

# BFFS Scotland Newsletter

The British Federation of Film Societies Scotland's twice yearly update  
for and about Film Societies & Community Cinemas throughout Scotland

Autumn 2007

## Made to Measure

BFFS Scotland wants to find out just how huge the film society audience in Scotland is. We know we have shed loads of film societies North of the Border and that you all have lots of enthusiastic members but we have never formally measured the size of that audience.

Then when Filmbank changed the terms of their commercial license last year they added a requirement that you complete a Commercial Returns License for each film hired which includes several questions about the number, type and price of tickets sold.

So we at BFFS Scotland are asking that when you submit your Commercial Returns License to Filmbank you also copy us in. If you're sending your returns by email please copy your message to [info@bffsscotland.co.uk](mailto:info@bffsscotland.co.uk), if you are posting your returns please send a copy to Ian Kerr, BFFS Scotland, 7 Dundas Street, Bo' Ness, EH51 0DF

We hope that this information will allow us to prove the incredible impact that film societies in Scotland have and how crucial a part of the exhibition network they are.

This will be of particular interest to funders, partner organizations and various other bodies who support community cinema in Scotland.

## Autumn Event 2007

Sunday 25th November 2007 is the date you should be putting into your diaries for the BFFS Scotland Autumn Event. As always, there will be a great selection of films, a free lunch and an opportunity to meet the BFFS Scotland committee and members of film societies across Scotland.

Once again we will be taking over the Glasgow Film Theatre. Registration opens at 10am with the first set of films beginning at 10:30. Film titles are still to be confirmed but are expected to include some or all of: Wes Anderson's *The Darjeeling Limited*; Ron Howard's incredible documentary, *In The Shadow of the Moon*; acclaimed second world war drama, *The Counterfeiters*; low budget surprise hit of the festival circuit, *Once*; stark unconventional biopic *Into the Wild*, directed by Sean Penn. Alongside these there will be a surprise movie and the chance to see any of the Italian Film Festival films playing at GFT the same night for free! It's a bargain!

Full details of the event will be sent your way in the form of posters, flyers and an email to all. Also keep an eye on the BFFS Scotland website, [bffsscotland.co.uk](http://bffsscotland.co.uk), where you'll find further information as and when it's released. See you there!



## Poppy Scotland

Poppy Scotland, the charity that runs the Scottish Poppy Appeal, have prepared a video to give a better understanding of the modern purpose of this Appeal. Normally people associate veterans with the First and Second World War. Poppy Scotland want to show the public how relevant their work remains today. The video is 7.5 minutes long and features work with Scottish veterans from modern conflicts such as Iraq and Afghanistan. The purpose is to show the public who veterans are, the issues they face and how sometimes families are left behind. Poppy Scotland helps veterans and their families in

Scotland and are keen that the video be featured by film societies particularly around the time of Remembrance Sunday, the 11th of November. They would be very grateful for any



suitable showing especially if it ties in with films you may already be screening. The film can be viewed here: <http://www.allcallsigns.org/images/poppyfinal.wmv> and you can contact Poppy Scotland directly to request a copy or for further information by emailing: [events@poppyscotland.org.uk](mailto:events@poppyscotland.org.uk)

## Spring Event 2007 - Reactions and Audience Reaction Index

The Spring Event held at Glasgow Film Theatre Hall on Sunday 6th May was, as always, a great opportunity to see some fantastic films and catch up with friends from film societies across Scotland.

The current committee for BFFS Scotland was re-elected at the AGM after the morning screenings. Both at the AGM and during the workshop in the afternoon, all were able to contribute to a stimulating discussion of your needs as film societies and community cinemas in a changing environment. We were pleased to be joined by Jennifer Armitage from Scottish Screen who will, with her colleagues, be feeding your ideas back to the ongoing discussions about Creative Scotland, the organization that will succeed Scottish Screen (and the other arts bodies in Scotland) in the near future. We were lucky to have *Stolen*, another great film from DocSpace which was very well received. In fact, nearly all of the films received excellent audience ratings. Only the Oscar nominated *Half Nelson* received a luke-warm reaction.

Film Title	Rating					Audience Reaction	
	A (100%)	B (75%)	C (50%)	D (25%)	E (0%)	Total	Index
Half Nelson	1	2	6	3	1	13	48.0
The Science of Sleep	2	2	1	0	0	5	80.0
Notes on a Scandal	5	8	0	0	0	13	84.6
Volter	4	3	0	0	0	7	89.2
Stolen - DocSpace	3	3	1	0	0	7	82.1



<http://www.bffsscotland.co.uk>

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## Life in the DVD Afterlife:

### Incident at Loch Ness

Bizarrely ignored by UK distributors 2004's excellent Incident at Loch Ness has been something you can only see at rare festival or special screenings. Now on Region 1 DVD you can see this fantastically funny and gently cynical mockumentary about a filmmaker's search for the Loch Ness monster. Successful screenwriter Zak Penn's low budget directorial debut is an absolute delight full of quirky cameos and beautifully silly playing from Herzog. Laughs are a plenty, Scotland retains its dignity and Nessie is of course a star. Fabulous!

*"When I was young, the film societies at colleges were really first-run art houses. That almost was the only place you could see movies, especially outside of New York or L.A. I used to tour them all the time with Divine - that's how this started, by doing campus appearances that would sometimes almost be riots when Divine would come out. I remember them as being really exciting."*

- John Waters talks to LA City Beat (<http://www.lacitybeat.com/>) about how film societies influenced his one man show and documentary, *This Filthy World*, 11/10/2007

## Brand New Retro

Park Circus Films have a new batch of releases available for hire by film societies including some stunning classics ripe for rediscovery on the big screen. It's a Wonderful Life is THE Christmas film and will be available to book from 14th December - just in time for the festive season; and 2008 kicks off with a Hitchcock double whammy - The Lady Vanishes appears in January and The 39 Steps following in April. All releases are on new 35mm prints. Also released is a new digital print of the multiple Oscar-winning All About Eve.

## Forthcoming Film Festivals:

The longest running mountain film festival in the UK, the **Dundee Mountain Film Festival** is in its 25th year. It runs from 21st-24th November, for details see: <http://www.dundee-mountain-film.org.uk/>

A fantastic **Scottish Film Weekend** will be in Aberdeen on 24th & 25th November. Two days of the best of Scottish Film plus socialising galore! More info at: <http://www.heartlandfilmsociety.org.uk/Special.html>

**Italian Film Festival UK 2007** runs from 16th November until 2nd December in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, Aberdeen, London, Manchester and Cardiff. A mini-festival, **Signore & Signore**, celebrating the leading ladies of Italian Cinema also runs from 27th September until 29th November at Glasgow Film Theatre, Edinburgh Filmhouse and Riverside Studios, London. Full details at: <http://www.italianfilmfestival.org.uk/>

**Fort William Mountain Film Festival 2008** will take place from 15th to 23rd February and are currently accepting entries from filmmakers, info at: <http://www.mountainfestival.co.uk/>

If you have any news, information, questions or particularly if you are having any problems with Filmbank then please contact us:

Email:  
[info@bffsscotland.co.uk](mailto:info@bffsscotland.co.uk)

Or write to:  
Ian Kerr  
BFFS Scotland  
7 Dundas Street  
Bo'ness, EH51 0DF

# The best thing about my film society is...

1) **Name:** Joan MacPherson

2) **Film Society:** Strathendrick Film Society

3) **I first got involved in film societies/community cinemas when...**

Balfron got a new school with a nice theatre. I love getting 'lost' in a film and would travel to see foreign films on my own though our nearest cinema is 20 miles away, and the bus service is poor and uncomfortable. I had often organised group trips to see box office hits and knew there were people in the village who enjoyed world cinema. There had been a film society in Balfron in the 1950's and I had often thought it would be great if it was still going. Anyone who has been on a community council for 9 years grows a community outlook and kind of knows what's likely to be supported. So I just put a few words to that effect in the local press asking for anyone interested to come to a meeting. From there we set up a committee and here we are today with 220 members.

4) **My official role in Strathendrick Film Society is...**

Media secretary but I have more fun just as a committee member and love it when we have ideas that give us and the members a bit of a laugh.

5) **When I'm not watching films I can mostly be found...**

On the internet e-baying, buying dvd's of world cinema or researching outings and holidays for the Third Age Group Strathendrick ([www.tagstrathendrick.org](http://www.tagstrathendrick.org)) for which I'm secretary I write a local news column for the Milngavie and Bearsden Herald and pass it to the local free sheets and other local papers. I am on the Central Scotland Co-op committee and have the pleasure of helping distribute money through their community dividend and work with them promoting fair trade and co-operative principles.

6) **Most unique screening experience?**

Was right after a film, listening to a traumatised friend tell how the short film 'The Long Span' had a devastating effect on her, it reminded her of the day her life was ruined. Her father was involved with constructing the Forth Roadbridge, and when the Queen came to open it, his family were invited to the event. Her school teacher had an obsession about her class always winning the Best Attendance Prize every year. Because, with permission from the headmistress, my friend was off school that one day, another teacher's class won the best attendance prize that year. From that day on my friend's teacher hated her. My friend was so stressed at school she could not concentrate in class. She went from almost top to nearly bottom of the class. Her parents and five elder brothers and sisters told her she was stupid. She could not explain why she was having problems. Her parents were ashamed that she did not pass the 11+ and was the first in the family not to get into high school, and her future, as things were then, was sealed. A disappointment to her parents she never got to feel that anyone was proud of her. Now in her 50's she has worked at night school, gained several qualifications but most importantly, she is a foster parent instilling confidence in youngsters who have had a hard time. Of course this could just be a draft for a film!!

7) **What was the first film you remember seeing?**

Old Yeller in the Odeon Motherwell, I cried my eyes out. I had seen films before this but cannot remember the events. I often went to the pictures with Margaret Mooney a family friend who took me out a lot. I remember I was allowed to close my eyes and bury my face on her lap if I was frightened or did not want to see the sad bits of any film.

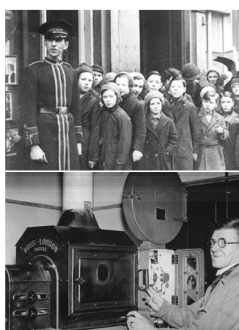
8) **And the most recent?**

'Open Hearts' last night. Another e-bay find.

9) **The best thing about my film society is...**

Enjoying a film in company, others laughing at the same time and members saying I'm so glad I came tonight, I would never have gone to see that if it had not been on here. Tea and coffee afterwards gives members a chance to mix, blether and give feedback to the committee. . . that can also lead to other ideas.

**The Strathendrick Film Society 2007/2008 season is underway and includes a diverse selection of films including Volver, The Train, Spirited Away, The History Boys and Black Gold, a timely documentary on the global coffee industry. Full information can be found on the Strathendrick Film Society website: <http://www.film-society.org>**



bffsscotland.co.uk recommends:  
**Scottish Screen Archive**  
<http://www.scottishscreen.com/>

The housing and preservation of Scottish Screen's extensive collection of films made in and about Scotland recently moved to the National Library of Scotland but the Archive section of the Scottish Screen website, which is also the catalogue for the access collection, remains a fantastic resource. The site houses over 300 film clips from a weird and wonderful selection that covers all aspects of Scottish life. Most films are available to hire from the Archive for non-commercial screenings so if you're looking for a quirky addition to your programme or a locally relevant short to compliment one of your main features this is an excellent place to look.

## Cultural Hubs in Creative Scotland

Scottish Screen, who provide significant financial support for BFFS Scotland, are currently undergoing structural change and will shortly be combining with the Scottish Arts Council to form a single Scottish arts body to be known as Creative Scotland. All of the current activities of Scottish Screen will be taken over by this new body and activities are underway at the moment to find the most efficient way in which to take this forward. Although this will not have any immediate effect on BFFS Scotland or any film societies, community cinemas and community arts organisations, there will be a long term effect on the way in which services, support and funding may be rolled out.

Anne Bonar has just been appointed as the Transition Director for Creative Scotland and regular Open Meetings to discuss the future of the organisation with interested organisations and individuals (see Sidebar for details of the November dates). Scottish Screen and related cinema and arts organisations across Scotland are also discussing plans for proposed "Cultural Hubs". The idea of which would be to separate various aspects of the screen industries in Scotland into thematic and/or geographic Hubs which would condense expertise so that anyone wanting to receive advice, support, funding or communication with similar organisations and/or individuals could do so through the relevant Hub. There may, for example, be Hubs for production, community cinema, festivals or for geographic areas such as the Highlands & Islands although at the August 2007 presentations Scottish Screen was expecting that at the end of the process approximately 6 Hubs would be formed.

The exact type and locations of Hubs are still very much under discussion but it is likely that BFFS Scotland will be involved in at least one of the Hubs and will most likely work with whichever Hub becomes the focus for community and rural cinema exhibition to continue our commitment to supporting community cinema in Scotland. Once more is known about the Hubs and BFFS Scotland's role we will of course let you know but for now we wanted to bring both the formation of Creative Scotland and the emerging Hubs to your attention. Both elements of the restructuring of the arts in Scotland are likely to start becoming



more visible in the next 12-18 months and at this point the Hubs may have a more direct impact on your film society, community cinema or local arts group as there may be increased access to expertise and funding for special projects, new ongoing activities and the building of new relationship with relevant partner organisations who may also work with your local or most relevant Hub.

So, as Scottish Screen take stock now is also the perfect time for your organisation to think about what you are doing with your film society or community cinema at the moment and how you would like to extend or change that in the coming 2 to 5 years so that you can provide an even better service to your members, ticket buyers and local community. BFFS Scotland would be very interested to hear and support any such ideas you may have as part of our own planning for the next few years which will be very different but hold a great deal of exciting opportunities for us all.

Scottish Screen are continuing to undertake

### Scottish Screen Open Meetings - November 2007

Scottish Screen are holding a series of open meetings throughout the country in November reporting back on all aspects of our work over the past year and looking forward to the next 12 months and beyond. There will be plenty of opportunity to find out more about Scottish Screen and the proposed new body, Creative Scotland, which will take on responsibility for the development of the arts and creative and screen industries over the next two years. There'll be time for networking over lunch at the end of each meeting.

#### Aberdeen - Tuesday 20 November

Venue: Aberdeen University - Linklater Room  
Time: 12 noon  
Presentation and lunch  
RSVP: [rsvpaberdeen@scottishscreen.com](mailto:rsvpaberdeen@scottishscreen.com)

#### Glasgow - Wednesday 21 November

Venue: CCA, Sauchiehall Street  
Time: 12 noon  
Presentation and lunch  
RSVP: [rsvpglasgow@scottishscreen.com](mailto:rsvpglasgow@scottishscreen.com)

#### Edinburgh - Thursday 22 November

Venue: Sheraton Hotel  
Time: 12 noon  
Presentation and lunch  
RSVP: [rsvpedinburgh@scottishscreen.com](mailto:rsvpedinburgh@scottishscreen.com)

#### Inverness - Monday 26 November

Venue: Columba Hotel  
Time: 11.30am  
Presentation and lunch  
RSVP: [rsvpinverness@scottishscreen.com](mailto:rsvpinverness@scottishscreen.com)

#### Dundee - Thursday 29 November

Venue: DCA  
Time: 11.45am  
Presentation and lunch  
RSVP: [rsvpdundee@scottishscreen.com](mailto:rsvpdundee@scottishscreen.com)

### Are You On the Map?

BFFS Scotland has set up a Google Map showing all the film societies in Scotland. It is available to view (and locate your nearest film society neighbours) via the BFFS Scotland wiki which is located at: <http://bffsscotland.pbwiki.com/> Anyone can edit the wiki, add details about their film society and contribute to this developing community resource which also includes Audience Reaction charts from the last few years' BFFS Scotland events. To add information simply register or log in as a guest using the password: **b44scotland**. For more information email: [info@bffsscotland.co.uk](mailto:info@bffsscotland.co.uk)

### Is There Anything You Want To See on the Website?

BFFS Scotland is currently reassessing the main website, [bffsscotland.co.uk](http://bffsscotland.co.uk), and looking at how to build up our presence on services like Facebook, Flickr and YouTube. If you are interested in helping us with changes to the website or would like to be involved with building the BFFS Scotland Community with these newer social networking sites then we'd love to hear from you. Email us (see above) or call Nicola on 0131 667 4776.



### BFFS National News

BFFS has recently published the results of a comprehensive survey of film societies and community cinema. The survey carried out by Jim Barratt the BFFS Advice and Support consultant, provides a key update on a sector of significant cultural importance to the UK - that of not-for-profit community cinema. The full 2007 Survey Report can be downloaded at: <http://www.bffs.org.uk/>

The BFFS National Conference for Film Societies and Community Cinemas will take place on Saturday 1st December 2007 at the Showroom Cinema, Sheffield. The conference is the only national event dedicated to the needs and interests of film societies and not-for-profit community cinemas. The day will include: facilitated networking; training and information sessions; screenings of hard-to-access cinema gems available from 2008. Ticket prices and further details are on the BFFS website.

The BFFS Block Booking Scheme is now up and running with films for the 2007/8 season including: Atash, Be With Me, Beyond Hatred, China Blue, The Guernica Children, Half Nelson, KZ, London to Brighton, Lost Embrace, Tony Takitani, Unknown White Male. Registration forms can be obtained from the BFFS office in Sheffield.

# BFFS Scotland Newsletter

**Do you have news for the next edition of the BFFS Scotland Newsletter? Do you want your programme to be put on the website? Do you have information or ideas you would like to share with other film societies on the BFFS Scotland Wiki? Email us: [info@bffsscotland.co.uk](mailto:info@bffsscotland.co.uk)**

## Rural Cinema North Report

In 2005, responding to the Rural Cinema Development Scheme set up by Scottish Screen, Inverness-based arts agency HI~Arts linked up with Eden Court Theatre, and North East Arts Touring to establish the Rural Cinema North project, for a pilot period of two years. The aim was to promote Cinema as an art form across Argyll, the Highlands and Islands, and the North East, making a wider range of films accessible to rural communities. The challenge was to seek out those who wished to screen films in their community, but who lacked the specific experience or support to do so. The RCN project, then, was most successful as an enabler, rather than instigator, of local community film activity such as:

**VirtualFilmClub.org.uk** - A permanent information resource for anyone wishing to set up DVD screenings in their community, the website launched early in 2006 and was still receiving between 5-10 enquiries per month 18 months later. These ranged from community groups in the project area requesting further advice or assistance, to overseas programmers and academics researching Scottish films. One recent enquiry came from a group in Trinidad and Tobago!

**Mull Film Club** - one of several societies nurtured by RCN; An Tobar Arts Centre in Tobermory wished to host a film club, but did not have time to run it directly. With the help of BFFS Scotland (whose support was invaluable throughout the two year pilot) I set up a 'taster' screening and spoke to individuals wishing to be involved in running regular screenings. BFFS Scotland lent equipment longer term, whilst I continued to offer advice by email, and made the initial film bookings on the society's behalf.

**Nairn Arts Festival** - RCN booked 6 silent 16mm Charlie Chaplin films for a special screening with live piano accompaniment. RCN found prints, projectionists and equipment for several similar one-off events, such as Cowalfest, **Cinema China in the Highlands, This Time This Place (Resolis Community Arts)** and **Fort William Mountain Film Festival**.

**Fraserburgh Junior Arts Society** - FJAS wished to launch their projection equipment, paid for by a long-term fundraising campaign. The Scottish Screen lottery-funded short film *Born to Run* had recently been shot in the town, and the director wished to screen it to cast, crew and families. RCN programmed an evening of locally made community work, stretching back over 15 years and culminating in the premiere of the new film.

Though my work with Rural Cinema North has now come to a close, plans are being drawn together for a national rural support network. I hope that in future community groups in non-urban areas across the whole of Scotland will benefit from the work of this pilot project.

- Matt Lloyd, RCN Project Coordinator Autumn 2007

## Your Thoughts Here?

Unfortunately we have not yet found a new editor for this wonderful publication. Not only is it fun to collate and edit but the software we use (Scribus) is free and the templates pretty simple to use. There is a how-to guide available for any possible Newsletter Editor and if you really want to show off you can show your pals the fact that something you edit and publish goes directly to at least 400 representatives of Film Societies, Community Cinemas and arts organisations across Scotland as well as a copy remaining preserved in the National Library of Scotland. If you would like to chat about contributing to the Newsletter or think you could be our next Editor then please call Nicola (the current editor) on: 0131 667 4776.

**Perks:** An amazing item for your portfolio/CV/ego, some development of your already sharp word processing and desk top publishing skills, an immense amount of glory.

**Commitment:** Around a week of evenings or a couple of weekends for each issue. There are two issues a year. Cleverly timed emails and planning can cut down the amount of time it takes to prepare the newsletter and printing arrangements are flexible.

## Scottish Film Societies' News & Forthcoming Attractions

**Heartland Film Society** is holding a bumper Scottish Film Weekend and, as well as the eclectic film programme, film and supper on the Saturday sounds like an utterly bargainous night! Full details of the weekend on the Heartland website: <http://www.heartlandfilmsociety.org/Special.html>

**Dunbar Film Society** are, for their festive screening, showing Tim Burton's *Nightmare Before Christmas* on 15th December. Be there or be an unseasonal pumpkin

**Barony Film Society** are also going festive on 15th December with a fluffy animal themed family-friendly double bill of *March of the Penguins* and *Wallace & Gromit: Curse of the Were Rabbit*.

**Edinburgh University Film Society** will be closing their autumn season with a Mystery Movie on 25th November, for a wee hint of what the film is, quiz the hosts at their monthly film quiz at the Cameo cinema, on 7th November.

More sparkly fare is to be had over at **Shetland Film Club** who will be playing luvvy-tastic *A Prairie Home Companion* on 15th November and *Dreamgirls* on 13th December.

Last but not least **Pentlands Film Society** are showing *China Blue* on 16th November.

## STOP PRESS: New Film Societies this Issue...

We would like to welcome all the new film societies just getting started and new to us this issue...

**Penicuik Film Society** is already up and running in the town hall. The new film society at **Queen Margaret University**, Edinburgh, had their first screening on 31st October. And a group of film fans in Fairmount are currently working on setting up a film society in **Dunfirmline**.

We also know that some Fifers are thinking about setting up a film club too. Watch this space.

**Well done and good luck to all our new film societies!**

## Forthcoming ICO Screening Days

The Independent Cinema Office, who supply programming support for indepent cinemas including BFFS Scotland members, have announced their Autumn 2007 and Spring 2008 screening days.

**November 2007** - The next event will be held from the 3rd - 5th November 2007 at the Broadway Cinema in Nottingham. Registration is now open. If you are a paid up member of BFFS Scotland/BFFS you can book your place via the ICO website.

**Spring 2008** - The Event will take place from 8th - 10th March 2008 at the BFI Southbank, London (formerly known as the National Film Theatre).

More information on all ICO events can be found on their website: <http://www.independentcinemaoffice.org.uk/>

# Published by Nicola Osborne for BFFS Scotland

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