



## Wodonga / Albury Camera Club Audio/Visual Competition June 2026

**WACC Contact**

**David Willis** 0417233388 [davidtwillis@bigpond.com](mailto:davidtwillis@bigpond.com)

**Judge:**

**Bob Thomas**

**Subject:**

**Audio / Visual**

### Audio / Visual Competition

**General Comments:**

I think I may have made the same comments on prior occasions, but perhaps repetition is the best way to drive home a point.

Audio Visual productions are getting more polished, and therefore more competitive. That means that you, as a competitor, will need to keep ahead of the game by making your own productions more professional and more sophisticated if you want to remain competitive.

Silent movies are no longer in vogue, and slide shows are a little bit 1960-ish. So a compelling AV should have a soundtrack which is more than just a generic piece of music. Specifically, AV makers need to seriously consider voice-overs and to aim for a production which wouldn't look out of place on the television. Use your own voice if it is appropriate, but otherwise enlist AI to give you a professional sound track. Today's AI is superb at doing this, and gives a professional feel for narration. It also lifts most productions significantly.

One aspect which is sometimes overlooked is perhaps the lack of early identification of the subject in terms of time and space. If your audience starts viewing your AV and does not immediately understand what it's about, then you have left out a vital piece of information. Leaving that information to the end credits means depriving your audience of the most important detail.

As always, AV makers need to avoid the dreaded slide show! Virtually anyone can point a decent graphics program at a folder full of images, and it will automatically produce a polished slide show which is really just a succession of images accompanied by a generic sound track. What you, as a creative person need to do is to take that slide show and inject life into it by telling a story in a creative and interesting way. What sets us apart from the automated AI approach is the ability to use our images to express an emotion or breathe life into the lifeless. Above all, we need to create interest and to leave our audience in a better place than they were before they saw your AV. Aim to produce an emotion in your viewing audience, whether it be amusement, inspiration, increased knowledge or even gloom and doom. Anything but boredom.

This year's crop of AVs from WACC have grasped most of these aspects with both hands and produced some work that should do well in other competitions. An excellent collective work.

	Points (40)	Place
<b>1. Sky Dancers - Australian Raptors - Glenda Black</b>		
The photography here is excellent, and the movement of the birds provides a visually stimulating element to birds shown in flight. One issue here is that you are relying on the viewing audience to read about the birds rather than concentrating on those fabulous images. We might have two eyes, but we can't read text and look at images simultaneously. By the time we've read about a particular bird the image has changed so that we can't then transfer our gaze to whatever the words told us. Spoken words would fix this issue, as we can watch images and use our ears at the same time. Finally, the closing credits are a tad too rapid for us to read before they disappear. An excellent compilation nonetheless, and an informative slide show.	<b>35</b>	
<b>2. Good Old Days Festival Barellan - Sharon Alston</b>		
Now this one is excellent! As a city slicker, I don't think I've ever seen so many Clydsdale's, which are not a common sight in downtown Melbourne. The photography is excellent, the variety of animals really interesting and the narration tell us what we need to know rather than asking us to read about anything. Including some video adds to the package. A well-conceived and constructed AV.	<b>39</b>	<b>2nd</b>
<b>3. Mongolia Eagles Festival - Wendy Standford</b>		
Another really well-done AV with a good mix of quality images and video. The subject is an interesting one and something quite unusual. The best we usually see are trained birds at Healesville Sanctuary, nowhere near as fascinating. The choice of AI narration works well and you have chosen a suitable voice for your production. Well done Wendy!	<b>40</b>	<b>1st</b>
<b>4. Noi Dep Flower Farm - Deirdre Blunt</b>		
This is another AV based on some good photography and clear, sharp images. The use of various transitions and effects gives the AV a boost and promotes the AV from just being a slide show (which is what everyone needs to avoid). The primary problem lies in insufficient information being provided at the very start. Until the closing credits we don't know what we're looking at or where it is. This information needs to be provided at the very start so that your audience knows what they're watching. Perhaps some sort of commentary about the flowers might be helpful as well.	<b>36</b>	

<b>5. Anzac Day - Judy Hofmeyer</b>		
Nicely constructed AV with good use of varied transitions and movement. The image with the flag and text would have been better if the frame gradually zoomed in to the writing. As it stands, the frame lasts a little too long as a static image. I would have like the location to have been mentioned early on, as “the apple isle” is a little too general. Narration is good and overall it is, a good AV recording a significant event.	<b>36</b>	
<b>6. Albury Pioneer Cemetery - David Willis</b>		
Cemeteries are always interesting places, and this one is no exception. The photography reflects the atmospheric nature of graveyards and adds an appropriate dimension to the AV. Adding individual stories provides more interest than a static representation would and gives life to the otherwise lifeless environment. The narration is good, although no doubt an AI speaker. I applaud the use of AI voiceovers given that the quality of most of our natural speaking voices is pretty ordinary, although care must be taken to ensure that any subtle signs of AI are eliminated wherever possible. In this AV there are a few slight vocal imperfections which lead me to assume this to be AI. Ideally, a good AI voice does not betray its origins.	<b>35</b>	
<b>7. Wintry Mornings - Deirdre Blunt</b>		
This AV illustrates a time of day with which I am less than familiar, for good reason. The photography shows us how cold early morning can be, and the way in which foliage and grasses experience that coldness. There are some nice images and the music is evocative. The overall AV probably needs more of a story and a bit more variety. The introductory voiceover is less than clear and needs to be more easily understood. I needed to play it a couple of time to fully understand the words. In general terms, any AV needs a bit of variety so that we are not seeing just variations on the same theme, but new themes altogether.	<b>34</b>	
<b>8. The Story OF Tane Mahuta - Rod Alexander</b>		
I must admit that after seeing so many AVs over the years, I tend to see the same old, same old a bit too often. This is just one example of that not happening, as it’s a subject I hadn’t heard of before, and it’s a story really well told. The voiceover is excellent and I didn’t pick it as AI which is great. Although I recommend AI voices, sometimes they are a little bit obvious, but this one works really well and is almost indistinguishable from a human voice. The content is interesting and varied throughout, and the photography does justice to the subject. Fascinating history presented in a nicely produced package.	<b>38</b>	<b>Merit</b>

<b>9. Rainbow Bee Eaters - Glenda Black</b>		
<p>Some really nice photos here and a great variety of different poses. The range of shots does you credit and they are supported by some interesting facts about their lifestyles. The closing credits are a bit too fast to really absorb, so perhaps slow them down a tad. With all due respect to the narrator, I feel that the narration could do with injecting a bit more liveliness and animation into the voice. It was an informative sound track, but delivered more in a monotone rather than having more light and variety in the delivery.</p>	<b>34</b>	
<b>10. The Dolomites - Jill Hancock</b>		
<p>Another interesting part of our fascinating world, with amazing terrain and scenery. To some extent this AV doesn't capitalize on the background story, with a missed potential for more of the background narrative. You probably know I'm going to recommend replacing the text with a narration, but I'll suggest it anyway. The text here runs past at variable speed, not always slowly enough to absorb. Similarly, some of the images leave us too quickly as the AV moves on to the next. Rather than using swipes and page turns, you would be better off slowly zooming in to the more interesting features, and letting our eyes take it all in. You have the time, as the AV is very short. I'm sure there are interesting back stories to the various foxholes and figures, so perhaps focus more on telling us about them. There is an interesting story to tell, so share it with your audience.</p>	<b>33</b>	
<b>11. Winter Wonderland - Gary Fielder</b>		
<p>There are some really pleasing images here, and it really presents a great representation of what you saw on your trip. However, it has two issues when looked at as a competition image (which is what I'm doing). Firstly, any AV should be designed to appeal to a range of emotions as it is essentially a form of storytelling. The problem here is that we start this story with a title but no synopsis – we have no idea where you are! We don't find out until the end, and even then in a very general way. The very first thing you need to do when you profile something or somewhere is to tell your audience where and when you are so as to provide context. The second issue is that although the images are great and very interesting, they have been presented as a slide show rather than a story. There is no dialogue, no elucidation. It's just a slide show of very nice images. To be competitive you need more creative input to engage and inform the viewer.</p>	<b>34</b>	

<b>12. My Photography Journey - Jessica Wells</b>		
<p>This is a fascinating use of AI and one which has been quite successfully implemented. The ability to channel our creativity in new and different ways is one of the many advantages of AI even though there are also some downsides. The lyrics are well written, and the coordination with good quality photographs ties it all together very well. It beats some of the meaningless drivel that so called musicians have been known to produce in recent years! It's a bit like being a conductor when you can orchestrate various disparate elements and bring them together to produce a cohesive sound. Well done.</p>	<b>37</b>	<b>Merit</b>
<b>13. Wetland Birds - Deirdre Blunt</b>		
<p>The production has been very well handled here, and I particularly like the use of video and special effects in the opening few moments. The images are excellent and the colour palate is very well matched to the overall theme. You have put some effort in making this a great showcase of your photos. There are a few issues however. You do not tell us where we are until the closing credits, and that information should always be provided at the start. The primary problem however, is that this is essentially a slide show, albeit a very good one. We are not given any new information about any of these birds and nor is there any sort of back story or narrative. As I have mentioned before, the viewer needs to gain either knowledge or experience some new emotion so that they are enriched by the experience of watching your AV.</p>	<b>33</b>	
<b>14. Living with the Hume Dam - David Willis</b>		
<p>This a really well put together AV, and has all the elements of a successful production. The use of software and transitions is good and the script is well written and interesting. It conveys information that is new to most of us and comprehensively covers the subject. The photography is good and overall a very good AV. The primary problem lies in the narration. On the one hand it was a good choice to go with AI narration, on the other hand this particular voice is a bit too artificial. Sometimes you need to try a number of voices before finding one that does the whole script smoothly and naturally. I have just completed an AV for non-competitive purposes, and it took me a while to find the appropriate voice for my project. Sometimes one voice will handle a script really badly, and other times a different voice from the same source works much better.</p>	<b>36</b>	

<b>15. A Trip to the North - David Woolcock</b>		
<p>This is a case of great potential lost completely due to readability issues. Love the topic, loved the images and you have a really interesting story to tell. However, there is no way your audience can read the sheer volume of text and view your images at the same time. When we create an AV, as the author we know what's in it, and when we write the words we know what they will say. However, your audience hasn't got that foreknowledge, and we have to read each word and absorb their content for the very first time. Not only that, we then want to see how those words apply to your images, and we want to explore each of those images. It's simply not possible in the brief time you have allowed. This is a clear case for using a narration, because although we cannot read words and look at pictures simultaneously, we can <i>listen</i> to words and view images at the same time. It's like walking and chewing gum.</p>	<b>33</b>	
<b>16. Tallangatta Show &amp; Shine - Geoff Bayes</b>		
<p>Great interest for car lovers here, and the AV showcases the event really well. I do like the AI voiceover which is clear and well enunciated. I don't think drawing your audience's attention to its flaws was a great idea, and you'd have been better off re-doing any bits that had a changed accent. When you're pretending to be human it tends to ruin the illusion when you out yourself. The aim is to make your audience believe that it is a 100% human voice!</p>	<b>35</b>	
<b>17. Local Gardens - Win van Oosterwijck</b>		
<p>This illustrates the wide variety of flowers in the area, and you have captured them well. Good voiceover for the story and the AV achieves it's aim. It is a bit of a slide show in that it probably need greater variety and more of a story to be competitive. However, I appreciate that finding that backstory might have been harder than with other more dynamic subjects.</p>	<b>33</b>	
<b>18. A Man Needs a Hobby - Bill Thompson</b>		
<p>You're not wrong .... A man does need a hobby!! I have always been tempted to buy one of those things, but photography always took precedence. I think the photography here is excellent, and although I haven't tried photographing models like this, I can imagine the difficulties involved. The subtitles are easy to read and the images are left on screen long enough to absorb. Overall, it's an interesting profile of a fascinating hobby. The only change I would make is to taper off the soundtrack rather than truncating it abruptly. Of course I'd also recommend ramping it up a bit by adding a narration rather than asking your audience to read text.</p>	<b>35</b>	

<b>19. Taillem Bend - Geoff Bayes</b>		
<p>What a blast from the past, and a bit of a worry seeing that those cars that are now museum pieces are the first cars I ever owned! An interesting place, although quite sad to see the state of disrepair many of them are in. I can relate to that. The photos are good, and the viewer is given a good idea of what to expect if they visit. My repeated issue here is telling us what it's all about at the end rather than the beginning. It would also help to add a map so that we city dwellers can get an idea of where this is on that map. There is potential to lift this even more by providing more of a commentary, as there is probably much more to tell.</p>	<b>34</b>	
<b>20. WangRail - Bill Cleverly</b>		
<p>A good AV with an interesting story, and an informative script. The shots following the progress of the build give us quite an insight into the works and the huge engineering tasks it involved. The voiceover is good except for an annoying background sound that seems to have been introduced by the recording process. You should either try and eliminate that using the free software Audacity, or re-record it using a better recording setup.</p>	<b>36</b>	
<b>21. Elvis: Direct From Graceland - David Willis</b>		
<p>An interesting topic for most of us who lived through the Elvis years. This covers the exhibition very well and showcases the event. The only issue is the rather poor AI voiceover. The poorer quality ones can be picked from the moment they open their imaginary mouths, and this one has a number of "tells" which wouldn't be there with a different voice. Using AI voices is an excellent way to boost the professionalism of an AV, but it does need to be realistic. Try experimenting with different AI voices until you find one that works.</p>	<b>34</b>	