

Lew Cook is a Portland film-maker whose career, beginning in 1922, spans more than fifty years. During the past few years he has become concerned with the preservation of old-time 35 mm movie footage—his own work as well as many other early movie photographers (Jesse Sill, Hobart Brownell, Eric Mayo, Paris Emery, Van Scoy, Raymond Rogers, Ray Conway, Otto Jones, Charlie Piper, Frank Heaton, and others). Since 1965 he has been reducing deteriorating 35 mm film into exhibitable 16 mm and has collected and reduced films which are rich in regional historical content. He has recently completed a film for the Oregon Historical Society using this early footage, titled Looking Backwards. This film is available for viewing through the Oregon Historical Society. The following are Mr. Cook's recollections and comments on early film-making in Portland.

Edison was the most outstanding man of early motion pictures. He invented a motion picture camera and the famous hand-cranked 35 mm projector used in most early day picture theatres. I obtained an Edison projector in 1923 from the late Howard Mapes, who ran the Start Film Exchange which at that time was located on Glisan Street. I worked for him a little after that and he paid me off in old one-reel features of Tom Mix, William S. Hart, etc. In 1924 I took some of these films on a road tour to the small towns in the area, Troutdale, Aurora, Yamhill, Newburg and Oregon City. Admission was 25 cents and 10 cents for kids. Sometimes somebody played piano.

Later I worked with Jesse Sill who was making a local newsreel sponsored by the Oregon Journal called "Webfoot Weekly." These films were shipped to local theatres all over the state. I did odd jobs for Jesse and his wife Joy, and they showed me how to splice and edit film.

The next thing I wanted was a camera to do my own shooting. The camera I bought was a Sept, which was made in France. It held little 35 mm magazines which were loaded in the dark and were only 18 feet long and good for a couple of short scenes before it was

# THOSE WERE THE DAYS



necessary to reload. I made some small racks in which I could develop up to 20 feet of film at one time, and I used my camera for printing. A year later, I bought from Sills an English Preswitch camera. About this time I made the "Mt. Hood Review" which was a 10-12 minute film about the things like Smelt Run on the Sandy River and other spectacular sights of the Mt. Hood region. Last year, a copy of this film showed up in the Stellar and Rothchild collection and is now being restored.

The late Dorothy Kawley was the person who really got me started in saving old 35 mm films. She had a film record of a trip she and her late husband had made in 1924 Buick and a 24 Ford roadster to Mexico. She was a good talker on the phone and she bugged me and Claude Palmer until we agreed to do the work. Reducing her films led to receiving films from Ray Conway who was with the American Automobile Assoc. They had 67,000 feet of old news film mostly on early aviation, including some shots of Tex Rankin and Will Rogers

who came through Portland on their way to Alaska where they were killed in an airplane crash. One thing led to another, and we received thousands of feet of old 35 mm nitrate from KOIN-TV which we reduced for producer Luke Roberts, and 20,000 feet from Ken Yandel of KGW-TV.

Most of the film we reduced came from an era before Radio. The newsreel film was very important than to let people know what was happening. They were shown in theatres everywhere—big and small. All part of the passing parade, which has now permanently passed on to TV. In the 20's thousands of good souls showed up for all events. People seemed to get together more. Wherever an event took place, there was always a good turn-out, and if a movie camera was there filming the scene, they would be sure to come to the local theater that night and look for themselves in the crowd on the screen. Those were the days.

—Lew Cook



IN THE PAST few years the Northwest and Portland in particular have witnessed a remarkable birth of a film community. The prospect of the Portland area becoming a regional and national motion picture center is exciting and certainly not out of the realm of possibility.

The writing on the wall in the alleys between theaters clearly indicates that local film pioneers have already produced films with high intentions and greatest of efforts.

The work of these pioneers observed in the past few years include at least two feature films made completely with local talent and money, dozens upon dozens of documentaries ranging from TV productions to industrial documentaries; from histories of the northwest to technical art films; and from cultural documentaries to works of personal lifestyles. The list includes literally hundreds of short films, some art and experimental types; some personal statements, many notable commercials, entertainment films, animated films . . . the list goes on and on.

Other indications of Portland celluloid pioneers include the formation of new educational oriented film organizations like the Northwest Media Project and the more established Northwest Film Study Center. In the past few years commercial film production has grown immensely with the addition of studios with "in-house" facilities and capabilities and with the appearance of many local production teams.

In addition, more local film creators are gaining national and international recognition for their works. The growth and achievements of the past few years represent a phenomenal potential for the Portland area becoming a film center.

Does it sound as though the area is booming and zooming at 24 frames per second?

Well, that is not the case! In the past couple years local viewers have observed more quibbles, criticism, hurdles, and local filmmakers turned bar boys and girls than they have seen regional motion pictures.

All kinds of pitfalls and monsters like "Bad Press," "The L.A. Syndrome," "Small Town Gossip," "Shoe String Film Bidding," "Sample Reel Misrepresentation," "Audience Snobbery" and a general lack of professionalism run rampant in the area, keeping film activity from really becoming something.

## FILM COMMUNITY

This criticism is directed to all: filmmakers, producers, film buyers and sponsors, and movie goers. All of the involved parties must get together and become united to make this a film center. If we do not, we will all continue to suffer filmmakers will continue to live month to month and only dream of making The Number One Movie; film buyers and sponsors will continue to be ripped off and end up with productions of less quality than expected; movie goers will continue to see double feature slicks and obnoxious shorts for the third and fourth time because there's little choice; and theater owners will suffer appropriately.

If you believe, as I do, that film is an exciting medium and that it would be great for Portland to become a center of the film experience, then allow me to be so crass as to moralize on some of the common sense do's and don'ts that ought to be heeded.

**Filmmakers.** Don't be hypercritical of other local works. Bad mouthing films brings the entire state of the art down and prospective sponsors and viewers become turned off to the medium. Don't misrepresent your equipment or ability to people who want to make a film and don't put other people's works on your sample reel. If a client ends up unsatisfied you won't get another job from them and you've harmed the integrity of local film production. Do plug each other's work and support film activity in general on all fronts. If you meet someone who wants to make a film, which for whatever reason you can't get completely behind, send the person to a filmmaker you know that can do a good job; that filmmaker probably won't forget what you have done and will return the favor. Do employ realistic budgeting when considering productions because not only do you have to come out on your production expenses but you've also got to eat while you are working on your masterpiece or waiting for the next commission. You may feel you could use the experience regardless of the budget, but I can tell you from experience that if the budget is too low, the project will suffer and you may not be very proud of the outcome. Also remember, in competitive bidding on films clients do not always take the low bid, so be realistic.

**Film sponsors and patrons.** I know the L.A. sunshine is hard to pass up but do acquaint yourselves with the talent and film production possibilities in the Portland area. You may be pleasantly surprised. Locally produced films have the possibility of having a uniquely indigenous flavor more atune to a regional point of view. If you intend to be intimately involved in the project, choose a local crew and you won't have to deal with working out of your motel room. When you use local film talent for the low budget jobs and Hollywood crews for the high budgets, don't then turn around and criticize the locals for low quality productions. With film, to a fair degree, you "get what you pay for" in love or money.

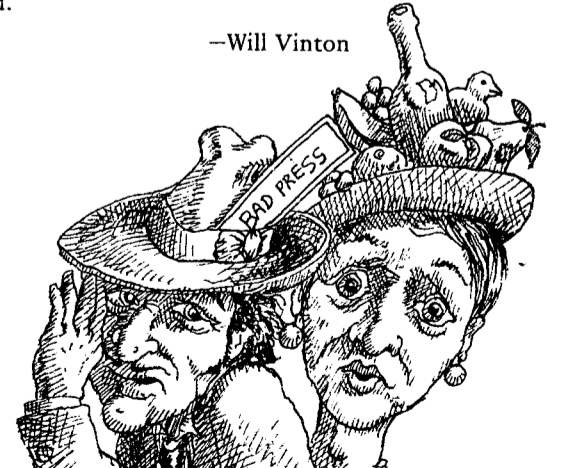
**Theater owners and film programmers.** Do try to use local films in your programs whenever possible. Properly handled and publicized, local films could easily prove to be an unsuspected source with a substantial

regional market. Instead of playing that old fourth run feature with your main feature, give the audience a break and show them any of the dozens of highly entertaining shorts that have been made locally in the past few years. At least these films are not so insulting as one's like "Bermuda Holiday," "Dirt Bikes, U.S.A." and "Hazing with Wilber Wolf" which Hollywood sends you. Do try to be responsive to audience desires by having them write down suggestions and experimenting with the requests. Consider programs of documentary films. When contemplating local films for programming, do not underestimate the built-in publicity and audience which accompanies them.

**Movie goers.** All of us as the patrons of film are extremely important to the success of regional film showings. Basically, it is up to the movie goers to determine whether regional films, art films, foreign films and/or the usual Hollywood films play at local theaters. Films do not magically come to theaters but rather each theater has a human being who is responsible for programming films. This person has to choose what films to "book" in a theater, based on what they believe the audience will pay to see. If a certain type of film has a "bad track record" (meaning small audience attendance and low box office revenues) the programmers will probably never book that type of film. All of this being the case, as movie goers, do let the theater managers know if you liked the program or that you did not. Tell them what films you would like to see playing there. If they care about their business they will welcome and appreciate your comments, good or bad. Do not go to movies just because there is something playing on a nearby screen. Check out what's playing, be adventurous, and use your attendance as a vote for the kind of films you prefer to see. Patronize those theaters which seem to agree that programming itself is an art! Regional film programs need your votes the most since they have no track record at all. Do support and patronize these programs. Pass the word on to your friends when you hear of regional film being shown since these showings suffer the greatest from lack of money for publicity.

The film experience is not even close to being on the way out and in the Portland area it may be only beginning. I look forward to seeing many more documentaries, shorts, and features being produced in the area in the coming years which are seen by larger audiences and which find a greater degree of success and are a credit to the Portland community. If we all help, we can all benefit by making Portland one of the alternatives to Hollywood.

—Will Vinton



(Will Vinton is creator of "Closed Mondays" and "Gone for a Better Deal," director of photography "The Circle", producer-filmmaker at Odyssey productions and partner of Lighthouse Productions. He won two Golden Eagle awards in a national film competition in Washington, D.C. in 1974.)



## NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS SERVICE

Like many other neighborhood associations, the Boise Citizens Improvement Committee is concerned with the level of crime in their neighborhood. One solution they do not want, however, is any drastic increase in the level of the police present in their community. They propose, instead, that local citizens be utilized to monitor crime in the area in cooperation with the police. James Loving, chairperson of the Committee, also voiced approval of a proposal by Captain Norm Ryder of the North Precinct that area associations help to form a Citizens Planning Committee to regulate station operations.

The Committee's last meeting featured, among other things, a speaker arguing against the proposed merger of PP&L and PGE. The next meeting, Nov. 26, will feature elections for many Committee offices, including the chairpersonship. Anyone interested should call the Boise Neighborhood Development Office at 288-6271. The meeting will take place at the office, 4000 N. Mississippi.

Criminally fast and noisy traffic is South Tabor's pet peeve, and their last meeting made a healthy start toward meeting the problem. With the help of representatives from the City Engineer's office, the group evolved the following proposals to meet the traffic problem: a four-way stop sign at SE 67 and Holgate; parking restrictions on 75 and 77-81 Streets off Division; and cul-de-sacs on some residential streets to discourage through traffic. A police department representative told those present how they can report and stop noisy speedsters.

Mayor Neil Goldschmidt will address the group's next meeting Nov. 12 at Youngson School, 2704 SE 71st.

Last week saw the birth of the Inner Southeast Neighborhood Association, to be composed of Buckman, Brooklyn, Hosford-Abernathy, Kerns, Richmond, Sellwood-Moreland and Sunnyside. The purpose: to do area-wide planning and to work cooperatively to obtain Community Development funds to carry their plans out. (The group's emphasis, most of those involved agree, will be on housing rehabilitation.) The proposal has yet to be approved by all the participating associations (the Hosford-Abernathy Neighborhood Development Association has already done so), but the concept seems a welcome change from the "squeaky-wheels-get-the-grease" philosophy of Connie McCready's office, as portrayed in last week's column.

Monday, Nov. 4, the North Portland Citizens Committee will hold its next meeting at Beach School, 1710 N. Humboldt Street. Meanwhile, NPCC reminds low-income working parents that their daycare program for children 6 to 12 operates from 7 to 9 am, and from 2 to 6 pm daily. Children are transported to facilities at Portsmouth Middle School. Fees are figured on a sliding scale based on the parent's income. For further information call Terry Faris at 283-5373.

The long-awaited North Portland Environmental Report is out! Watch for details in next week's paper.

Last week the Richmond Neighborhood Association hosted a debate on ballot measure No. 54 between Terry Jacobson of Pacific Gas & Electric Corp. and Del Bucknum of the Consumer Power League. The results: those who came with closed minds had their biases reinforced, and those who didn't left more confused than ever.

Jacobson's principal contribution to the debate on whether Portland should purchase its gas and electric utilities was the fact that he used to play basketball at Richmond High (where the debate took place) and that many PGE employees would refuse to work for a government agency. He did bring a tape and slide show that was considerably more eloquent, if not much more informative. It contained considerable invective to the effect that commissioner Francis Ivancie, "both major newspapers," TV station KATU, radio station KYXI, and "most of the people of Portland" seemed satisfied with the status quo and were against the merger. However, a "small, vocal minority" were agitating for a takeover on the basis of a myth that utility rates could be lowered as a result. On the contrary, they said, after paying \$291 million for the companies and other necessary extras, customers could expect a 64% rate increase. Moreover, there was a "chance" that without PGE, its "expertise" and its vast wealth of fuel and hydroelectric power sources, there might be power outages in Portland. "Do you want to risk being left in the dark?" the film asked in true Halloween fashion.

Bucknum's delivery was considerably less polished; in fact, it jumped from one subject to another and was quite difficult to follow. Electricity rates in Portland are 110% higher than the average rates of eight neighboring municipally-owned companies. The money PGE is spending on nuclear and coal-fired generators is totally unnecessary because the Bonneville Power Administration is using less than forty per cent of its expected capacity. Finally, a municipally-owned company would not have to pay money for taxes, advertising or lobbying. As to the charge that Portland might end up without power, Bucknum sneered, "Who ever heard of a city the size of Portland being unable to obtain power?"

Another guest speaker at the meeting spoke in favor of bringing trolley buses back to Portland. These vehicles, he said, cause no air pollution whatever, and are so quiet that background traffic interferes with noise readings on them. Their acceleration and deceleration is fast and smooth. Their engines have only one moving part, require no maintenance, and are practically indestructible. Last but not least the Seattle fleet of 58 trolley buses uses only \$138 worth of power per day.

Your last chance to speak out on the Northwest Comprehensive Plan will be this Thursday, Nov. 7, at Trinity Church, NW 19th and Everett. Sponsored by the Northwest District Association.

The Portland City Council has delayed for one month consideration of Bible Temple's sharply contested expansion plans. Meanwhile, the last meeting of the Montavilla Association elected a nominating committee for January's elections consisting of three members of Bible Temple and two members of the old Association board. After what went before, this qualifies as peace and love.

# SOUP...

## NUCLEAR POWER COST OVERRUN

USING FIGURES obtained from the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), an environmental group calculated that nuclear energy during the next fifteen years will cost \$100 billion more than the AEC has told the American public.

David Comey, representing Businessmen for the Public Interest, said the AEC bases its cost projection on an assumption that the reactors will operate at 80% of their capacity. Comey says that AEC's own figures show that atomic reactors currently in operation operate at only 50-60% capacity.

Problems developing last summer reveal that atomic reactors running at more than 60% capacity tend to develop leaks and corrosion. After finding nuclear wastes leaking from an undisclosed number of atomic power plants, the AEC ordered 21 of the country's fifty nuclear power plants shut down.

Comey also noted that despite the fact that nuclear reactors begin to show wear-and-tear and decreased performances after three years of operation, the AEC has licensed commercial reactors to operate for forty years.

The AEC has not contested Comey's projections but stands by its plans to increase atomic power's share of electricity output by 1990 from 6% to 40%.

—LNS

## ACID RAIN

RAIN WATER falling on Northeastern regions of the United States, and on Europe's North and Baltic Sea regions, has increased in acidity 100 to 1000 times in the last twenty years. The acidity in the rain has been compared to Pepsi-Cola, and in isolated cases, to that of lemon juice. Independent studies done by American and Swedish scientists show the rain is altering the acid content of the soil, stunting plant life, and corroding objects such as buildings and automobiles.

According to *Environment* magazine, the acid rain is due to air pollution by sulfuric and nitric oxide gases. Current pollution control devices let these gases escape into the atmosphere, while eliminating particles like fly-ash and cement dust, which used to neutralize the acid.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) said that there are devices to control acid gases, but that only power plants, incinerators, and other major acid producers are required to use them. Acid-gas polluters such as oil refiners, steel plants, and autos—the major source of nitric oxides—don't have neutralizing pollution control devices.

Due to prevailing weather patterns, the problem now seems to be located primarily in Scandinavia and the East coast of the United States. But there are indications that the problem is rapidly becoming widespread. Meanwhile, in the affected areas it isn't advisable to drink pure rain water—the rain currently falling in those areas is 5 to 500 times as acidic as the level considered safe by the EPA.

—LNS

## FAMILY CIRCUS AND A FILM

TUESDAY, NOV. 5 at Arbuckle Flat, Family Circus will sponsor an evening of good old-fashioned political entertainment: the theme—unions. Featured will be union songs from the good old days, & a Family Circus skit about the united farm workers. A documentary film entitled *Wildcat at Mead* will also be shown. The film is about a successful strike by black workers in Atlanta. Time and place: Tuesday Nov. 5, 9 p.m., Arbuckle Flat, The Contact Center.

ON WEDNESDAY NIGHT, October 30, Hortensia Allende spoke to perhaps 1200 people at Portland State University. More than one year after the military coup which ended the freely-elected Popular Unity government and killed her husband, President Salvador Allende, "all of Chile remains a jail" she told us. But Mrs. Allende's speech was not a requiem for her country and her people. Instead she urged us to take action and assured us that we are not impotent.

Mrs. Allende hasn't got the riveting force that we usually expect in a political leader. She reads carefully from prepared notes, sometimes fumbling for her place, and withdraws from the microphone while her words are translated from Spanish to English. Yet like many other women who are catapulted into prominence by the violent histories of their countries, Mrs. Allende represents her people well, with a quiet, dignified forcefulness of her own.

She began with a long quotation from Allende's speech to the United Nations in December, 1972. Recent public revelations confirm Allende's accusations against the United States government, and give his words the weight of prophecy fulfilled. The actions of Kissinger's Committee of 40 and the CIA made the coup possible and inevitable. In his speech Allende described the US-imposed blockade which was choking Chile's commerce and trade, severing its access to international aid, and isolating Chile from the world. He compared the thirty

# ALLENDE IN PORTLAND

million dollars which such companies as ITT and Kennecott Copper originally invested in Chile to the four thousand million dollars in profits which these corporations had wrenched from the Chilean workers and land. It is not an open aggression, Allende had said, so it is difficult to understand. It is subterranean and indirect, but no less damaging because of that.

In September 1973 US interference in Chilean politics came out of the shadows, Mrs. Allende told us, because Chile's experiment was becoming a model for how other Latin American countries could change into free socialist nations. Unidad Popular was destroyed not because it was a failure but because it was a success. "The US

Photo/Nance



hopes that Chile's fate will neutralize Cuba's example." Mrs. Allende believes that in spite of its difficulties the Popular Unity's "peaceful road to socialism" was correct, because it was organic to Chilean history. It is the fascist junta which violates Chile's constitution and democratic tradition, imposing on the people a terrible reality unknown to them before.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7