread of what they were saying as I approached. Using the side-screen and having the tally lamp permanently off I'm able to film with what appears to be a very much more casual attitude and this encourages those being filmed to remain calm and behave naturally. Of course I'm far from filming casually in such a situation, it's just an impression I've perfected to enable me to film the real world without disrupting it too much. The very act of carrying a camera tends to distort reality and in my view is a big plus point for the modern compact Mini DV over a shoulder mount, for instance.

Question You have often expounded the virtues of VHS, Tom. My finished films are VHS, but is DVD a lossless form of digital archiving? I seek to achieve the best quality, of course.

Answer My finished movies are kept on VHS, DVD and Mini DV. There was a time when making SVCD's was another alternative, but I now believe that the cost and availability of DVD blank media - as well as the huge acceptance of DVD players throughout the land has made DVD king for distribution. VHS won't lie down and die just yet though, and VCR's - even S-VHS VCR's - are ridiculously cheap. But VHS struggles to maintain picture quality, even when expensive decks and blanks are being used for recording, and DVD is the great leap forward we've all been waiting for. I don't believe there is any difference in the vulnerability of videotape or shiny disk. The former is open to demagnetization and crumbling, but being analogue it's difficult to lose the program content entirely, however roughly the tapes are stored or handled. It is one very good reason why VHS has been around nearly 30 years. Homeburnt DVDs are fussy, sometimes not playing on older decks and they're known to freeze and stutter at times. Yet as burners and blanks get even more reliable these really are just early-adopter teething problems. The disks still have to be handled with care, but from this day on DVD really is the medium that carries the message to the masses. ■

VALUABLE ACCESSORIES? OR TRUNK TRASH!

Some on the Executive are concerned that too many of our articles are quite technical, and that some of them go over the heads of many of our readers, so it's time that I wrote something non-technical, but hopefully still useful to our members.

What I'm about to tell you is so ridiculous, and out of the main stream of current thought and common practice, that I first have to give you a little background so you can accept that I'm not pulling your leg!

First, you should know that I spent twenty-two years as a Wolf Cub, Sea Scout, Sea Rover, Assistant Leader and finally Skipper of the Sea Scout Troop. The "Be Prepared" motto was an important part of my life from eight to thirty years of age, and left a lasting impression.

Second, except for a few years driving a '54 Austin Healey and then a '57 Studebaker Silver Hawk, I've driven oversize cars almost exclusively, starting with a 1951 Chrysler New Yorker, progressing through a succession of Ford Galaxy and Impala convertibles, a string of Oldsmobile 98's, and finally a couple of Lincoln Towncars, including my current wheels, a 2001 Cartier L (the "L" means "stretched", but still short of a limo). Lest you think I'm bragging, I hasten to explain that every car was bought used, and the first Lincoln, an '88, was bought in '94, and driven until this past autumn, when it was unceremoniously dumped at the ripe old age of seventeen years. Consequently, I've never driven a front-wheel drive, and I've always had a very large trunk, at least over the past forty years!

I've also been collecting movie cameras and projectors, screens, editing equipment, accessories and movie making paraphernalia for many, many years, not to mention good useful tripods, and oodles of camera bags in which to store the small stuff. In fact, my collection was one of the main reasons we had to add

an upstairs addition on the house, doubling its floor space, but it continues to grow (the collection - not the house!).

I like to believe that I've bought most of this stuff to use, and not just to look at, and it really upsets me when I run into a problem on a shoot that could easily be solved -- with something that I left at home!

I also grew tired, physically, lugging that equipment down and up the stairs whenever I went out to videotape, so I began to leave some of it in the trunk. From that, a plan has evolved.

Now I regularly carry 4 tripods: **#1** my best, heavy, solid Miller tripod, with Miller legs and fluid head, for when I won't be shooting very far from the car, **#2** a solid, but lighter, Bolex tripod with another Miller fluid head, to use when I will have to hike some distance, like in the woods, **#3** a much lighter and smaller, but still serviceable tripod, for when the going will get rough, or include rock climbing, or large crowds of people, etc., and finally, **#4** a small, low, wooden tripod that will provide a good steady platform at a low angle.

In the pictures, **#1** is hanging suspended below the left fender, **#2** below the right fender, **#3** is lying behind **#1**, and the wooden tripod, **#4**, is on the trunk floor. I also carry a monopod, with a ball joint, seen lying beside **#1** on

the "shelf" which holds the spare tire, and a shoulder support seen hanging on tripod **#1**. This is handy if I'll be doing a lot of walking in a situation when a tripod can't be used, would get in the way of others, or just doesn't work, like in a museum or jumping on and off "People Movers" at places like Disney World or the CNE, or when I hope to have sudden opportunities, like shooting wild life.

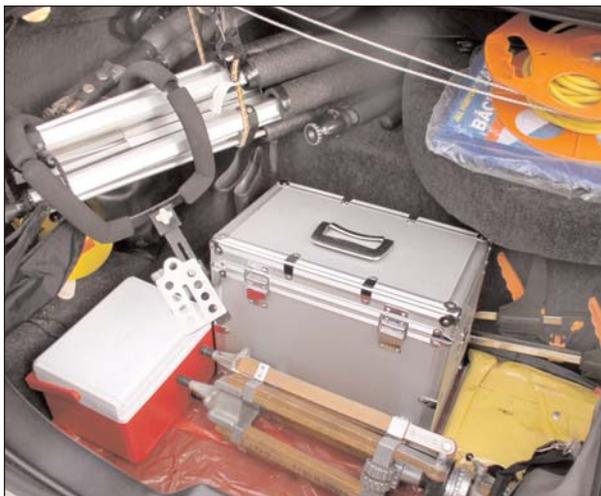
The monopod serves similar purposes, but isn't as steady, and I can't use both hands for something else while carrying the camcorder. It's also more difficult to do a long smooth pan with a monopod.



Notice that all of the above (with the exception of the wooden tripod) have been outfitted with black foam rubber grips. On the larger tripods, these are lengths of foam covering intended to prevent pipes from freezing. They provide three advantages: **a)** they cushion the load when carried on my shoulder, **b)** they also act as silencers, reducing noises like the clicking of a hanging lens cap rattling against the tripod leg, and most importantly **c)** they make shooting outdoors in very cold weather a little more bearable. You can buy them at Canadian Tire, but Home Depot carries a variety of diameters.

On the monopod and shoulder support they are foam tubes for fishing rods, bicycle handgrips, etc, from Canadian Tire.

Why so many tripods? If something happens to my "one-and-only tripod" in the field, I'll regret not having brought



my backup, and I'm a big believer in backups, from experience.

I've been working on a history project for six years now, and have shot a great deal of different things at so many different locations, and often going to such extreme lengths to get the shot I want, that I finally realized that I should have a second camcorder running to show these situations, for use in a "making of ..." trailer to show when my video is finally complete, to help publicize it. So that's why I need the two largest tripods. And the others? Well, they're small, they don't take up much room in the trunk, ... and I use them.

Of course, you can't shoot yourself using the camera unless you use another camera, or a mirror. I use the back-up camcorder.

The small SONY TRV9 miniDV is kept in the car at all times, in that little red plastic insulated box with the white lid on the trunk floor. Have you ever seen something you'd like to shoot when you were out in the car, and your camera was back at home? I have, many times. Now I carry the back-up camcorder (remember, a back-up for everything) in the car always, with a couple of exceptions.

If I'm copying a tape from one camcorder to another, I need both camcorders in the house. If the weather is cold and I'm planning to shoot indoors somewhere, I bring it in ahead of time to let it warm up, and then take it with me in the front seat where it's warmer, so the camcorder lens won't fog up, or the camcorder fail to run because of condensation when I later take it into the warm place to shoot. But when I *unexpectedly* see something I want to tape, it's usually outside, like a hawk or an owl on a roadside tree, and I don't have to pre-warm the camcorder for that. And, of course, in the summer, that problem doesn't exist anyway.

I also keep my digital still camera in the glove box, bringing it in occasionally for the same reasons I bring in the back-up camcorder.

I carry an extension cord (the orange reel with the yellow cord sitting on the spare tire cover), and I've used it many times. Usually, it isn't used for shooting (though it has been, to power a remote camcorder without killing batteries, etc.), or me that needs it, but others, who bring their equipment to a meeting and forget an extension cord, or need "just one more". In case they're not prepared, I am! (Like battery jumper

cables!)

There are a few things in the trunk that I don't use regularly, but when they are needed, they are really needed! This includes a yellow rain suit in the clear bag (on the floor of the trunk), without which I wouldn't have been able to shoot the tail end of those two recent hurricanes that crossed Lake Ontario full of rain.

There's also a black umbrella, whose handle just barely shows behind tripod #3 (but you know what a black umbrella looks like), and a 9 X 12 foot blue plastic tarp (between the extension cord and the spare tire cover). I carry the tarp in case I want a shot from ground level. If I'm in my good clothes, and/or the ground is wet, I won't get the shot without that tarp. With it, I don't mind kneeling, or lying on the ground. You can buy them at Canadian Tire, among other places, and they come on sale at very low prices a couple of times a year. You buy it when you see the sale, not when you need it and the price is high! Be Prepared!

Just below tripod #1 you can see the tops of a pair of rubber boots ("Wellies") They came in very handy when three of us went birding in Luther Marsh, and the old road crossed three fords as it wound around the lake. I waded through the shallow water ahead of the new van, checking the depth and the submerged rocks that could scrape the floor of the van, or knock off the exhaust system. And when we arrived at the point at the dammed-up lake where the herons nest, it was very difficult to get near the water's edge, except where the old flooded road ran out into the new lake, and I alone was able to walk out a long way into the lake to get around the brush at the shoreline. I couldn't get as far out as I would have liked, though, so this coming Spring I intend to buy inexpensive fisherman's chest-high waders!

They won't stay in the trunk all the time though; just when I think I might use them. There's no way I'm wading out into the water in our cold winters!

Nor does the aluminum box always stay in the car. It holds my main camcorder, tapes, spare batteries, chargers for both camcorders, microphones, earphones, auxiliary wide angle and telephoto lenses for each camcorder, various connection cords, a Bolex lensshade that I've adapted to my camcorder, etc. I even rigged up an umbrella that fits on the camcorder's accessory shoe. It protects the camcorder, and me, from sun

or rain, but it's worse than useless if there's any kind of a breeze! The camcorder will fly away!

I bring in the box periodically, and every time I'm going on a shoot, and recharge all the batteries, check over the contents, remove what I'm sure I won't need, and add what I might need, and then put it back in the trunk for the morning.

I also carry a few large green garbage bags in the box. They take very little room, and fit easily between other items, but they can be worth their weight in gold. A few years ago Jim Small and Eckhard Kries, my two business partners, and I got an assignment to shoot a football season for a junior team whose coach wanted the video for studying the plays. It didn't pay well enough for all of us to cover each game, so we took turns, working alone. One game was played in Hamilton's Ivor Wynne Stadium, the home of the Tiger Cats, and I worked it alone, setting up all the equipment in the glassed-in Press Booth way up in the top of the stadium. I made several trips hauling all my equipment up the stairs (there was an elevator, but it was locked because it wasn't a regular game day), plugged in the big power supplies and hooked them up to the two big professional S-VHS camcorders on very heavy, sturdy tripods on dollies, and shot the game from there.

In the second half a storm came up very quickly, and suddenly there was lightning, thunder, and a torrent of rain, all at once. Everyone on the field was in the locker room in about 15 seconds, and after about 20 minutes it was clear that they wouldn't be coming back that day!

I waited another half hour for it to let up, and finally decided that this wasn't going to get any better before dark. I started carrying the tripods and dollies down first, one at a time, trip after trip, through the uncovered stands. On the last trip, on my way back soaking wet and wondering what I was going to do about the electronic equipment, the caretaker intercepted me half way up and asked "Would you like some garbage bags?" I got the bags and put the power supplies and camcorders in four bags, and four trips later I had the stuff back to the car. I've always carried several garbage bags in my gadget bag since. In a pinch I could put one over my head and body, tear a hole to see through, and get back to the car with my equipment still dry!

There are only a few things in the pictures left to explain. On the floor, at the vertical wall under the tire, there are two orange things and one yellow thing. They are long bar clamps, in three different sizes, bought at Canadian Tire. These clamps can be quickly disassembled and reassembled as spreaders, so they have a hole at each end to make this possible. Through the holes I've inserted a 1/4-20 bolt and nut, to which I can attach a photographer's ball joint. The clamp can be adjusted to various lengths and clamped anywhere (on a door, fence, step ladder etc.) I want to attach lights or a camcorder. In their reversed configuration, they can even be fastened in a doorway, spanning the gap, with the camcorder at one end, up high overlooking a room. I've used this trick to videotape a guest speaker in a meeting room so seriously overcrowded by the audience that it was impossible to set up a tripod. One camcorder went into bookshelves at the back of the room, and the other was set up in a window casing along the outside wall, both well out of the way of the crowd who would have tripped over a tripod leg several times.

The other thing is a gray tool bag, containing a large variety of small items - bungee cords in several sizes, tent pegs (steel and plastic), a rubber mallet (to pound in the tent pegs!), a short crowbar (to pull them out), foam kneepads (easier than the tarp), a few ball joints for use where needed, small bar clamps, and other small items which I don't want bouncing around loose in the trunk. You'll notice the long, light bungee cord holding the extension cord on top of the spare tire, and the two shorter, heavier bungee cords suspending tripods #1 and #2 under the fenders. But they have another use, connected to the tent pegs.

A couple of years ago my two partners, Jim and Eckhard, and I (and Carolyn) went to a grass airstrip at Rhinebeck, NY, where they fly vintage aircraft every weekend during the summer. I needed some shots of a 1920's De Haviland Moth and a Curtis JN-4 Jenny, and we got those, but there were so many other interesting planes, some even older, that we spent the weekend videotaping the takeoffs and landings. Each plane taxied to one end of the airstrip, turned around and took off heading the other way. On landing they came in at the same end, landed, and taxied back to their starting position. We took up three different positions to

get different views of the action. I set up my tripod almost against the fence along the edge of the airstrip, with a road immediately behind me. I couldn't infringe on the other side of the fence, and I couldn't backup because every now and then vintage cars tore along that roadway. The result was that two feet of the tripod were up against the fence, and one stuck out toward me. As I panned the takeoffs, I started on one side of that leg and had to step over it as the plane passed me. In order to avoid kicking or tripping over the leg, and jiggling the camcorder, I would take my eyes off the viewfinder every time, just as the plane passed me, and then I had trouble finding the plane again in the viewfinder as it rose into the air.

It was after viewing all the footage at home that I found the solution. That leg had to be shortened, and moved out of my way to a vertical position, but that made the tripod unstable. The answer to the problem was a tent peg and a rope (or bungee cord) placed between the other two feet just inside the fence (which could just as easily have been a wall). Any tendency for the tripod to fall over toward me was countered by the bungee cord. For soft soil, the plastic tent peg was ideal, but for hard ground, the steel peg was needed. And you buy them in packages - not singly!

The tent pegs were used again in another way when I wanted a close-up shot of the business end of an old cannon as it was fired at Fort George at Niagara-on-the-Lake. The CBC had wanted the same shot before me, and set up a very expensive camera on a special stand they built and positioned on the hillside directly in front of the cannon, some distance across the dry moat that surrounds the fort. The staff at the fort warned the CBC against doing the shot from there, but the CBC said they knew best and were sure it would be O.K. In the end, the blast hit the stand and camera and sent the whole thing tumbling all the way down the long hill to Navy Hall at the bottom! I needed another solution.

I put a tripod head on a large square piece of 3/4 inch plywood, drilled a lot of holes through the plywood, and drove steel tent pegs through the holes to fasten the plywood just over the hill on the ground across the dry moat, with the camera just peeping over the hilltop, and drove the plastic pegs around the perimeter. The camcorder was adjusted on the tripod head to aim the lens at the

cannon. We started it recording, and retreated to the bottom of the hill. When the gun was fired we returned and pulled out the pegs. I had the shot and I still have my camcorder!

I don't try to keep everything in the trunk that I might need. If I did, I wouldn't be able to put the groceries in it, and I'd be right back in the days when I used to remove the trunk lid from my Austin Healey every week to get the groceries!

For another shot of the same cannon high on a platform at the fort from a lower position where I was permitted to stand, I added a ten-foot high tripod and a three-step folding platform that raised me 29" off the ground, so I could see the viewfinder screen and control the camcorder overhead. To get these into the fort in one trip, along with my two camcorders, tripod #1, and my equipment box with various auxiliary lenses to fit the situation, I also took a golf cart (push or pull type) and golf bag. They're stored at home most of the time.

There are also seasonal items, which I don't need at other times. For example, I've been trying for a couple of years to get some ice boating shots on Hamilton Harbour, but conditions have to be just right, and I need the cooperation of ice boating expert Jon Soyka who will narrate the sequence, so in the winter I keep a large bag packed with a snowmobile suit I bought at Value Village, special socks, gloves and mitts, a motorcycle helmet, balaclava, extra warm boots - everything I will need for the fleeting opportunity, and that's all packed ready to go on a few moments notice.

I'm not recommending that you pack everything that I have in my trunk, but I do suggest that you consider what you want in the car all the time, and what you might want for different problems and types of shooting, and carry them when they might be useful. ■

BE PREPARED!

I've built a few other contraptions to overcome specific problems. Please let me know if you're interested in another article about some of these solutions.

by Fred Briggs

PROFILE Series

MY HUSBAND, THE "FLICKERS MAN"

by Joan (Flickers) Fuller



I suppose, after some 47 years of marriage to David, I should be used to seeing pieces of perforated celluloid or cassettes of video tape lying around the house. Perhaps, as a baby, his soother was a discarded camera lens, in disguise.

David occasionally reminds me that he could never control his craving for "movies" Apparently, as a kid in elementary school, some local NUT gave him an old Pathe 35mm silent theater projector along with a bunch of small reels of movies, cleaned out of the projection room when sound movies arrived. I can imagine it - at that tender age, the "flickers boy" in his home town.

When our paths crossed, and destiny had us married off in 1957, I knew nothing about his "other" passion. Soon enough, it surfaced when he arrived home with a Nizo 8mm camera and a Bolex M8 projector.

In a way, this passion was a good thing, provided I could tear him away from it, as needed. We raised two kids. A record of our children's growing-up grew quite large by the time we decided to emigrate from Australia to B.C. in 1967.

But think of it - how many long hours we must have sat through these home movie shows. Pity the poor, innocent victims - the visitors! You know, along with the disorganized maze of "opportunistic shots", a kind of organization had begun to emerge. David and I had our

kids act out short skits: he'd scratch away with his "frame-line" splicer again and again and I could see shape emerging from chaos. There was hope!

Oh yes, then adding "sound" raised its ugly head. David brought home his new toy, a reel-to-reel tape recorder. Friends, if you thought that the silent movies were pretty much "hard-tack-full of weevils" to most hapless friends, now with the tape-recorder, their ears *and* eyes were assaulted unceremoniously! Weevils and maggots!

I know, that's harsh. To be fair, at least I always knew he wasn't in the pub or betting shop or worse. I could hear him diddling and doodling around in his hobby room.

Our movie-making fortunes took a new course when my husband began to "diddle around" with a sync-box that loosely married the tape machine to the Bolex projector. Incidentally, I noted at the time, more and more pieces of rejected "bootlace" pieces in the trash can. A good thing! One day, in good faith, I swept his room and thought I'd done a great service by throwing away some of these short "pieces of bootlace" lying on his desk. Never did *that* again!

As our fortunes improved in our newly adopted country, David realized that this bootlace film could never win many prizes. Home he trotted one day, with a much-used Beaulieu 16mm camera, complete with an Angenieux zoom lens poking out like a huge, long snout. A few weeks later, he saw an ad in a magazine for a discontinued Bolex 321 16 mm. projector, brand new. New York. A heavy, but durable monster. (A widow-maker, I feared. A hernia generator, at least.)

Magnetic sound-on-film. It didn't end there. Oh, no! A Vancouver film studio was upgrading its editing gear. Yep, home came a 4-gang sync block plus an audio cassette recorder that would read sprocket holes and lip-sync sound. Sounds of car-doors slamming, rifle shots - piece of cake for him. "Add a sound-proofing, lead-lined blimp around the camera ... Hmmm," he continued musing (aloud), and built one for the Beaulieu. And on to record-

ing and syncing live dialogue. Edison's reincarnation dwelt at our place.

Well, that was his "thing", I guess. To my surprise, all this diddling around began to pay off as David was winning awards in amateur contests. At last, I didn't have to lock the doors shut when we had visitors over to "watch our movies."

Simultaneously, David developed TV Production classes at his Secondary School. Both of our kids enrolled in Dad's classes. Two B/W video cameras, a switcher, audio mixers and a couple of Panasonic "flying heads" reel-to-reel VTR's. He says to mention that this was in the early 1970's! Mean anything to you?

Video was well and truly "in" by the early 1990's. David reckoned that when Hi-8 and S-VHS arrived, the image quality, though nowhere near as good as 16mm Kodachrome, was "good enough".

History repeats. Videonics analogue surfaced. Continued interest in winning awards in amateur contests, too. And making "baby movies" of our grandchildren.

And now "NLE", as he calls it. Gobbledegook again, but he's happy "diddling" away in his hobby room and his "stuff" is much easier on the eye and ear, too. As a dutiful, supportive wife (of long patience, I add), I've "acted" for him and I've written storyboards.

We've both had heaps of fun directing our short scenarios, featuring our grandchildren who are just born to be the most natural actors.

You know, come to think of it, I haven't noticed in our wills any mention of what's to happen with his legacy of recorded memories and how his paraphernalia is to be "disposed of". I wonder: as heirlooms or in a dumpster.

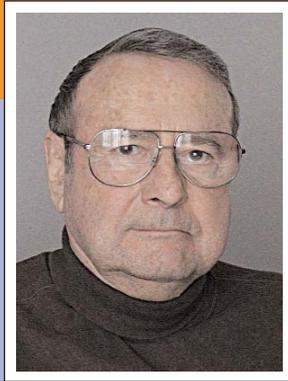
But, David is still crankin' em out: he's as active as ever in Moviemaking Clubs and helps out with sundry contests. I suppose, one day, when he can no longer lift his Sony 2000, he'll hang it up gracefully and be content to watch the young cats doing the same thing as he's done since childhood.

Continued on page 20

MORE GREAT STUFF FROM THE INTERNET

Navigating the SCCA Website

By Thom Speechley



In previous issues of "Neat Stuff etc.", I listed many websites with potential help for the serious videographer/film maker. However I now confess to having neglected the excellent site maintained by our own organization, SCCA. For several years Fred Briggs, "webmaster", has been enlarging and refining the site and, most important, making it as user friendly as possible. The following will be a quick walk through the main pages.

The correct URL for the site is <http://www.s-c-c-a.ca> Note: Those are "hyphens" between the letters. For most browsers it is possible to simply type in: **s-c-c-a.ca**

To "bookmark" this address, with the homepage open, in "Internet Explorer" press **ctrl/d**, or go to "Favorites" and "Add to Favorites". Do not use the "right-click/add to favorites" method in Explorer. It only saves a link to the first "frame" of the home page. In "Netscape", go to "Bookmarks" and click "Bookmark this Page" or, press **ctrl/d**. Right clicking on the homepage in "Netscape" also opens the "Bookmark" menu option.

After saving, open Favorites or Bookmarks to confirm the address is correct as above.

Home Page Overview



The opening page consists of two 'frames'. The upper frame has links along the left margin that take you to "Affiliated Clubs", CIAFF, SCCA Contacts and "PANORAMA". This section also has links to sources of information regarding annual and regional meetings and the SCCA Competition. There is also an e-mail link for anyone requiring further information. You will notice an "unidentified" icon just below that, which will be explained later. Notice that the subjects highlighted in white text are also clickable links.

A recently added resource is a link to "Daypop", a search service for current news regarding digital video, camcorders, editing and DVD. And finally, there is an input form, which allows the reader to forward a link to this site to a friend or associate.

The bottom frame is the main navigation tool with five options for exploring the site. On the far-left side of the frame is a direct link to the CIAFF.org. This shortcut is useful for contest entrants who are unfamiliar with the site. The next window ("Where Would You Rather Be?") has a pop-up menu with a choice of several subject pages. The right hand window is a "key word" site search engine.

The link in the middle called "Site Map" opens a page with links to all individual pages on the site. This allows you to go directly to a particular page, an issue of "PANORAMA" for example. The text "Search the SCCA site!" is a link to another search engine.

Note that the "bottom" frame remains in place, even when you leave the SCCA site to "browse" one of the many links. If you ever think you are lost, click "Site Map" or SCCA Home Page at the bottom and you will get back to where you started.

Get the free "Adobe Reader"

We assume that most readers have "Adobe Reader" installed. If not, please note that much of the site content, especially issues of "PANORAMA" are in "Acrobat" PDF format and can only be accessed with "Reader" installed. If you don't have it, it is a free download, or you may find that it came with one of your software packages. Here is the download site: <http://www.adobe.com> Once there you will have to navigate around all the literature trying to sell you the "Adobe Acrobat" program. Click the icon for the "Adobe Reader." On the next page, click the link to "Adobe Reader 7.0".

Near the bottom of this third page is a line that reads: **Download Adobe Reader 7.0.** Click that link and follow the simple installation instructions.

Take the Tour

The best place to start your visit is by opening the dialog box "Where Would You Rather Be?" This offers a 'quick pick' of many of the pages you will want to explore. This is where to look for late updates of SCCA activities, such as meetings and conventions. The place I visit most often is the "LINKS" page.



Links Page

This is probably the richest page in the site. It contains 1968 distinct links to sources from books and equipment to film stock and stock footage. Instead of "Googling" through endless blind alleys, I have bookmarked this page and start here instead.

The page consolidates all the links I

would otherwise have crowding out my "Favorites" or messing up my desktop. It's a quick way to check for updates of your most popular software. And, if you are curious, you can even discover the fun of 3D and stereoscopic picture making.

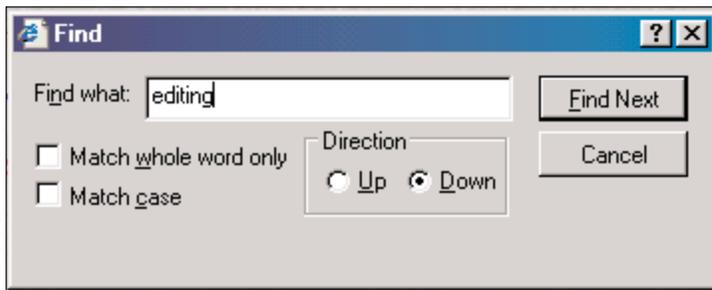
The image shows a screenshot of the "SCCA LINKS" page. The title "SCCA LINKS" is prominently displayed at the top. Below it, the text "1968 Distinct Links" is shown. A breadcrumb trail reads "Home Page > SCCA Links Page". The page lists various categories of links with their respective counts:

- 3D Pulfrich 2
- 3D Stereoscopic 19
- Animation 23
 - Animation Instruction 11
 - Cartoon Animation 7
 - Cell Animation 6
 - Claymation and Stopmation 6
 - Digital Animation Software 14
 - 3D Max 3
 - NewTek 8
- Film School and Training 3
 - At Home 10
 - Online 16
 - Schools in CANADA 12
 - Schools in UK 4
 - Schools in USA 10
 - Seminars 3
- Film Societies 4
- Film Students 6
- Film to Video Transfers 8

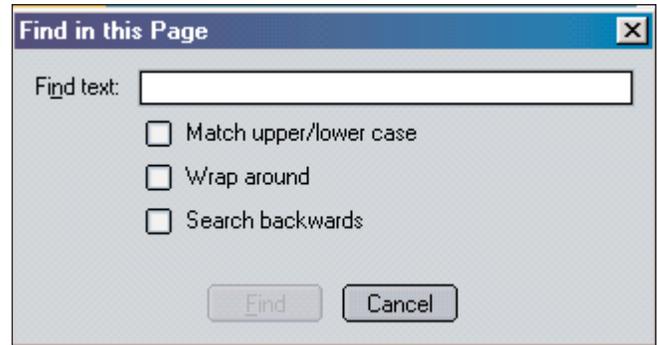
Control F (CtrlF)

You probably use this standard "Windows" feature to explore individual pages to find specific words or references. With the page open, holding down the "Ctrl" key and pressing the letter "F" opens a dialog box for entering your search keyword. The keyword will be found only on the page displayed and not in any link or document to which it may refer. You can apply this method on any opened page at any link and many websites provide their own search options for further exploration.

CtrlF - Internet Explorer



CtrlF - Netscape



Search sponsors [add search to your site](#)

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Search SCCA Website [search tips](#) [Return to SCCA Homepage](#)

▼

Refining the Search

For more selective browsing, use the search engine on the bottom frame of the homepage. Clicking the heading "Search the SCCA site!" opens a new page with a query entry box.

You can ignore the links at the top of this and similar pages. They are obligatory links to site sponsors. You can enter a descriptive group of keywords and ask the engine to match all the words (Matching ALL) or

find references to any words chosen. In this example, the "ANY" choice found 33 instances. When "ALL" was selected, the search was narrowed down to just 25 hits. Obviously you can cut your browsing time with proper application of this facility. The link above to "search tips" is very helpful in that regard. Try some of the variations for one of your favourite topics and find which one narrows your search most effectively.

This search facility works the same as the single box at the right side of the bottom frame.



Remember when using either search facility that "CtrlF" can be used at any time to zero in on specific terms or words even in the list of references found.

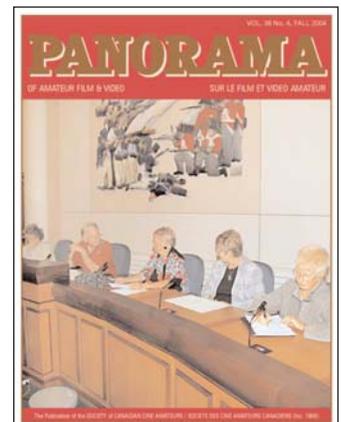
"PANORAMA"

For many of you, the main attraction of the site is the opportunity to review an online copy of "PANORAMA". At this time this is the only way to see the publication in 'living colour'. You will certainly appreciate all those fine shots by Joe Bochsler and others. And for historical interest, you can find copies and articles going back to 1997!



Be sure to use the separate search feature, which is part of the "Acrobat Reader." That is the "binoculars" icon on the top menu. This will find a word anywhere in the entire opened document. The search rules are similar to those given in the above tips link. With the "Panorama" page open, using

CtrlF in current versions of either "Internet Explorer" or "Netscape" will also open the "Reader" search facility.



Trade Specific Searches

After returning to Home Page, go to the "Daypop" link and select one of the four topics. This is a quick way to search the Internet for news on the subjects which most interest us. In the illustration the default choice is "digital video" and "all pages". Now press "Search"

SEARCH DAYPOP for Latest Video News (last 5 days) in News and/or Weblogs

DAYPOP

Annou

Site To A Friend!

Your I

Our search picked up more than 1400 hits. They were quite random and not always relevant to our needs but once inside "Daypop" you can refine your search. All references are refreshed daily and kept for five days so you can go back next week for much entirely new information. Clicking on the word "DAYPOP" takes you directly to that site where you can perform searches on subjects other than the above selection.



Vital Statistics

About that unidentified link on the home page. This will take you to a series of screens, which give vital statistics for the site. You may not be impressed, or even interested, but browsing these charts should give some appreciation of the "global nature" (a worn out phrase) of our interests and the Internet.

SCCA		Edit
URL:	http://www.polar.icestorm.com/scca	
Counting since:	13 March 1999 / 19:07	
Current report:	27 January 2005 / 14:14	
Summary	: Totals and Averages	
Unique Visitors	: Day Week Month Hours of the Day Days of the Week	
Incl, Excl, Reloads	: Day Week Month	
Geo Tracking	: Domain Country Continent	
System Tracking	: Browsers Operating Systems Screen Resolutions Screen Colors	
Referrer Tracking 1	: Last 20: Unsorted Email Searchengines Queries Usenet Harddisk	
Referrer Tracking 2	: Totals: Sources Searchengines All Keywords All Website Referrers	

Let's examine just one of the summaries. System tracking tells us how quickly our clients are catching up with technology. This helps in maintaining and upgrading the website.

From this snapshot it is obvious that targeting a website for a resolution of 640X480 is no longer necessary. The question of course is, can we now take advantage of the higher 1024x768 resolution?

We hope you will bookmark the site and keep coming back for regular issues of "PANORAMA" and updates. And I'm sure Fred will welcome any suggestions and comments.

Because the website is an ongoing project, we will be publishing further articles to help you get maximum benefit from it. Next time we will talk about the "Site Map" and further ways to help you locate information.

Happy surfing! ■

Screen Resolutions			Unique Visitors
800x600	2635	46.94%	<div style="width: 46.94%;"></div>
1024x768	2156	38.41%	<div style="width: 38.41%;"></div>
1280x1024	268	4.77%	<div style="width: 4.77%;"></div>
Other	198	3.52%	<div style="width: 3.52%;"></div>
1152x864	158	2.81%	<div style="width: 2.81%;"></div>
640x480	153	2.72%	<div style="width: 2.72%;"></div>
1600x1200	45	0.80%	<div style="width: 0.80%;"></div>
At this moment Screen Resolution Tracking is not yet supported by all browsers.			

HOT LINKS

By Fred Briggs

Adobe Photoshop *elements* 3.0 plus Adobe Premiere *elements*

Adobe has recently introduced, and I have purchased, two new programs. One is Adobe Photoshop Elements, Version 3.0, an update of the earlier Version 2.0. The other is Adobe Premiere Elements 1.0, a "light" version of Adobe Premiere, which, like Photoshop Elements, provides most of the capabilities of the "Parent" (should we say "Big Daddy"?) program, at a greatly reduced price.

If you go to the LINKS Page at <http://s-c-c-a.ca> (see Thom Speechley's article in this issue for more information), and click on "Adobe Graphics" (in the first column under "Graphics" which is beneath "Editing Software and Hardware", you'll find a link to "Adobe Photoshop". This will take you to the page for the new Photoshop, version "CS", which sells for US\$649.00.

You will also see a link for "Adobe Photoshop Elements", and if you click on that you'll find that this program sells for US\$99.00!

Similarly, if you click on "Adobe Premiere" (under "Editing Software" under "Editing Software and Hardware") you'll see that Premiere 1.5 costs US\$699, but Premiere Elements 1.0 is just US\$99.00! And if you go to either of those two "Elements" links you'll find an Adobe link to "Adobe Photoshop Elements and Adobe Premiere Elements", a bundled package which goes for US\$149.00, or just a little over 11% of the cost of the two big programs sold separately!

There was also a special introductory upgrade discount pricing that until recently expired at the end of February, (a restriction that has now

been removed.), and I got the package for just US\$119.00 plus shipping. (Canadian orders are charged GST and the appropriate PST, but you are saved the Canada Post charge for collecting these taxes.)

The package consists of a plastic DVD case containing a program CD for Photoshop Elements, two CD's for Premiere Elements, and a DVD containing an introduction to both programs. After loading both programs, and getting some experience with the Photoshop program, I decided to review the first one in this issue of PANORAMA, and the Premiere Elements in a later issue.



Why am I writing about a Photoshop program? The main General Interest shared by our members is Moviemaking, and for most of them that now means Video. But some of our members have a broader interest in other forms of Photography. Usually that means Digital Photography, in one form or another. Today, most video cameras also have a capacity to store digital stills on some type of removable memory, and some have found that they need additional features, like higher resolution, flash, etc., and have bought a digital

camera. I could have put the link to the new Photoshop program under Digital Photography, but I realize that many videographers, with no interest at all in still photography, still have a need for a photo editing program because they use stills, which they have scanned, in their videos!

I'm sure everyone has heard already that I have been working for six years on a history video of the community in which I was raised. That has involved scanning hundreds of photographs from family photograph albums, libraries, historical societies, archives, and postcards I borrow or buy on eBay. When I moved from Hi8 to miniDV, I acquired the capacity to make digital stills, and began to collect shots of current places, statues, plaques, grave-stones, etc. Finally I found it necessary to add a digital camera for too many reasons to go into here. All these pictures are stored on my computer (22.6 Gigs so far) in a large number of folders identified primarily by source, so I can keep track of where I got everything, because some of them haven't been cleared for use, and I'll only clear those I'm actually going to use. Some ostensibly identical postcards are filed in different folders because of the sources, and I have to keep them all because some are in better condition than others, some have postmarks defacing the card in different places, some are better scans, etc. As a result, when I want to find something, it's a matter of searching through likely folders, opening the files in a photo viewing or editing program, and scanning everything that I come across because it might be better than what I already have. The collection is getting unmanageable!

I bought Elements 3.0 because I had already found that Elements 2.0 had most of the facilities of the full versions of Photoshop, with a few additional capacities. For example, Panorama photographs used to be quite popular (and never really died) and I have been able to find several that I want to use in my history video. However, they are usual-



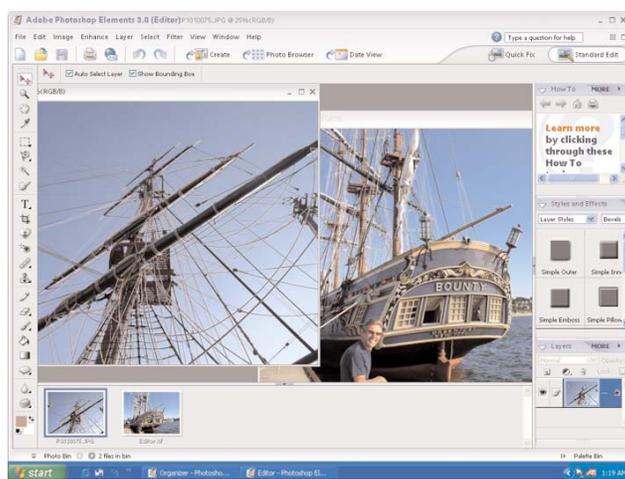
ly too long to fit in a scanner, so I have to scan them in sections, and then "stitch" them together later to make one long picture that I can turn into a simulated camera pan with video editing, or specialized, software. Now I also make my own series of stills with my digital camera, for the same purpose. My stitching was originally performed by manual manipulation, copying and pasting in a photo editing program which uses layers, but now I use the stitching command in Elements 2.0 (Adobe calls it Photomerge), which Photoshop didn't provide (but maybe it's there in the new \$649 version). Elements is also easier to use for quick and automatic adjustments of contrast, colour, instant red-eye correction etc., while it still provides most of the advanced features of its big brother. Some things don't appear to be available at first, but many of them, like burn and dodge, can be found if you look around where you didn't originally expect to find it (click on sponge!), but some settings and flexibility is missing. How else can they sell the high priced version? And if the latter isn't an option for you, this is a much better alternative than just doing without!

I might use the "direct burn to CD or DVD disc" someday, but I probably won't ever use the slide show with music feature, and I'm even less likely to use the photo-email ability (email attachments are great for my needs), or the raw camera and 16-bit data features. (My camera does give me an option to store tiff files instead of just jpegs, but it isn't in the raw data class!)

I will definitely use the capability to compare several similar pictures (read postcards) to select the best version, and the flexible print option for laying out several pictures to fit on one sheet of paper. Remember that my main purpose of still photography is to add pictures to videos, so I rarely print them anyway, but when I do, I have had to use a separate program just to give me some capacity to add pictures to the same sheet. (I used to copy and paste the pictures onto a larger blank page to accomplish this, but it was too labour intensive!)

I haven't had an opportunity yet to do a lot of editing with this program, but I've done enough to report that it handles very much like its big brother, and

it doesn't seem to have problems. We would have expected Adobe to get the bugs out because of their prior experience with several versions of Photoshop, and two with the stripped down Elements.



There is also a Quick Fix Mode in the Editor that hides most of the options, adjustments, and other stuff that might frighten the beginner.

Most of my experience so far has been with the new module they call the "Organizer". Adobe had an earlier program named Adobe Photoshop Album 2.0 that was a companion to Photoshop Elements 2.0 and provided some of the same functions as the new integrated Organizer. In the past few days I have loaded over 3,200 pictures (and still going!) into this Organizer and tagged each of them with key words that identify the sources, and puts them into a complex classification system which I quickly designed (and am constantly refining on the fly as I gain experience with the program) to allow me to sort my pictures into groups. You set up Categories, Sub-categories, and Tags as the need arises, so it isn't necessary to design the perfect system before you start, and then start over when you find that you didn't plan properly. The whole collection can be ordered by date of origin (scanning or digital camera shot), Import Batch (to the Catalog), or Folder Location (a God-send!) in ascending or descending order -- the whole collection or any subset. I can pick out and display the five "Wind - Storm" pictures in a few seconds. I can find the 109 Canal pictures, or the 75 Bridge pictures, or the 126 that show Canal or Bridge, or the 29 pictures that show both Canal and Bridge, or the 155 which show either one or both, just about as

fast. And I can quickly make any adjustment to the Tag, Sub-category, or Category that turns out to have been unwisely applied. That's the power I need, and it's going to make my life a lot easier than it has been!

There's always a *However!*

There are some exasperating bugs in this Organizer component of Photoshop Elements 3.0. The funny thing is that the editor doesn't suffer from the same bugs! That's probably because they have cobbled together two separate programs, and sometimes the fit isn't perfect. Files can be dragged from one section of the program to another, (and I expect that the Photoshop program will also integrate with the new Premiere Elements), but sometimes a file will work in one part, and not in another!

These problems, so far, all appear to be associated with file names. Windows is fussy about file names anyway, compared with Mac's, but this goes beyond Windows! There are two restrictions on file (or folder) names: they may not start with a number, and they may not have an extra period in the file name.

You import pictures into the Organizer by opening a file path and selecting a file name, and then double clicking it (this is an over simplification, but good enough). Selecting just one file with a bad name works, and the file is imported into the Catalog. But if you try to import a list of files (100+ or only two), if any file in the part of the list you try to select contains an extraneous period, like "w." for "with", or "St.", or "Mrs.", or "2.5", or begins with a number, like "00", or "1927 Ford", the whole program crashes! No warning, no Error Message, NADA! I have been using computers for more than 40 years (yes, really!) and I've never seen a program disappear from the screen as fast as this does!

If the name of a *folder* begins with a number like "28th Guides", or "1903 Carnival Souvenir", there is no problem. But if there's a period in the name of a folder, the program doesn't crash: the file tree simply doesn't show that folder! When I was nearly finished importing most of my files, I was missing some that I knew that I had. I couldn't find the folder anywhere using the file path shown by Organizer, but when I went to "My Computer" and started

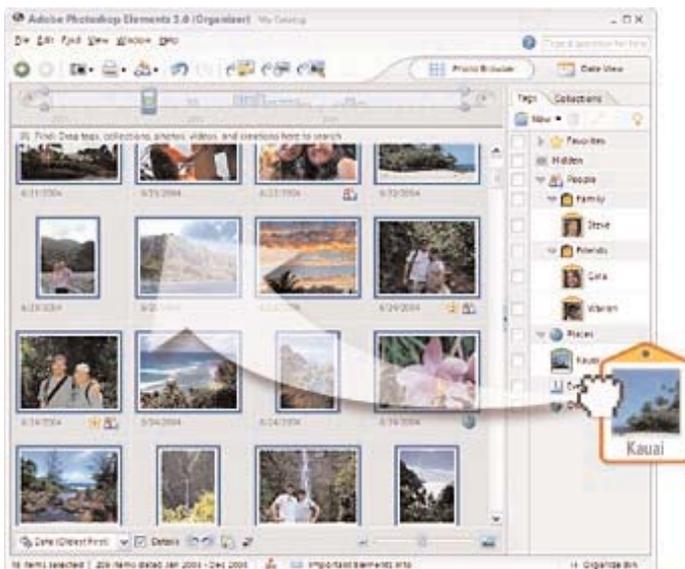
looking through the tree, I found a "G. Whitehouse", "S. MacLean", and a "St. Andrews". I removed the periods and then Organizer was able to find them without any problem. And as I've already pointed out, the perplexing, but instructive, thing is that none of these naming problems cause any difficulty in the Editor section of the program.

These problems have been discussed in the Users Forum

Adobe has set up for the program, and it has been suggested there that perhaps Adobe rushed this product onto the market in time for the Christmas buying season. However it has come about, I'm sure that Adobe, a company with a fine reputation for good software, will soon fix it, probably with a patch, or version upgrade, downloadable from their website. But it isn't there yet, and the best I could do was to use workarounds. It wasn't difficult to remove the odd period here and there in folder and file names, but the leading number problem, while easy for single files (after I found each one because of the crash!), was rather daunting when I had more than a hundred files in folders with every file numbered (like 80 Perry's Fleet, 1813). Ironically, Organizer provides an opportunity to rename files, which works OK for single files, but to change names by the batch, you must first select the whole list that you want to affect ... and that's exactly what causes the program to crash!

I found a free utility (1-4rename <http://www.1-4a.com/rename/rename-features.htm>) that suited the purpose perfectly, and it worked like a charm. I added PR- in front of the numbers (like PR-80) in a flash, and it worked immediately. Watch out for "No." though - you have to spell it out, as "Number")

There was another problem which showed up only in the Organizer, and that was corrected by moving the file



into the Editor. Occasionally, while importing files, a few are properly displayed for a few seconds, and then replaced with an icon representing a broken file. I don't know why, but dragging the broken file into the Editor presents the image as it should be, and if it's modified very slightly and resaved, or simply saved as the original file name, and then closed, the corrected file suddenly replaces the broken icon on the Organizer page! The explanation seems to be that there is an error in the file that is detected by the organizer, but the Editor is less fussy, and resaving the file corrects the error in the file format. So far, the corrections seem to be permanent as I haven't yet seen any recurrence of the problem once it has been fixed.

While I certainly haven't explored this program completely, either here or on my own, I've seen enough already to know that I did the right thing buying it. Whether or not it will meet your needs, only you can tell.



If your needs are much lighter than mine, you may be interested in a tip that Joe Bochsler passed on to me tonight when I told him I was writing this review. You may have heard that Google is branching out with new applications for their remarkable search engine.

Go to <http://www.picasa.com/> and download the free program Picasa2. Try it out to see if it will meet your needs, or you need something more, like Photoshop Elements 3.0, even with its current eccentricities! ■

SCCA Annual Contest

A Happy New Year - and good video making to you all!

Once again we are immersed in the organizational planning for the Annual SCCA video contest, to be held in the summer of '05.

The past year has again seen tremendous developments in home video making equipment, along with improved computer editing software, which is putting real video production power in the hands of amateur and professional video makers everywhere.

The expectation of your SCCA is that these constant improvements will encourage, and permit, many more of you to enter our contest, with an increasing number of even better video creations.

There are many categories in which your entry may compete, and the contest is open to all Canadians and all SCCA Members, at a VERY low entry fee per entry. Do check the SCCA website for a complete list of rules, regulations, and entry forms. <http://s-c-c-a.ca>

Contest submissions are due again June 15, 2005

Note that as well as a host of subjects and contest categories, the contest will offer a compulsory general theme for club AND individual entries for the Inter-city Trophy. This year the theme is stated as:

"AIN'T LIFE GRAND!"

While we always look for a variety of subjects presented in skill demonstrating entries, - the use of a compulsory topic allows a measurement of interpretation on a common subject each year.

I am always pleasantly surprised at the widespread interpretation of these annual themes - it is remarkable how the creativity of everyone rises to the top!

So tune up those imaginations my video friends - get your creative juices in gear, and by yourself, or as a group project, get your videos prepared and submitted!

Again, CHECK the WEBSITE, or contact me, for details!

Keith Gloster
kerithgloster@mac.com
SCCA Contest Chairman

ALIVE AND WELL SERIES



Canada's War In Colour

by Fred Briggs

Last month (January) the CBC network broadcast a three-part series entitled *Canada's War In Colour*. We regret that we weren't able to publish this information if time for you to catch the series, but it will most likely be repeated at some time in the future, so we wanted to let you know about the series so that if you see or hear it advertised when it's rerun, you'll know what it is, and can take advantage of the opportunity to watch it.

Unlike the CBC's stunning history production, *Canada, A People's History*, made a few years ago (and still in reruns), there is no new footage, or reenactments, in this production. It consists completely of vintage footage from archives all across the country, outside of Canada, and from ordinary people's cupboards, closets, and bottom drawers!



It was produced for the CBC by YAP Films Inc. and the Series Producer/Director was SCCA Member Karen Shopsowitz. Karen has been making films for many years, but made a personal breakthrough with old footage when she directed and edited the 1989 movie *My Grandparents Had a Hotel* that used family footage of their hotel on Lake Rosseau in Muskoka. The film had considerable success (Gemini for Best Music), and received wide attention, even in the States (Silver Apple at Oakland, California, http://www.brown.edu/Research/Catskills_Institute/shopsowitz.html).

That was followed later (2000) by Karen's NFB film, *My Father's Camera*, (<http://www.nfb.ca/fatherscamera>, <http://www.phsc.ca/DadCam.html>)

which included a lot of footage shot by her father, Israel Shopsowitz (known to many of us as the founder of Shopsy's).

It also featured some of her own Super8 footage, and the work of other amateurs. Before starting the film, Karen visited some meetings of the Toronto Film and Video Club, London Videography Club, and Hamilton Video/Film Makers, gaining knowledge of the amateur scene, and looking for old footage. She also interviewed some of their older members, including Jack Carey, a member of two of those clubs and a past President of the SCCA, who appears on screen in her film with members of all three clubs. It's quite common for professional documentary makers to poke fun at amateur moviemakers in a number of different ways, but *My Father's Camera* honours the amateurs, their hobby, their productions, their equipment, and their fraternity in a respectful way. This program won accolades everywhere it was shown (including a Peabody Award), and if you haven't seen it, you must make an effort to find it.

Her visits to amateur clubs and her search for footage was the occasion for Karen's first mention in the pages of PANORAMA (Summer, 1998), and she joined us as a member in 1999. Her next appearance in PANORAMA was an article she wrote in the Summer 2003 Issue (Alive And Well Series) about the World Home Movie Day she helped to organize at the Toronto Mediatheque of the NFB. The one-day celebration of home moviemaking was inspired by the Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) and was scheduled for August 16th, 2003 (8-16 - get it?), but it was delayed two weeks in Toronto because of the Great Blackout. Karen enlisted the cooperation of the Toronto and Hamilton clubs for a panel discussion as a small part of the activities, and Michael Adamski, Stella Magic, and Marilyn Reid, all of

the Toronto club, won awards for their old films.



Karen also joined us at the 2003 Convention in Brantford where she announced the World Home Movie Day and invited our attendance, and also appealed for old amateur colour home movies of Canada during the years of the Second World War. In the Winter 2004 PANORAMA, Joan

Bochsler reminded our readers of Karen's search for these old films in an article in which she reported on the successful search for Expo '67 amateur footage from our members for the CBC. The World War II production has now been completed and snuck up on us before we could write about it. Better late than never.



Karen emailed me with the information that "Club footage includes, Royal Visit film from across the country (from the Toronto club but from other amateurs, some of whom might have been members), as well as colour film shot by Toronto Film Club member Wilfrid Prissick, of the 1936 dedication of the Vimy Ridge Memorial, as well as other footage shot by Prissick of Second World War posters and bond drives. There's also footage from amateur club member Narcise Pelletier of Victory bond parades in Toronto and Montreal." She also told me by telephone that other club members' footage was found but not used, and a great deal of amateur footage was found that may or may

not have come from members of clubs, as the records aren't always clear.

Karen tells about some of the footage in her own words that I haven't included because of lack of space, and because you can read it at

<http://www.cbc.ca/documentaries/canadaswar/about.html>

Regardless of the club affiliations, or lack of, we're sure that you'll find all the footage, and especially the amateur footage, to be absolutely riveting and worth watching for in the TV listings. Whether on the Home Front, or on the Front Lines, the footage that Karen and her team found is really amazing, much of it shot by Canadian amateurs, and some of it by amateurs on the other side! It's hard to believe, even as nuts as we all are, that people would carry their cameras onto the beach on D-Day!

Meanwhile, go to <http://www.cbc.ca/documentaries/canadaswar/> for more information, a sneak view of almost five minutes of the show, and a chance to order the entire three shows on 2 DVD's (or 2 VHS tapes) for \$29.95. It will be released on February 15th, just about when you will be reading this. You can wait till you've seen the series, and then you'll surely want the home video, or just get it now and not have to worry about catching it in rerun! I'm pre-ordering mine as soon as I finish writing this. ■

Profile Series
Continued from page 11

* * * * *

If I could add a few comments to this wonderful scenario about Dave, it would be that he is an inspiration and a dedicated worker for the Victoria Video Club. He is always adding ideas and suggestions to our most welcome second page. It always reflects his humour and creative talents which inspire our club members to go and try another production. When Dave joined the Victoria Club he was endeared to us all and we are the better for it. Our Club, like most other clubs is losing members to death or ailing bodies, so a breath of fresh air has been added to the group with the guidance, and generous leadership of Dave. We applaud you, Dave, for your dedication and resourcefulness and for helping to lead us on into another year with optimism. How lucky we are in the Victoria Club. ■
Thank you Dave.

Margaret Chamberlain

The Last Word...

After reading Fred Briggs' story about his car trunk, I was tempted to run outdoors and check out my car. But the relatively permanent snow kept me indoors. We don't even appear to have a river out the back, just snow everywhere.

There are some signs of life. We put out

peanuts in the shell on our balcony, and a Blue Jay came immediately from parts unknown to investigate. We thought we had a compost pile, but the critters who visit think it is their exclusive dining room.



I was impressed with Fred's trunk "confession", especially when he mentioned a backup for everything, and protecting good clothes on a tarp. I suggested that Contraptions would be a good title for a series of solutions to problems that videographers face. According to the little dictionary at my desk, a contraption is a contrivance, or a makeshift machine. Okay, videographers, share your best contraptions with us all!

I'm not sure if it's a threat or a promise, but Fred has built a few other contraptions to solve specific problems, and has offered to share them if anyone is interested. So if you have had to build, buy or borrow a contraption to solve a problem in videography, let us know and we'll go further into this matter. Joseph has used a special bracket (a contraption) to hold his camera steady at eye level. This allows him freedom for both hands to operate the controls on his camcorder.

Until it gets warmer, let's use the extra socks on our feet and over our cameras. There's some beautiful Canadian winter scenes just waiting to be made into video for our summer enjoyment a little later on. ■

Joan Bochsler, Editor.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION & RENEWAL

MEMBER INFORMATION *Please print clearly*

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Classification

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