

ACOFS Bulletin

Australian Council of Film Societies

NUMBER 61

February 2020

This Bulletin has been compiled and edited by Ian Davidson, (ACOFS committee) editor@acofs.org.au

This Issue contains information important to your office bearers and film society programmers. Please also pass it on to all your committee and other interested people - including those who are not on email.

And please ensure it does not get caught up in spam filters!

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1. From the Editor

You are receiving this ACOFS Bulletin because you are, or have been, on a film society committee which is affiliated with a State Film Federation, or because of your links with, or support of, the Australian Film Society movement. Feel free to pass it on to anyone else you believe would be interested. If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter please let the editor know by reply email.

It is clear from the number of successful film societies across Australia and the number of reports we receive of their various film activities, that many people are very active in support of their local film society. We always welcome contributions from members.

One very active person that immediately comes to mind is Bill Biscoe, who we notice received an OAM at the 2020 Australia Day Awards. Congratulations Bill. I quote his nomination:

“Bill Biscoe has contributed to a range of organisations including the:

- *Federation of South Australian Film Societies, as President;*
- *Barossa Film Club as Secretary from 2001 to 2018;*
- *Barossa Arts Council as a member since 2008 and Secretary in 2012; and*
- *South Australian Living Arts Festival as a Regional Organiser.”*

On a more mundane note, I note that almost 50% of all film societies have not re-affiliated with their State Federations yet for 2020. (according to reports from the Federations to ACOFS). The immediate implication of this is that the list of film societies eligible to use the ACOFS DVD Rights agreement will not include many active film societies, and their request for rights from the distributors may be queried. So would all film society secretaries please double check that their society membership is current, and Federation secretaries please ensure that ACOFS is up-to-date with a current list of member societies.

ACOFS also wishes to thank the DVD distributors who continue to support the Australian Film Society movement by making screening rights available at prices which allow film societies to survive across Australia. New Acquisitions from DVD distributors that have been advised to us are listed in the relevant section below.

2. From the President - Mark Horner.

Well, here we are, and the first month of 2020 has disappeared. I hope 2020 so far, has been good for you, your Federation and your Film Society. It has been lovely to have a break but I am looking forward to my Film Society film screenings and my weekly fix of a good film.



I have to admit that over the break I have watched several films available on a major streaming service. Not sure how I got so involved in this process. Just some friends suggesting I watch a particular film or series. How convenient it has become to watch what we want when we want to watch it. Mind you, I can remember, not that long ago, browsing and choosing film titles in the video rental shop. That was fun too. Particularly when done with friends who always had an opinion on the best films to select or who knew how to get the best deals. However, nothing compares with enjoying a film on the big screen.

As the ACOFS working party formed to discuss what the future of film screening will look like progresses, I look forward to continued stimulating and informative conversations and the presentation of discussions at the ACOFS AGM in Melbourne on 18 April 2020.

Federations should now be considering who will attend as a delegate. It would be great if ALL Federations could send delegates to the AGM.

On a sad note, TFOFS President and ACOFS Vice President, Jim Mansbridge, advised two TFOFS current committee members have very recently passed away. This will certainly have an impact on the TFOFS committee. Vale Dave Moser TFOFS Vice President and Tom Busby TFOFS Secretary. Two lovely men who were very much involved in their Film Societies and with TFOFS. They will be sadly missed.

Very best wishes for a successful year of film screenings for your Film Society and as always, get involved.

Cheers,

Mark.

[If you are interested in ACOFS developing any new ideas to help film societies, please email Mark with your suggestions and comments at president@acofs.org.au].

3. Reports From the Federations

From the FVFS (Victoria)

The FVFS ended 2019 with a total of 84 members.

The latest issue of ReelNews (#124, February 2020) includes a wide range of topics of interest to film societies, namely:

- David Stratton continues his regular feature, listing “The best films from the last 3 months” to aid societies in their program selection.
- Geoff Gardiner on **Ivan the Terrible**.
- Updates from the The North Bellarine Film Festival.
- A social evening at Chewton Film Society.
- A few words on stunt men and illusion.
- Tension in the movies.
- The 2020 Healesville Mini Film Festival.
- Who is John Turner?
- Plus regular features – “StarBox score results” and “What’s being seen at film societies across Victoria”.

From TFOFS (Tasmania)

TFOFS (the Tasmanian Federation of Film Societies) continues steadily along. At present we have 17 members, with the Dodges Ferry Film Society recently joining.

The most important news of the last few months is that two of our longstanding committee members have passed away.

Tom Busby was a long-time president and committee member of the Break O’Day Film Society. He represented the Society at TFOFS meetings for many years and he was TFOFS president for five years. He also represented TFOFS at a number of ACOFS meetings. Tom was always friendly, kind and helpful.

Dave Moser belonged to the Eaglehawk Neck Hall Film Society which he was instrumental in setting up. He was also a very enthusiastic vice-president of TFOFS. During his years in the film society movement (and in his many other community activities) he was unfailingly good-natured, competent and altruistic.

They will both be missed very much.

Jim Mansbridge, president TFOFS

4. News From the DVD Distributors

These titles have been provided by the respective distributors as being either new acquisitions or titles of interest to film societies. It is an indication of who holds the screening rights for the films, but these distributors can not necessarily supply the DVDs.

For the latest distributor contact details and websites see ACOFS Fact Sheet 3B on www.acofs.org.au/resources (Updated regularly). The contact is included below only where it has changed recently.

Amalgamated Movies (Available now or soon to be released).

All is True

Chills, The

Hail Satan?

Hummingbird Project, The

Jumanji 3: The Next Level

Little Women

Miss Bala

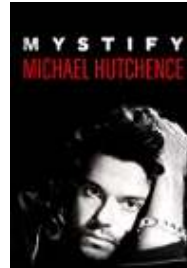
Once Upon a Time in Hollywood (Also in 35mm)



Ophelia Sink or Swim
Spiderman Far From Home
Skin
Wedding Guest, The
Yellow is Forbidden
Zombieland Double Tap

Amalgamated Also handles Madman rights bookings – such as.

As It Was
Australian Dream, The
Intruder, The
Memory
Mystify
Overcomer



And released on digital (no DVD)

American Woman
Aquarela
Brian Banks
Them that Follow
Untogether

Amalgamated now also handles Limelight Films such as the following-.

Brimstone and Glory
Camino Skies
Double Lover
Florianopolis Dream
Fool, The
Little Woods
Lost in Paris
Number One
Older than Ireland
Olive Tree
Passions of Augustine
Yuli
Zama



Classic 16mm films now available-

Assignment K
Bear Island (Cinemascope)
Competition, The
Dirty Money
Duffy
Grizzly
Robin & Marion
Tootsie (Cinemascope)

Antidote Films

Antidote charge just \$35+ GST for screening DVD titles.

Dosed
Erasing David
Most Dangerous Man in America, The
Triangle Wars, The
United States of Amnesia, The
Unmade in China



rights for most of their

Hi Gloss

Woman at War
Reports on Sarah and Saleem, The
John McEnroe in the Realm of Perfection



Label Distribution

Suzi Q (From March)

Limelight Distribution

Fergus Grady Fergus@limelightdistribution.co.nz 0468 483 212 (In Melbourne)

Simon Werry simon@limelightdistribution.co.nz

Eg. Camino Skies

Older than Ireland

Lost in Paris

See their catalogue at www.limelightdistribution.co.nz

Madman

Through Amalgamated

Parasite

Roadshow

Midway

Ronin Films

For member prices refer to the "private purchase" price, but remember you then have to pay the appropriate screening rights fee. Ronin will accept the recommended \$50 plus GST for DVD screening rights. www.roninfilms.com.au for details and purchase prices.

Jupurrurla, Man of Media. 2019, 28 mins, Australia

Petyarre

Arlie

Umbrella Entertainment

Buoyancy

Emu Runner

For Sama

Good Posture

Martha – A Picture Story

Parts You Lose, The

Promised



For a full list of all Umbrella Entertainment Public Performance Rights List, contact Jason Hernandez at jason@umbrellaent.com.au

Want something special on DVD that you cannot get anywhere else? Create a list of what DVDs you would like and send your list with the subject: "What We Want on DVD and Blu-Ray" to Jason at Umbrella.

Contact Jason for bookings or call on 03 9020 5136 or jason@umbrellaent.com.au

For Australian titles in the Umbrella catalogue, Umbrella may be able to assist you to invite the director to attend your screening for a Q and A. Ring Jason.

Vendetta Films

(Can approve rights for DVD screening even if they don't have the DVD)

Alice Davies: alice@vendettafilms.co.nz

Available Now:

Barbara

Girl
Girls of the Sun
Gone are the Days
Happy Prince, The
Ideal Palace. The
Lancaster Skies
No Dress Code Required
Orchestra Class
Out
Support the Girls

Coming Soon:

Allo's Journey
Inna De Yard
Master Cheng
Out of Blue
Repeat Attenders
Return to Ghandi Road
Roxanne
Vai

For a full list of what's available go to www.vendettafilms.co.nz



5. New Titles from the NTLC at the NFSA

The NTLC (Non-Theatrical Lending Collection) is part of the NFSA (National Film and Sound Archive) in Canberra. There are almost 1,000 DVD and BluRay titles available for loan to film societies at \$22 (including rights and delivery to you). See their catalogue at loans.nfsa.gov.au

The following licenced DVD or BluRay titles are listed as having been added in the last 90 days:

3 Days in Quiberon
Anima for Kids III
Art and Vegetables
Atelier Highlights
Bauhaus Spirit: 100 Years of Bauhaus
Beethoven Tage Aus Einem Leben
Berg Fidel
Berlin Um Die Ecke
Casting
Chance 2000 – Last Chance Party
Chronider of the Uniquely Normal
Church of Fear vs. The Alien Within , The
Drama Consult
Egomania – Island Without Hope
Esterhazy, Mauerhase, Hase and Igel
Exit
Film Unfinished, A
Forest for the Trees, The
Forget Me Not
Fritz Bauer Conversations
Good Bye Lenin!
I Was Nineteen
If I Think of Germany at Night
In The Aisles
Born in 45



Karbla
Kathe Kollowitz Bilder Eines Lebens
Lagos-Notizen einer Stadt
Legend of Timm Thaler, The or The Boy Who Sold his Laughter
Man and Beast
Me and Kaminski
Modern City, The
Mohr and the Ravens of London
Mover, The (ATLAS)
Nachrichten vom grossen Krieg 1914 – 1918
Of Fathers and Sons
Oray
Peter Weibel Medienrebell
Queen of Niendorf
Rabbit is Me, The
Schwimmen
Self-determination, Perspectives of Filmmakers
Shoah
Slit, The
Supa Modo
Stadt von Morgen, Die – Experimentierfeld Asien
This Ancient Law
Two Mothers
Veve
What Does End Mean Here?
Witness Out of Hell



Contact nontheatric@nfsa.com.au for details.
Your contact there is Phil Hore.

Also don't forget that the NTLC may have some older titles which you will not be able to get elsewhere. Even where the original Australian distributor no longer holds current rights, the NTLC may have purchased the screening rights themselves.

The NTLC may be able to licence a viewing of your own copy of a DVD where they hold the screening rights to that title in their collection. This means that if a title held by the NTLC is already booked out when you want it, you can use your own copy after paying the NTLC the normal \$22 fee for the screening rights for that title.

6. Film Society Basics - Publicity

Basic Requirements for Film Society Success - Posters and Publicity (D Harcombe)

As you know, for local film societies - whether large or small - members are everything! As long as you're choosing films which your current members like, and which new members will probably also like - and in a venue they will or do like - you're half-way there! But how do you find enough members, at membership fee levels that are acceptable to them, and which will also provide enough revenue to cover your costs - both of your venue, and also the licence fees for showing your films? Answer: getting your publicity and promotion right!

So let's list how we can best promote/publicise our film club:

Posters and Publicity

Get good quality, well-designed, posters up everywhere in town or neighbourhood shopping centres. Easiest to recruit are those shops which are already displaying other organisations' posters - especially if yours is a well-designed and smart-looking one, and it's perhaps accompanied by, eg, a free pass to one of your films.

Also getting posters up regularly at schools, libraries, and tourist/visitor information centres. From my experience, education people seem particularly keen supporters of local film clubs.

If you're giving free film passes to your poster site owners, these passes can variously be given the first time at that site, the first time each year, or every time you have a newly-designed multi-film poster to display. You can also ask your members to try to get posters up at their workplaces.

Poster design - avoid over-loading them with information. Too many words, and people won't read them. Instead, just basic information about the current and/or upcoming multi-film program - ie a picture for each film, plus film titles, the time and place they're at, and contact details for any enquiries.

If handing out, or leaving small leaflets at poster sites, you should naturally follow a similar design style as for your posters - but (unlike the posters) you can also include on your leaflets a synopsis about each film and its Australian rating - plus (if desired) its origin, especially if your members particularly like foreign or locally-made films.

Are these ideas useful? I hope to offer more in future ACOFS Bulletins - and hopefully get some discussion going. Eg: more film society topics, such as General Publicity, Membership Recruitment and Involvement, and How to Run Your Organization Well (including records and accounts) etc. Until then ...

David Harcombe [Sec: Tasmanian Federation of Film Societies]
dpthfilms@gmail.com

7. Barossa Film Club Turns 17

Barossa Film Club has reached a significant milestone of seventeen seasons since it was founded in 2003 by long time Barossa resident and arts supporter, Paddy Carter, as a branch of the Barossa Arts Council. The very first film was screened on 21st February 2003 in the Brenton Langbein Theatre (part of the Faith Secondary College). The short film was "James Joyce – Poet and novelist" made in UK in 1988 and the main feature was a Chinese film "Ju Dou" directed by Zhang Yi_Mou and released in 1993. The April feature was 1997 French film "Ridicule" and the next screening was the 1997 Mike Leigh film from the UK, "Topsy Turvy".



Initially, there were six screenings for the year and annual membership subscription was \$30. There was an enthusiastic take-up of membership by 48 people and it is interesting that there are 4 people who are still members 17 years later: Paddy Carter (who is a life member), Susan Raven, Ingrid Glastonbury and Pam O'Donnell.

Obviously, this initial format has been successful. The Club's annual membership fee is now \$35, which includes ten screenings, and films are still shown at the Faith College, albeit in the Wine Centre rather than the theatre. We are still a branch of the Barossa Arts Council and our emphasis is still on films which are interesting because of their historical value or their rarity or their intellectual value. Members still debate the merits of the films shown which can lead to some interesting discussions.

[ACOFS would welcome similar “milestone” stories from other film societies. Surely there are others out there with significant milestones to report on. And what about the logo? How about some contributions from societies with interesting logos – especially if there is an interesting back-story to tell. Editor.]

8. Quotes from Dress Circle

The following are two quotes taken from “Dress Circle”, the very informative newsletter published by Ross Adams, “produced by a collector for collectors and enthusiasts.” This includes film society organisers.

From Ross’ “Leader”, about political correctness. :

“It is always encouraging to know that what is published is read and enjoyed. Reading newspapers and listening to the news doesn’t bring much joy. In recent movie news it would seem that all the world has gone crazy with political correctness. It was reported in the Sydney Daily Telegraph on 16th November that Walt Disney has now slapped ‘cultural warnings’ about potential racism on the studio’s streaming channel. American viewers have already come across the trigger warnings about ‘outdated’ cultural depictions. The 1941 animated film ‘Dumbo’ ends with the alert to viewers stating ‘This program is presented as originally created. It may contain outdated cultural depictions.’ The article goes on to say that the movie has been criticised for promoting racist stereotypes, with the crows that helped Dumbo learn to fly, depicted with exaggerated stereotypical ‘black’ voices. Further, the 1955 cartoon ‘Lady and the Tramp’ gets the warning because of its Siamese cats singing in stereotypical Asian voices.

A Swinburne University cinema expert, Dr Liam Clarke has added to this nonsense by saying that ‘... shows from earlier times including many favourites are out of step with contemporary attitudes.’

Several years ago, a Lithgow Valley Film Society member refused to renew her membership because we were showing ‘violent’ Tom and Jerry cartoons. Another member criticised me because I did not offer an apology to the Aborigines when I screened a documentary about Captain Cook. Has the world gone crazy with this political correctness nonsense?”

And from another item in Dress Circle:

“Recently I was having coffee at an outdoor café in Lithgow and reading an article in the daily newspaper about global warming. An unknown (to me) man obviously saw what I was reading and approached saying ‘You’re the man from the local fillum club aren’tcha?’ Warily I said ‘Yes’. He then proceeded to tell me that ‘fillum was the cause of global warming.’ He said; ‘When the fillums were running through the projecklars, all the fumes were goin’ into the hair and that caused global warmin’. That’s why they ‘ad ta get rid of it and go digitalis. Did ya know that?’ I had to admit that I did not know that piece of vital information and would pass it on to others in the industry!”

Thank you Ross for doing just that.

9. Letters

1. From Simon of Shit Movie Club

“I’d just like to drop a reply in regards to Ross Adams article 7 about Presentation in this month’s issue. [Issue 60, November 2019 – Ed]

I too feel presentation is a very key element to the success of a group, however, to quote the generation below me: ‘OK Boomer’. I don’t think Ross presents himself in a great light in the article, his priorities and the group he runs sounds like it has a very specific and niche audience that would actually deter many groups of people.

Being a ‘job stealing immigrant’ (please, my garage is packed with them, if anyone wants to buy one I’ll do you a deal) I wouldn’t feel too welcome at a group that stands and recites the national anthem before a screening, as too I feel any member of the indigenous community would feel very excluded by such an approach.

For my own group I will stand at the front in jeans and a t-shirt to introduce the movie (when not in a full dinosaur outfit) as I feel it fits the theme of our group, we run "Shit Movie Group" by name, and, by nature, it's a great caveat for us for the few times things go wrong, like the venue's projector's gone down or they've had a band in who've re-wired the sound system and even though we get in early to setup we're still running late it helps that people aren't seeing the group as a service but as a community, dressing the same as everyone else helps maintain that we're all at the same level, that I'm not above you, you're not paying me for a privilege but we're all chipping in to cover the cost of keeping the lights on. This brings people together and helps form bonds.

That's an element I aim to foster as a movie group can be more than just a movie group, it can be a great way to help people with social isolation and depression, major factors in the eight people a day Lifeline state are lost in Australia by suicide. This means the group has to be welcoming of all, accepting of all and not place any barriers to entry that would come to impede participation - accessible venues are one element but having a friendly, warm environment is another and you're going to miss that if you're focusing on what was great in the past.

Nothing wrong with trying to capture the prestige of an actual cinema, we run trailers before our film to make it feel more like a real thing (and also present upcoming screenings) but we also do it in our own style throwing in fake trailers and skits we found on Youtube into the mix: <https://youtu.be/PLQb1uhMf3g> - this has actually led to a kind of meta game where people try and guess what's real and what's fake (the attached isn't a great example, but some do blur the lines of reality).

Instead of 'Presentation' though I like to think of it more as 'Branding' - what does your brand suggest to people and does each and every item you do fit your brand, whether it's your mailer, reviews or social media, down to your interactions in person on the day.

The world is a serious place where serious things happen and it can be quite overwhelming, so, if you give people the permission to be silly - watching silly films, introduced by a silly man with silly trailers it can help them feel more at ease when the lights come back up and that serious world returns.

Laughing has strong psychological effects and laughing in groups helps bonding. For someone who says struggles with social anxiety a film club centred around comedic films (whether that comedy is intentional or not) allows them to relax in a safe space with other people, it gives a central element to focus discussion on and bring down walls, acting as an icebreaker before conversation can move elsewhere.

As people who manage film clubs I feel we have an obligation to our members, whom without we'd very much be just ourselves sat in a darkened room watching a movie, which we can do without the hassle at home and so I feel it's important to understand that weight you've decided to take on, however, I feel the focus should be on bringing people together and forming communities, rather than revelling in a bygone era that wasn't actually as good as your rose tinted memories of it suggest.

Now, I'm certainly not saying everyone should do what I do, what I do works for the people I'm aiming at and I'm sure Ross would not enjoy one minute of it whereas it sounds like he has a number of people who do enjoy his film club out in Lithgow, but, Ross, I ask you the question, are you serving them as well as you could, would refocusing on their needs and wants reflect better in your movie club then dictating what you enjoy? If you can find your brand, people will come to you.

There's always an article on advertising in these bulletins and we have not spent a single cent on it, directly. We have free social media platforms that haven't really picked anyone up (they're run more for the enjoyment of the current members) but what we do pay for is Meetup which does push a lot of people in our direction. Out of those people though, the single biggest builder of our groups has been word of mouth, people bringing friends, who, in turn, bring more friends, from colleagues to family members our society grows and with that the ability to help more people feel at ease living in an isolating large city. Being on brand helps people know from any point they view the group what to expect, which is stupid, silly fun.

End of the day, it doesn't really matter, like the bad movies we watch, no one's died, no one's career has ended even with the big colossal mistake they've made and has been recorded for the annals of history, they will carry on with their lives, hopefully a little wiser for the experience, and, if you're struggling with anxiety and stress from work, I can tell you first hand at what a relief that sentiment can bring.

Simon"

10. Drop me a Line

Please send all comments, suggestions and articles to ian24davidson@gmail.com

This newsletter is intended to reflect information and news from all societies, so please let us know about anything of interest at your society.



Do you make use of the list of recent acquisitions supplied by distributors in every issue? Are they useful? Drop me a brief email to let me know if we should continue with this feature.

Many thanks for all contributions. Ian Davidson, editor.

ACOFS - Australian Council of Film Societies

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If you want to have the ACOFS Bulletin emailed to you directly, please email me at editor@acofs.org.au Our website is www.acofs.org.au

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1. *If clicking on a highlighted link in this newsletter does not take you to your Internet browser, try copying it and pasting it into your browser search bar.*
2. *Please ensure your spam filter is NOT set to capture our emails which include relevant material from ACOFS, such as this Bulletin.*

ACOFS and the State federations do not necessarily endorse the statements or view contained in any personal statements in articles, letters to the editor or in the films mentioned in this Bulletin.