



# Australian Film Societies Federation Inc

ABN 50 670 944 795

Correspondence to: Secretary, PO Box 468 Mullumbimby NSW 2482  
Phone: 02 6684 3405; Email: [ausfilm@hotmail.net.au](mailto:ausfilm@hotmail.net.au); Web: [ausfilm.org.com](http://ausfilm.org.com)

## Minutes

### of Annual General Meeting

held 12 November 2016 at Seminar Room A, Coombs Building, ANU, Canberra

#### In attendance

##### Registered delegates:

Gary Hovey, Braidwood Film Club; Travis Cragg, ANU Film Group; Henry Fitzgerald, ANU Film Group; Richard Keys, Workshop Film Group; Ian Grey, Workshop Film Group; Rick Rowland, Big House Film Society; Alan Duke, Canberra U3A; David Hogan, Canberra U3A; Lynn Rutherford, Reel McCoy Film Group; James Sandry, Reel McCoy Film Group; Graham Seaman, Blacktown Library Film Society; Theresa Huxtable, Illawarra Film Society; Hilton Prideux, WEA Wollongong Film Society

##### Registered proxies:

The Left Bank Film Society: proxy allocated to James Sandry

##### Registered observers

Louise Sheedy Manager of the NFSA Lending collection and Caitlyn Leon NFSA Loans Officer

#### 1. Welcome and opening

The president took the chair, welcomed those in attendance and declared the meeting open at 12.30 pm.

#### 2. Apologies

The following apologies were tabled:

Michael Lines Kelly, Left Bank Film Club; John Wearne, North West Theatre Company; Lydia Brichta and Roger Swanson, Blacktown City Library Film Society; Kevin Barr, WEA Wollongong

#### 3. Accreditation of proxies and delegates

##### Resolved Lynn Rutherford- Richard Keys

That all registered delegates and proxies be accredited to the meeting.

#### 4. Confirmation of Minutes of Annual General Meeting held 12 November 2016

##### Resolved James Sandry - Graham Seaman

That the Minutes of the meeting be confirmed.

#### 5. Reports

##### (a) President's report

The president apologised for the last minute change of venue. He informed the delegates that in the last week three groups had contacted him about starting a film society and joining the Federation. The President briefly outlined the essential functions of the Federation: enabling film groups to get discounts on screening rights and to liaise with distributors and the Lending collection of the NFSA. However, He emphasised that helping people start film societies was the main point of the Federation and that in this are, the Federation had had a very successful year with 19 new film societies joining since the last AGM. Although this was offset by nine film societies going out of business and ceasing to be members the number of Federation members had increased to 59.

The President outlined the Federation's plan to keep this trend going:

- 1) Use of the Federation Website
- 2) Digitisation of the Federation's administration
- 3) Continuing to work with the management of the NFSA Lending Collection and with Australian Film Distributors.

The President also announced that Legal Aid was a new benefit that the Federation was introducing for its members. The Federation purchased a trial subscription to the Arts Law Centre of Australia which entitled the Federation to two document reviews and five verbal legal advices. Details of this would be put on the website.

The President reminded the meeting that in an attempt to overcome some of the problems associated with traveling down to Canberra for an AGM, information of what was decided would be put on the website including a video of the Guest Speaker Simon Foster. He reported that this had been very successful last year with the video of last year's speaker Andrew Pike getting 72 views.

The President reminded the meeting that above the official functions of the AGM it was an opportunity for film societies to informally meet, socialise, trade information and be reminded that though they operate in small groups they are all part of a much larger group. He then listed the social activities planned for the weekend.

Finally, The President announced that long serving executive member Hilton Prideux was retiring from the Executive. He said that Hilton had made a huge contribution to the Federation and will be greatly missed. This was supported by the vice-president and the rest of the delegates.

#### **(b) Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer announced that this year's report was the first using the new automated system, the new invoicing system and the new payment options and it had gone very well. However, it was noted that introducing the new software had thrown off the figures for the financial year.

The Treasurer reported \$1,576 income and expenses of \$1,314 for the Financial Year producing a surplus of \$262. Consequently, the balance of the Operating Account has gone up \$262 from \$4580 to \$4842.

Expenses consisted of website costs, hosting last years AGM and lodging documents with the NSW Fair Trading Department. No invoice had been presented yet by Paul Sarcoar of Codered Solutions for the work of digitising the Federations administration.

The balance of the Term Deposit account has increased from \$12,779 to \$13,201 due to the payment of \$421 interest calculated at 3.3%. The term deposit will continue to be re-invested in line with accepted practice.

**That the financial statements be received.**

**Resolved James Sandry – Travis Cragg**

## **6. Current status of the Lending Collection from the NFSA**

Guest and Observer to the meeting Dr Louise Sheedy presented an overview of the current status of the NFSA's lending collection to the meeting. She made the following points:

- Dr Sheedy had been working to develop a framework for the collection and its long term stability. She assured the meeting that the NFSA had no intention of dismantling this collection in the foreseeable future.
- The NFSA would start adding titles to the Non-Theatrical Lending Collection (NTLC) in 2017. The current policy of NFSA Management was that any additions to the NTLC must be Australian Films that do not have a distributor. The most likely example of this sort of film, are films from film festivals that never got a commercial distribution.
- In response to delegates who argued that this was a very narrow criteria that would not help film societies which needed to show a broad range of films Dr Sheedy said that she was currently working on a renewal and acquisition strategy to keep the collection relevant to film societies. This should be finished in early 2017.
- This strategy involves writing a report which:
  - shows the demographics of the people who use the collection
  - details the scope of the collection
  - shows how often titles are borrowed
  - develops a new broader criteria for additions to the collection

Dr Sheedy intended to have a balance between acquiring new titles and renewing rights of existnt titles but she could not say how many films would be in each category.

Several attendees at the AGM complained about the cost of short 16mm films. They pointed out that in the pastonce, when you hired a 16mm feature film, you could get a short 16mm film for free but this policy was discontinued. The meeting as a whole requested that this pricing structure be re-examined since it did not support the regular use of short films.

Dr Sheedy said she was attracted to the idea of either having a cheaper rate for 16mm shorts or bundling them with 16mm feature films because it would increase accessibility but she cautioned that many of the costs involved in supplying 16mm film were constant regardless of their length.

Dr Sheedy said that having contact with organisations like the AFSF was desirable in order to get this sort of information and she offered to meet with us early in 2017 when she had a clear strategy and an ongoing criteria for suggestions to the collection.

## **7. Communications**

### **(a) Website**

The President credited the website for the recent increase in new members. Over the last year the website has been modified to increase its Search Engine Optimisation (SEO). This has resulted in the AFSF website being ranked higher in Google search results.

When you search Google with the Term "How to start a film society" the AFSF webpage is the first three listings. The ACOFS website is the 4<sup>th</sup> listing. Unlike the ACOFS Website which is about ACOFS and its state federations, the AFSF website is aimed directly at people who want to start film societies.

In the last year, the website has had 2271 visitors. This is more than ever before. The website has had 5395 views with 2.4 page views per visitor. The websites most popular pages are 1) the list of Australian Film distributors and 2) the pages on copyright and screen rights. Of the website visitors: 4678 were from Australia, 277 were from America, 125 were from Brazil and 46 vistors were from the UK.

The president announced plans to use the AFSF website's higher SEO ranking to improve the ranking of the websites belonging to members by linking to them. This would involve creating new entries on the AFSF website with a link to the film societies website. Permission would need to be given by each society to publicise them and to have their details on our website. Due to the amount of work involved the members will have to be contacted in stages.

#### **(b) Facebook Page**

The AFSF Facebook page has been closed down. Megan Findlayson, a committee member who resigned last year had promised to keep it going but had stopped because of a lack of response from AFSF members. The Committee felt that while getting film societies to interact with each other was an important goal the Facebook page had been unsuccessful in doing this. The meeting thanked Megan Findlayson for her efforts.

#### **(c) Adoption of Software**

This has been the big project for the last year and would continue into 2017. The President reminded the meeting that at the 2015 AGM the committee announced plans to look at enrolling members, the treasurers functions and liaising with distributors with an eye to make it more efficient and easier.

The Committee contracted with Paul Sarcoar of Codered Solutions who was able to create a custom solution for us combining Mailchimp emailing software, Google Docs and Xero Financial software interacting with each other through the use of an integration engine. The integrated system work in real time so information moves from system to system in 15 minutes or less.

The President explained how the software would function. The AFSF website has two links to two different online forms. One for new members to supply their details and one for existing members so they can update their details. The information from these forms goes directly to an online database which is connected to two Google document spreadsheets. The Committee sees one of those documents which has everybody's full information. The distributors see the other spreadsheet which only has the members name, membership number and their number of members.

The information from the online database is also channeled into Xero, the financial software. Xero offers a much wider range of payment options than we were able to offer before. Xero creates and sends out invoices, helps the Treasurer track who has paid and helps to reconcile payments.

The same database channels into Mailchimp, the email software which allows the easy creation of emails and draws on the database information to create mailing lists. Mailchimp also provide statistics on a wide range of things like how many emails are opened and how many links are clicked on.

This new system that allows members to update their details means that the Federation won't have to send out renewal forms. However, on the advice of Paul Sarcour, all members should choose to auto renew so that they can be sent invoices at the start of the next financial year.

The president noted that the software allowed film societies to indicate their exact number of members. This had been added at the request of Roadshow Entertainment who charges on a sliding scale based on the number of members. At the time of the meeting only 15% of members had updated their number of members. However, the Committee felt this would be turned to 100% through future mailouts.

As a side effect of introducing this system the Federation has developed an information privacy policy which can be found on the Federation Website.

## 8. General Business

### Public Liability Insurance

The President stated that public liability insurance was very useful to some members of the Federation. He said that when members contact the Committee asking about it the Committee recommend a company called Dansurance which specialises in theatrical related insurance as this had the lowest rates, about \$270 per year.

The Committee had contacted Dansurance to see if a more advantageous commercial relationship could be negotiated. Dansurance offered \$10 off the first year's premium. The Committee considered this to be so slight that it wasn't worth taking up.

Dansurance is providing public liability insurance for 40 film societies. However, in order to get any substantial bulk discount the AFSF would have to supply 1000s of groups as customers.

The President proposed putting up a page on the Federations website AFSF Website saying "that if you want public liability insurance contact us and we will recommend someone". Ian Grey proposed that this should be accompanied with a brief explanation of why you should have public liability insurance or why you shouldn't. The meeting decided to put up the webpage with that information.

**Resolved: Ian Grey – James Sandry**

### 9. Election of Federal Executive

All Executive positions were declared vacant. No nominations were received before the meeting. The Chairman invited nominations from the floor. The following were elected to the positions indicated:

President:	James Sandry	Nominated: Gary Hovey	Seconded: Lynn Rutherford
Vice President:	Richard Keys	Nominated: Henry Fitzgerald	Seconded: Graham Seaman
Treasurer	Henry Fitzgerald	Nominated: James Sandry	Seconded: Richard Keys
Secretary	James Sandry	Nominated: Travis Cragg	Seconded: Gary Hovey
Other Officers	Theresa Huxtable	(Public Officer)	
	David Hogan		

### 10. Closure

There being no further business, the chairman thanked delegates for their attendance and contributions, invited everyone to enjoy following events over the weekend and closed the meeting at 4.30 pm.

*Confirmed as a true and accurate record of the above proceedings.*

*Name of Chairman: . . . . .*

*Signature.....*

*Date.....*

*Signature: . . . . . Date: . . . . .*