

Sales update

Domestically, *Bush Mechanics—The Series* has been licensed to ABC Enterprises for home video. The series has also been licensed to the ABC for its Asia television service, along with *Desert Tracks*, *Copyrites*, *Touring Australia*, *Uluru—An Anangu Story*, *The Real Flying Doctors*, *Land of the Lightning Brothers* and *Dreamings—The Art of Aboriginal Australia*, and to RTP for free television in Portugal.

Facing the Music has been licensed to Kunstkanaal for pay television in the Netherlands and to SVT for terrestrial television in Sweden. It has been relicensed by Qantas for in-flight entertainment.

Once Were Monks, *Rite of Passage*, *Reunion* and *Buried Country* have been licensed to XYZ for its Lifestyle and Arena channels.

Return to Sandakan has been licensed to TG4 for free terrestrial television in Ireland, and *A Compassionate Rage* to ORF for terrestrial television in Austria. *Harder Than Everest* and *Loaded* have been licensed to UPC for European pay television and *Belinda's Baby*, *A Compassionate Rage* and *Breathing Space* to M-NET for pay television in South Africa.

In the USA, *Uncle Chatzkel* has been licensed for terrestrial television to American Public Television. *The Diplomat*, *Billion Dollar Crop*, *A Bird in the Hand*, *Lake Pedder* and *Big Brother of Christmas Island* have been licensed for pay television to the Free Speech network.

In the US non-theatrical market, First Run Films extended its licence for *Cane Toads* and Bullfrog Films for *Billion Dollar Crop* and *Koalas—The Bare Facts*. *Bush Mechanics* has been licensed to First Run Icarus and *Selling Australia* to Films for the Humanities.

In China, *Reunion*, *Flowers and the Wide Sea* and *Dreamhouse* have been licensed to Leyland International for home video, and *City of Dreams*, *The Edge of the World*, *Mr Strehlow's Films*, *Thomson of Arnhem Land* and *Tosca—A Tale of Love and Torture* have been licensed for pay and terrestrial television by Hong Kong Century Film & TV. The M&C Network have licensed *Act of*

Necessity, *How Wonderful* and *The Last Crop* in Korea.

Return to Jupiter was licensed for pay television in Iran, and *Fortress Australia*, *The Raid* and *Long Tan—The True Story* was licensed to the History Channel in Canada. *Emily's Eyes* has been licensed to IETV for terrestrial television in Israel.

National Geographic has licensed *Rite of Passage* and *Born for the Fight* in Northern Africa, Asia, Italy and Switzerland and *Plagued* in the Middle East and Italy.

Discovery has renewed its licence for *Born for the Fight* in central and southern Asia, India and the Pacific Rim.

In brief

The **Film Australia Annual Report 2000–2001** was tabled out of session on 30 October 2001. The company's financial result was 20 per cent above the budgeted forecast, due to increases in revenue and the achievement of operating efficiencies. This strong financial performance, release of some of its most acclaimed documentaries ever and improved delivery of distribution, facilities and library services contributed to one of the company's most successful years. Anyone wanting a printed copy of the report should contact the Publications Co-ordinator on (02) 9413 8723 or email ktilgals@filmaust.com.au

A **new catalogue** of video and multimedia titles distributed by Film Australia has been published for the new school year. A catalogue for broadcasters will be published in early March. For copies, call Film Australia Sales on 02 9413 8705 or email sales@filmaust.com.au

Production company **McElroy Television** have moved into offices at Film Australia Studios. After several months shooting their most recent series *Going Home* on Film Australia's soundstage, Hal and Di McElroy have decided to base their company at the Lindfield site. With a career spanning more than 30 years, Hal is one of Australia's best known producers. He has been involved with some of the country's most successful films, including *The Cars that Ate Paris*, *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, *The Last Wave* and *The Sum of Us*.

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real2reel

The Year of the Outback and a Royal Jubilee

2002 has been declared the Year of the Outback and Film Australia is set to make a significant contribution through the company's historic archive and contemporary programs.

There are over 100 outback-themed titles in the Film Australia Library. The earliest footage is from a 1913 expedition around Australia and the first complete production is a ten-minute film called *The Heart of Australia* from 1928. The most recent, *The Red Heart* episode from *Selling Australia*, was seen last year on ABC-TV.

There's the perennial bestseller *The Back of Beyond*—a John Heyer classic from 1954 that tells the story of Tom Kruse, a mailman on the Birdsville Track. A bush policeman's annual patrol across the Northern Territory is described in *Outback Patrol*, produced in 1952 by the legendary Stanley Hawes (Film Australia's founding producer-in-chief) and directed by Lee Robinson with narration by Chips Rafferty.

Stanley Hawes also directed the 1946 film about correspondence education, *School in the Mailbox*, which was nominated for an Academy Award.



Oscar-winning cinematographer Dean Semler shot a series of outback films while working at Film Australia in the 1970s, including *Where Dead Men Lie*, based on a Henry Lawson poem.

Australia's drovers are celebrated in 1988's *The Last Great Cattle Drive* as 1200 cattle were driven from the Northern Territory to Queensland on a journey that covered 200 kms and lasted four months.

The indigenous Australian collection is extensive and includes extraordinary footage of Aboriginal dance, ceremony and daily life as well as numerous films, such as *Uluru—An Anangu Story*, that present indigenous perspectives on the land.

A DVD package will bring a selection of this valuable material together with still photographs and outtake footage from the archives plus new interviews with key personnel, production notes and study guides. Currently in development, it is due to be released later in 2002.

Royal Jubilee

This year also marks the 50th anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II's reign. Film Australia's archives contain the film record of her first tour of Australia in 1954—the first ever visit by a reigning monarch. Titled *The Queen in Australia*, this was also the first feature-length colour documentary made in Australia. It is just part of a collection of royal tour footage dating back to 1901.

Online initiatives

Film Australia is pleased to announce two new online initiatives.

The company's website at www.filmaust.com.au is being redeveloped to provide more detailed information about Film Australia, its activities and services. In addition to existing corporate publications (such as the annual report, media releases and the newsletter) and program details for more than 500 titles, new features include

- downloadable images and press kits
- a secure facility for video orders
- a showcase section highlighting selected programs
- local and international library rate cards
- an industry resources section.

Film Australia's site and facilities will also have an increased profile as Film Australia Studios.

Downloadable study notes and tailored information for teachers will continue to be provided for an ever-increasing list of titles.

Film Australia's online membership facility will continue, with members from the film and tv industry and education sector to be offered tailored email news and updates.

The revamped site is expected to go live in March.

Film Australia is also a content partner in a new website specifically developed to showcase film and television content for the education sector.

To be launched in February, **enhanceTV** will provide details of broadcasts relevant to teachers and students, downloadable study guides and access to a wealth of other teaching material.

The site at www.enhancetv.com.au has been developed by Screenrights, the non-profit collecting society that licenses the use of television in educational institutions.



From top: *Plumpton High Babies* and *In the Realm of the Hackers*.

In Production

Human Contraptions

EP: Stefan Moore, Anna Grieve
Academy Award winner Bruce Petty takes us on an anarchic animated journey through the inner mechanics of the “contraptions” that shape our lives. This ten-part series, produced by Deborah Szapiro, will screen on ABC-TV. Five of the five-minute episodes have been completed: *The Law Machine*, *The Brain Machine*, *The Global Machine*, *The Government Machine* and *The Education Machine*.

Law and Order

EP: Mark Hamlyn
This one-hour documentary for ABC-TV will look at how Australia’s legal system has failed to deal with the complexities of crime and social issues in indigenous communities. Producer Denise Haslem and director Trevor Graham (who worked together on *Mabo—Life of an Island Man*) plan to start filming in Yirrkala in the Northern Territory later this year.

Fearless—Stories from Asian Women

EP: Franco di Chiera
This four-part series examines the lives of four courageous and committed women who are willing to risk everything in their fight for social justice and human rights. The series has been developed with the assistance of ScreenWest and produced in association with ScreenWest, Mask Productions and SBS Independent. Samantha Kelley and Peter Du Cane are producing with Mathew Kelley and Du Cane directing. Principal photography is due to start mid-February, with the crew travelling to India, the Philippines and Sweden.

In Post-Production

Welcome to the Waks Family

EP: Franco di Chiera
Producer/director Barbara Chobocky is currently editing at Film Australia with Jeff Bruer. Co-produced by Rod Freedman in association with Documentary Films Pty Ltd and SBS Independent, this one-hour program focuses on one of Australia’s largest families: mum, dad and 17 kids!

Plumpton High Babies

EP: Mark Hamlyn
All through 2001, producer Julian Russell and director Aviva Ziegler tracked the lives of a group of schoolgirl mothers at Plumpton High in Sydney’s west. Editing at Film Australia is now well underway. The program will be screened on ABC-TV.

The Island at the Bottom of the World

EP: Mark Hamlyn
Director Marée Delofski is also in the edit suites at Film Australia working on a one-hour documentary for ABC-TV. Produced by David Noakes, the program promises to shed new light on legendary film actress Merle Oberon, who claimed to come from Tasmania but who literally fled from questions about her past.

East Timor—Birth of a Nation

EP: Franco di Chiera
This two-part series for the ABC is in the final stages of post-production. Made in association with Melbourne company Abracadabra Films (producers Luigi Acquisto and Stella Zammataro, directors Acquisto and Andrew Sully), it looks at how a country is born, literally from the ashes of the past.

In the Realm of the Hackers

EP: Franco di Chiera
In this one-hour documentary for ABC-TV, producer John Moore and director Kevin Anderson tell the story of the Australian teenagers who hacked into some of the most secure computer networks in the world, including NASA. With principal photography completed locally and in the United States, post-production has commenced in Melbourne.

Screenings

Ordinary People will be broadcast nationally on ABC-TV at 10.00pm on Thursday 14 March. The program follows One Nation candidate Colene Hughes over two years and two elections as her idealistic fervour slowly turns to disillusionment.

Film Australia will have a strong presence at the Mumbai International Film Festival in February with **Facing the Music**, **Steel City**, **Buried Country**, **Tosca—A Tale of Love and Torture** and **Uncle Chatzkel** screening in competition and **Cunnamulla**, **Ordinary People** and **Our Brother James** included in a special Australian showcase.

Cunnamulla and **Facing the Music** will screen at the London Australian Film Festival in March. The Margaret Mead Traveling Film & Video Festival has selected **Facing the Music** to tour throughout the United States, while **Cunnamulla** will be included in the Sheffield Documentary Festival Tour of the United Kingdom.

Facing the Music will screen at the 19th International Jerusalem Film Festival in Israel in July and the 15th Singapore International Film Festival in April. New York City’s Film Forum will host a theatrical season in April. It has also been invited to the Local Heroes International Film Festival in Canada.

Cunnamulla has been invited to the Tampere Film Festival and the Bermuda International Film Festival. It screened at the Rome Film Festival in November 2001.

Dreamings—The Art of Aboriginal Australia and **Boomalli—Five Koori Artists** are currently screening in Madrid, Spain as part of an international touring exhibition curated by Australia’s Museum of Contemporary Art.

Ten Million Wildcats will screen in competition at Festival International du Film Animalier d’Albert in France.

The 26th Hong Kong International Film Festival has invited **The Diplomat** to screen. This widely acclaimed film screened most recently at the Amascultura International Documentary Film Festival in Portugal, the Seoul Indie Documentary Festival in Korea, the One World Festival in Slovakia and the Human Rights Film Festival in Poland.

Uncle Chatzkel formed part of the Celebration of Jewish Film in Jerusalem in December.

Three AFIs, an IF and Catholic Film of the Year

Accolades keep coming for Film Australia's 2001 releases. At the Australian Film Institute Awards held in December, **Facing the Music** won Best Documentary and Best Achievement in Sound in a Non-Feature Film, while another acclaimed program **Cunnamulla** was awarded Best Achievement in Direction in a Documentary.

Facing the Music also won the IF Award for Best Documentary, and the filmmakers Bob Connolly and Robin Anderson were honoured with the Living Legend Award. In addition, the Catholic Film Office named it Australian Film of the Year—the first time the award has been given to a documentary.

Professor Anne Boyd, whose fight to save the Sydney University Music Department is chronicled in *Facing the Music*.



More award news

Mabo—The Native Title Revolution CD-Rom received the Apple Award for Excellence in Arts & Culture from the Australian Interactive Multimedia Industry Association. The project was also nominated for an International EMMA Award in the UK.

Allan Collins won a gold award in the Documentaries, Cinema and Television category for the **Everyday Brave** episode **Mistake Creek** in the South Australian and Western Australian State Awards of the Australian Cinematographers' Society.

Facing the Music and **Bush Mechanics—The Series** were finalists in the Group Category of the Centre for Australian Cultural Studies National Cultural Awards 2001. The awards recognise outstanding contributions to the quality of Australian cultural life.

Uncle Chatzkel won the Audience Award in the Documentary Category at the Washington Jewish Film Festival in December, and the American Anthropological Association awarded a commendation to **Thomson of Arnhem Land** at its 2001 film festival.



Moira Kelly with Pranvera Preng, one of the young Albanians brought to Australia for medical treatment.

A Compassionate Rage

A lot of people talk about what could be done to make the world a better place. Moira Kelly doesn't just talk, she acts.

She's run an AIDS clinic for children in Romania, been house mother at an Aboriginal mission, worked in India with Mother Teresa, nursed crack babies in the Bronx, rescued kids from the firing lines in the brutal Balkans conflict and set up schools for the disadvantaged in Bosnia. She brings those in need of surgery from war zones to hospitals in the US, Canada, Ireland and Australia. Now she's creating a haven for young people on a farm outside Melbourne.

A Compassionate Rage, a new Film Australia National Interest Program made in association with Vue Pty Ltd, follows this feisty Australian on her mercy missions across the globe.

Over 18 months, we journey from Albania to the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne with a group of ill and injured children, who cannot gain access to crucial surgery in their own impoverished countries. Then it's back to Albania to restore the kids to their families and arrange further assistance, from schooling and jobs to gifts of land and housing. And home again, to Australia, where Moira's dream of a safe place for children recuperating from surgery is finally realised.

This latest project is being supported by Rotary and the Children First Foundation (a charity Moira established while in Bosnia). Both organisations believe Moira's involvement is crucial to the farm's success, but they are also concerned that she may not stay in Australia for long, that the temptation to return to the "hot spots" may be too great.

The documentary is a fascinating study of character—just what does it take to do what Moira does?

"If I wasn't doing what I was doing," she says, "I would see no reason for my existence". When pressed, she'll admit that she is also hooked to the adrenalin rush that comes with her work.

For Moira, her work is her life. It defines her and leaves her no time for anything else. She has a strong ego, which she translates as the "will of God". She feels rage, but she doesn't express it by ranting or hysterics. She just refuses to take no for an answer when a child's future is at stake.

Her anger is directed at the neglect of kids whose origins or issues are not "fashionable" in the international community. It's also directed at the bureaucracy of aid agencies. Moira prefers to operate outside these constraints. She makes mistakes and sometimes tramples on sensibilities but, to her mind, at least she is getting things done.

Producer/researcher Helen Clucas describes **A Compassionate Rage** as "the story of one person's determination to make a difference. But it also raises questions about the whole nature of aid work and intervention in the lives of kids in far away places."

Writer/director/producer Alan Lindsay outlines the film's approach. "**A Compassionate Rage** does not follow what has become conventional documentary structure—it has multiple acts and a lot of characters, it doesn't pause for interviews.

"I want to draw the viewer into Moira's life and into the lives of the children she helps," he explains. "Moira gave us unreserved access to film her activities. We lived day and night with her. By the end of the documentary it should be obvious that she is not the saint some claim her to be, but it should be equally obvious that she does do a remarkable job for kids who deserve help, kids who others ignore."

A Compassionate Rage was developed with the assistance of the Australian Film Commission and Cinemedia's Film Victoria, and produced with the assistance of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. Franco di Chiera is executive producer.

It will screen on Thursday 14 February at 10.00pm on ABC-TV in the new True Stories timeslot for one-hour Australian documentaries.