

RESEARCH WITH AV MATERIALS

The workshop was arranged by the Audio Visual Services Committee of the LAA, Macquarie University and the Australian Film and Television School to give researchers and librarians an opportunity to have both 'hands-on' and theoretical experience of the use and preservation of sound recordings, film, video and still pictures.

Marjorie Roe, from the University of Queensland's Library, was the driving force in getting the workshop off the ground and most of the organisation. She and other workshop leaders ensured the forty people at the workshop had two highly satisfying days at Macquarie University and the Film School. On the first day, four researchers used illustrated case studies to identify their problems when using audiovisual materials:

Dr Hank Nelson (Historian from the Australian National University), described his primary research with Tim Boden for the ABC radio series 'Taim Bilong Masta' and 'Prisoners of War — Australians Under Nippon' and for the film, 'Angels of War'. Hank mentioned the size of audiences reached by different media — estimating that one or two hundred people might have read his articles, one or two thousand have bought his book, but that the ABC radio and television cassettes have reached hundreds of thousands of people and that the audience for the film could be measured in millions. He also cited an American study of university students which found that they saw twenty films for every book they read. [No, he didn't give the reference for this.]

Ed Stokes (a local historian, photographer and writer), described his research for the book *United We Stand* — an oral history of Broken Hill around 1909. His searching saga included the sad story of finding that the emulsion had been scraped off hundreds of old photographic plates which had then been used to make a hen house.

Dr Ina Bertrand (Media Researcher, Film Historian at Latrobe University) described her part in the discovery and verification of the turn-of-the-century Australian film 'The Story of the Kelly Gang' — complete with the story of refusing one 'kind offer' from a film buff to take care of it himself.

Television broadcaster and producer, Peter Luck arrived 'trying to look like an academic' and told us some behind-the-scenes stories about the television series, 'These Fabulous

Years'. He commented that old newsreels show particular oversights and barely mentioned women, crime or poverty (even at the height of the depression). The Melbourne Cup has been filmed every year since the first race, but we only have three pieces of moving film of Dame Nellie Melba during the whole of her career, which began at the same time as the first Cup race.

An afternoon of 'hands-on' experience at the Film School gave people various practical tasks to perform and we spent the time locating items in film, still pictures, sound and video recordings. Marilyn Vietnieks, the ABC Film Archivist, talked about the great level of detail needed for computerised indexing of television material. For instance, one minute of TV news takes one hour to index. People want such detailed shots as a 'fat policeman' or 'a C-class destroyer on the horizon, going from the left of the screen to the right in one minute'. The beauty of this level of database indexing is that once done, it can be combined in many different ways, as required.

On the second day Peter Burgis from the National Film and Sound Archive presented an impressive written paper to supplement his highly original and entertaining practical introduction in which he aimed to 'demystify' sound and broadcasting. His hobbies listed in the paper were: 'scuba diving, mountaineering, fencing, motor racing, parachuting, bull fighting, crocodile hunting and knitting'. He showed us some cardboard, folded in three which turned out to be a gramophone — complete with a small record, which he played by turning it with a pencil. It really worked and had cost nine cents from the Gospel Recordings Company. Intended for missionaries, they are for sale only for spreading the Word of God.

Papers were also given on Copyright (from the owners' and users' point of view) and Ann Baylis, also from the National Film and Sound Archives, provided an overview of the papers, including the problems of access versus preservation of this material. Copies of the papers presented will form the basis of the *Researcher's Guide to Audiovisual Resources in Australian Libraries*, which is intended for both people using the material and those with the duty to look after it. Details appeared in *InCite* (26 July, 1985, p.13).

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