

BARRIE KING The Quiet Achiever. Born 1931 - 2004

Story by IAN STIMSON



BARRIE KING

I met Barrie King at Scotch college in 1948 and he taught myself and others the basics of film processing and printing not realising that it would become a lifelong friendship. When Barrie was an under graduate at the University of Western Australia he started his life long passion for collecting. His first movie camera was a hand cranked Kodascope type 1A circa 1924. In 1956 Barrie joined the State X-ray Labs and two years later he did a Masters degree in Radiation Physics topping the class at Cornell University in New York U.S.A.. He was also a freelance stringer for the West Australian Newspaper and his first press photo was of the Garrett Locomotive at the subway near Claremont when it jumped the tracks in and lodged itself in the subway.

Barrie started collecting various still cameras mainly KODAK'S and then some of the more obscure continental manufacturers, this included cine camera's and on one of his trips overseas he found his first Newman-Sinclair 35mm camera. He then became the Physicist in charge of the state X-ray labs and as radiation safety was always an important part of his life he introduced the radiation patch that all radiographers wear to measure the x-ray dosage. As a professional physicist, he was at the Monte Bello island when the British exploded their first atomic bomb, this lead to him being responsible for writing the RADIATION safety standards for Australia which still stand today. In 1963 he was appointed to the senior position at the X-ray labs and became its Director until he retired in 1988. On the film side of our business he was one of the founders of the Film societies

here and in other states as well as being involved with the Film makers oral history group and the National Film and Sound Archive. His job took him to Canberra on a regular basis and so he was able to meet and get to know people at

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the archive. On one of his trips to London he found the soundtrack to a CINESOUND movie "Mr Chedworth Steps Out" in the Bradford (UK) archive and this he was able to reunite with the print held here in Australia but minus the sound track. So now we have a complete print.





LYRIC THEATRE - BUNBURY W.A.

Amongst his collection of projectors was a "KINEMA COLOR" rear shuttered projector Circa 1906 which had been used by a touring showman the "CORRICKS" from Tasmania and here is evidence that the machine was used in the "LYRIC THEATRE" Bunbury W.A.. The projector was being restored when he had his first stroke in 1997 unfortunately the project was never completed yet there was lot of evidence in his communications with the British Science Museum as to where the restoration was at . In 1990 we both became members of the Movie Machine Society in the U.S.A. and the writer became the Board member at "large down under". We both attended the 1997 meeting held at the George Eastman house, the storage facility has to be seen to be believed one whole wall is devoted to all KODAK cameras, and the other side of the room has shelving housing all kinds of projec-

tion heads that were ever made from places around the world, on the floor in an area of some 20x50 feet are the big plants the Simplex from the White House a 1930's machine on a Western Electric Universal base ,Hitler's LEITZ polygon projector with a periscope lens system and so much more. Barrie was very passionate about film preservation and represented Australia at the 1997 Film preservation conference at BRADFORD in England and then to the states to the TMMS meeting. The highlight of this meeting was a Gaumont colorfilm projector this machine projected its image thru three separate colored prisms and this gave a new meaning to the problem of convergence of the Red/Green/Blue colors on the screen the projector ran at 32 frames a second and had to be lined up after each screening of Silent Movies. We both went to the Eastman Cinema to see a two hour epic supported by a full orchestra of 80 players when the lights dimmed and the first frame hit the screen we were transported into another world of film appreciation. It would seem that "PARAMOUNT" has a very large library of silent movies and a new print is struck each year for the George Eastman School of Music, I was told that the supply will never run out. Barrie was experimenting with sound recording setting up 16mm optical sound recording equipment for sound on film using the BACH - Auricon equipment . His attention to detail is shown in a lot of the documents given too me by the family and the sound recordings that he had done with many film people. As I sat at the Auction I realised that here was a collection of one of our states most acknowledged film historians and collectors who was able to spark up interest in others to follow the passion of collecting. The like