

Wellington Meeting – November 1998

Excerpts from the write up by David Lascelles.

Date 6th 7th 8th November.

The meeting was held at the Karori Bridge Club (formerly Regal Theatre) in Karori Road, Karori.

Prior to the official meeting, a special auction of film and equipment belonging to the late Des O'Callaghan had been arranged on Friday morning at 11 am. Many film buffs attended and nearly all items were sold.

Friday night, the doors opened at 6.30 pm and members began streaming in with the first stop, the registration table, where Trevor Collett had everything under control. Soon after a light meal was served, followed by announcements and a programme of films began. These included a Tom & Jerry cartoon, *How to Drown* (NFU 1947), *Screen Snap Shots No 28* (Columbia 1948), a Pete Smith film *Studio Visit* (1946) which included footage of Lena Horne that was cut from the film *Cabin in the Sky* (1943) and a 1950s advertising film for a Bell and Howell projector 630 model. At the end of the show, supper was served.

On Saturday, after a delicious morning tea, the meeting began. With the business completed, it was on to the auction where John Bell was assisted by Michael Woolf, Brian Coulter and I. A wonderful lunch was then served.

After lunch, we boarded the buff's bus for the trip to the home of Jill and Michael Woolf's residence in Horokiwi. Here we found mechanical music boxes, gramophones, a collection of magic memorabilia and of course the Wurlitzer Organ. After a most informative talk from Michael, he demonstrated some of the more unusual and interesting items in his collection, we were treated to music from the Wurlitzer, operated by a computer. Accompanying the organ was a silent Charlie Chaplin film screened by John Bell which we all enjoyed. Our next stop was to Phil Croft's home cinema in Naenae. This beautiful 35mm theatre seats around 20 and his projector was hand built over 9 months, using parts from a variety of machines. After an impressive selection of films, it was back to the venue.

The Saturday evening meal was held at the venue and after an excellent meal during which many raffles were drawn, it was film time again. Among the films shown were a wonderful 1974 film from Czechoslovakia and one from Australia, *Tasmania – Gem of the South Seas* (probably late 1930s), excerpts from MGMs 1949 Silver Anniversary, a 1954 Joe McDoakes comedy and a film from Britain on how to be a good projectionist, which starred Graham Stark and Frank Williams. Soon a great day had come to an end.

After morning tea on Sunday, we boarded the bus for our next visit. We had a choice to make, Te Papa or the Penthouse Cinema and I chose the latter. We were welcomed by resident projectionist Brian Jennings before we were ushered in to view a specially prepared programme which consisted of; a production short on the making of *Hello Dolly* (1969), *Railway Centennial* – an NFU Pictorial Parade, a Tom & Jerry cartoon *The Cat Concerto*, a 1946 Academy Award winning item from James A Fitzpatrick travelogue *Roaming Through Michigan*, a Pete Smith Specialty *Do Someone a Favour* (1954), a Rank "Look at Life" (1950), a Donald Duck cartoon, the trailer for *Sergeant York* (1941), an EMI music clip, scenes from the 1985 film *View to a Kill* and finally *Pie in the Eye* – a 1948 compilation film looking at the great comedy era of Mack Sennett. A quick tour through both projection boxes took place before we returned to the venue for lunch and the official farewells. A very enjoyable weekend was finally at an end.