



# SWINDON FILM SOCIETY

*... for the best in world cinema*

## ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17 SEASON

### Introduction

Our films were well attended last season and we were really pleased with the contribution made by the Wyvern staff and volunteers. The new screen at the Arts Centre was an added bonus.

The 2017-18 season, our 70th anniversary, again contains films which are generally lighter and shorter than those shown in recent seasons. Others depict the actions of people caught up in contemporary political events. We welcome any comments and suggestions for future screenings.

### Finance

*These notes should be read in conjunction with the annual financial accounts which have been audited.*

In the season 2016/17 the Film Society made a loss of £1,544. Here is the breakdown of Society activities:

	INCOME	EXPENDITURE	PROFIT/LOSS
SFS at the Arts Centre	7,257	8,881	(1,624)
New College Films	766	761	5
Wroughton Cinema	792	733	59
Bank Interest Received	16		16
	8,831	10,375	(1,544)

The loss was made up two things: £950 less income from membership fees (£775 less) and ticket sales (£175 less), and some greater expenses:

For many years Roger Maisey audited our accounts without charging. As he has retired from this much appreciated voluntary work, we paid £240 to have them done by a firm. We spent more money on buying DVDs to sample films for the season, and we paid more for our publicity material. Other costs crept up – for instance, we now have a pull-up banner in the foyer at the Wyvern to publicise the Film Society! As you know, after much debate and trying out various cheaper venues, we've

decided to stay at the Arts Centre and put up the fees for this season, which we hope will bring us back into breaking even.

The society is still very healthy financially: we have a Coventry Building Society savings account with £6,562 in it, and ended the season with £3,376 in the current account. This money has accumulated over the years, and at the moment there are no plans to use it.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE FINAL ACCOUNTS SHOW A SMALLER LOSS – THIS IS WHY:

For some years we have had an accumulated debt owing of £863, which is from film licence fees which the distributors never asked for. The debt had to be kept on the books to show the Society's good faith in wishing to pay licence fees, as this is a legal requirement. After a certain number of years, it is permitted to "write in" such a debt, on the grounds that no-one is pursuing it. I have decided to get rid of this anomaly, so this year in the final, audited accounts our loss will show as less than it really is:

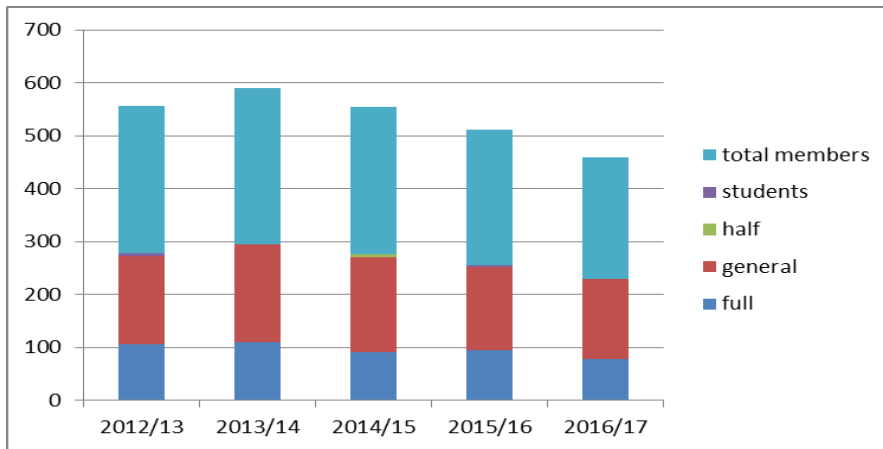
#### FINAL ACCOUNTS

Real amount spent on licence fees this year:	1,426
Old debt written in:	(863)
Adjusted amount which will show as licence fees this year:	563
Real trading loss this year:	1,544
Final Accounts loss shown as:	681

## Membership

SFS membership dropped in 2016/17 to a total of 230 members: 78 full and committee members and 152 general/student members. This compares with 256 members in 2015/16 and an average of 267 over the last five years.

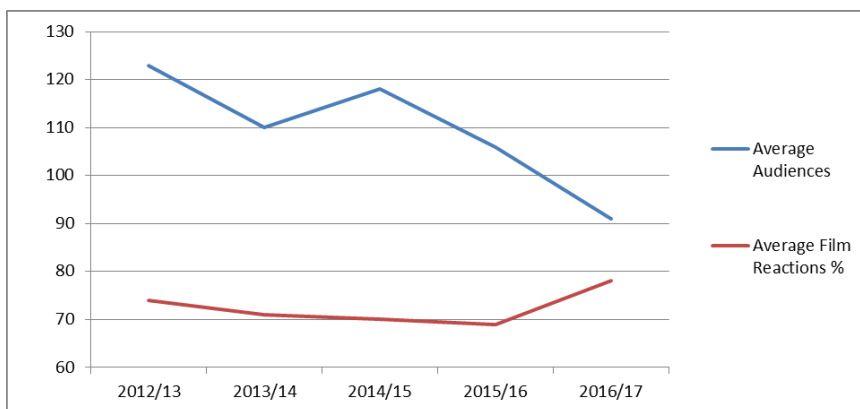
59 members (26%) joined the Society for the first time in 2016/17. The core membership remains very loyal: 106 people (46%) have been members for 5 years or more and 59 people (26%) have been members for 10 years or more.



## Film Audiences and Reactions

Audiences were also down compared with last year with an average attendance of 92. The highest attended film was Marshland (146) the first film of the new year, and the lowest was Son of Saul (51). The Arts Centre programme was supplemented by two films shown at the Phoenix Theatre in New College: I Daniel Blake and Queen of Katwe.

Average audience reactions were 78%, which is the highest score in the last 5 years. The highest scoring film, with a very strong 93%, was I Daniel Blake, and Son of Saul was the lowest rated with 66%.



Film	Attendance	Score %
Tangerines	93	80
Mustang	98	76
The Way He Looks	88	69

Theeb	94	75
Irrational Man	90	76
The Broken Circle Breakdown	84	86
Babette's Feast	94	87
Marshland	146	79
Our Little Sister	99	77
The Crow's Egg	94	82
I Daniel Blake	127	93
Rams	94	72
The Second Mother	81	69
Queen of Katwe	43	86
Son of Saul	51	66
Marguerite	97	74
<b>Average</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>78</b>

## Marketing and Advertising

Besides the creation and distribution of our traditional advertising material for the SFS, with the brochure and posters, and in an effort to boost our audience numbers, we continuously look for new ways to make the Society a little more visible in Swindon and surrounding areas.

We include regular articles and adverts in paper media (Swindon Advertiser, The Handy Mag, Swindon Link or Wyvern brochure), and now also try and use the online and social media routes further. We are presently mentioned on a number of local websites (The Swindonian, Total Guide to Swindon, Swindon Web, Wyvern Theatre) as well as various social media (you should see regular publications not only on our own Facebook page, but also on The Swindonian page). The Swindonian in particular should receive a special mention as their team has proven very supportive of the Society, and have largely contributed to our publicity towards web and social media users. Lately, they have even taken on mentioning us on a Swindon 105.5 radio programme.

Other areas include a presence at the U3A Freshers' Fair every September and a continuous presence in the Wyvern theatre foyer by way of a simple banner display; we have recently given an interview on BBC Wiltshire Radio; possibly also publish a general online presentation/review of the SFS with The Swindonian again. Let's not forget to mention the partnership deal we also agreed with the Spanish tapas restaurant Los Gatos, where our spectators may get 10% off their bill on film nights.

Finally, you may have noticed the complete revamp of our own swindonfilm.org.uk website with a much-improved users' experience, intuitive menus and search capabilities, and user-friendly pages. We already have ideas to improve it further in the coming years....

We believe there is more to do in the new media domains, and we are continuously looking for new ideas, so please do not hesitate to make recommendations to our team if you can think of anything further we could do to promote our Society.

## **Outreach at Wroughton**

Last season 2016-17 was a successful one at Wroughton Ellendune Community Centre.

Films ranged from the animated *Ethel & Ernest*, the comedic and ever-so-slightly crazy *Hunt for the Wilderpeople* to the magnificent *A United Kingdom*.

Audience numbers were good with the exception of *Race*, the story of four-times Olympic gold medal winner Jesse Owens. It was a really worthwhile film that some film-goers judged would be like *Rush*, the story of motor-racing heroes. The men enjoyed that one! I very much enjoyed them both.

During the season, a new manager was appointed who later informed me that she and her staff were ready and willing to show the films independent of SFS. This decision was welcomed by myself and the SFS committee. Wroughton was the last of the village community projects started up by Hans and Barbara Hoffbauer.

The 2017-18 season started in September with minimal cost membership and a suggested £1.00 donation. Two films have been shown, *Their Finest* and *The Time of their Lives*. It was a full house for the latter!

For anyone interested in the Wroughton film season, information is no longer available on the SFS website and now needs to be sought from the Ellendune Community Centre.

## **Next Season 2017/18**

The committee will be considering issues such as improving our publicity particularly with regard to social media. We have a first-class website and Facebook account and are always seeking to improve our visibility around the town. However, the membership will always be informed of developments.

Please do get in touch if there is anything you would like to add in the way of comments and suggestions.

Meanwhile, thank you for your continued support. Sit back and enjoy the new films!

## **Swindon Film Society November 2017**

A member of Cinema for All / British Federation of Film Societies

[swindonfilm.org.uk](http://swindonfilm.org.uk)