



## May Newsletter

Welcome to this May edition of our Newsletter. Although the weather is getting colder by the day, this is your opportunity to catch up on what is “Hot” in our AV world.

### **The Port Elizabeth International AV Festival**

#### **and PSSA AV Convention at de Rust**

As this Newsletter arrives over the ether, this milestone event is about to take place at De Rust, and the delegates are gathering. There is undoubtedly a feeling of anticipation in the air, as we believe that some remarkable AVs will be screened.

Our Chairman Jeff Morris will be there, as well as other members of AV Makers SA, so those of us who are not able to be there, will have to wait till next month’s edition for some feedback.

### I can do it in One

This FUN internal exchange of AVs by our members has been a remarkable success - thanks in particular to the support which you, our members, gave to this enterprise. A special vote must go to those producers who entered their FIRST attempt. Well done, everyone !

Comments were invited, and Jeff has circulated these under separate cover - thanks Jeff !

I believe that all participants had FUN in putting these sequences together, and we have received many encouraging reports. Typical is this one from Tom Bayford:

“ Hi Jeff

I have to let you know what a wonderful experience it was to participate in a national event with people, experienced and non-experienced, of obvious mutual enjoyment and no pressure (or very little). I thoroughly enjoyed every moment of the administration process. May I suggest that people who are in the near vicinity of each other get together and discuss the ins and outs of their productions as another workshop in the near future. I would certainly appreciate that.

Thanks to you and the AV Makers SA committee for great organisation.

Regards Tom Bayford “

From my side, I feel that we have a lot of talent out there, and that overall the standard was high.

I think Tom has a good point in suggesting a workshop where we can get together , perhaps view all the sequences again, and see what we can learn from each other. Let us see if we can arrange this !

## Jeff's impressions

Jeff is the South African scribe for the Royal Photographic Society, and here is a copy of his report to the RPS about our competition -

### **"I can do it in 1" by AV Makers – South Africa**

Jeff Morris LRPS APSSA AFIAP

My committee was discussing ways of increasing involvement of our members, and especially new ones, with making AVs. We also wanted to get away from the pressure of entering a salon or competition for the first time. We came up with this idea of a fun AV exchange. I have not heard of it being done before in this way.

The club has about 50 members on the books, scattered through South Africa, with very few actively making sequences. Some had never made an AV and some were recruited at a regional beginners' workshop we had recently held. The great distances in South Africa make meetings with all members attending out of the question. We function by email correspondence.

We announced the exchange and allowed about three months for members to work on their submissions. The subject was free and the time limit was roughly one minute, hence the name. It was billed as an exchange and not a competition. There were to be no prizes or awards, just fun.

We kept up interest with regular reminders to all our members. About one month before the closing date we asked all those who wanted to enter to Register electronically by a cut-off date. All we asked for was author's name, email address and provisional title of the AV. We could watch registrations and chivvied privately those whom we thought should be entering who had not already. We made it clear that only those who registered would be involved in the later stages of the exchange.

All entries were via internet file transfer. We allowed a window of four days for uploading sequences, well advertised in advance, and used the service of [www.wetransfer.com](http://www.wetransfer.com). Because the free version of [www.wetransfer.com](http://www.wetransfer.com) only keeps links for a few days we had to keep the process in a time window of a few days. All those who had registered were sent clear instructions on how to do this with a list of the email addresses of the other participants. The result was that each person uploaded one AV addressed to all the others and received download requests from all.

The last step was to set up an electronic Comments form where participants could comment on each other's sequences. This was kept simple with fields for person's name, title of AV, comments on the sequence and comments on the exercise as a whole.

Our exchange was a great success. We had 20 authors registering and eventually 17 sequences were entered. At the last count, there were 97 individual comments – all positive and helpful. Apart from three or four 'old hands' most of these entries were first or second attempts by authors. Taking that into consideration, the standard of the productions was high. There was a lot of creativity and

thinking 'out of the box'. In the process, many new AV makers broke the ice as far as preparing and entering a sequence for the first time in a sharing experience.

Critical success factors included the following.

- Keeping the entries short made upload and download times reasonable. This was crucial with our limited, expensive bandwidth.
- Keeping up interest within the group by frequent mailshots.
- Helping first-timers individually. Many had never used [www.wetransfer.com](http://www.wetransfer.com), or something like it or even created an exe.
- Using free Google Drive to make the Registration and Comments forms worked well and everyone could access them.
- Having comments in a single thread meant that everyone could see all the comments in their own time as they were published.

Only time will tell how lasting our success will be. With this initiative we have at least stimulated many new AV enthusiasts.

Anyone wanting more information is welcome to contact the author at [avmakerssouthafrica@gmail.com](mailto:avmakerssouthafrica@gmail.com).

## Personality of the Month          Arthur Fitt

**Knysna** has a very active Photographic Club, and one of their leading lights is Arthur Fitt.

Of particular interest to us is that it is their practice in Knysna to screen and comment on an AV at every Club evening. They also arrange AV workshops - Thank you Arthur for your report on this, reprinted below :

Firstly a report on what is happening at the Knysna Photographic Society.

On Saturday 15 March we held a meeting of our AV Interest Group attended by 14 people.

It was conducted by Chris Daly who had requested the opportunity to give personal feedback on the seven AV's that our club members had created and for which he had been one of the three judges, the other two were Paul Rixom and Adri van Oudheusden.

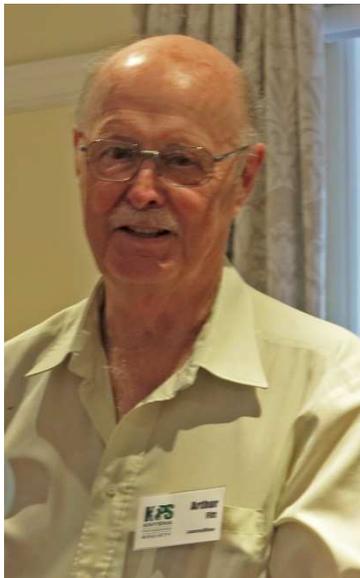
This was the primary object of the meeting and was extremely successful not only to the authors of the AV's but to everyone else. In addition Chris did a presentation on the importance of the choice of suitable sound for an AV, there is a lot more to than just using a piece of music that sounds nice, he demonstrated with a marvelous AV how the music can reflect the mood of the AV, sadness, anger, love, joy, excitement etc. We spend countless hours/days creating suitable images and 5 minutes choosing the music. He then showed and talked about his thought processes when making several of his own AV's and finished up with a short demonstration showing the basics of creating an AV with 8 slides using PTE 8. So after 3 hrs of intense effort, with a 10 min. break for tea we all became budding expert AV directors. But as we all know, we can listen and study forever, but the

only way forward is to do it. Chris also stated that making AV's takes up a lot of time. This is the reason that many people offer for not actually getting started, yet one of the busiest people in our club is our chairperson Luana, who has a full time job, a husband who needs to be fed at least once a week, is involved in other activities and is one of our top photographers and produced the best AV in the seven that were shown at this meeting? So what is your excuse.

There is only so much time available to get together at meetings so we did not show any of the YPI AV's. As has been said by others there was nothing outstanding amongst them and we felt that our time could be spent more productively in other ways.

We show an AV at each of our monthly meetings and we endeavour to choose something of good quality demonstrating a variety of themes. We try to encourage club members by showing how good AV's can be not how bad.

We have created a system of Star grading for our club so the authors can get a feel for how they are progressing, all the judging is done externally. Full details are available on the Knysna Photographic Society website ([knysnaphotosociety.com](http://knysnaphotosociety.com)) under INFO\AV Judging and Star Grading Arthur Fitt



As regards AV's I am a relative beginner. I recall the first AV that I saw in the 80's created and presented for public viewing by Malcolm L.Pearse ARPS, FPSSA which was done in the old way using multiple slide projectors. Although I had no real interest in photography or AV's it was so good that it stuck in my mind. Twenty years later when the Knysna Photographic Society came into being we held a 2 day workshop at which amongst other things a few AV's were shown by local photographers, including Barrie Wilkins and I think early efforts from Chris Daly. So the seeds were sown but I did nothing until 2011. I joined the PAVC when a general invitation was sent out to clubs in 2011, was it really that long ago, and started experimenting and studying. As I have said elsewhere one has actually got to do it to make progress, but sensibly one needs to

learn from other people's experience and studying their comments and advice is highly recommended, although we each have our own strengths, we don't have to reinvent the wheel every time. The AV quarterly magazine from the RPS has some interesting articles and the opportunity to listen to Howard Bagshaw on his visit in 2012 was very motivating. There is little doubt that the whole scene is changing as demonstrated by the complete revamp of the RPS approach to AV's with the introduction of Multimedia and Narrative Distinction Panel. I am not a member of the RPS this is just part of the study and investigation as to what it is all about. Also I get the impression that PSSA have also changed their thinking on the subject.

I use PTE only and as a Civil Engineer by profession (retd.) I am attracted to the technical aspects of AV making but endeavour to tackle any subject that comes to mind, in fact I find one of the most difficult aspects is deciding on a subject. I tend to be too ambitious, I try to get a whole book into a 5 min. AV and that is a problem, but hopefully I will eventually get the message.

Another factor that I have noticed is that some of the top flight photographers depend too much on the quality of their images at the expense of the other elements, sound and putting it all together, the whole process I see to be like directing a film.

A final quote from an article by Michael Hallet FRPS, Chair of the Distinctions Advisory Board of the RPS "There appears to be a culture that places too great an emphasis on looking at the quality of individual images, rather than considering the body of work as a whole...There is a need to acquire a new understanding, and to be open to new ideas and ways of looking at work."

## Future Salons and events

1. The International 321 Competition closes soon - so get moving if you have an entry ready
2. Club Internal competition - this will take place later in the year: Closing date 1<sup>st</sup> September
3. Next Sandton AV workshop. We will try for a Saturday morning in July, and let you know.
4. Put 13<sup>th</sup> September in your diaries !! Jeff is planning a Pretoria AV Festival, where it is planned to showcase winners from Bridgend (UK), the 321, our International showdown, as well as various other competitions. Watch this space.
5. Finally, be reminded that annual subscriptions ( R 100 ) will become due in July

With best wishes from the Editor's desk

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