

Christchurch Meeting – November 2014

Excerpts from the write up by David Lascelles.

Date 31st October, 1st 2nd November.

The meeting was held at the Christchurch Amateur Radio Rooms in Idris Road. 42 were in attendance, which included some of our regular attendees from Australia.

This meeting would celebrate 30 years of the NZ Film Buffs Association Incorporated.

Friday night began with the usual catch up with old friends, a social drink and a look at the sales table. Continuous finger food was provided throughout the evening. Member Bruce Thompson from Ohakune reminisced about his family's involvement in film exhibition since 1923. This was a fascinating history and was all captured on film by Hugh Macdonald. After a short break it was decided to do part of the auction. Among the items, were a few bottles of vintage wine, especially labelled for our anniversary. The night then came to a close.

Morning tea on Saturday was followed by the meeting, during which I was awarded Life Membership. When the meeting finished, the auction got underway. There were some great bargains at low prices for those wishing to purchase. At auction's end, it was lunch time and what a feast it was. There was a full range of Chinese food as well as fish and chips which catered to everyone's taste.

After lunch we boarded the buff's bus for our visit to the flight simulator where air traffic controllers are trained. A very interesting few hours was spent here.

Our celebratory dinner was held at the Cashmere Club where we had a private room for the evening. Guest speaker was Fred Read, who spoke about his life in films and the history of Christchurch Cinemas past. A fascinating and interesting account, often hilarious, often sad, Fred's story was well received. The signed placemat was then auctioned. After coffee, our Patron John Bell was presented with an engraved replica Oscar Statue and a magnum of champagne to honour his many years as the club's auctioneer. The anniversary cake was cut by former president and founding member Dave Turnbull. This truly was a night to remember.

Sunday morning we boarded the buff's bus for an earthquake tour of the CBD. Bryan Ellis provided the commentary, while we viewed both the Christchurch and Catholic Cathedrals and what was left of the Odeon cinema. From here it was on to Ferrymead Heritage Park where the first place of interest was the Hall of Flame where we saw a copy of the only colour film of the Ballantynes Department store fire which took place in November 1947. Next was a visit to the Time Continuous Picture Theatre where we were shown magic lantern slides of old Christchurch and some early film of the city and its theatres. The Print Shop proved popular as did the tram and steam train rides around the park and a visit to the Railway Society's workshops and Radio Ferrymead. Soon it was time for lunch which was enjoyed outside in the garden of Stewart Cottage.

The stayers BBQ which was held at the home of Bryan and Dawn Ellis at Woodend, brought to a end a very memorable weekend.