



Storyboard

The newsletter for SOUTH ESSEX FILM MAKERS



Welcome to SOUTH ESSEX FILM MAKERS

Well here it is and welcome to a brand new season with a brand new name. There had been much discussion and some disagreement over the choice of our new name. For those who didn't attend last years AGM, and the attendance was very good, there is a brief resume of how we arrived at 'South Essex Film Makers' over the page. But let's not dwell upon that too much and start looking forward to what I feel is going to be a great new start for us as a group that *MAKE* films.

Over the summer months the new seasons programme has come together into an interesting, entertaining, educational, exiting and fun package. There are more hands on nights lined up to encourage you to get that camera out and also to work as part of a group. You will get the chance to have a go at aspects of film making you might not previously have attempted or even thought about. That is what the PROJECT nights are all about in November. A chance to plan, shoot and edit a complete film as part of a group. So if there is something you want to try, directing, sound recording, producing, lighting or possibly even acting then do not miss these evenings. This newsletter will be coming out monthly as I plan to preview the coming months programme of events to give you a better idea of what each night offers. So let me start with forthcoming evenings until the end of October.

6th October is a Training Night hosted by me, Nigel Woodham on Creating Soundtracks. I intend to discuss the need for a good soundtrack, how to record and edit one, what to look for to improve your soundtracks and because I don't want to talk for too long, show you plenty of examples.

13th October is billed as a Technical Forum / Hi-definition. That will be hosted by Ken Pratt with a few others chipping in. All new video cameras now being sold are almost exclusively high definition but available in several different 'flavours' We are going to try and explain what it's all about, what benefits and disadvantages there are and how they are likely to affect you. Being a forum means we want your questions and experiences. I am sure we will drift 'off topic' at some stage so any question you might have in general about film making, just ask.

20th October. Competition / Just a Minute. Self explanatory really. A competition for your films that must not last more than a minute, that's 60 seconds....not a second over. They can be 10 seconds long if you like but no more than a minute including titles. I expect you all have half a dozen or so you made already over the summer so we look forward to seeing those.

27th October. We have a visit from a commercial company, AKM Music, that produces high quality music CD's containing copyright and royalty free music and sound effects. They will be demonstrating there products and talking about their vast catalogue of available material, much of which is used in the film and TV industry. It is interesting to note that you can purchase their CD's as normal music CD's that will play anywhere or as a CD containing .wav files that can be copied straight onto the PC and dropped directly into almost any editing program ready to use.

NEXT YEAR. I just want to mention a couple of events coming up in the second half of our season to give you a nice long time to think up something to film and enter. The Summer Project, that's last summer (what we had of it). On the 2nd February we will be showing the results of your Video Diaries, you have made one haven't you? If not have a go, after all it's only for fun. Remember the outline for your diary is it should be just that, a talking diary. It could be a day out, a holiday, an event or even just you stuck at home for the day with nothing else to do.....just make it (or a couple if you like), but please keep it short.

The 23rd February sees another competition just for fun, the CONDENSED EPIC. We want as many of you as possible to have a go and enter this. So we have opened up the remit slightly to give you an even wider scope of material to have a go at. What we want, is for you to take a well known film, TV series or show and condense it down to under two minutes, total. I am hosting the Viral Video night in January and will be showing some 'condensed' movies I have lifted off the old World Wide Web as part of that evening which should give you an idea of what we want if you're struggling, but that will only give you six weeks to rustle something up so better get thinking about it now.

Well that's it for now, I hope you enjoy and participate in the new seasons activities, but above all, get out there and get film making.

Nigel Woodham

What's in a name?

Changing the name of a club so well known and respected as Westcliff Film & Video Club was not a decision taken lightly. But when the decision was made the problem was what should the new name be and why change it at all?

The rationale behind the change was to present a fresher, more encompassing image to the younger film maker who could be out there looking for like minded people to mix with and possibly collaborate. They could possibly then become new members, the life blood of any group or organisation, especially in such a volatile and quickly changing area of interest as ours. After numerous enquiries among younger groups, the first thing we realised needed to go was the word 'Club'. The feedback we received reasoned that 'Club' (in the context of a group or meeting) gave a very old fashioned, almost boring image to younger people. The original name 'Westcliff', although carrying a lot of history and weight within the established amateur film making world didn't seem to have a lot of relevance to our catchment area or locale. We as a club had not held meetings in Westcliff for many years and only one member actually came from that postal district. So Westcliff went, to be replaced after much discussion with SOUTH ESSEX, a more accurate description of the area inhabited by our membership.

Then came the controversial bit and part of the new name that caused, and still does, much discussion and debate, FILM. Why did we pick *film* as part of the new name. Well let's look at the four most popular suggestions put forward by some of last seasons members. Video, Movie, Film & Multi Media.

VIDEO. Many thought the term video to be dated. When used as medium it was thought that video would have a short life span, looking forward. On the other hand video is probably more relevant than any of the others in describing exactly what we do. We all shoot on video, but hard drive and card capture will start to change that over the next couple of years. I don't know about you, but even though I edit on a PC I still edit 'Video' and daily switch my wording between watching a 'video' and watching a DVD.

MOVIE. Against was the idea that '*movie*' conjured up big Hollywood productions, harked back to the golden age of cinema sixty plus years ago and had a bit too much of an American feel to it. But most of us make 'Home Movies', many edit on a PC using programs with names like Windows Movie Maker, Apple's iMovie and Magix Movie Edit Pro, all programs aimed at people just like us.

FILM. Nobody actually uses film, that being celluloid, the stuff you expose to light and have to develop in chemicals before physically cutting and sticking together before projecting it so as to be viewed, well not in our group anyway. Then again many of us go to the cinema to see 'Films', we watch films on the TV and I know when I go out with my 'Video' camera I go out 'Filming'.

MULTI MEDIA or just MEDIA. Most thought those terms just too undefined. Media could be anything and Multi Media is even worse. In the context of a Film, Video or Movie group a Multi Media section or competition is defined by any of the other three words, on it's own it could be taken as a painting group for example who employ the use of oils, water colours and acrylics.

So what swung it in favour of FILM?

As mentioned previously, most people go to see a 'Film'. Now that film may have been originated on any medium and many modern films have been shot on Video, Blair Witch Project and 28 Days Later to mention just two. The act of capturing footage with a camera is still referred to by most as filming. And one of the most important aspects in relation to the word *Film* that should be considered with reference to the name change is, most young people out there who like doing what we like doing, don't want to be 'Video Makers' or 'Movie Makers' they all want to be 'Film Makers'. They want to make *films* and the serious ones want to enter them into *Film* Festivals. Try looking on the internet and the 'buzz' is *film* making, *film* school etc.

So that is how we got to where we are today and the name SOUTH ESSEX FILM MAKERS. When you hear anyone in our group talk about what they are doing you will hear, and will yourself use all of the terms mentioned, Film, Movie, Video, Multi-Media, sometimes in the same sentence. But a decision had to be made and was, with the hope that our new name would carry us forward as successfully as Westcliff Film and Video Club did for so many years previously. So here is to the future, may we continue to look forward with only an occasional glance back. The important thing to remember is it is what we do that's important not what we call ourselves. A film director is only as good as his last film so the saying goes, well let's get out there and produce new material that builds a reputation as well founded as the Westcliff name did, with a clean slate and a fresh start it's now up to us, *that's you and me.*