



The Australian Museum of Motion Picture technology (Inc.)

NEWSLETTER

Edition Thirteen

May - June 2007

Fund-raising project

After two years of trying to obtain premises to store the increasing number of items being donated, a deal has now been arranged to permit AMMPT to start some serious fund raising for this purpose. Previously an attempt was made by running film shows at the Port cinema in Fremantle.

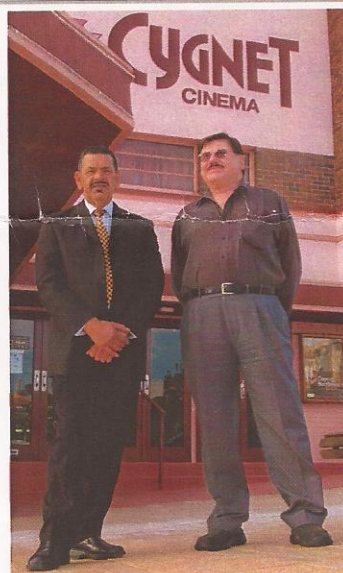
However due to several factors, the prime one being our obligation to Hoyts who had donated the use of the venue, not to publicly promote the shows beyond our own membership which resulted in insufficient returns to cover costs, this initiative was abandoned.

What was originally seen as a setback to the organisation has subsequently turned out to be the catalyst needed for us to search for alternatives. This has resulted in a mutually beneficial deal being arranged with the operator of the Cygnet Cinema in Como, Mr. Eddie Herbert. It will we will be able to publicly advertise our programmes, as well as being able to provide a cinema with disabled access, a clean and fully operational venue, and a fully stocked candy bar.



The film screening group ready for action

The cinema is also heritage listed which dovetails nicely with our objectives, with AMMPT members Barry Goldman, Hedley Sims and George Robinson forming its regular and casual projection staff. Melbourne based Chapel Distribution have supported the project by providing 35mm prints of film classics at concession rates. The programme selected for the remainder of this year is listed on an inside page. Members are asked to make copies and distribute amongst friends and family and others interested.



Cygnet operator Eddie Herbert (left) with Hedley Sims

Screenings have been scheduled to be held on the first Sunday of every second month, beginning July 1st, but including December.

A special feature of the shows will be the inclusion of live music, performed pre-interval by musicians of a vintage compatible with the main feature. Already several TV personalities who featured in the very early days of local TV variety shows have indicated their desire to be involved.

Following the success of the Perth Town Hall exhibition, especially the TV photo memorabilia on display, it has been decided to again set up a limited number of those photo panels in the foyer at each screening. Also the prospect of running special silent films with live music accompaniment has been enhanced with the donation of a large electronic organ by Social Club Secretary, John Richman-Scott and the provision of a PA system and a professional follow-spot to be housed in the bio-box. AMMPT member and professional musician David Sandercock will take a pivotal role in these special presentations.

Membership Cards

New Membership cards have been produced and issued at recent events. These have the Member's name prominent, to be worn at regular events as well as presented as proof of identification at the film screenings to receive concession admission prices. No exceptions will be made at the box office as staff can't be expected to know everyone in our growing membership. Unclaimed cards have been enclosed with this newsletter along with receipts for subs. Please contact the Secretary if you do not have a card.

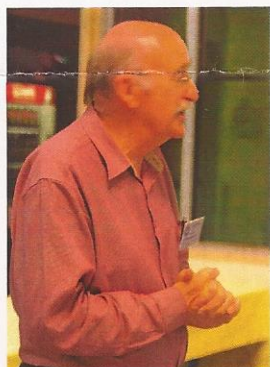
Donation of Videodisc unit and Channel Nine tour

Thirty Members and guests attended our May event held at the Tuart Hill studios of Channel Nine to have a tour of the facilities and witness the formal handing over of a donated Ampex HS-100 Videodisc machine. This unique and initially outrageously expensive electronic item was the first device to permit instant replay and slow motion of short segments of the video image. Unfortunately these items proved to be costly investments by the TV stations that purchased them, as they were rendered obsolete within a few of years as developments in videotape technology soon overtook Ampex's previous R & D.

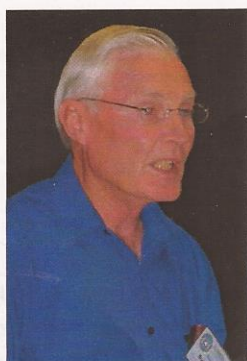


Richard Ashton talks to Members at Channel Nine

Retired STW9 News Director and AMMPT member Terry Spence gave a short talk on the history of Channel Nine and his experiences in using the Videodisc machine. He was followed by fellow member and retired Station Engineer, Bob Penno who related the trials and tribulations in keeping the intricate machine operational. Bob also recounted the details of how the concept of the original Stumpcam was invented and used in Perth, before being taken over for further development by the Nine Network in Sydney.

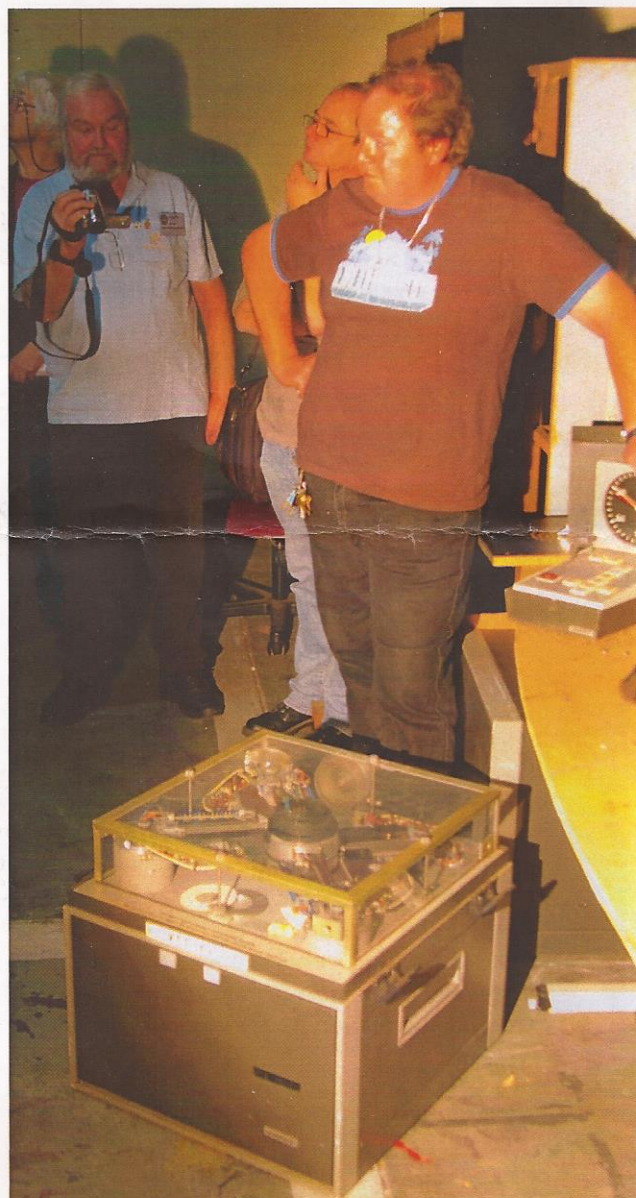


Terry Spence (left) relates how the News Dept used the Videodisc



Bob Penno (right) recalls the operational complexity of the Ampex Videodisc unit.

Sean Finbow who donated the Ampex machine to AMMPT's collection, recalled how he salvaged the various boxes comprising the unit from a dump bin as it was being loaded to take a lot of old gear to the tip.



Sean Finbow shows the recording head unit – only a small part of the total multi box videodisc package comprising several heavy units.

Film Weekly

Member Jack Honniball has made available to Registrar Richard Ashton, copies of the old cinema trade magazine, *FILM WEEKLY* which covers events during the period from the mid 20's to the early 30's, which included the period when the industry changed over to sound. These are the sections devoted to the Western Australian cinema industry and make fascinating reading. Richard has also been liaising with the National Library which has resulted in copies of this and other material being available to local AMMPT members through the State Library for research purposes. Contact Richard on 9367 5967 so arrangements can be made for you to view the documents. Your membership card will be required for identification at the library.

Member profile

By Richard Ashton

One of our new members is **Phil Maddison** from Queensland. He lives on a property 350km north west of Brisbane. He moved there 20 years ago from Brisbane, having worked there and at Goondiwindi as a projectionist. With film and theatre business firmly in his blood, he has built his own private working museum on the property. And the collection is still growing!

Phil says...In the beginning after a few beers one night I got a bright idea about starting it. Next morning I rang Bill Heynen at Goondiwindi about buying the old projectors out of the *Empire* which had closed years before. Since then my collecting has got a little out of hand. The Kalee 7's from the *Empire* kept having more children. Now there are 18 machines on the screen. Most run on carbon arcs. My smaller internal theatre running 250 watt QI's in *Raycophone 6"* mirror's on two J3's. There is also a *Westrex* base *Simplex* in this theatre too. Yes it's a sound off disc player too.

Phil's goes on ...The main theatre projection boxes are on three levels. There are five machines on level 3 and seven on level 2. On level 1 there's a 70mm *Philips* DP70 the "one tone model" and a *Cinemechanica* Drive-in auto slide projector. All these throw onto an *Ultra- Panavision* ratio 2.75:1 sized screen which is 27 foot 6 inch x 10 foot masked under a 35 foot x 20 foot proscenium. The average throw is 70 feet.

The theatre is basically open air; don't forget this outback Queensland with bountiful days and nights! As the closest neighbour is 2 1/2 miles away the beefy sound is not a worry! I have a multitude of various projectors now some stored some mounted and running, but most are in beautiful condition, all new sprockets and this includes my favourites *Kalee 7's*. There is also a *Kalee 8*, *11*, and a *21*. There are 13 *Cummings and Wilsor's* machines which include *Seniors P5, P6, P7, P8* and 2 *Model G's*. There are 3 *Super Standards*, 2 *Standards*, a *Powers 6B*, a *Philips* DP70 and a 2 *Ron Jones 1962* specials as well as a complete *Minerva* outfit made in 1945 and a few *Superlite* arc lamps.

The main theatre is powered by a *Newton Derby 6* cylinder diesel *Ford 60* kva generator. The whole project was built single handed with no encouragement from by my family who detest any mention of film or projectors...says Phil.

For those who want to know more, Phil has provided heaps of info. Members can contact me to see photographs and sketches of the museum layout. In future we will be putting details of some of his exhibits in the newsletter.

...in Passing

to the big TV studio and bio-box in the sky.

We are saddened to learn of the recent passing of two industry pioneers.

June Holmes has advised that **ERNIE TAYLOR** passed away on Thursday April 26th at the age of 67.

Ernie worked at *TWW7* and also *STW9*, where he was first worked in the Film Department and was also responsible for programming.

We also learned that **TERRY ANDERSON**, a projectionist at the *Princess* and *Hoyts* theatres in Fremantle during the late 50's, and also a bit of an adventurer at the *Speedway* and involved in making home built aircraft down in Denmark, died in Albany hospital on May 6th after an initial recovery from a massive heart attack.

And returning from a near miss with one of those celestial destinations is an "Australian Cinema Man of the Year", projectionist and creator of the *Coastal Cinema* chain, **Peter Thomson**. Peter recently suffered a major stroke which left him almost completely incapacitated in Fremantle hospital. His wife Rose now reports he is making steady progress towards recovery and in the past two weeks was permitted to return home for short visits. It is expected Peter will be in hospital for some time yet, but would appreciate visits from his industry colleagues. As a member, Peter will continue to get the low-down on industry activities and the devious exploits of his mates through our newsletter.

End of an era

At the May meeting of the WA branch of The Society of Cinema Pioneers (from whose members the concept of AMMPT was born) industry icon and AMMPT member Arthur Stiles handed the President's reins over to John Polmear after 30 years at the helm.



Arthur Stiles (above) hands over the Pioneers Presidency.



Recently joined AMMPT member John Doyle is congratulated by Barry Goldman on receiving his Pioneers certificate.