

OPENING NIGHT • 1 SEPTEMBER 1995

- 6.00 Welcome . . . Drinks
- 6.30 Unveiling of the Kormilda Mural by the Chief Minister, Honourable Shane L. Stone MLA
- 7.00 Tribute to Territory Cinema Pioneers
The silent films are accompanied live at the piano by Ian Ellis
- 7.30 *Melbourne Cup*
Lumière Programme
The Story of the Kelly Gang
The Archaeology of Cinema
- 8.09 INTERVAL
- 8.25 *The Sick Stockrider*
The Breaking of the Drought
- 9.41 Short Technical Interval
The Romantic Story of Margaret Catchpole
On Our Selection
- 11.04 Finish

DAY TWO • 2 SEPTEMBER 1995

- 7.30 *Lumière Picture Show*
A Hero of the Dardanelles
A Maiden's Distress
The Cheaters
- 9.06 INTERVAL
- 9.15 *Outback Patrol*
Making Film
- 9.45 Introduction to *Jedda* by Rosalie Kunoth-Monks
Jedda
- 11.41 Finish

DAY THREE • 3 SEPTEMBER 1995

- 7.30 *History of Cinema*
Where Dead Men Lie
- 7.55 Introduction to *Back of Beyond* by Ian Kew
The Back of Beyond
- 9.20 INTERVAL
- 9.30 *The Hunter*
Wake in Fright
- 11.17 Finish

Program subject to change

**SUBSCRIPTIONS FROM
BLAZEZ, STAR ARCADE &
THE DECKCHAIR CINEMA 81 0700**

We gratefully acknowledge the generous help of:



Commonwealth Bank



**ROSALIE KUNOTH-MONKS
TONY CAUGHT • PIANO TUNER
IAN ELLIS
KORMILDA COLLEGE**



THE BACK OF BEYOND - 1954 John Heyer 66' Sd BW
PC: Shell Film Unit. P ED: John Heyer SC, John Heyer, Janet Heyer, Roland Robinson. Dialogues, Narration: Douglas Stewart, John Heyer. PH: Ross Wood. M: Sydney John Kay. P: Max Lemon. ASST D: George Hughes. SD: Meruyn Murphy, John Heath.
Cast: Tom Kruse, William Henry Butler, Jack the Dogger, Old Joe the Rainmaker, the Oldfields of Etadinna, Bejah, Malcolm Arkaringa, the people of the Birdsville Track. Narrator: Kevin Brennan.

John Heyer still lives in England. He will be the guest of the Melbourne Documentary Film Festival in November this year.

Screening Sunday 3rd of September at 7.55 pm, the film will be introduced by Mr. Ian Kew, Manager of Shell Darwin.

This reconstruction of life on the Birdsville Track follows the daily work of Tom Kruse, an outback representative of the Royal Mail. Each fortnight he drives 300-odd miles through the desert in his old lorry to deliver supplies and mail to the few isolated settlements between Marree and Birdsville in central Australia.

The film offers a tightly structured, romantic view of outback life, with the desert seen not so much as a hostile environment but as a mould that creates resilience and resourcefulness in the people who live there. In preparation for the film, Heyer travelled on the Track with Tom Kruse, then returned to Sydney to write a detailed shooting script. Location shooting, with a unit of about twenty technicians and actors, took six weeks during spring 1952. The unit's five trucks carried supplies and equipment including a wind machine, a dolly for tracking shots and a tower for high angle shots. Guide tracks for the dialogue were recorded on location and professional actors later dubbed in the dialogue in Sydney.

Although produced by the Australian branch of the Shell Film Unit on a budget of £12 000, John Heyer was given complete creative and technical freedom to realise the project, rare even today where corporations are concerned. Like other Shell productions, the film was released widely through non-commercial outlets, and Shell estimated that over 750 000 Australians saw it during 1954, the first year of its release. It was televised extensively overseas, and represented Australia at several film festivals, including Edinburgh and Venice, where it won the Grand Prix in 1954.

John Heyer, born in Tasmania in 1916, was appointed as producer in charge of the Australian branch of the Shell Film Unit in 1948. In 1956 he became executive producer in charge of films and television for Shell International in London and worked there until 1967, producing and directing a large volume of commercials and documentaries, many of which won awards at film festivals around the world.

COVER: Photograph of Lottie Lyell

**THE DARWIN FILM SOCIETY PRESENTS
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CELEBRATION**



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CINEMA
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MELBOURNE CUP – Australia 1896, 3', Si, BW. The first surviving motion picture to be shot in Australia. W. Barnett, an Australian portrait photographer, and M. Sestier, the French agent for Lumiere, set up a partnership and produced footage in many locations. Just as well, they filmed at Flemington this first Tuesday of November 1896. The Bulletin comments: "It is something beautifully appropriate that the first Australian picture presented by the new machine should be a horse race. Of course it had to be either that or a football match." The film had its premiere two weeks later as a charity matinée at the Princess Theatre in Melbourne.

LUMIERE PROGRAMME – France 1895, 5', Si, BW, dir: Louis Lumière. Reprint of the first Lumiere programme to be shown in London. A succession of single short films including "Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory", "Baby at the Lunch Table", "Demolition of a Wall", "Watering the Gardener", and "A Game of Cards".

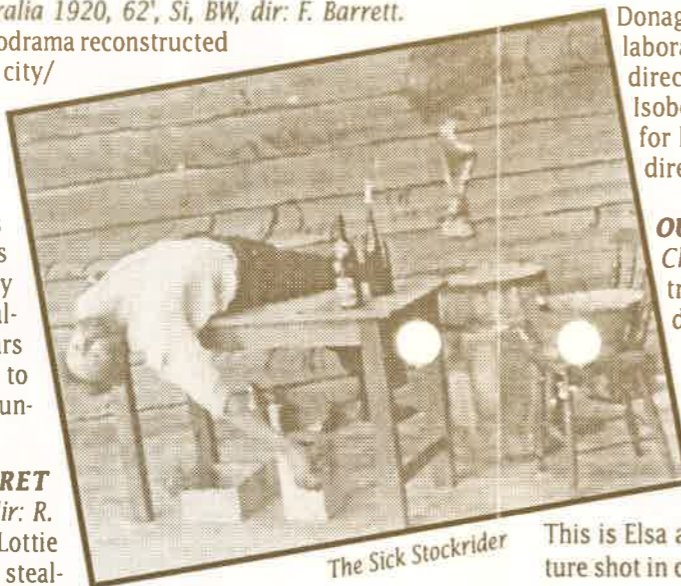
THE STORY OF THE KELLY GANG – Australia 1906, 4', Si, BW, dir: Charles Tait, prod: J. & N. Tait. Johnson & Gibson. Very much a family production. It is claimed to be the very first feature length film using the narrative structure shot here or anywhere else. It did run for more than one hour. The Bulletin again (complaining): "There is a deal too much racket about the show - sometimes, you can't see the picture for the noise of horses, trains, gunshots and wild cries; but, all the same, it is the sort of bellowdrama that the lower orders crave for; and two thirds of Australia would want to see it. The two thirds that believe Ned Kelly was a greater man than George Washington."

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF CINEMA – USA 1965, 27', Sd, BW. A documentary surveying the early history of the motion picture, from its prehistory, including shadow puppets and peepshows, to the end of the silent era.

THE SICK STOCKRIDER – Australia, 1913, 14', Si, BW, dir: W.J. Lincoln. Based on Adam Lindsay Gordon's poem, it is a series of stagey tableaux separated by intertitles of the poem's verses. The recurring image is that of the dying stockman interspersed with images of grim memories of his mates and their deaths.

THE BREAKING OF THE DROUGHT – Australia 1920, 62', Si, BW, dir: F. Barrett.

Based on the play by Bland Holt. A pioneer melodrama reconstructed by the National Film Archives. It develops the city/country dichotomy through the story of a farmer, his wife and daughter who are ruined by drought, a selfish spendthrift son and brother who wastes their money in fast living in the city. Franklyn Barrett well served by his experience as an actuality cameraman and his perception of every day events, crafted a richly authentic and affectionate response to the values of rural, Australia. He recalled many years later, "We decided that if it was not possible to make interesting pictures about our own country, then we would give up the ghost."



The Sick Stockrider

THE ROMANTIC STORY OF MARGARET CATCHPOLE – Australia 1911, 19', Si, BW, dir: R. Longford. A melodrama about a young girl (Lottie Lyell) sentenced to transportation to NSW for stealing a horse to save her lover (Raymond Longford) from the excise men. The only surviving part of the film covers the events leading up to her arrest in England.

ON OUR SELECTION – Australia 1920, 55' Si, BW, dir: R. Longford. From the book by Steele Rudd. In reflecting the melodrama and broad caricatures of the stage adaptation of Steel Rudd's stories, Longford further refined the naturalism which placed The Sentimental Bloke ahead of its time. He retained the humour and episodic structure of the original stories while bringing as much authenticity as possible to this affectionate portrait of life on the selection, the clearing of the land, the first crop, drought and bushfire. While Longford was making the transition from actor to producer and director, Lottie Lyell was becoming the most prominent and consistently successful of Australian screen actresses. Not only was she the nation's first film star, she appeared in at least 17 of the 30 films made by Longford, and shared with him a creative collaboration unequalled by any later Australian film making team. She contributed, both as a scenario writer and business manager, on nearly every film made by Longford between 1910 and 1925. She co-directed "The Blue Mountains Mystery" (1921) and research in recent years suggest that Lyell was the artistic force behind Longford's films.

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LUMIERE PICTURE SHOW – France 1896, 14', Sd, BW, dir: Louis Lumière. This film was completed in 1974 from a collection of Lumière films unearthed in 1972. The introduction shows Lumière cinematographic apparatus which he developed and used in film production and is followed by a succession of single short films including "Demolition of a Wall", "A Game of Cards", "Snowball Fight", "Dancing Girls", "At the Beach".

A HERO OF THE DARDANELLES – Australia 1915, 10', si, BW, dir: A. Rolfe. Only the opening sequences now remain of this feature film based on the Gallipoli expedition. They depict the enlisting, training and final leave of a young man who departs for military service in Egypt. This was the official recruiting film endorsed by the Department of Defence. Of the early wartime propaganda narrative features, this is the only one to survive (though in fragments only).

A MAIDEN'S DISTRESS (or Saved in the Nick of Time) Australia 1911, 3', si, BW, dir: E.I. Cole. An Australian western melodrama in which Indian Chief Wild Friday rescues squaw Running Water from death at the hand of the renegade cowboy Arizona Slim.

THE CHEATER – Australia 1928, 69', si, BW, dir: P. Mc Donagh. This story of crime and revenge involving the head of a crime empire and his daughter who serves as bait to attract wealthy victims, clearly takes the Hollywood social melodrama as a model although the concept of the crime empire and aspects of the design and plot are redolent of Fritz Lang's Dr. Mabuse. Nevertheless, the sometimes sardonic blend of these elements is quite original and not merely imitative. Stylistically "The Cheaters" is one of the most assured of surviving Australian silent films. Completed just as talkies were taking hold, unsuccessful attempts were made to release it as a partial talkie with an unsatisfactory sound-on-disc system. The Mc Donagh's pictures resulted from an intelligent collaborative unity between the sisters as co-writer/director, co-writer/art director and leading player. Isobel Mc Donagh was billed as "Marie Lorraine" for her film appearances, Paulette and Phyllis as director and art director respectively.



Paula (Marie Lorraine) and her father Bill Marsh (Arthur Greenaway) in Paulette McDonagh's 'The Cheaters'.

OUTBACK PATROL – Australia 1952, 20', Sd, BW, dir: L. Robinson, narrator: Chips Rafferty. This record of a police patrol in the outback of Northern Australia is a good example of the documentary narrative as distinct from docu-drama.

MAKING FILM – Australia 1951, 10', Sd, BW, Avondale Studios. The first in the series "Australians at Work" detailing the stages in the production of feature films. Charles Chauvel is seen at work in several scenes.

JEDDA – Australia 1955, 101', Sd, Col, dir: Charles Chauvel, new 35mm print.

This is Elsa and Charles Chauvel's last film, as well as the first Australian produced feature shot in colour. Before Jedda, Australian indigenous people did not find their way into the centre of film drama, although the film is still made from a white man's perspective and is unintentionally condescending. Chauvel developed his story and surveyed locations during an exhaustive 10,000 miles journey through the Northern Territory. The trip also saw the casting of the two leads. Robert Tudawali, a Melville Island Aboriginal, was recommended by the journalist Douglas Lockwood, and Rosalie Kunoth (screen named Ngarla) was found at a hostel for Aboriginal girls in Alice Springs. Much of the filming took place on Coolibah Cattle Station near Katherine, Mataranka and the Katherine River Gorge. Film had to be unloaded at night, stored in cold caves, then flown to Darwin and to England for processing. Several thousands feet of negative containing the last scenes were lost in an air crash, and the material was later reshot at Kanangra Walls near the Jenolan Caves in the Blue Mountains. "Jedda" had its première at the Star Theatre in Darwin on 3 January 1955. First commercial results were encouraging, but neither overseas sales nor the eventual Australian receipts earned enough money for Charles Chauvel Productions to survive. However, impressed by the way the Chauvels publicised the film in a TV interview, the BBC commissioned them to film "Walkabout" (1959), a 13 part colour series of a journey from Sydney to Darwin.

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THE HISTORY OF CINEMA UK – 1956, 10'. Sd, Col, dir: J. Halas (animation). An animated cartoon depicting the history of the moving picture to the present day.

WHERE DEAD MEN LIE – Australia 1972, 15', Sd, Col, dir: K. Gow. Henry Lawson in 1898 wrote a "scenario" in short story form, "The Australian Cinematograph". By film standards of the time it was a revolutionary blending of narrative and ballad, containing literary equivalents of the fade, dissolve, and complex shifts in time. The story's title, its detailed visual description and use of present tense, leave the modern day reader with little doubt that the tale of death among inland drovers was intended for cinematic interpretation. Lawson's scenario, although published, was ignored by producers until early 1970 when the Commonwealth Film Unit produced the story under the present title. Drover Ned and his companion run out of water on a return trip from Wilcania. They are found dead and the news is broken to Ned's family.

THE BACK OF BEYOND AUSTRALIA – 1954, 66', Sd, BW, dir: J. Heyer. See back page.

THE HUNTER AUSTRALIA – 1959, 7', Sd, BW, dir: B. Beresford. An indictment of the senseless and indiscriminate shooting of kangaroos. Photographed in the Coolah Valley, NSW.

WAKE IN FRIGHT – Australia 1971, 100', Sd, Col, dir: T. Kotcheff. A young Englishman teaching in an outback school sets off to spend his summer vacation in Sydney but doesn't make it beyond the nearby mining town known as "the Yabba". He is engulfed by the slightly sinister mateship of the locals with its undertow of repressed sexuality and squalid violence. The excess of this alcoholic nightmare is held in check by a rough humour. Kenneth Cook's novel, "Wake in Fright", was originally a project for Joseph Losey, who wanted Dirk Bogarde for the lead, but it was never made. This was the last feature role for Chips Rafferty.

The "Celebration" acknowledges the generous help of: The Australian Film Commission, The NT. Government Arts and Cultural, Affairs, Shell Darwin, Commonwealth Bank, Mirambeena Tourist Resort, Monochrome, Rite Price Supermarket, ABC Radio, Tony Caught Piano Tuner, Ian Ellis, Kormilda College, Rosalie Kunoth-Monks, The National Film Library, National Film and Sound Archives, Norbuilt.

This selection of early Australian Cinema is true to the traditional city vs bush dichotomy, although we are dwelling more on stories from the bush. It should bring back the savour of our Darwinian remoteness. In some respect the choice was easy, 95 % of all Australian made silent films are lost. Out of the remainder, Australian directors women and men who produced local content films for home consumption have been favoured; I also chose lesser known or underrated films and directors. The weekend has a strong documentary flavour, reflecting the undersigned's bias. Enjoy the films, some are 100 years old.

The flickers on the screen are ephemeral, may the triptych mural, by Kormilda College be a lasting tribute to the "100 years of Cinema". Kormilda staff and students are to be congratulated and thanked for the enthusiasm they showed in tackling the challenge. I extend my warm and sincere thanks to all the people who helped create this event.

Gilbert Herrada, Curator, "100 Years Of Cinema".

References

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