

Wellington Meeting – May 1996

Excerpts from the write up by David Lascelles.

Date 3rd 4th 5th May.

The meeting was held in the Newtown School hall.

Friday night began with the usual socializing, catching up with all friends and wheeling and dealing at the sales tables. Raffles of free film began, again by courtesy of our friends at the Film Archive. Light snacks appeared and after M.C. John Bell had welcomed everyone, a screening took place of a couple of New Zealand Mirrors along with an excerpt from the 1963 *Hollywood and the Stars* documentary series which featured the Marx Brothers with extracts from *At the Circus*. The final film was the 50 minute 1973 documentary *Hollywood and the Dream Factory*, made by MGM Television about the studio during its beginning, its greatness and its decline, with rare footage of the 1970 auction of costume and props which proved very interesting. Supper was then served and the evening drew to a close.

Saturday began with a terrific morning tea which was followed by the six monthly meeting. During this meeting, a Life Member's certificate was presented to Cecil Cowan by our patron, John McDonald. Soon the auction was under way. There was much interest in a collection of film from the estate of our late member, Snow Bartholomew. At the end both sellers and buyers were happy with the outcome. Lunch was then served.

After lunch, we boarded the buff's buses for the drive to Avalon where we visited the Film Unit and the Avalon TV Studio Complex. Member Philip Croft was our guide and he explained how film is processed from developing the negative to the finished screen print. Much interest was shown in the animation process and Bob We then visited the TV Centre. Here we were shown all over the place – production stages and sets for *Lotto*, *Fair Go* and *The Morning Show*. It was then on to the recording booths and control studios before invading a large sound studio being made ready for mixing the sound for Peter Jackson's new film *The Frighteners* which for most was the highlight, as we were shown a short video sequence from the film. Then it was back to the Unit, where we gathered in their main theatre for a screening of the Bob Stenhouse-Hugh Macdonald animated short film *The Orchard*, which has still to be released. This was followed by a short New Zealand award-winning film *Stroke*, made by Christine Jeffs and to cap it off, an amazing extract showing how Peter Jackson shot and aged film giving it that vintage look for his film *Forgotten Silver*. We then headed back to the venue.

The Saturday night meal was held at the venue and was a real feast. During the meal, a few old films were screened, Wellington Newsclips between 1937-39, extracts from *The MGM Story* their 25th Anniversary (1949) and the making of *The Seven Ups* (1973). After dinner, for those that still had stamina, it was off the John Bell's Time Cinema to view the New Zealand made film *Rangi's Catch* (1973). One of its stars, Film Buff Michael Woolf introduced the film which was a Children's Film Foundation British financed production. Other stars of the film were Ian Mune, Temuera Morrison, Don Selwyn and Peter Harcourt. However, Vernon Hill as the young boy really stole the film which was very enjoyable.

Sunday began with morning tea after which we piled into cars for our visit to the Film Centre where we were met by manager Barbara Blake and Mike Kennedy.