MORE SHOW BUSINESS

Mr. George Parkes' description of his ventures into the cinema industry as set out in the Dec. 1983 issue of the "Bulletin" brings credit to him for his enterprise in the not always easy entertainment world and for his portrayal of the changes that beset the movie industry, silents to talkies, black and white to color, boom to depression.

Another pioneer of the silent screen on the South Coast was one elderly Teddy Rowe of Shellharbour who, soon after World War I, did a three town circuit each week taking in Shellharbour, Albion Park and Huskisson down at Jervis Bay.

His portable equipment consisted of a hand operated "Pathe" projector illuminated by a mixture of acetylene gas and surgical ether carried in cylinders. There was a halt every twenty minutes while a fresh spool of film was threaded into the machine.

A lad stationed behind the screen followed the action in reverse and operated a variety of gadgets to provide the sound effects. A box containing gravel, broken glass and a few empty jam tins would be violently shaken to simulate anything from a train smash to a shipwreck while a pianist played tunes appropriate to the action on screen, soft and dreamy for a love scene and something loud and wild for a battle.

Teddy transported his assorted gear to Albion Park from his base at Shellharbour in a horse drawn buggy and his visit down to Huskisson entailed journey by train to Bomaderry thence by service car to Jervis Bay.

The programme always ran to a set pattern of a two-reel comedy and a two-reel drama before intermission, followed by three reels of a serial some of which ran for twenty weeks with each weekly episode ending on a note of drama with the heroine trapped in some dreadful predicament but always rescued in the nick of time next week.

Intermission was always a noisy interlude among the young members of the audience and generally with the local policeman marching up and down the aisle boxing ears and booting backsides.

The smell of ether always brings back memories of our old picture show man of over sixty years ago.

—BERT E. WESTON, 7/12/83.

NEW MEMBERS

The Society welcomes as new members Mr. and Mrs. Bill McKay (Austinmer), Mr. Michael Organ (Woonona), Mrs. D. Harrison (Wol­longong), Mr. & Mrs. Parkes (Miranda), Mrs. H. Barham (Figtree), Mrs. S. Hume (Corrimal), Mrs. G. Sellers.

DONATION

The Society gratefully acknowledges the gift from the Bayley family of a large number of books by the late W. A. Bayley for sale at the museum.