

a third venue, the Empire Hall., on Macquarie Street. In summer three additional open air cinemas operated, so that Dubbo, with a population of just over 9,000, was serviced by six cinemas offering thousands of seats each week.

People flocked to the movies. In addition to the newsreels, which provided locals with glimpses of national and international events that they previously could only read about. Flickering images of royalty, Prime Ministers, the First World War, dance crazes and sport stars made the people of Dubbo, for the first time, world citizens.

On April 25 1930 the Daily Liberal provided breathless coverage of the first real 'talkie' screened in Dubbo. This gala event attracted 1500 people to the Monarch and was an instant success.

Perhaps the added pressure and cost of the 'talkies' put strain on the cinema industry in Dubbo, as a round of amalgamations and takeovers in the mid 1930's left Dubbo with just two players in the market, 'Western Cinemas' that covered the Monarch and Roxy, with the Royal still independent.

Cinema continued to play a major part in Dubbo's social life until the late 80s, when the introduction of video stores led to another round of closures. The Reading Multiplex helped revive cinema, but it is unlikely Dubbo, or any city, will see the glory days of cinema return.

FOCUS QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

Cameras

Difference and Similarities

The cameras are displayed in chronological order (from oldest to newest). Which camera is the oldest and which is the newest?

How can you tell?

Draw each camera and label how they are different?

Can you explain the main differences between these cameras and a camera you own?

Photographs

Living in the Past

People in the past had no television or internet, so they had to entertain themselves. Note down all the different types of things people did to entertain themselves.

It was very common for storekeepers to photograph their shops. What shops can you see in the photos? What did they sell? Note these down.

There are a number of portraits of people dressed in their best clothes. What do you think was most fashionable for men and women at that time?

Another popular photo style was the group. Note down the types of groups that existed at that time. Do these groups still exist? Do you know anyone still in these groups? What do they do?

The Meaning of Photos

Write down the number times someone has taken a photo of you (you may have to guess!). In the early years of photography most people would only be photographed once or twice in their entire lives. Does this make a difference to how we think about photos?

Photographs were also expensive and slow to make. If

someone made a funny face the photo would be ruined but they may not know for many weeks, and by then the photographer would be in the next town. If someone makes a funny face with today's cameras, what happens now?

Do you think photography is more or less important to people today compared to the past?

Cinema

Many people went to the movies twice a week, no matter what was on. Why do you think this was the case?

Most programmes began with a newsreel, showing news from around the world. Why do you think these were so popular?

What other ways did people have to get the news?

Movies are no longer as popular. Why do you think this is? Can you think of other things that are no longer popular?

Craft Activity

Use the exhibition catalogue to make a Zoetrope. By using the template, children can make their own cartoon image by simply replacing the skipping girl.

The Zoetrope

One question that had fascinated people for centuries was this: Does a horse at full gallop ever have all its feet off the ground? Many people thought it did, and were convinced that it happened when the horse was at full stretch. Others were convinced that if a horse took all its feet off the ground it would fall over!

The problem was that a galloping horse moved so quickly it was impossible to tell who was right.

Until, that is, 1877 when Edward Muybridge appeared on the scene. A keen photographer and inventor, he was approached by a wealthy business man to solve the problem. Muybridge built a series of cameras that could capture a horse as it galloped past. Each camera could take an image in just 1/1000th of a second!

When the film was developed Muybridge could finally prove that a horse did take all its feet off the ground, but not at full stretch. Instead it happened when all its feet were tucked up underneath. The business man is reported to have won a bet of \$25,000, but Muybridge was not finished yet.

He noticed that if you played all of these individual images one after the other, it would look like the horse was actually moving. He used a Zoetrope, a device invented in China almost two thousand years ago, to produce his 'movie'.

ACTIVITY SHEETS

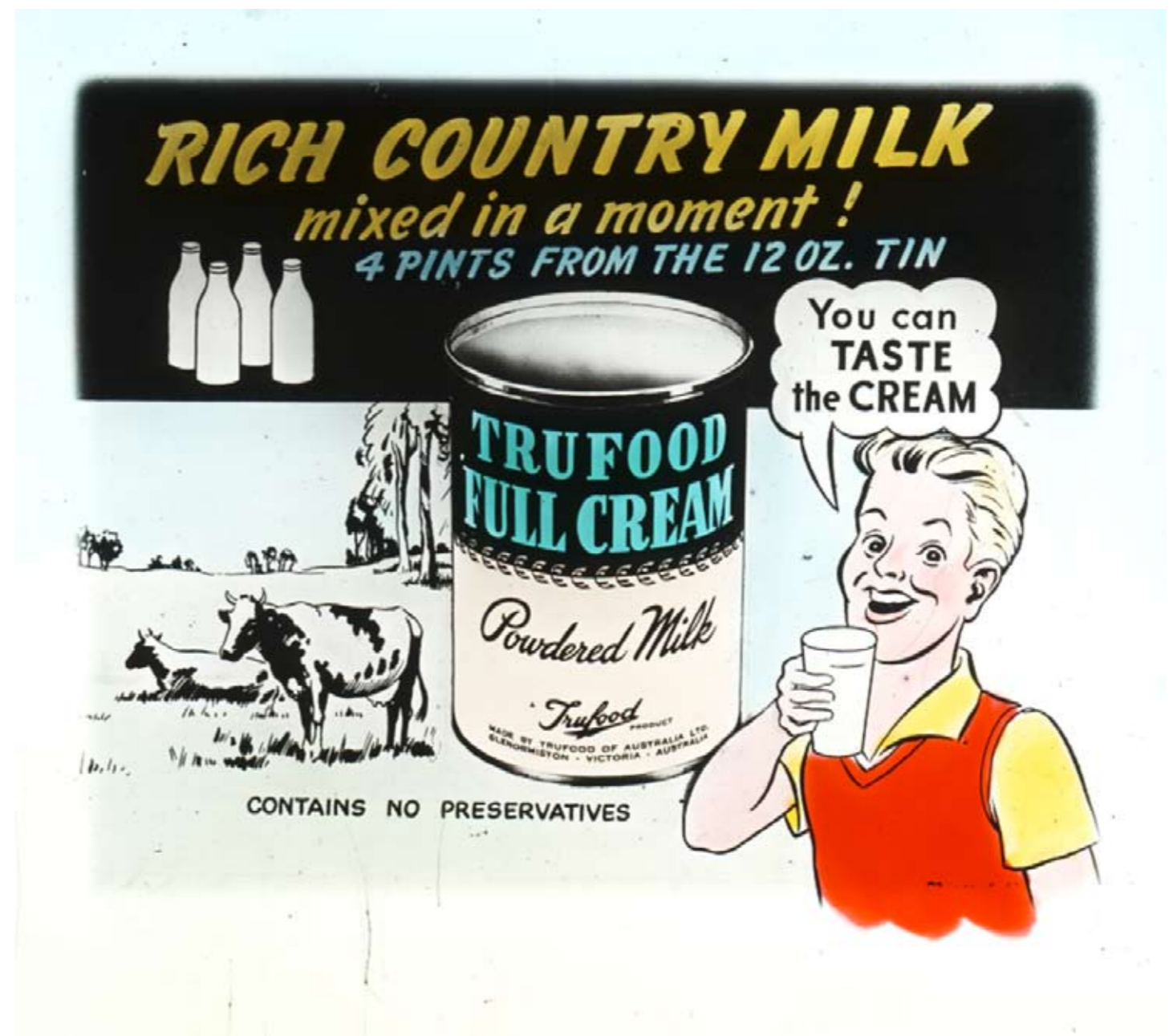
Activity sheets that expand on the issues raised above are available from the WPCCC website. Visit wpcddubbo.org.au for these and other forms to make your visit easier and more educational.

CONTACTS

For more information or to book a visit, contact Andrew Glassop (Education Officer) on the following:

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Cinema Advertising Slide, Used at Monarch Theatre between 1930 and 1950. Collection Dubbo Regional Museum

MAGIC LANTERN SHOW

Film & Photography in the Central West

4 April to 19 July 2009

Teachers' Guide

WESTERN PLAINS CULTURAL CENTRE



INTRODUCTION

This guide is designed to allow teachers to guide students through the Magic Lantern exhibition, and provide a number of activities and discussion points for students to focus on during the tour.

EXHIBITION LAYOUT

Magic Lantern is divided into three sections, Cameras, Photos and Cinema. Each section has a number of text panels that introduce and expand upon the themes. This text is provided below as background information for the teacher.

TO CAPTURE AN IMAGE

There exists a rough grainy image of rooftops in a French village. There is no detail, just the harsh contrast between the sun bouncing off roof tiles and deep shadows behind chimneys. The background is a blur of white. Yet it is perhaps the most important image ever taken – the very first photo ever made. Made by Frenchman Joseph-Nicephore Niepce in 1827 it used a bitumen substance and required eight hours of bright sunlight to develop. This sparked a revolution in what would eventually become known as photography. Across the world, amateur chemists set about trying to find substances that were sensitive to light and could be developed.

In 1839 Louis Daguerre, along with Niepce, announced the Daguerreotype. Using a polished silver plate coated with silver iodide, it could produce images of stunning detail, though it still took several minutes to capture an image. Despite this drawback, it was now possible to take portraits. Interestingly, the process was not patented in France, with the government declaring it France’s ‘gift to the world’.

The Daguerreotype was only the beginning. Within the next two decades other processes emerged. The Ambrotype, Calotype, Chromatype, Pannotype and Tintype all came, and swiftly went. It was not until the Wet Collodion Negative that the next shift emerged. These glass negatives allowed the photographer to make multiple prints on paper but were messy, with the photographer having to coat the plate (thus the name ‘wet’) then expose and develop it before it dried. The photographer was tied to the darkroom.

Dry collodion plates, which could be mass produced, were the next improvement, before the real revolution in photography arrived. This was roll film, which allowed cameras to become smaller, with more exposures available, and infinitely more user friendly. The age of mass photography, led by the humble Kodak Box Brownie, was just around the corner.

For the next one hundred years or so, the development of photography moved from the film to the camera. Improvements in lenses, image quality, ease of use and new features were incremental changes compared to the revolutions of the previous century. However, with the digital age image making underwent another dramatic change. Cameras were no longer discrete instruments, dedicated to taking photos. Cameras appeared everywhere – in computers, phones, PDAs - and printing, long the domain of Chemist shops and Photo Labs, moved to the home as well as the large discount store.

The journey of the camera, from the amateur chemist, to the

professional studio, to a ubiquitous consumer product, seems complete.

CAPTURING THE WEST

Although the great advancements in photography were all made in Europe or North America, Australia was an enthusiastic adopter of this new technology. It is believed the first photograph taken in Australia (now sadly lost) was of Bridge Street, Sydney in 1841 – just a little over one year after the invention of the Daguerreotype.

Studios soon appeared in major cities all over Australia, yet the spread into regional Australia was slower. The Wet Collodion process meant the photographer could not move far from the darkroom – people had to visit the studio, not the other way around. Some photographers built mobile darkrooms and toured country centres, staying for just a few days, before moving on.

By the 1860s some photographers had made the permanent move to the West. A studio opened in Bathurst in 1862, another in Glenn Innes in 1867. Dubbo gained its first studio in 1884 run by George Plummer. However, George also ran a studio in Orange and it is unsure if his Dubbo studio was permanent. In fact temporary studios, where photographers took over shops and established a darkroom and studio, continued to exist well into the 1890s, where studios would advertise they were open ‘for a few weeks only.’ Dubbo was serviced by two Plummer Studios, Fortescue, Lander, Eilte, Crown, Sarony and Chapman Studios in the last two decades of the 19th century.

Early photography sold itself as a technological marvel. Those who had their photo captured were taking part in a great progressive movement. Newspaper ads spoke of new advances in developing prints, new sizes, new techniques, and of superior technical training. Others tried more familiar sales pitches. One ad, by Fortescue, claimed that photographs were very suitable gifts for ‘Young Folk’ at Xmas while Elite Photography was already offering ‘Babies Taken Instantaneously’ in 1887.

Whether temporary or permanent, early photography in the studio was an expensive luxury. Crown Studios, in 1898, advertised that they could provide 12 cabinet photographs (approximately 10cm by 16cm) and a larger rococo enlargement for £1 1s, approximately half the average weekly wage of a worker. As in the rest of the world, it was not until the widespread availability of cameras using roll film that the price of photography fell. When it did, the number of photographic studios also fell, and photography became the people’s art-form.

THE POSED IMAGE

In the early years of photography a wide range of techniques and subject matter were explored by photographers eager for experience and notoriety. Yet nothing was able to create the instant sense of wonder and power like the portrait.

Initial scepticism lead pioneers such as François Arago to deem photography of little use for portraiture. Sitters would often blink or move their head, blurring the images due to the long exposure times required. Stern, expressionless faces of

early portraits made the images seem other worldly leading to early connections between photography and the occult. It would be several decades before the smile appeared in images and only in the twentieth century would the smile replace the expressionless face of early photographs.

By 1851, 20 years after the first photographic studios were set up, backdrops had begun to appear in the portraitist studio, from classical landscape scenes to posed settings around studio props such as columns, tables, books or sculptures, all designed to heighten the personality or achievements (real or perceived) of the sitter. This calculated use of props and backdrops alongside the fact that early photographers manipulated and retouched images could not however assuage the public belief in photographic truth.

The artificial had already become synonymous with the portrait.

THE PUBLIC IMAGE

As the photographic studio emerged as a space in which sitters could compose and record an image of how they wanted to be seen, portraiture became more about the creation of an image rather than its mere representation.

The posed image is the public image. When we pose for the camera we do so because like those early sitters, we are aware of creating an image of ourselves. The photographer is similarly, choosing the best lighting, framing the image, manipulating the image before them to create an ideal. We, photographer and subject, do this because we know instinctively that these images will become part of the public domain. From Wedding and Christening photos, to School or Graduation photo, we know that these images are created for no reason other than to record a moment for posterity. At that moment we are aware of the historical implications of the act of taking a photograph.

THE CANDID IMAGE

In the early days of photography the candid image or snapshot was used to explore the limits of the medium. Placed in direct competition to the posed image, candid snapshots were about movement, emotion, and ultimately modernity. In the 1920s, small, inexpensive fast-shutter cameras like the Kodak Brownie appeared. By 1950, according to Kodak, nearly three quarters of American families owned a camera, taking 2 billion photographs with them. By the 1970s, they were taking 9 billion pictures a year, most of them quick, informal snapshots.

As the twentieth century saw the rise in historical theory that focused on the experience and role played by the ‘everyman’, the snapshot became the tool of history. With a mass produced, cheap Kodak in your hand, you to could be part of history, as witness and participant. Through this democratisation of the process of photography, all photographs gained equal value. No longer were lines drawn between the value of images of a Prime Minister or that of Aunt Jean’s wedding. Websites such as Picture Australia, run by the National Library allows you to search the repositories of Australia’s great Photographic Collections. Websites such as this will even allow you to add you’re own images to its database, created a layered, diverse vision of Australian history.

THE PRIVATE IMAGE

The candid image could be seen as the private image. For more than one hundred years the candid image or snapshot (that is the photograph made by amateurs and intended to document a personal, individual history) have had an increasingly profound effect on how we understand our own personal history and what we have come to see as part of our national history. These images have set a standard for how we represent ourselves, mark life events, preserve and even create memories.

Candid photography has never been so valuable and so ubiquitous; some 29 billion photographs will be taken in 2009 by phone cameras alone. Which of these images will we look back on with a historical eye? In the end these images raise a profound question: What is photography for? Has photography lost its impact or its value? Is it still truthful? Is it still objective? If 29 billion photographs will be taken in one year, how we identify the significant images from the random?

MOVING THE IMAGE

Whilst photography was advanced by well meaning amateurs and gentlemen, cinema belonged to entrepreneurs. It was, from the outset, entertainment. Two young French brothers, August and Louis Lumiere, are credited with the first public showing of genuine moving pictures, on December 28 1895 in a Parisian café. Their invention, the Cinematographe, was distinctly designed to be used. It was at the same time a camera, developing tank and projector, and was intended for a solo operator. The first films, all around twenty seconds long, were of simple domestic or street scenes. However, the thirst for the exotic was immediate, and the Lumiere’s sent cameramen across the globe recording footage. One, Marcus Sestier, arrived in Sydney in 1896, and the first movie presentation in this country, ‘Passengers alighting from the ferry Brighton at Many’ aired on October 27, 1896 – less than a year after the device’s invention on the other side of the world.

Marcus soon left Australia, but left behind his Cinematographe and several people trained in its use. Thus began the Australian film industry.

And the industry was soon at the forefront of world cinema. Perhaps the world’s first film studio, The Lamplight Department (1897 – 1910) was run by the Salvation Army. It produced Christian themed films that were screened during extravagant shows that mixed film, music, live action and art. In just 19 years it produced 300 films, making it definitely the most prolific studio of the time. Australia also lays claim to the first feature length narrative film, The Story of the Kelly Gaming (1906). All this before the real cinema boom that began in 1910.

DUBBO, WORLD CENTRE

Like many regional centres, Dubbo took to the movies as its link to the rest of the world. It began in the early years of the 20th century, when an open air cinema operated at the skating rink on the corner of Church and Darling Streets. In 1911, two permanent cinemas opened, Lytton’s Picture Palace and The Monarch. The Monarch was operated by Clarrie Taylor, who would come to dominate cinema in Dubbo for many years to come. By 1917 Taylor had bought Lytton’s and opened