

EGERTON FILM SOCIETY

Chairman's Annual Report – September 2007

This is my fourth Annual Report as your Chairman. At last year's AGM Vivienne Foulds, Ruth Haggie, Peggy Harper, John King, myself, Mark Kingsbury and Ian Mills, William Olsen and Pat Parr volunteered to be the committee, and I was asked by them to carry on as Chairman. We have met from time to time, either formally or informally, with decisions about the programme being taken either at these meetings, or by e-mail. Earlier this year Peggy Harper stood down as our treasurer, a role she had played since the Film Society began. We all owe her a very big vote of thanks for all her hard work in keeping the books, banking the takings and paying all the bills. It is a big and thankless task, which has now been taken on by Mark Kingsbury.

Over the last year, as members will know, we have had a full programme of classic and contemporary films, starting in September 2006 with **"The Constant Gardener"**, a powerful adaptation of John LeCarre's recent novel about corporate corruption set mainly in Africa. In October we held our first special event with guest speaker Jonathan Balcon who told the 80 or so members and guests about the career of his famous film making father Sir Michael Balcon, followed by a screening of the Ealing comedy **"Whisky Galore"**. At the end of that month we screened our first documentary **"The March of the Penguins"**, and in November that splendid Humphrey Bogart film noir **"The Big Sleep"**. For our December meeting we screened **"Nanny McPhee"**, a seasonal fantasy comedy with Colin Firth and Emma Thompson. Our New Year season included many films requested by members, including the recently released **"Pride and Prejudice"** (January), the second of the Pirates of the Caribbean trilogy **"Dead Man's Chest"** (February), **"The Wind That Shakes the Barley"** (March), Ken Loache's critically acclaimed drama about the fight for Irish freedom, followed by George Stevens classic western **"Shane"** (April). In May we held another well attended special event, when Disney author and historian Dr Robin Allan spoke about Walt's classic animated features and introduced **"Bambi"**. Our season continued with Billy Wilder's comic masterpiece, **"Some Like it Hot"** (May) and closed in June with the French classic **"Jean de Florette"**.

Attendances have continued to be good, with audiences usually of between 40 and 70 members and their guests, with current films continuing to attract particularly high audiences. Our screenings are preceded by a short introduction, which some members continue to say they find useful and interesting (!), and as usual we produce a programme in advance with detailed notes about each film. With the notice of the AGM members will have received the autumn programme, with details of films we shall be screening up to the end of January. Next month we are having another "special" screening, this time to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the birth Humphrey Jennings, director of some of Britain's finest wartime documentaries, with newly restored digital prints from the British Film Institute.

The committee have at last been forced to increase our membership and ticket prices slightly to cover the increasing costs of film hire, which rose by over 20% last January, but we very much hope you will agree that we still offer exceptional value for money. The committee would very much like to hear member's views about what films we should book for the spring and summer next year.

Finally I would like to thank on your behalf all those members who help in so many different ways - on the door, setting up the equipment, getting out chairs and putting them away again afterwards, running our licensed bar, and doing all the paperwork behind the scenes. I would also like to thank Egerton Stores for acting as our ticket agents, and for everyone who helps publicise our film shows, and, of course, for all of you for turning up each month. Your committee get a lot of pleasure out of the Egerton Film Society and I hope that you do too.

Richard King
27 September 2007