

# AMPS

The Association of Motion Picture Sound

## Newsletter No. 3

February 1992

### “STEREO FOR CINEMA AND TV”

#### AMPS Meeting at Pinewood (2.6.91)

AMPS Chairman, Hugh Strain opened the meeting and handed over to Bob Allen to act as question supervisor. The panel of post-production experts comprised Hugh Strain, Bill Rowe, Gerry Humphries, John Ireland, Graham Hartstone and Rob James. There followed good questions and lively discussion.

Production recordists were strongly advised by the panel not to record dialogue in any form of stereo. Problems caused by M and S system of recording dialogue were discussed very fully. This system, considered as mono-compatible, results in poor off-mike quality when not used as stereo.

Other reasons for avoiding stereo dialogue were changes in background noise and audio reorientation causing disturbance to overall continuity of sound.

Not “crossing the line” in sound is as important as not “crossing the line” in picture.

Recording of atmos tracks in stereo is most helpful in post-production. M/S type microphones and M/S recording systems should be avoided for making stereo tracks to be used in productions where the final mix is to be in Dolby stereo.

Crossed pairs were considered okay for use with Dolby, but the panel recommended using two widely spaced cardioids for atmos tracks.

Up and past type FX e.g. cars, should be recorded in mono as should spot FX e.g. typewriters, doors open and close, pots boiling etc.

Crowd tracks and atmos tracks should be recorded with spaced mikes. Trains up and past benefit from stereo recording as the width of the picture usually remains filled with noise of passing carriages after the engine has passed off screen. The interior of moving vehicles is also enhanced by being recorded in stereo.

The desirability of dubbing from clean unused magnetic tracks as done in the U.S.A. was commented on and an in-depth discussion followed. It was agreed that a push should be made to convince UK producers that it should be done here too. Although no proposal was made, the general feeling of the meeting was that some sort of monograph of this meeting should be produced, and that directors, producers and others concerned should be made aware of the requirements for stereo sound. Therefore proper planning at pre-production stage should eliminate the problems encountered during production and post-production.

The full proceedings were recorded on R-DAT by Ken Weston and his roving boom operators.

Report by Bob Allen.

**\*STOP PRESS!\***  
**AMPS Social Event**  
**Friday 13th March**  
**Pinewood-Be there!**  
**See Inside for more..**

### Newsletter “Contributions”

Dear Members, if you have any points to make, bones to pick, or axes to grind, please feel free to send them in ready for inclusion in subsequent newsletters. It is hoped that these newsletters will be informative and interesting and there is nothing more interesting than having your own letter/article/thesis published, so please write in to the following address!

The Editor  
AMPS Newsletter  
Mayflower Film Recording Ltd  
3 Audley Square  
Mayfair W1Y 5DR

### AMPS Now Even Better Value!

Dear Members,  
As AMPS enters its third year, the irritating but unavoidable subject of subscriptions rears its ugly head again.

In these poverty stricken times of recession it has been decided not to rise the annual membership fee, which remains at £30 for full membership of the Association.

However, to encourage prompt payment (remarkably, many members find parting with their money a very difficult and drawn-out process!), a £5 reduction is being offered for renewals received before 30th April 1992. Applying some elementary simultaneous algebraic equations we arrive at the bargain price of £25 - if you pay before 30th April.

We look forward to receiving a deluge of renewals on 29th April 1992!

# AMPS AGM

## Your New Committee

The second AMPS Annual General Meeting was held at Pinewood on Sunday 2nd February 1992 and was moderately well attended considering the early kick-off. It was remarked that the supplies of free coffee and biscuits initially offered as the proverbial "carrot", acted more in the role of a sharp stick to wake bleary-eyed members!

Our Chairman, Hugh Strain, opened the meeting at 10.20 am with a brief summary of the year gone-by and a glance towards the future.... "The past year for our industry has been disastrous and there doesn't seem to be much improvement on the horizon as far as I can see." He then went on to thank various people and places for their voluntary contributions and handed over to Bob Allen for the Treasurer's report.

After detailing the credits and debits, Bob informed us that the current "cash in hand" was approx. £5900 - quite a healthy balance. Chris Munroe then addressed the meeting about the proposed Members Directory.

This is to be developed in conjunction with Kays and will be financed from advertising revenue. Forms are due to be sent out to members for the purpose of compiling this directory.

A ballot was then conducted under the watchful eye of Mr. John Ireland and a number of changes were made to the AMPS Committee. The Committee now comprises:

Hugh Strain (Chairman)  
John Ireland (Vice Chairman)  
Lionel Strutt (Secretary)

### Sweatshirts

Top quality sweatshirts bearing the AMPS logo are now available. When first seen at the AGM, the phrase "selling like hot cakes" came to mind, and stocks have been replenished to cater for the demand at the Social Event where they shall be on sale once more. They come in large and extra large sizes and in a variety of colours (Red, black, white, dark blue, light blue and light grey.) They were kindly organised by Sue and Ivan Sharrock and cost a non-profit-making price of £15.80.

Bob Allen (Treasurer)  
Gerry Humphries (re-elected as Membership Secretary)  
Graham Hartstone (re-elected)  
Chris Munro  
Brian Simmons (re-elected)  
Ken Weston  
Ivan Sharrock  
Les Hodgson  
Alan Paley  
David Crozier (newly elected)  
Robin O'Donoghue (newly elected)  
Eddy Joseph (newly elected)

As outgoing members of the Committee, David Old, Mike Hopkins and Campbell Askew were thanked for their services to the Association.

The meeting then focused its attention on the general state of our industry (if indeed it can still be called an "industry") and the future of AMPS. Among areas considered were approaches to M.P.'s and Euro M.P.'s, incentives /inducements to producers, publicity and advertising for the British Film Industry (there's that word again) and membership of Euro Images - the European Council's investment fund. These subjects were discussed in depth and while the current situation seems pretty dismal, some positive ideas were instigated to provide a glimmer of hope. (The AGM minutes will be available shortly for a full report on these.)

"Any Other Business" rounded up the meeting with some brief topics on AMPS participation in the BAFTA nominations, stereo dialogue recording and links with our trans-Atlantic counterparts. As already mentioned the minutes will be sent out in the very near future.

### Hope on the Horizon?

"Movie-makers are to be given the chance to save Britain's flagging film industry by Chancellor Norman Lamont..." said Britain's biggest tabloid newspaper on Tuesday, February 18, 1992. The Sun said on its money page that the Chancellor was set to unveil "big tax breaks" aimed at luring foreign stars like Jack Nicholson and Madonna to work in Britain, help companies raise cash and encourage

people to invest. How big these "tax breaks" will be and whether they achieve the desired results remains to be seen, but surely it must be a step in the right direction.

The recent AMPS "Film Shows" have attracted large audiences in Theatre 7 at Pinewood. Screenings to date include: "Dances With Wolves", "Thelma and Louise", "The Commitments", and "Mr Johnson". The most recent show, "Cape Fear", was a pre-UK-release preview which left most of the audience in a gibbering state of wild-eyed terror! Due to their success it is proposed that the shows become a regular event!

Whilst Theatre 7 is undoubtedly a superb cinema, it is appreciated that some members have great difficulty in reaching Pinewood. Alternative venues are being looked into and any suggestions concerning which films should be run and the cinema location would be gratefully received. A number of "classics" and "all British" films have already been suggested and endeavours are being made to obtain good quality prints.

The screenings are free and open to all AMPS members and their guests. The next show will be "The Prince of Tides", starring Barbara Streisand and Nick Nolte, on Tuesday 25th February. The film starts at 8 o'clock and seats are available through Gordon Strong at the Theatre 7 booking office, on 0753 656296. Please note that there is no smoking in the auditorium.

## AMPS Social Event

After the overwhelming success of last year the second AMPS annual Social Event will take place at 8 o'clock on Friday 13th March 1992. It will be held at The Pinewood Restaurant, Pinewood Studios and both members and non-members are welcome. The ticket price of £15 includes live music and a disco as well as a delicious buffet. There will be a Tombola and a Quiz, and of course, a bar. Tickets are available now from Graham Hartstone (Pinewood 0753 656301), Gerry Humphreys (Twickenham 081 892 4477), Lionel Strutt (Mayflower 071 493 0016), or by application to the Secretary, AMPS, c/o Mayflower Studios, 3 Audley Square, Mayfair, London W1Y 5DR

Film Shows  
Attract  
Full House!

# Obituary

## Gordon Everett - Production Sound Mixer.

Gordie passed away on 9th June 1991, victim to an aneurysm similar to that which, in 1980, had caused his premature retirement from active film making. Gordon started his career at the age of seventeen with Pathe News until the war intervened, whereupon he enlisted in the R.A.F. and worked on top secret Radar jamming systems. When hostilities ceased, he rejoined the film industry at Cine Industrial, initially in the camera department, later transferring to sound and moving on to Studio 22, servicing the Hammer Horror genre at Bray. After a spell at Merton Park Studios as Assistant Dubbing Editor, Gordon worked for UMP and eventually Sammies, whence he got his first major break as Production Sound Mixer on "The Battle of Britain", directed by Guy Hamilton. He was to work again with Guy, but not before he had built up an enviable list of credits, notably: "Zeppelin", "Waterloo", "The Bluebird", starring Elizabeth Taylor, shot in Russia, and "Omen 1", the first of the cult trilogy. Around this time, I made Gordie's acquaintance and worked on his crew for "The Amazing Mr. Blunden", Lionel Jeffries' second picture as Director on this delightful children's' ghost story.

Gordie wanted the same crew the next time he worked with Guy Hamilton which was the 007 - "Man With The Golden Gun", shot in 1974 in the Far East. Gordie's favourite tippie was Scotch 'with ginger ale, please', and it definitely kept him free of all the oriental gastric nasties, but not from the assassin's bullet! (You have to see the film to know what I mean!). This was Roger Moore's 2nd Bond Movie and Gordon was set to work with him very shortly afterwards on "Wild Geese" before going into "The Spy Who Loved Me" in 1976, which, as I was back on his crew again, was surely one of the high spots of my own career.

In summing up Gordie's role as Head of Department, the adjective which springs immediately to mind is "gentlemanly". Gordie was unfailingly courteous and polite, and demanded no less from his crew. His presence on the floor was quietly authoritative and induced great respect. It was a real pleasure to work for him, since he enjoyed a joke as well as maintaining a highly professional approach to the job. One anecdote: Whilst on location for "Golden Gun", we had to collect FX in the exotic setting of the floating casino in Macao. Miking up a fruit machine, Gordie said to me, "You roll the Nagra, I'll put the dollars in".

With the first coin, the jackpot came up! Exhibiting true professionalism, his face beaming with delight, Gordie never uttered a word until the reverberation of the very last coin had finished echoing round the delivery cup!

After Christmas 1980, Gordon underwent major emergency surgery for an aneurysm which effectively put paid to his operational career in Features. Four years later, following some work with 16mm and video units, he began to suffer further problems with his health and retired to Devon, becoming increasingly frustrated with his encroaching disability. Visitors were warmly welcomed however, and I shall always be grateful that our professional relationship developed into a friendship which lasted throughout his retirement, and I shall miss him immensely. Gordon is survived by his wife Meriel, daughters Melanie and Penny, and brothers Peter and Brian, to all of whom we extend our deepest sympathy. By the time this notice appears, Gordon's ashes will have been scattered in the garden at Pinewood, a fitting place for a man who worked on some of the biggest films to have been made there. It is the family's wish that any donations in memoriam should be made to the A.C.T.T. Benevolent Fund at 111 Wardour Street.

PATRICK HEIGHAM