

## Christchurch Meeting – May 2000

*Excerpts from the write up by David Iascelles.*

The meeting was held in the Roy Stokes Hall in Seaview Road, New Brighton. Date 5<sup>th</sup> 6<sup>th</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> May.

On Friday night as members began arriving, we welcomed a group from Australia who belong to CATHS (Cinema and Theatre Historical Society of Victoria) who were on a New Zealand wide tour. This had been organised by our loyal Aussie member Mike Trickett and it was great to have them attend our weekend. As friendships were being renewed, items for sale checked out, a light meal was served. Then it was time for the movie show which included a compilation of Mack Sennett items from his original film *Hard Knock and Taps, Here we go Again* (1949), a 1970s spoof comedy *Vicious Cycles* and *Fiordland the Perfect Wilderness* from NFU (1982). To end the evening we had something from The March of Time series, re-released by the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1959 titled *March of the Movies* (originally released in 1939). At the conclusion of the programme, some raffles were drawn and supper served.

After morning tea on Saturday, the meeting took place and once business was completed, it was on to the auction. With rather a lot to get through, auctioneer John Bell, ably assisted by Michael Woolf, John Turnbull and Brian Coulter made short work of it which allowed plenty of time to relax over lunch.

After lunch, we boarded the buff's bus for our visit to the Hollywood Cinemas at Sumer where we were met by the owners, Lang and Maureen Masters. On the programme was an interesting and entertaining short, made in the 1970s titled *The Fabulous Forty Horse Hitch* showing the old time Circus Parade held every year in Milwaukee with huge old handmade and painted circus wagons from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, pulled by forty horses which was truly amazing. Next were three extracts from feature films – Marilyn Monroe singing from *Some Like it Hot* (1959), the waltz sequence from the remake of *The Merry Widow* (1959) with Fernando Lamas and Lana Turner and *Annie Get Your Gun* (1950). We were then taken on a sightseeing drive over the hill to Lyttelton where we viewed (from the outside), the Harbour Light Theatre. As we headed back to the venue, through the tunnel, we stopped off at the Lonsdale House Museum which had a bit of everything on display that many found very interesting.

The Saturday evening meal was held at the venue and we sat down to a marvellous spit roast dinner after which we were entertained by "Nans Grans" – a group of older ladies who did a song and dance act before giving twins Dave and John Turnbull a chorus of *Happy Birthday* as a cake was brought out for the occasion. More raffles were drawn and then Gerry Kennedy, President of CATHS thanks the buffs for their warm welcome. CATHS member Peter Wolfenden then demonstrated special purpose projection filters which, when fitted to the projector will remove that pink/red colour fade for the screening duration. The evening then drew to a close.

On Sunday, we boarded the bus early as we had a planned breakfast arrange at McDonald's. This we ate on the bus during our trip to Lincoln to view Howard Patterson's cinema, where the platter system was up and running with a cinemascope print of *Island of Love* (1963) for us to view. From here it was quite a drive to Ashburton for our visit Peter McQuarters. With invited guests as well of the local press, Dave Turnbull, our President was given the honour of cutting the strip of film, officially opening the museum. In comfortable seating, we were shown Cinesound and Movietone Newsreels from the 1960s along with Dunedin director Robert Sarkie's 1966 film *Signing Off*. Lunch was then served after which we were taken to the Aircraft Museum just down the road where Peter's son, Jason, gave us a guided tour of the old base. We returned to Peter's for afternoon tea before it was time for a quick look at the Regent Theatre in Ashburton before we headed for home. We stopped in Rakaia to a look through a private museum/collection of just about everything of yesteryear which was a real eye opener. On arrival in Christchurch, some who still had enough energy visited the cinemas of Brian Coulter, Graham Ritchie and Bryan Ellis for more movies before calling it a night.

Although the weekend officially ended on Sunday, with many staying on Monday, a BBQ was held at the home of Bryan and Dawn Ellis, followed by more movies. A great weekend had finally come to a close.