

Australian Council of Film Societies

BULLETIN

April 2011

The New Exciting Future

The new Victoria

The informed observers were right. As predicted in last month's Bulletin, the FVFS Annual General Meeting delivered the Victorian Federation into the hands of the Old Guard. With the help of an unusually large number of proxies, the OG re-asserted its control, not just at the head of the table, but in every available Executive position, effectively shutting out anyone who might presume to disagree with them. So much for their much-repeated claims to being the champions of democratic principles.

What happened in Victoria was made possible by three factors. First, the OG were determined to win at any cost. Secondly, most film society members and committees simply enjoy what their societies do and leave it at that. They are already very busy with priorities much closer to home than federations and ACOFS, and they have no interest in becoming involved with political in-fighting. The third and vital factor was universal fear of the unknown. Everyone is wary of change and what it might bring. In these circumstances, when proposed change was painted to look like the worst thing since the Black Death, the outcome was a foregone conclusion.

There is an old saying about the shortcomings of democracy, 'nations get the governments they deserve'. We wish all Victorian societies success and full houses at every screening.

The new ACOFS

For ACOFS, the Launceston meeting looms, and with it an unhappy prospect. The Victorian delegation, voting as an exclusive Old Guard bloc, will equal or outnumber the delegates from all the other states, reducing the democratic process to farce.

Things could have been very different. Instead of denying the need for change, (which they had talked about for years, but done nothing to fix) the OG could have acknowledged the Executive's proposal as just a first step. They could have indicated where they agreed with it (as they have implicitly stated since) and where it could be improved. The consultation process could have developed from there. It could have been genuinely productive, and it could have been instrumental in putting together an energetic, forward-looking team to take ACOFS into the future. It was a golden opportunity. But it was lost, and it is unlikely to come again.

When the Executive were first putting their proposal together, someone said 'you know, there are probably only about 10 people in the whole of Australia who care enough about this to actually make it happen'. We nodded our heads sagely. We realised the task would be huge, but we decided that if we didn't make a start, who would? What we didn't fully understand was the degree to which the organism is infected by a toxic malaise. The reality is, that the organism doesn't know how ill it is. It's not just quiet; it is comatose and slowly dying. Odds are that is the only pace that will quicken in the next few years. Someone who used to be famous once said, 'the ultimate folly of democracy is that it must be allowed to commit suicide'. Knowing what we know now, it is difficult to disagree with such magisterial wisdom.

And the nominees for the ACOFS 2011/2012 Executive are...

President -	Ian Davidson (V)
Vice President -	Anna Blainey Warner (V) Mark Horner (T)
Secretary -	Prodos Marinakis (V)
Treasurer -	John Turner (V) Mark Horner (T)
Committee -	Susan Davidson (V), Barboo Marinakis (V), Sue Nunn (V), Andrew Watkins (V), Tom Busby (T).

THE LAUNCESTON FILM SOCIETY PRESENTS THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF FILM SOCIETIES FEATURING GUEST APPEARANCES BY DAVID STRATTON AND MARGARET POMERANZ

The Council, its President and Executive acknowledge with thanks the enormous contribution made by the members of Launceston Film Society (under the guidance of Mark Horner) to the organisation, billeting, catering and many other arrangements involved in making this historic event happen, and in making us so welcome.

PROGRAM

Friday 15 April

Venue: **The Tramshed**, 4 Invermay Road, Inveresk, Tasmania

Pre-welcome

Normal bar service available. Nibbles provided.

Welcome to Launceston

6.30pm to 8.15 pm:

Drinks and nibbles for delegates and friends. An opportunity to make and renew friendships in a relaxed atmosphere before the following day's formal proceedings.

Dinner

8.30 pm at **Larceny** restaurant, 22 Tamar St, Launceston. Optional at own cost. Larceny is a short walk from **The Tramshed**.

Saturday 16 April

Venue: **The Tramshed**, 4 Invermay Road, Inveresk, Tasmania.

Annual Council Meeting

9.00am: Registration of delegates and observers. (\$10.00 per person attending morning session, to cover morning tea and lunch costs.)

9.20am: ACOFS Annual Council Meeting convenes

10.50am: Morning Tea.

11.10am: ACOFS Annual Council Meeting re-convenes

Lunch

12.40pm: Lunch for delegates and observers.

Conference

1.40pm: Venue open to film society members and members of the public interested in attending proceedings. \$20 per person attending to offset costs.

1.45pm: **Master of Ceremonies**

Bryan Putt, President - Crowlands Film Society

1.55pm: **Film Societies as Educators**

Dorothy Jenkins, PhD student, Monash University, Melbourne, Victoria

2.20pm: **The International Film Federation General Assembly, Brazil December 2010.** Michael O'Rourke, president, NSW and Associated Film Societies

2.35pm: **The Tasmanian Film Society Scene**

Mark Horner, president, Federation of Tasmanian Film Societies

2.45pm: **The Breath of Fresh Air Festival**

Owen Tilbury, director, Breath of Fresh Air Festival

2.55pm: **Launceston Film Society**

Peter Gillard, president, Launceston Film Society

3.10pm: **Afternoon Tea**

with diversifications by Chris Bryg and Samantha Hammersley

3.30pm: **Margaret and David Offscreen**

Margaret Pomeranz and David Stratton in discussion live, on stage

4.30pm: **David's Choice**

David Stratton will introduce and screen a film from his personal collection.

Post-formalities

7.15pm: Normal bar service. Entertainment from Lyndell Geeves and ensemble.

7.45pm: Entertainment: **Slings and Arrows**

8.00pm: Dinner

Because of venue commitments, dinner is scheduled to finish at 9.00 pm.

Sunday 17 April

Venue: TBA

9.00am Breakfast (at own cost)

After breakfast, there will be an opportunity for delegates and friends to visit some of Launceston's many attractions, in and around the city. Highly recommended. Tour guides will be provided.

See you there!