

THE INTERNATIONAL **CINERAMA** SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER 22.

December 2004.

I have to start with an apology for not publishing the usual Newsletter promoting the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television's WideScreen Weekend this year. Despite my best efforts, I was unable to obtain details of the programme in time. As a result I have decided to revert to publishing the newsletter when circumstances allow.

Details of the Museum's film programmes and the March 2005 WideScreen Weekend are published on the Internet at: www.nmpft.org.uk/ As the complexity of the Festival and the difficulty in obtaining usable prints makes last minute changes inevitable, I suggest you consult the Internet for up to date information.

This year is the 50th anniversary of **TODD-AO** and the emphasis will therefore be on **70mm**.

Sadly, I have to report that John Harvey, the force behind the resurrection of CINERAMA in the USA, suffered a serious stroke just before last Christmas and, as a result, despite physiotherapy, has lost the use of his right-hand side. I understand that, to defray his medical costs, he has had to sell both his house in Dayton and all his Cinerama material, the latter having being purchased by a Cincinnati film buff.

David Strohmaier's documentary **THE CINERAMA ADVENTURE**, has been transferred to 35mm film with Dolby 5.1 sound and, in August 2003, played on one of Arclight's conventional screens at their Los Angeles complex during the build up to the opening of the new print of **HOW THE WEST WAS WON**. Subsequently it has played several major film festivals across the USA.

Despite all this exposure, David has still to find a distributor for it. In September 2004 it returned to Arclight's **CINERAMA DOME** complex promoting two special showings of **THIS IS CINERAMA**. The performances also featured the **TIC Breakdown** film, a Newsreel of the opening of **SEVEN WONDERS** on Broadway and excerpts from **CINERAMA HOLIDAY** and **SEARCH FOR PARADISE**.

The big surprise was a previously unknown CinemaScope trailer for **CINERAMA HOLIDAY**.

Does anyone have any information on this oddity?

Also billed was an extract from the 3-Strip KinoPanorama film **OPASNIYE POVOROTY (Joyous Racing Corners)**. I understand that the showings, considering they were on a Thursday evening and a Saturday morning, were well attended

Recently there has been some controversy as to whether Cinerama Inc installed any additional equipment to show the prologues or used the theatre's existing conventional projection and sound equipment.

As a result I have contacted ex-Cinerama projectionists who have confirmed that the theatre's existing equipment was used wherever possible.

I also queried the presence of a composite emergency mono track on the magnetic sound reel as stated in the early literature on the process. As far as anyone can remember, no release prints had an emergency track. All public showings from the start were 7 track, with 1 to 5 behind the screen whilst track 6 was fed to the sidewalls and 7 to the rear wall. In all the original Waller installations, the picture Control Engineer, seated at a console in the theatre, could patch 6 & 7 to any auditorium position as required, although these were normally allocated as above. It was Cinerama's policy to keep 6 & 7 faded out until required to reduce the perception of tape hiss. The later installations, which had no picture control engineer, and the two MGM titles, played tracks 6 & 7 open throughout.

Note: Original CineMiracle prints carried an emergency stereo pair of magnetic stripes on Baker panel.

THIS IS CINERAMA is now in it's 11th year at Bradford where it continues to draw reasonable audiences each month. Not bad for a 52 year old movie the industry wrote off as unwanted and of no possible future interest. Sometimes cinemagoers *do* know better than the moguls!

We urgently need a philanthropic film buff to appear and finance a new set of prints as, sadly, the truth is that the cost can never be recovered from admission charges. Despite a 16-year search, I have still not found one.

Recently a young New Zealander, in Bradford for the monthly showing of **THIS IS CINERAMA**, claimed to have found a 3-Strip travelogue of New Zealand and to be interested in equipping a theatre there to play it. As no such movie was ever made, we suspect he had actually found the New Zealand sequences from **CINERAMA SOUTH SEAS ADVENTURE**, a copy of which had been privately preserved in New Zealand.

Cinerama Theatre News:

AUSTRALIA.

Adelaide. **Hoyts Regent.** Closed 28-01-04.

CANADA.

Toronto. **EGLINTON.** This is now an events venue.

FRANCE. NEW ENTRY.

Cannes. **GRAND PALACE.** A 1967 issue of Kinematograph Weekly reported that 70mm Cinerama equipment was to be specially installed at this Theatre during the Cannes Film Festival for a single, out-of-competition, invitation preview showing of **CUSTER OF THE WEST**.

U.S.A.

Baltimore. **TOWN.** In 1976 a flat, unmasked, screen was fitted in front of the Cinerama screen, using projection from Cinerama's Baker box.

Boston. **BEACON HILL.** Delete: Temporary Flat screen ----to----masking.
Insert: 50-ft single sheet screen.

Harrisburg. **TRANS-LUX.** Twinned 1975. Current Status unknown.
New York. **WARNER.** Delete: Not known if Cinerama screen retained.
Insert: Section of Cinerama Screen retained till closure.

New York. **ZIEGFELD.** There were no curtains on the Cinerama screen, they were projected onto the screen from a slide.

Philadelphia. **BOYD.** Now known as the **SAMERIC**, this is now the last classic movie palace in the city. Despite the theatre being a protected building, it is currently under threat.

Portland. **HOLLYWOOD.** This theatre is still open with Able and Charlie booths still in situ. The louvered screen has long since been changed for a single sheet on the original frame and the theatre is reported to be in a very run down condition.
(Oregon).

Los Angeles. **WARNER.** Now being used for development work on digital projection.

CineMiracle.

Atlantic City. **WARREN.** Opened 27-08-1960.
New York. **ROXY.** After Windjammer season, equipment transferred to the Mayfair.

Portland. **HOLLYWOOD.** Delete **Maine.** Insert **Oregon.**
(Maine)

D-150.

New York. **MAYFAIR.** Equipment transferred from the Roxy.
New York. **RIVOLI.** Opened 1966.
Syosset. **UA-150.** Ran **TIC** (70mm) in 1973.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all Cinerama enthusiasts worldwide **SEASONAL GREETINGS**. It is your enthusiasm that has kept **CINERAMA** alive, allowing this milestone of the Cinema to be experienced by future generations.

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