

Hamilton Meeting – May 2002

Excerpts from the write up by David Lascelles.

Date 3rd 4th 5th May.

The meeting was held in the Hamilton Pleasure Boat Club.

With this being the first meeting to be held in Hamilton, there was excitement in the air as members arrived on Friday night. A number of new members had joined us for the weekend. Refreshments were available and most appreciated. The sales tables were filled with an assortment of items and were generating a lot of interest. Soon it was movie time and the selection chosen was Pictorial Parade 129 *21 Years* (NFU 1962), a Pete Smith speciality *That's His Story* (1950), *People of the Waikato* (NFU 1956), *Taupo Moana* (NFU 1963), *Bees a Buzzin'* (1960) and the Tom and Jerry cartoon, *Dr Jekyll and Mr Mouse* (1955). Interval was announced, during which, a beautiful supper was served. Then it was back to the movies which continued with *A Train for Christmas* (NDU 1975) and finally *On the Foot Plate* – a railway film by Eric Burns made in the 1950s which brought the evening to a close.

Saturday began with the meeting, followed by a wonderful morning tea and when everyone had finished their tea and coffee, it was on with the auction. With around 100 lots on offer John Bell, assisted by Michael Woolf and Brian Coulter had their work cut out, but they did a great job and at the end both buyers and sellers were happy with the outcome. A highlight of the auction was a few gifts from the Film Archive with proceeds going to the club. Lunch was then served – a delicious array of food, much of it home made.

After lunch we boarded the buff's bus that would take us down to the river for a cruise on the *Waipa Delta* paddle steamer. Back on shore, our 'mystery bus tour' began, destination the Sporting Museum, which, along with sporting displays, other items of interest were there as well. We had a wonderful afternoon tea of fresh scones, jam and cream, then it was back on the bus and a return to the venue.

The Saturday night dinner, which had a nautical theme, was held at the venue and was a great meal. After dinner, a couple of speeches were made and some give away prizes were distributed, then it was time for an 80 minutes film presentation from the Film Archives introduced by Jane Paul. This programme consisted of both silent and sound films, specially chosen for the occasion. For the silent films, piano accompaniment was by Tama Karena and among the highlights of this remarkable programme were *The Mechanical Doll* (1922) – an early animation and live action film starring a clown and projectionist, Dave Fleischer, *Progressive Newmarket* (1921), *Behind the Scenes* (1940) – a look at the State theatre in Hastings, *New Zealand Sound Scenes No 10* (1933) – showing the burning off of millions of feet of nitrate film at Moa Point in Wellington, *Powder Sunshine* (1952) – a promotional colour film made for the Anchor Milk Company. Ending the programme was *The Company That Lost a Miracle* (1975) – an in-house spoof made by the staff at Pacific Films. These gems were only some of the marvellous titles packed into this feature length package.

Sunday morning saw us on board the bus by 9 am for our visit to The Regent Theatre at Te Awamutu with our host Alan Webb. Alan's luxury 3 cinema is a wonderful place of enchantment, blending old style décor with new. After a screening of the feature *October Sky*, we had a guided tour through this remarkable theatre and the history and nostalgia that prevailed. Soon it was time to return to the venue for a traditional R.N.Z lunch of pea, pie and spud followed by the official farewells. A very successful weekend had come to an end.

Some of the stayers visited the Village 7 complex and Rialto 3 with tour guide, Chief Projectionist Des Savage. The end of the afternoon saw a gathering for films at Allan and Carol Smythe's place and later in the evening, those still remaining were entertained by the 'Barbershop Quartet' of Dave Turnbull, Allan Smythe, Gavin Cown and Bryan Ellis in a medley of unusual songs.