

WILLIAMSTOWN FILM SOCIETY

www.williamstown-film-society.org

Last Wednesday of the month, 7:30pm at the Council Chamber,
Williamstown Town Hall, Ferguson Street, Williamstown, 3016



AGM

26th October 2022

President's Report

So far so good!

Nine consecutive screenings and two to go. A far cry from 2020 and 2021's Covid affected programs. Our 2022 program was all new and fresh – we decided not include cancelled films from the previous two years. Still unsure what to do with the four we were unable to show. It seems a shame to just miss them...

Screenings have gone well this year. We began in the Supper Room for its size then moved to the Chamber in February and there we have stayed. Members love the Council Chamber. It is cozy and intimate and the sound is much better. We even reconfigured the screen, speakers and seating in an effort to maximize spacing of chairs and it seems to work really well. The Mayoral Bench is particularly popular – our own private dress circle perhaps.

A big thankyou to the Hobsons Bay City Council (HBCC) staff and the team of the Venues Department for all their help and assistance with screenings, in particular the ever-changing landscape of Covid and restrictions.

We are still wearing masks when inside and avoided sharing a cuppa and something sweet. It was a conscious decision and our way of taking care of our members and their families. In light of that and in some ways because of that, our attendances have been very good. Audience numbers have increased from low 30s to high 30s, and when everyone is fit and well, the low 40s. A heartfelt thank you to our members for their willingness to follow our guidelines.

We also continued with pre-booking for our monthly screenings. Being able to produce an attendance list each month proved to be enormously helpful making Dimi's check-in task extremely smooth. The list provided an accurate attendance number which was handy when setting up or catering. The system also enabled members to send their apologies which was greatly appreciated. It also ensured new members could be made welcome.

The committee need to be congratulated on their programming. Selecting the films and creating a program for the year takes a great deal of juggling and fine adjustment to get the flow and balance right. Starbox scores have been very high, despite the variety and challenging content of some films.

Once again, the WFS website has proved to be valuable resource. We have been 'found' online resulting in new memberships. Our monthly flyers which are circulated to all of the Hobsons Bay Libraries have caught people's attention and also produced new memberships.

Our 25th Anniversary display at the Williamstown library finally went up this year (delayed from 2021 due to Covid) and looked terrific, and according to library staff produced great conversations and comments, especially from children who just loved Mari's Paddington Bear in his bright red coat. The

display made use of the large touch screen table enabling visitors to view photos from the 25th Anniversary and browse through every annual program since 1996.

On a very sad note, John Power (partner of Ann Morrow) passed away in June 2022. Until recently John, and Ann, had been long-time members and regular attenders to our screenings. Both were very keen on films which raised issues and loved discussing them with anyone and everyone. They have been missed. Our sympathy is extended to Ann, family and friends. Ann's own health has declined and she has recently been in hospital and respite care herself. Our best has been passed on from her friends at WFS.

In concluding this report, I would like to thank a few people and the organisations they represent.

It never hurts to repeat thanks but I will. Thank you to Mr Marcus Cassidy-Anderson, Garth Sheridan from Venues Department of the Hobson's Bay City Council for their advice and support during 2021/22 and a special thank you to venue staff for their assistance in setting up the Supper Room and the Chamber for our Wednesday screenings. It was nice to see the tea-trolley reappear in September.

A thank you to the FVFS committee for their advice and guidance as film societies came back into circulation after two interrupted years due to Covid. It was delightful to catch up at the annual information day and AGM back in March. The workshop which centred on how film societies managed through Covid was particularly useful and it was heartening share what other societies have done and to know that help is available.

Thank you to the WFS Committee, particularly Maria Kouppas (secretary), Dimi Simeonidis (treasurer) and Jack Neill (projectionist). We are a good committee and work well together. The proof is in the lively chat after the lights come up.

Finally, thank you to our wonderful members. It seems like no matter what kind of film we present you appreciate it and love to talk about it, whether it was your *cup of tea* or not quite *up your alley*. And that was no mean feat hidden behind masks.

Keep coming; we'll still be here.

Michael Slee

President

Williamstown Film society

14th October 2022