

the 9.5 review

january 1969



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the 9,5 review

Editor: Gordon Clarke Art Editor: Terence H. Bave
Published by Group 9,5

Volume 7, No. 2

January, 1969

INHIBITED CREATIVENESS?

"No-one who is not similarly committed could be recommended to join them, and those who do are unlikely to turn out good films—the struggle for survival seems to inhibit creativeness".

So Gordon Malthouse wrote about ninefivers in *Amateur Photographer* in June 1966. I marvel that he was not deluged with rude letters from outraged 9,5 belligerents who seem permanently poised to rush straight in where the proverbial angels fear to tread. But perhaps Mr. Malthouse's remarks struck a little too close to home, for in his long years of cine journalism I don't think he could ever have written a truer word.

Although I have used 9,5 for several years now, I confess I have always thought that, besides the technique and entertainment value of any film, the matter of which gauge it happens to be and the consequent image quality pale into insignificance. It always puzzled me that the majority of ninefivers seemed to be pre-occupied with equipment, processing, home-made gadgets, printed films and what I call the "political" side of the hobby—whether or not this or that dealer stocks the film, or what can be done to publicise the gauge.

Until quite recently, ninefive films have fallen far below the standards of the best films on 16mm or even standard 8mm, with a few notable exceptions—notable for their rarity. Ninefivers could be heard to comment vociferously on definition, processing and the cameras that had been used, but seldom on the theme of a film, its entertainment value, or the technique of its camerawork, sound or editing.

At last I see concrete signs that ninefivers are bursting from their technical fetters and attempting to actually make some films. Last year, a 9,5 film narrowly missed inclusion in the Ten Best. This past year, viewing the entries for the Open Film Award provided me with the pleasantest evenings I have spent watching 9,5mm films.

Those of you who were lucky enough to be at our get-together show will, I feel sure, agree with me. Those who were not so fortunate can read all about it in the next issue. Meanwhile, turn the page for Eric Millhouse's report on the competition.



On the cover: (top left) a frame from *Nor All Thy Tears* by Alan Caistor; (bottom left) a frame from *A Tale of Two Bottles* by Swan Cine Club; (right) the first prize in the 1968 competition. (Special photographic work by Bernard Beeston, Gerald McKee, ARPS, Richard Phipps).

The results . . .

The second of our annual film competitions attracted an entry which, if numerically not much larger than last year, was certainly of a very much higher standard. Of twenty-four films entered, all but three had some form of sound track and no less than eighteen were in colour. Documentary, comedy, travel, abstract sound and-motion, even a quite ambitious science-fiction drama, they were all there.

A preliminary adjudication sifted out twelve entries which were head-and-shoulders above the rest and on 13th September these were screened before the panel of judges which comprised Alan Cleave, Assistant Editor of *Movie Maker*, Bert Wicks, of the I.A.C., and Alex Cassie, of Whitehall Cine Society. The selection included nine films in colour, and all but one were sound films. As in 1967, the multitudinous (it seemed) different sync systems taxed our resources to the limit, but, in the capable hands of projectionists Reg Uphill and Frank Moon, the session proceeded without any hitches.

The first prize

This went to **NOR ALL THY TEARS** by Alan Caistor, a delightful little mood piece based on a poem by Daniel Schubart set to the music of Franz Schubert. "We were in no doubt that this was the overall winner," said Alan Cleave, summarising the judges' comments. "We thought

it was a well-conceived study and the atmosphere nicely contrived. The switch from the gay, lyrical mood at the beginning to the sombre notes of desolation at the end was very effectively accomplished."

Second prize—Fiction Trophy

A TALE OF TWO BOTTLES

by Swan Cine Club, directed by Angus Tilston, secured both these awards.

This was an Eastern fantasy about the purchase of a bottle, complete with genie, in a market, and the consequential granting of wishes. "This was ambitious," said the judges, "in that an atmosphere of fantasy was attempted and this was fairly skilfully evoked in terms of costume and make-up. The acting could have been a little more stylish, but on the other hand it was not 'hammy'. We felt the film could have been slightly more imaginative in the use of angles, to get away from the feeling that it was all being photographed in the corner of somebody's front parlour; but, apart from that, it was quite a worthy effort."

Third prize

This fell to **IN THE WAKE OF THE TORREY CANYON**, also by Alan Caistor, a Cornish Holiday film. The judges commented: "Coming a very close Third, we admired very much the very high standard of photography and the study the producer had made

of his family. We feel that it was a little over-indulgent for a general audience, but bearing in mind that it *was* a family film, this could be forgiven. It had some nice atmospheric patches at the end."

Comedy—Under 21

The judges did not feel that any of the films entered merited this prize, and the award was withheld. There were no entries to qualify for the best film by a ninefiver aged under 21, but we hope the very handsome cup donated by Valentine - Cook Limited will find a home next year.

Runners-up

The panel selected three other films which narrowly missed awards and the following are their comments on these.

Runnymede, by Gordon Clarke. "Deserved the next place. It perhaps wasn't a particularly ambitious film, but what it set out to do it did effectively."

Line Fantasy, by Robert Bayley. "An ingenious idea, perhaps a little limited in possibility, but obviously an imaginative effort and an attempt to get off the beaten track."

How We Saw Rome, by Gordon and Jennifer Clarke. "Here there was some good photography, but we felt that some opportunities were missed, however; for example, the shot where the coin is thrown into the fountain. You really feel it cries out for the complementary MCU of the coin falling in the water. This the producer didn't see fit to add, but apart from that it had its

moments, and it would nicely evoke a visit to Rome for anybody who had been there."

The rest of the films which reached the final judging were: *Return of the Spouse*, by David Elliott; *Kaleidoscope '67*, by Larry Pearce & Gordon Clarke; *Swinging London*, by Edward Vowles; *Nippy Nappy Wash*, by Kristina Charles; *The Run-around*, by Len Hooper, and *Project Venus*, by Gerry Owen.

General Standard

Asked to make a few observations on the competition as a whole, Alan Cleave said: "A little mixed. The six films that we considered as possible contenders for the top places stood out, it is fair to say, head-and-shoulders above the other six. A conspicuous thing was the colour photography, the quality of which was very good on the whole and made the black-and-white show up very badly by comparison. The B & W looked as if it was stock of 30 years ago—the sort of results you might have got then; but as far as colour is concerned, particularly in relation to *Torrey Canyon*, *Runnymede* and *How We Saw Rome*, it reached a very high standard indeed"

Verbatim criticisms from the judges' comments, together with a "Group 95 Open Film Award" Leader, are being sent to every entrant. We hope that the comments will encourage all to make next year's Open Award an even bigger success.

E. C. M.

THE NINEFIVE



COLLECTOR

by Maurice Trace

Maclean Rogers

P. M. Maclean Rogers died in 1962. His death was barely mentioned in the Press and it passed without notice among cinemagoers. This was less than just, for, without knowing it, the average cinema audience probably saw more films directed by Maclean Rogers than by any other British director. For a period of over thirty years he turned out pictures at a fantastic rate, sometimes as many as seven a year, and no fewer than nine of his features are on 9.5 Sound.

Rogers fought in World War One and with his gratuity went to Hollywood to seek experience and fortune. He returned to England some years later and joined Herbert Wilcox as publicity manager and editor. Scenario-writing quickly followed, and in 1929 he directed his first film, *The Third Eye*. After striking a bad patch during the depression, he eventually got back to directing and never looked back.

His earliest film to reach 9.5 is *A Wife or Two*, a comedy made for British Lion in 1936 and released on 9.5 Sound in 5 reels less than three years later. Based on a well-known play, it was a typical 'thirties farce of mistaken

identity, but was well played by Henry Kendall, an immaculate star of London revues, whose other films on 9.5 (*Death at Broadcasting House* and *The Flaw*) are much sterner stuff.

Rogers then directed many films (some with Old Mother Riley and Gert and Daisy) before tackling *Variety Jubilee* (1943), which Butcher's Film Service described as their greatest production. A highly melodramatic plot told about the rise and fall of a Music Hall and the lives and deaths of its owners. The main virtue of the production was to record on film the performances of such great artists as George Robey and Charles Coburn as well as many other lesser known acts. Pathescope released a 9 reel version and it is well worth having a look at this interesting film which in time will obviously acquire an historical value.

Rogers was probably happiest with mystery thrillers, as his work on the Paul Temple series shows. Temple, an amateur detective, created by Francis Durbridge, was featured in some highly successful radio serials which started in the 'forties and which are still going today. The first film featuring this character was *Send For*

Paul Temple, directed by John Argyle and starring Anthony Hulme and Joy Shelton. (This is on 9.5 Sound in 9 reels.)

After this, more films followed (using the same plots as the radio serials), but in these Maclean Rogers was the director, with John Bentley as Temple and Dinah Sheridan as his wife. Pathescope released 9 reel versions of two of these in *Calling Paul Temple* (1948) and *Paul Temple's Triumph* (1951).

Another of his thrillers on 9.5 is *Flannelfoot* (9 reels), which tells how an ace jewel-thief is forced to commit a series of murders to protect his identity. After an opening sequence in Berlin, the action moves to England, where Scotland Yard detective Ronald Howard (son of Leslie Howard) tries to find out which of the many suspects is Flannelfoot. The strong supporting cast includes Jack Watling, Ronald Leigh-Hunt, Graham Stark and Edwin Richfield.

Behind The Headlines (5 reels) saw Rogers turn in a featurette about the workings of Scotland Yard. Gilbert Harding relates a story which starts with the theft of a lorry and ends with a killer's conviction of murder. The detailed work of the police looked convincing, and for good measure there was an operation scene in a hospital.

In 1952 Rogers set out to direct *Down Among The Z-Men* (also known as *Stand Easy*), which featured the Goons, who were then at the peak of their popularity. One cannot help feeling that he did not understand the Goon type of humour and as a

result did not quite know what to do with the boys. There are one or two flashes of the real Goons but mainly he settled for slapstick. Peter Sellers, Harry Secombe, Spike Milligan and Michael Bentine took the leading roles, and one of the brightest spots was a solo act by Bentine—but Pathescope cut this out for the 6-reel 9.5 version.

A year later, Maclean Rogers was back directing Secombe and Bentine in *Forces Sweetheart* (9 reels), another comedy of confused identities. This was a fairly conventional farce, and Pathescope considered it so funny that they included it in their catalogue in the Drama section. Freddie Frinton and Graham Stark helped to liven up the proceedings.

Rogers made a much more happy stab at comedy with *Something in the City* (1950), a delightful film with Richard Hearne (alias Mr. Pastry) as a respectable businessman who earns a secret living as a pavement artist. His two personalities get interwoven to such an extent that one is accused of murdering the other! This is a well-paced and quite delightful picture with a fine performance from Hearne and good support from Garry Marsh, Ellen Pollock and Dora Bryan.

Maclean Rogers was active right up to his death. Many artists who later rose to stardom were given their first chance by him, while his reliability and practical methods helped to put so many films on the screen. Certainly, the 9.5 Sound catalogue would have been much duller without him.

You may remember in the last issue that I mentioned the newly-formed Widescreen Centre. Well, since writing that article, I have had a chance to examine their price list, and it contains one or two very interesting items.

More light on the screen

For instance, those of you who have read my articles before will have realised that I am always "on" about getting more light through the gate of the projector. I believe that this is essential, not only for widescreen but for all amateur gauge presentations. It has been even more true of 9.5mm because we have not been making the fullest possible use of the inherent advantages of the gauge. What is the use of having a bigger format with all that lovely extra emulsion area if you don't make the fullest possible use of it?

Which brings me back to the Widescreen Centre's price list. In it they state that they can supply custom-built transformers to your own specifications. Here, then, is an opportunity to do that "soup-up" to your projector that you've always meant to do. For instance, what about fitting an I-Q lamp? The 24 volt, 150 watt version has a lovely compact filament ideally suited to 9.5mm. Or you might even prefer the 24 volt, 250 watt version . . . the filament's even bigger, but there is the extra heat to contend with. However, you can find out more about these transformers by writing direct to

The Widescreen Centre (NOT TO ME, PLEASE!) at BCM/Scope-68, London, W.C.1.

The Zenoscope

I have also had a chance of examining the new anamorphic that they supply, called the ZenaScope. In fact, I did a complete report on it in the latest issue of *Widescreen*—the magazine of the Widescreen Association (I hope you will excuse the advertising). But since many of you will not have seen this test, let me tell you a little about this new widescreen ("squeeze") lens.

It works on the same principle as the majority of widescreen lenses that are constructed from cylindrically-ground elements, in that it first compresses an extra amount of view on to the existing frame area, and then opens this up again when you project. The ZenaScope is a two-element anamorphic that transmits virtually all the light—a great advantage with widescreen, of course. It is also of generous proportions, which in turn lends itself for use on the majority of 8mm zoom lens cameras, and 9.5mm cameras. As it is of fixed focus construction, you are naturally limited to how close you can approach your subject without using supplementary lenses, but in good light this is no disadvantage.

To get the best out of the ZenaScope it is essential that you

continued on page 20

Posting Kodachrome to France

After the performance I have had today trying to send six magazines of Kodachrome to Paris at an economic rate, I think it would be a good idea if you published in the *Review* the best method to adopt.

Hugh Greaves Limited suggest wrapping cartons in brown paper, etc., and sticking on a green customs form, but leave out details of cost.

A parcel of six Webo magazines costs 24s. 3d. by letter post. If sent by parcel post, a full customs declaration has to be made—the “Douane C.1.” form is no good. An individual magazine, weighing just over eight ounces, can cost 4s. 1d. by letter post with the C.1. form.

LGP (Cine) tipped me off that if the magazines were sent as two parcels of three at the small packet rate, it would be cheaper. This is how I eventually sent them, with a thin strip of brown paper wrapped around three magazines so that the ends of the packets could be seen and tied together with string. I used the “Douane C.1.” form and, with the help of a sympathetic G.P.O. counter clerk who looked up the regulations for me, was able to send this for 3s. 4d., the total cost for six being 6s. 8d. instead of 24s. 3d.

I am sure others would be interested in this method.

Incidentally, the results had better be good to justify the bother and the fact that I could

have got nine magazines of my old favourite, Ferrania colour, for the price of six magazines of Kodachrome II!

I would also like to take this opportunity of congratulating you on the continued excellent production of *The 9.5 Review*.

T. J. MORGAN.
London, S.E.12.

Still Convinced

Congratulations on your excellent magazine! I was in the professional film trade for 35 years and took up 9.5mm in 1936; my heart has been in it ever since. From an engineering point of view, I am *still* convinced that it is the only perfect amateur gauge.

LAURENCE G. MILLER.
Longhope, Gloucester.

Delighted

I am delighted with the superb results of 9.5mm. I've said this before and I'll say it again. Why the technical “bods” of all the photographic combines can't or won't see it, passes my comprehension.

The 9.5 Review is a very fine piece of work and I read it from cover to cover. Please keep the 9.5 flag flying. Thanks to you all for your work on behalf of those who use this gauge.

ROBERT J. COOMBES.
Stonehouse, Glos.

Letters for publication to: 10 Grey-stoke Lodge, Hanger Lane, London, W.5. Whether you type or write your letters, please leave a double space between the lines.

ON TEST

SUPERSOUND FILM CLEANER

The new film cleaner from Supersound had been eagerly awaited for some months, with the result that its basic principle—cleaning films by attachment to a domestic vacuum cleaner as well as by chemical means—will already be familiar to most readers.

The outfit consists of the main cleaning unit, a four-foot plastic hose and a one-ounce bottle of Supersound film cleaner. (An added bonus is an attachment for suction cleaning your camera or projector gate.)

Setting up

As with the firm's strippers, you supply the motive power—in this case by mounting the cleaner between conventional rewind arms by means of the screw holes provided at the base. The machine is connected to the intake of any vacuum cleaner by the plastic hose.

You lace the film to be cleaned from the right spool of the rewind through the film cleaner, passing the special suction head which is the heart of the device, then through the felt rollers which can be impregnated with Supersound cleaning fluid or other cleaner. Then you thread it on to the left hand spool.

Operation

You switch on the vacuum cleaner and, for best results, wind the film fairly slowly and evenly through the machine.

In their advertising, the manufacturers state that the cleaner is suitable for removing dust left on the film after scraping splices. However, we feel their claims for their product are unnecessarily modest, since the machine is also ideal for getting rid of plain, old-fashioned dirt which inevitably builds up on all films with continual handling.

Results

We put some quite filthy pieces of film through the machine, and a quick check on the projector confirmed that they had emerged much, much cleaner. The only black marks which will still appear on the film, of course, are those made by grit which has been ground into the emulsion.

Apart from removing those distressing "splodges" which mar enjoyment of one's own films, the cleaner will obviously appeal to ninefivers with collections of package films, especially those that have been lying around for a few years. Cleaning an optical sound print, for instance, gives a noticeable improvement in sound reproduction over a track that was previously really dirty.

We experimented to see whether the machine would interfere with magnetic stripe, but in our tests it did not harm it. Care should be exercised, though, in choosing a suitable cleaning fluid. Supersound's own fluid is recommended.

Summing up

Supersound have been able to keep the price very attractive—£3 10s.—and there is a twelve-month guarantee. You, of course, supply your own vacuum cleaner and rewind.

Really, this gadget is very simple, and yet it is all highly

ingenious — another tribute to Supersound's designers, who are already world-renowned for their popular strippers. Short of an ultrasonic cleaner, this is probably the best cleaning device the amateur is likely to have, and it's immeasurably better than the old cloths soaked in carbon tetrachloride which could sometimes put on as much dirt as they removed.

The cleaner is available now, and your 9.5 specialists have it in stock.

Highly recommended.

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FADES FROM A BOTTLE

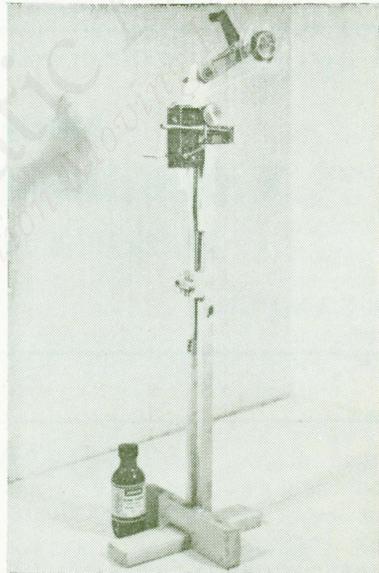
ALAN CAISTOR explains how to make chemical fades and describes a gadget which makes the job easier

Two places in a film nearly always call for fades: the opening shot (a "fade in") and the closing shot (a "fade out"). I expect we've all made films that include adjacent scenes that are intended to span an interval in time or that reveal sudden unexplained changes in location. If such films are silent, then the careful use of sub-titles can bridge these awkward places, but if a sound track accompanies the film it is often best to dispense with sub-titles altogether and then the awkward places almost shriek out for fades. But whether our films have sound or are silent, the visual punctuation that the prudent use of fades provides can help to impart in our films some of that indefinable quality we call "polish".

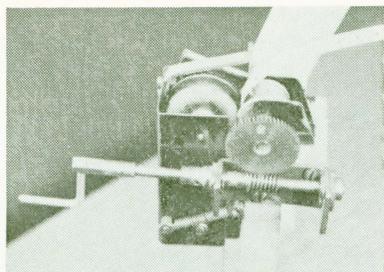
Broadly, fades can be produced by the average amateur in three ways. Firstly, when filming under artificial light, the lights can be slowly turned on or off by using a suitable variable resistance. In my own case, I often use this method for fading titles. Secondly, they can, by various devices, be produced mechanically in the camera. Apart from fades made by closing or opening the lens iris (to which there are some technical objections anyway), few 9.5 cameras incorporate such devices and in any case many ardent enthusiasts seldom, if ever, make "in camera" fades because, until a film is finished, they don't always

know exactly where in the film fades might be needed. The third method is to create fades *chemically* by applying a special dye to the appropriate length of processed film. In recent years, I have used this method a good deal and, through bodging it now and then, have come to learn a few of the "wrinkles" of the art.

As with many aspects of our hobby, it's fairly easy to produce *reasonably* good chemical fades, but more difficult to produce



The device for making chemical fades. The hand-turned mechanism for lowering the film is seen mounted above the glass tube for containing the dye. The tube is 1' 4" long and is thus suitable for making fades of up to 3 seconds' duration.



The mechanism embodies a "seven turns per frame" reduction gear. To prevent slipping, the film is held in contact with the sprocket-wheel by a sprung "idler" wheel made from a small pulley.

perfect ones. A fade that looks fine using a projector with a low or moderate light output can look simply awful when a high-powered machine is used. I have discovered, however, that provided they are made with care and patience, chemical fades can be indistinguishable from the best "in camera" fades.

The dye I use is Johnson's "Cine Fade" solution and, in my view, the instructions on the bottle over-simplify matters. When processed film is immersed in the solution, the emulsion is slowly stained an opaque, indelible black. The speed with which the stain develops depends to some extent upon the type of film and, more particularly, upon the temperature of the solution. A warm solution will act more quickly than a cold one. I have found that around 70 degrees fahrenheit it can take up to ten minutes to produce a dense black stain. This "slow-acting" feature is the key to the whole process. A frame that has been immersed for only a minute or so will acquire a transparent medium tint of mid-grey.

Let's imagine that you are about to make a chemical fade by the method I have found to be the most effective. The first thing you need is a glass tube just wide enough to allow a length of 9.5 film to slip easily inside. (The length of the tube will depend upon the maximum length of the fades likely to be needed, assuming a projector speed of 16 f.p.s., a one-second fade will need, say, a 6-inch tube (i.e., long enough to hold 16 frames), a three-second fade will need a length of about 1 foot 4 inches.) Shove a cork in one end of the tube and wedge the tube upright, standing it on the cork. Fill the tube with Cine Fade until the solution is about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from the top. The piece of film to be treated is first thoroughly de-greased with carbon tetrachloride and then suspended above the tube and arranged so that it can be lowered EXTREMELY SLOWLY into the solution, end first. (Make sure you've got the film the right way up, depending on whether you are making a "fade in" or a "fade out".) To ensure that the film won't snag up inside the tube, hang a lead weight on the bottom.

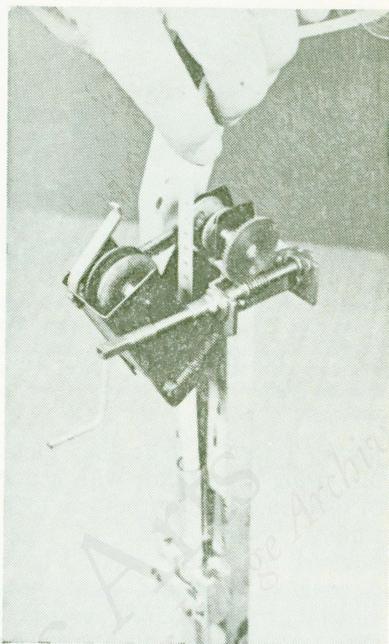
Before you start the actual staining, tie a small piece of bright cotton thread through a sprocket-hole slightly above the frame that will be the last to go in (i.e., if it is to be a two-second fade, the cotton will be about 34 frames away from the end). This will warn you against trying to lower into the tube more film than it can contain.

Lower the first 6 frames or so into the solution. Don't do this gingerly; put them in quickly but without splashing. As this is the

end that is to become black you should, at this stage, allow it a five-minute soak, but if you were to let the film remain stationary for this time, instead of there being a gradual transition from dark grey to complete black, there would be an abrupt division between the two. To prevent this, the film should continue to be evenly lowered, but *extremely* slowly. As a guide to the speed, not more than 2 or 3 more frames should enter the dye during the 5-minute soaking of the first 6 frames.

Once the 5 minutes are up, the speed of lowering may be slowly and evenly increased until, at a point roughly midway along the fade, the speed is about 6 to 8 seconds per frame. The even acceleration is continued until the last few frames (just below the cotton) have entered—at which point the whole length is rapidly lifted out of the tube and **IMMEDIATELY** washed under cold, running water.

The secret of producing a perfect fade in this way lies in the evenness of acceleration of lowering the film (from the almost imperceptible movement during the first 5 minutes to the point where the final frame is simply dunked in and out) and in the speed with which the film is washed afterwards. You can imagine that as the film is lifted from the tube there are many dribbles of solution clinging to its surface. Until these dribbles are washed away, they continue to dye the emulsion—with ghastly results. I have overcome this problem by conducting the whole operation in a bath next to a tap. As the final few inches of film approach the



To enable the film to be withdrawn rapidly, the "idler" wheel assembly is designed to swing away from the sprocket-wheel, at the touch of a finger, to leave an open film-path. Because the reduction gear prevents rapid movement of the film, the final few inches are quickly lowered *by hand* through the open film path.

(Photographs by Fred Gibbs)

tube, I turn on the cold tap in readiness—and any dribbles on the film remain there for only a fraction of a second.

All this may sound very laborious, but once you've done it a few times, the job becomes routine. You may decide to do as I've done and construct a device to control the lowering of the film. My device consists of a wooden frame to hold the tube above which is mounted a rewind arm to hold a spool containing the length of film.

Between the top of the tube and the spool is a sprocket-wheel by which the film is fed into the tube. The sprocket-wheel is turned by hand through a reduction gear, and approximately 7 turns of the handle are needed to lower one frame of film. (A 16mm friend of mine has gone one further and knocked up a motorised version that can handle several fades at once!)

Once the length of film has been washed, it should not be spliced-in or even touched until it is *thoroughly* dry. Cine Fade is suitable for all emulsions available in 9.5 (both colour and black-and-white) and the same solution may be used over and over again.

Before settling down to a session of fade-making, it's a good idea to have a "dress rehearsal" with a scrap length of film—preferably a spare piece from the very same film on which the final fades are to be made. This will enable you to judge the time needed for the dye to act on your particular film and at the particular temperature of your solution. If you find that the fade doesn't go right out to black, don't give up in disgust—all you need to do is to give the film a second treatment (i.e. you can superimpose another fade over the original and it won't notice).

Well, there it is. I sincerely hope I've not frightened anyone away from attempting chemical fades but, in case I have, let me conclude with a challenge. Owing to the much higher magnification demanded of 8mm film, it is harder to make good chemical fades on that gauge than on either

9.5 or 16mm, yet many 8mm enthusiasts make them—and make them well. Let it not be said that we ninefivers lack the interest necessary to provide our films with a few of those embellishments that can make so much difference to the end result.

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1968 9,5 SHOW & GET-TOGETHER — Full Report next issue

SPLICED!

The photograph on the right shows one of our members, John Garnett Jones (who used to be honorary editor of *ACO & Film News*) after his marriage to Miss Joy Yvonne Cooke, at St. Luke's Parish Church, Cannock, Staffordshire, on August 15th.

The event was reported briefly in our last issue, but we were unable to include the photograph then.

We offer them our very best wishes for the future.

Photograph by Fred Parsons, Cannock.



MY FIRST SOUND FILM

by Kenneth Wordsworth

I am in the middle of making my first attempt at a sound film. Some shots I had already taken on outdated Pan X (bought for a song) gave birth to the idea of this film. These were pictures of a New Forest stream in its upper reaches (actually the Lymington river).

I was so impressed by the quality of the light and shade effect — autumn leaves floating downstream, bare branches reflected in the clear water, patches of light darting on rivulets of water racing past a half-submerged log, caught by the autumn sunshine—that I decided to expand the idea. By using more film (this time Orwo 64 ASA stock) I would explore the stream for more poetic images. I found plenty *and* a theme for the film—a spoken soliloquy by a man who returns to the stream to re-live boyhood adventures spent there with a childhood friend who had been killed in action during a commando raid on the Lofoten Islands. Shots of the raid were to be shown in the film, cut from the Pathescope release, *Commando Raid on Norway*.

My film was intended as a memorial to an imaginary friend. I can recall two literary accounts of a return to a scene of childhood. One was in George Orwell's *Coming Up for Orr*, an

experience which turns out to bring utter disillusionment, the final blow being the pool where he used to fish which is now a municipal refuse dump! The other example was an essay by James Agate, who finds that although everything seems to have diminished in size (the copse he remembered as a forest, for instance) there is now a beauty that went unnoticed by a child. I decided to use the second conclusion.

A film of this type is a real challenge. Although it has been done many times before, if not tackled properly it can be extremely corny. Haven't we all seen examples? The narration must not veer too much towards sentimentality either, or it becomes unintentionally funny.

If only I could attain the perfection of a professional film I once saw, the French *Poil de Carrotte* (*Ginger Nut*). I remember the delightful scene when the young boy accompanies his uncle through the French countryside. When I saw this film some time ago at the National Film Theatre, an added poignancy was that sitting near me in the audience was a woman who had known the child actor in the film up to the time when, as a member of the French Resistance, he had been shot by the Germans.

WIDESCREEN

from page 10

refocus it to your usual projection throw; this is a point that I intend to take up with the manufacturers, because they do not mention this at all, in fact they do not supply instructions as such. I feel that this is a most important point, and buyers should know that this lens will give them jolly good results provided that they realise it is fixed-focus.

Having said all this, I can tell you that I got some good results with it and had great fun playing about fitting it on to a great variety of cameras. Fortunately, I have one of those very handy Uni-mount universal mounting brackets (£6 6s.), and this made it easy to change cameras. I found that, on the whole, the lens performed better with the special lens hood (£2 12s. 6d. extra) than without it. I suppose I should have expected this, but for many years I have not bothered to use a hood and have "got away with it". This is, obviously, not pos-

sible with the ZenaScope, as it has a very exposed (!) front element.

The actual lens itself sells for £16 10s., plus 7s. 6d. post and packing—and how they produce it for the price these days I'll never know. It is British throughout, in fact it is the only British-made anamorphic as far as I know.

Widex '69

Finally, I've just had good news about the next annual wide-screen show —WIDEX-69— this is going to be held at the MANCHESTER NATIONAL FILM THEATRE, and will be a bigger-than-ever show. If you'd like to see what amateur widescreeners are doing, this will be your chance. More information on this can be had from Harold Coban, Public Relations Officer, The Widescreen Association, 34 Netherwood Road, NORTHENDEN, Manchester, 22. The date is yet to be fixed, but I hope to see some of you there.

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History Repeats Itself

There have been a variety of organisations looking after the interests of the ninefiver. When Pathescope stopped importing film, we had the Nine Five Association to ensure that 9.5 users could still load their cameras.

But whoever thought a few years ago that anybody would ever be rash enough to propose a Standard Eight Association with similar objectives? Yet the Standard Eight Association now exists, sired by two North London enthusiasts, Ben Ansell and Les Turner.

They assured me that they felt no anxiety about 8mm film supplies in the foreseeable future, but they were definitely worried about stocks of equipment drying up. It seems these fears may well be justified, because standard 8 equipment has completely vanished from most dealers' windows already. In fact, little is being made now.

The Association's immediate aim, said Mr. Ansell, was merely to make contact with as many "standard eighters" (his phrase) as possible, and then to approach the trade in an effort to interest someone in continuing not only film, but equipment, too.

It was only the determination of ninefivers to carry on using a

format which suited them, rather than adopt what most manufacturers thought might show the most profit, that enabled ninefivers to survive a couple of rather bleak patches in its history. It remains to be seen whether standard 8 users are made of the same stuff. Contrary to what some of my 9.5 friends think, after talking to Mr. Turner and Mr. Ansell, I suspect that many of them will prove that they are.

Most readers might argue that ninefivers had something worth preserving, while standard 8 users have not. But this is perhaps a short-sighted view, as well as a biased one. Ninefivers may have stuck to their gauge because they were in love with the design and enjoyed the superb quality, but I reckon there was a secondary motive for most of them. They'd invested a lot of money in equipment. Money they had worked for and spent on a hobby they enjoyed.

Standard 8 users are now in the same boat. Anyone who has seen super 8 pictures (which vary from much better than standard 8 to much worse, according to the cameras you use for the comparison) will know why some standard 8 users are asking themselves frankly: "Why the hell should I change?" — *Gordon Clarke.*

Group 9,5

London Meetings

London members continue to meet fortnightly on Saturday evenings at St. Gabriel's Parish House, Churchill Gardens, Pimlico, S.W.1. The starting time is 7.30 p.m. and the meetings usually finish at about 10.30.

Several members have complained that full programme details for St. Gabriel's are no longer given in the *Review*. Unfortunately, we can only apologise once again, because it has still not been possible to include them in this issue. Frank Hillier, who has now taken over organisation of the London group, is trying to arrange inter-club visits and guest speakers. This all takes time, and he was unable to draw up a programme to meet the press date for this issue. By the time this



magazine appears, full details should be available, and they can be obtained from Frank Hillier, at 17, Frensham Road, London, S.E.9.

However, we can print the firm *dates* of the meetings:—

4th January, 18th January, 1st February, 15th February, 1st March, 15th March, 19th March, 12th April, 26th April.

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9.5mm silents, comedy, documentary, etc. S.A.E. details: Clarke, 10 Grey-stoke Lodge, Hanger Lane, W 5.

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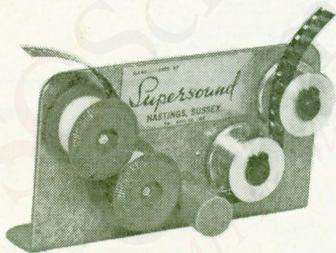
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Wanted: Instruction book for Pathe-scope "H" camera, buy or borrow. Harry Beckett, 136 Ringinglow Road, Ecclesall, Sheffield, 11.

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