

Auckland Meeting – May 1999

Excerpts from the write up by David Lascelles.

Date 7th 8th 9th May

The meeting was held at the Ellerslie War Memorial Hall.

On Friday night, Roger Stewart was at the registration desk greeting members as they arrived. The sales tables had many interested items creating a lot of interest. A nice supper was served and then a feast of films began. Those shown were cartoons of Mighty Mouse, Tom & Jerry and Barney Bear and from Castle Films, *The Roaring Wheelers*, a Pete Smith film *Antics* (1954), Laurel & Hardy in *Below Zero* (1930), a teaser trailer for *It's a Mad Mad Mad Mad World* (1963), an Australian Movietone News, a Pictorial Parade (1967) from the NFU, a Warner Bros short compilation film of early Mack Sennett films (1948), a trailer for the British film, *School For Secrets* (1946) and finally Geoff Murphy's 37 minute comedy *Dagg Day Afternoon* (1977). What an evening!

On Saturday after a nice morning tea, the formal part of the meeting began. During this meeting Life Membership of our organisation was conferred upon Doug Harley with the members present according him a standing ovation and a prolonged round of applause. With business completed, it was on to the auction handled as usual by John Bell, assisted by Michael Woolf, John Turnbull and Syd Chell. Around 100 lots were on the block which disappeared rapidly under the hammer. Lunch was then served.

After lunch we boarded the buff's bus for a trip to the Waitakere Centre where the views are breathtaking. Later we went to the AV theatre for a special presentation put together by the Auckland Movie Buffs. The video showed the old Civic, the new IMAX and preservation by Ted Turner of the MGM Film Library. Then it was downstairs for an introduction and display of DVD, technology of the future which no doubt in time will make VHS and laser discs obsolete. After light refreshments, it was back to the venue.

The Saturday evening meal was held at the venue and had been billed as *The Film Buff's Fancy Dress Ball*. Some great costumes were on show including Dave Turnbull's alter ego W.C Fields, John Turnbull as Whoopi Goldberg and our Secretary who came as Father Christmas and ended up receiving presents rather than giving. During the evening, John Bell presented a Life Certificate of merit and appreciation, to Wanda Knight, daughter of Film Buff George Knight who had passed away suddenly quite recently. Afterwards it was movies again, a presentation of old slides followed by a Bugs Bunny and a Droopy cartoon, the Auckland Projectionists Movie Ball in the 1950s, filmed by Rudall Hayward and processed at the NFU. *Flying Action* proved interesting as did the MGM Anniversary and the MGM/UA 60 Anniversary Promotional Films. Excerpts were also seen from *Hello Dolly* (1969), *Annie* (1982), plus dance numbers from a number of MGM and Warner Bros musicals including *The Great Ziegfeld* (1936) and *42nd Street* (1933). Also screened was *Precious Images* (1986) 458 film scenes edited by Chuck Workman to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Directors Guild of America, which was 7 minutes of 35mm pleasure. During the short break, lucky numbers were drawn with great prizes and giveaways of surplus film from the Archive. A great night had by all.

On Sunday, a warm welcome awaited us at Jan Grefstad's Hollywood Cinema in Avondale. After refreshments, it was into the theatre for a recital on the Wurlitzer organ by Paul Fitzgerald, from Adelaide, Australia followed by the Laurel & Hardy film *Two Tars* (1928) with organ accompaniment. Then screened film clips from the Jeanette Macdonald and Nelson Eddy movie *Maytime* (1937) and *Girl of the Golden West* (1938) along with Deanna Durbin (aged 17) in *100 Men and a Girl* (1937). Other memorable gems were also screened including that band to end all bands *The Nitwits* or Louie the dog. From here, we made our way over to Westwind for a great lunch and more movies. Those shown were; trailers for *Star Wars Episode 1 The Phantom Menace* and *What Became of the Broken Hearted* and a *Mr Bean* short. Now it was time to say farewell while reflecting on an incredible weekend.