



## **Oxen Park Cinema Club**

### **Secretary's Annual Report 2013 – 2014 (read at the 2014 AGM)**

I have great pleasure in presenting the secretary's report for 2014.

Oxen Park Cinema Club, located in the beautiful hamlet of Oxen Park is now 12 years old and after years of fund raising and touring village halls, showing films with our mobile unit, we have opened our purpose built 40 seat cinema - '*The Carthouse Community Cinema*' in Oxen Park. This is a wonderful facility for sociable film evenings in 'living room comfort'. The Carthouse was opened in November 2013. This attracted animated interest from the local and national press. We were delighted to be visited and featured on the BBC's TV *North West Tonight* and also a 7 minute piece on Radio 4's *You And Yours*.

Over the past season we showed 18 films. 6 on Tuesdays of which 4 were at The Carthouse, 5 Saturday Supper Specials, 3 Saturday Summer Specials and 4 children's films. Opening The Carthouse has had a great ripple effect on the local communities – we are getting new people coming to every film show and these are coming from further afield.

We introduced the "button voting" system (thank you Norma) and this has resulted in giving us good feedback on people's preferences. Our top films this year were *Epic Of Everest*, followed by *Argo*, *Skyfall* and *Dans La Maison*.

We have continued to show films in village halls and responded to outreach requests but until we get some fixed equipment we continue to dismantle, pack up and set up - always a time consuming task.

All our children's films are shown at The Outback Hall at Leven Valley Primary School an excellent venue with a regular audience of 40 - 60 5-11 year olds. In 2014 our links with Leven Valley Primary School developed into a mammoth project entitled *The Great Outdoors* which linked 7 schools with 158 children aged 5-14 making 58 films which were judged and shown at an 'Oscar' style 'Peninsula Film Festival' with awards for the best films. Over 200 people came to the final festival at The Victoria Hall in Grange over Sands. They could watch any or all of the films made by the children set up on 7 screens around the hall. Ian Nicol, head at Leven Valley, was the master mind of the project but our Roger was a key player in bringing all the films together so they could be judged then shown on the 7 screens. This exceeded all our expectations and will probably be repeated.

On the back of this our annual Rusland Show film class was also *The Great Outdoors* bringing in some of the films shown at Grange.

The films we have made on local industry have caught the interest of industrial history societies as well as many local people who used to work in these industries. *The Backbarrow Blue Works* is finished at last and will be included as a loop with *The Lowood Gunpowder Works* in a special local history exhibition at The Lakeland Motor Museum. We are delighted with the positive feedback we have received and proud to have contributed to these historical archives. We have already been bought in to show these films at events organised by outside organisations – our reputation is spreading.

This year we have developed many established connections and made new ones. We have become a partner with the new BFI promoted Cine North through Signal Films in Barrow in Furness – this means that we get marketing and film booking support and a place on the BFI Neighbourhood Cinema website. This is an exciting development and should make an impact on our sustainability next season. Signal Films have been a long term partner: we occasionally show their films, advertise their workshops and share knowledge on films and technical issues; we invited them to judge the films entered for the Peninsula Film Festival which they did and supported us on festival day.

Our thanks, as always, to all our film sponsors and programme advertisers – their support is so welcome and appreciated. Many of these have followed our progress from the beginning and believe in our vision of offering a special community service and now (at last) a community cinema. Thanks also to Sue McKinnon our webmaster for all her work on keeping our website up to date and so user friendly.

Your hardworking committee continue to meet monthly and work on creating a sustainable film society for its very rural community. All helped with our 2 major fund raising efforts: the Coro coffee morning and a cycle orienteering Lanequest.

We are sad to lose Jane Chaloner from the committee this year. Jane has had a huge input: running the raffles, organising coffee mornings, sorting out advertisers and sponsors she will be missed and difficult to replace. We look forward to seeing you Jane at film shows. Thank you so much for all you have done for us.

Oxen Park itself has 20 households. In the last 12 months we have shown that we can have a cinema in the village with very low impact, no extra noise, low key parking and bringing in extra business to the pub opposite. Nearly everyone in the village has been to at least one show and experienced the special atmosphere and comfortable seating we offer. We had (have) sceptics and antis as well as many supporters. By managing the film shows sensitively; directing parking and following a noise management policy we are winning people over and bringing the community together.

What of the future?

- We are now looking for funding to support the installation of a ceiling mounted projector and associated fixed equipment in The Carhouse.
- We want to fit out the film-making/editing room so we can run workshops based at The Carhouse.
- We want to develop the use of The Carhouse whilst being sensitive to the quiet village setting.
- We look forward to developing the Peninsula Film Making Project to bring in schools from all over the South Lakeland District.

As always: Do keep coming. Enjoy the films. Bring your friends .

Thank you.

**Carol McNeill September 2014**