

# the 9.5 review

february 1967



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# the 9,5 review

Editor Gordon Clarke

Art Editor Terence H. Bave

Published by Group 9,5

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## GROUP 9,5 AMATEUR CINE FILM OPEN AWARD

We are pleased to announce this competition which aims to stimulate and encourage the growth and standards of 9.5 mm film making by amateurs in all parts of the world.

All films shot on 9,5 and completed since January, 1966 are eligible, regardless of length or subject matter, and can be sound or silent, in black and white or colour.

A full set of rules governing the competition and an entry form are enclosed with this issue. Further copies can be obtained from Group 9,5. These details have been circulated to clubs and the cine press throughout the United Kingdom, Europe and the Commonwealth.

To allow sufficient time for those enthusiasts who so wish to produce films especially for the competition, we have fixed a September deadline for receipt of entries. This will also mean that the winning films can be screened at our 1967 Get together in London. Films will be returned in good time for an entrant to submit his film for the Ten Best of 1967 contest and it is stressed that the Group 9.5 Competition must in no way deter ninefivers from entering films of merit for the Ten Best.

The address for films, entry forms and all correspondence relating to the competition is—

ERIC MILLHOUSE ESQ.,  
(GROUP 9.5 COMPETITION)  
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Hugh Hale will award a cup to the maker of the film adjudged best overall of the entries. Group 9.5 will present shields to the two runners-up and Eric Ford will present a certificate and award to the producer of the best black and white film submitted.

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Cover picture: Keighley Cine Circle shooting *Misadventure* (see page 17).  
Left to right: Terry Narey, George Whitfield, Edwyn Hodgson.  
Photograph by Laurie Sharp.

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# vive le neuf-cinq

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**Report by Gordon Clarke**

## **Entente Cordiale**

"In England you are working for 9.5 in France we are doing the same. We may have little success when we try to do something on our own, so we must work together for the future of 9.5."

The words of leading French 9.5 dealer André Ligonie when we visited him in his Paris shop at 16 Avenue Felix Faure, 15e. In the past co-operation between ninefivers on opposite sides of the Channel has been virtually non-existent, but after 85 hours in France visiting 9.5 enthusiasts and manufacturers and distributors of equipment, we are confident that we have laid the foundations of a new liaison between British and French 9.5 interests which is rich in promise for ninefivers in both countries.

## **Chez Ligonie**

André Ligonie is a portrait photographer—and a stockist of a wide range of 9.5 equipment. It is he who is solely responsible for the Autoreflex zoom camera, reviewed in our next issue. Possessing considerable engineering knowledge M. Ligonie designed every part of this camera himself and is having it made initially in small quantities under his personal supervision.

Retailing in France for something like £250, the Autoreflex zoom is the last word in 9.5 cameras. We handled the Autoreflex, we studied the interior, we

**Pictures by Studio André Ligonie**

were shown the incredibly detailed blueprints drawn up by André Ligonie and the factory where the Autoreflex is assembled and checked.

Surrounded by a range of equipment including the Rio, the Rio phot, the Autoreflex, the Pathe P projector, the Heurtier Supertri and the new model of the Europ. M. Ligonie described the 9.5 situation in France. The majority of 9.5 projectors are made in France and free of import duty. So in a country where price maintenance is unknown, the cost of a Europ. for instance, is about £76 and often only £65 after discount—as opposed to £105 for this silent projector in England!

Kodachrome II 9.5 film is available in spools and magazines, but not in chargers. (The cost of an empty "H" charger is about thirteen shillings in France compared with 4s 9d in England). Ferrania and Orwo stock is also available in black-and-white and colour, so the choice is similar to that in the United Kingdom.

The production of printed films has all but ceased and Hefa are now the only manufacturer, though Film-Office still hold stocks. M. Ligonie feels that it would be well for the production of 9.5 prints for both countries to be concentrated in England.

André Ligonie, who has a private collection of 9.5 sound films himself, was pleasantly surprised





Top Larry Pearce meets his French opposite number Andre Ligonie  
Bottom: Gordon Clarke Larry Pearce and Paul van Someren with  
equipment to warm a ninefiver's heart in Ligonie's Paris shop.

to learn that interest still persisted in optical sound in the U.K. Both he and Madame Ligonie were impressed (in fact amazed) by our description of the 16 to 9.5 sound re perforation process.

In our lengthy conversation with André Ligonie we discussed detailed plans for extensive mutual co-operation to ensure that the best possible facilities can in future be made available to both British and continental ninefivers.

One further possibility is the production of a simplified version of the Autoreflex zoom camera at a more popular price. This would have provision for fitting standard C-mount lenses and would be without the zoom or reflex viewfinder facilities. M. Ligonie hopes to start work on plans for this model shortly.

### **Window shopping**

It is abundantly clear that the average French dealer has a lively and enthusiastic interest in 9.5. We called on a few Parisien 9.5 retailers.

At Pasquino Freres at 7 Avenue Italie, 13e we found 9.5 equipment to the back of the window but it was more than worthwhile stepping inside to see the range of modern 9.5 cameras—including the Autoreflex again—and shelves stacked high with 9.5 films.

Even during our short visit on a Sunday morning we were interrupted by one or two ninefivers (neuf cinquistes should we say?) coming in to hire films from the comprehensive Pasquino library.

Amongst other cameras in the

window of Photo Cine Schaffar at 47 Rue Amsterdam 8e was one never seen in England—the Cinegel Reinette. Inside a large area of the shop was literally piled from floor to ceiling with innumerable reels of 9.5 film. The Schaffar library contains almost every sound film issued in France and the great majority of the silent releases too. Many sound releases not available in Britain were printed in France such as *King Kong* and a three-hour version of *The Three Musketeers*.

In addition to his library service M. Schaffar has a number of surplus copies for sale.

It was interesting to see a number of 9.5 cameras never heard of in England like the 100 ft spool-loading Starlett, rather reminiscent of the Bell and Howell 70DR.

Needless to say there was plenty of 9.5 camera film in the shops!

### **An enthusiast at home**

André Ligonie arranged for us to visit Paul Choisel, Vice-President of a new dynamic 9.5 cine club in the Paris and Ile-de-France area.

Now retired seventy-year old M. Choisel devotes practically all his days to the club. He showed us his first 9.5 film, made in 1925 and entitled *Mariage in extremis*. Since then M. Choisel has used nothing but 9.5—and his wife has become equally enthusiastic!

M. Choisel also showed us a tape synchroniser he had built himself.

He still has the several cameras he has used over the years and brought out some of



them to show us. His favourite camera for a long time was the Facine designed by Weisbrot who gave his name to the Webo cameras. M Choisel told us he had known the designer personally.

Features of this camera are speeds from eight to eighty frames per second, backward running footage and frame counters, a visual indicator appearing every ten seconds and a facility for making automatic dissolves! Ever anxious to keep his equipment up to date, Paul Choisel now has an Angenieux reflex zoom lens fitted to this camera.

The Facine is the camera he used constantly until quite recently when he has found the lighter Ercsam VL more suitable for carrying on excursions to the mountains he loves.

M Choisel emphasised, as did Andre Ligonie, the need for maintaining closer ties with British enthusiasts and we readily agreed on a free and regular interchange of information and news between the new Club 9.5 and Group 9.5.

Paul Choisel is fired with the immense enthusiasm which is typical of the French ninefiver.

At the rear of his house M Choisel showed us the parts of a six foot high continuous processing machine owned by Andre Ligonie which is being stored there until a suitable site for a further processing station can be found.

M Choisel and Club 9.5 are in contact with 9.5 enthusiasts in several other European countries. The most fascinating revelation was in a letter and photograph from Yugoslavia, where almost

every ninefiver owns his own small perforator for producing two strips of 9.5 from ordinary 35 mm film. Such is the ingenuity of the ninefiver where film supplies are unobtainable through normal channels.

### **The cock still crows**

In the Rue Lafayette we kept our appointment with Ercsam-Pathe Cineric manufacturers of the Europ projector, the P and PM and the Webo and Rio cameras.

The charming and helpful Mlle Odile Descaves showed us the 9.5 version of the new Webo BTL camera. She was very well informed on 9.5 matters and also introduced us to one of E.P.C.'s mechanics. We found him testing an 8 mm projector but when we mentioned 9.5 his face lit up and he demonstrated the Malex Sonocub projector which features a built-in tape recorder (mounted in the vertical plane) using perforated Cinetape. The projector is fitted with a quartz iodine lamp.

Odile Descaves assured us of E.P.C.'s continuing interest in 9.5 and, indeed, our gauge was given equal prominence with 8, super 8 and 16 mm in the firm's equipment showcases.

We were able to obtain comprehensive literature on Pathe 9.5 apparatus—and to give a copy of *The 9.5 Review* to a Spanish ninefiver who had dropped in to enquire about a Webo camera!

### **The red carpet**

We were warmly received wherever we went in French cine circles and nowhere more so than at Kodak Pathe.

"We want to help you because we like 9.5. After all it was a French invention," said Monsieur J. P. Valdes, welcoming us to his office in the Avenue Montaigne.

Here we discussed with Kodak Pathe's export department the Kodachrome II film supplied to England, before we left to visit Kodak's processing laboratory.

During the hour long drive to Sevrans to the north of Paris, M. Valdes—Head of Technical Services for cine films—spoke enthusiastically about 9.5 and told us how he had used the gauge himself before the war. He assured us that 9.5 received exactly the same consideration as the other gauges and it was of the utmost importance that Kodak Pathe should satisfy *all* their customers. In fact they take additional care when processing 9.5 films to avoid trouble with the central perforations. M. Valdes also mentioned that Kodak Pathe receive a few enquiries about 9.5 film even from the United States from time to time.

### Sevrans

The Sevrans station is the largest colour processing laboratory in the world and grouped with workshops and warehouses occupies a considerable area.

Three thousand people are employed here and in the height of the season five tons of film arrive for processing every day. Sevrans handles standard 8, super 8, 9.5 and 16 mm movie film as well as still material.

Last year the station processed over six million feet of 9.5 film—more than five million feet of this was Kodachrome.

The head of the processing station Monsieur Lanave, met us on arrival and told us something of the stringent controls applied to all Kodak processing.

M. Bazin then conducted us around the entire processing plant which was an immensely impressive sight even in this off-peak winter period. On arrival from the postal authorities the films are divided by an automated sorting system into standard 8, super 8, 9.5, 16 mm or 35 mm still films.

In the darkroom, the individual rolls are then assembled for the processing machines, each roll being punched with an identification number. Despite the enormous volume of films received so precise is the reference system that, at the time of our visit fewer than one film in nine thousand was being returned to the wrong address.

The secret of faultless processing throughout the worldwide Kodak empire lies in the colour control strips prepared each day at Rochester in the USA and flown to all Kodak stations. These strips are processed and analysed and must conform within a very narrow tolerance with the ideal colour strip. We were shown the control strips for 9.5 Kodachrome II, carefully stored and logged.

The test laboratories checking these strips must work day and night whenever the processors are in action so that in the event of a defect in the colour balance, processing could be halted immediately. Tests are constantly being run alongside customers' films to ensure quality control.

There are eleven machines pro-



cessing Kodachrome and 16, 9.5 super 8 and standard 8 mm films can be accommodated on any of these friction-drive continuous processors, running at 70 feet per minute.

Frequent samples are taken from the 36,000 litres of solutions in circulation for analysis in the laboratory. The temperature and humidity inside the building are rigidly controlled.

To exclude dust windows are completely absent even in the rooms where the processed film is broken down and re-packed. Here each roll has leader attached, is spooled and placed in the customer's carton to be passed to the despatch section which sorts the films and hands them over in bulk to the French post office.

One cannot begin to describe adequately the enormous scale and complexity of processing

operations at Sevran. Suffice it to say that our visit leaves no doubt that Kodak Pathé *care* about 9.5 and ninefivers are assured of perfect processing by sending their Kodachrome II films direct to Laboratoire Kodak Pathé Avenue Victor-Hugo Sevran, Seine et-Oise, France.

At the end of our visit the laboratory managers joined M. Valdes and ourselves over champagne. It was abundantly evident from their conversation—and from all that we saw at Kodak Pathé—that the organisation is determined to please the ninefiver just as much as other Kodachrome users.

#### **Future prospects**

Super 8 has not met with a very favourable response in France any more than it has in Great Britain. 9.5 is holding its own and gaining ground.

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# Winter Filming on 9.5

Do you put your camera in hibernation for the winter and forget it till summer comes? You're missing a lot of fun if you do—winter filming brings a new range of subjects to you and makes your cine work an all-the-year-round hobby

Weak shafts of sunlight on misty countryside, rain soaked streets, windswept bare trees, are all rich in atmosphere that can suggest an off-beat documentary, or can be used as the background for a dramatic story idea. Winter's the time of grey tones—and the careful use of an exposure meter is essential if you are to do justice to these on the screen. Colour can be used on the brighter days, but if the weather is really dull it is best to concentrate on black and white. One of the advantages of charger loading is that you can change a partly-exposed colour charger for a black and white one without losing more than a couple of frames, if you do it in a darkroom.

Snow is winter's top movie subject! Unfortunately, snow in this country is usually accompanied by leaden skies, and this is not worth filming. The photographic result is disappointingly gloomy. But the sparkle of sun on snow is

by  
Gerald M. McKee  
A.R.P.S.

irresistible, so when there is a weekend with snow and sun make full use of it.

A snowball battle, the children building their snowman and a toboggan race can be built into a wonderful little film. Colour is ideal for this, use your exposure meter, though, it's easy to over-expose a snow scene! And there is plenty of action on a frozen pond, experienced skaters showing off their skill and humour from the beginners tumbling on the ice and ducks slithering about in their search for water—opportunities for contrasts by inter-cutting here.

When the weather gets really bad you can take to indoor filming. The easiest way is to use a bar-light on your camera. This is ideal for parties, where filming with separate lights will have your guests tripping over wires. The bar light allows you to move your camera from shot to shot knowing that you will have plenty of light on the subject. Incidentally, although bar lights are often provided with an exposure calculator, it is worth checking with your meter for important shots.

Bar lights are certainly convenient, but they do not give good modelling to close-up portraits, and the position of the lights on a level with the camera throws ugly shadows on the background. They are the cine equivalent of the still-photographer's flash-gun.



Far better if you are shooting a film story or close ups of the family is to use separate photofloods in reflectors on stands. Three lamps are ideal. One lamp is used as key light — usually placed in a high position near the camera. The second lamp is used as fill in—to lighten the shadows given by the key light. And the third lamp can be used to light the background — or to provide back lighting. A well lit background adds a truly professional touch — so often amateur films have well lit faces against a black shadowy background.

Kodachrome IIA and Ferrania-color Artificial Light type films can be adequately exposed with most cameras if you have a bar-light or three photofloods. But don't use daylight type colour films in artificial light. Even with the correct filter the loss in speed is a serious disadvantage. With fast 400 A.S.A. black and white film and an f1.9 lens you can even do available light filming without the use of photofloods but you have to be careful to avoid ugly shadow effects.

Separate lighting units are not expensive and if you are interested in serious indoor filming they are a worthwhile investment. If you are good at metal work you can do it yourself even more cheaply by fabricating lamps from suitable bits and pieces obtained at Woolworths or Government surplus stores.

Parties — especially the children's bun fights — and Christmas festivities are among the main indoor subjects. But even the more usual domestic activities can form the basis of a short comedy with a bit of imagination. The letter which fails to

arrive trouble with the TV, Dad's attempts at cooking while his wife has the flu, or even the dreaded home decorating sessions can suggest good movie situations. Look at some of the TV comedy series for ideas along these lines.

If you are tired of live-action filming and are interested in animation work table top animation of children's toys can provide some absorbing evenings. The camera has to be firmly mounted on a tripod and the models are moved a little between each separate frame's exposure. Even the Prince has a single frame setting and provided you allow for parallax when setting it up you can get excellent stop-motion animation with this modest camera.

So get your camera out of the cupboard buy a few chargers of film stock, and get cracking with your winter filming. You won't regret it.

#### **Some Film Stocks for Winter Work**

Ferrania 100 A.S.A. for general winter filming outside in poor light

Ferrania 400 A.S.A. for photoflood and available light work

Orwo 125 A.S.A. for photoflood and exteriors in poor light

Kodachrome II Daylight 25 A.S.A. for snow scenes and bright winter sun

Kodachrome IIA 40 A.S.A. for photofloods

Ferraniacolor Daylight 25 A.S.A. for snow scenes and bright winter sun

Ferraniacolor Artificial (when available) 40 A.S.A. for photoflood



by George B. Whitfield

### ***The future of those other gauges . . .***

You might have seen a super eight film. I have seen both super and single eight. They are marginally better than standard eight.

Just as 16 mm. has marginally better definition than 9.5 mm. you will observe that there is still a great difference between super eight and 9.5 mm. The middle gauge isn't the middle gauge any more. *It never was the middle gauge.* It has always been closer to 16 mm. than 8 mm. it isn't in the middle it is way up in the quality scale. It is the biggest purely amateur gauge. For the best quality you might think that 16 mm. is the tops—but 9.5 mm. is a far better design than 16 mm. which has edge perforations which interfere with sound quality and picture steadiness.

Did you read the two October issues of *Amateur Cine World* in which Edwyn Gilmour listed the second-hand cameras and projectors which the 16 mm. enthusiast might obtain. He makes it clear that these bargains are becoming increasingly difficult to find. John Chittock suggests that 16 mm. is too expensive a gauge for the amateur. This points to a steady withdrawal of 16 mm. from the amateur market.

Fortunately 9.5 mm. equipment — new equipment — has more price appeal as well as portability. The film supplies are just as assured as standard eight. When I was asked, at a recent 9.5 mm. film show, whether I would choose 9.5 mm. today my reply was "You can start on this gauge which is no more obsolete than standard eight!"

We can expect 9.5 mm. to largely replace 16 mm. as the latter becomes even more of a professional gauge.

The eventual outcome of the present standard — single super-eight conflict is of little interest to the ninefiver. Tony Rose, Editor of *Amateur Cine World*, has remarked on the quiet sales of cine gear last season caused by a parallel lack of confidence in standard eight's permanence and a marked boredom with the other expensive pieces of planned obsolescence.

In this period of 16 mm. withdrawal from the amateur field and the stagnation of 8 mm. sales, only the 9.5 mm. market has expanded.

This expansion was mainly due to L. G. P.'s hard work in trying to



supply other stockists and of course the effect of various articles published in the cine press. It is truly amazing that with no perceptible interest being shown by the importers of 9.5 mm film or equipment the 9.5 mm sales kept building up. What we have not gained is any support by British manufacturers, perhaps their hearts were broken by the flood of Oriental 8 mm.

### **. . . and the future of 9.5 mm**

equipment!

Of course, this 9.5 mm progress can only be maintained by consistent (and rapid) processing. This is the only guarantee of repeat sales of 9.5 mm film.

Then there are so many small accessories which could be made in Britain which would sell in large quantities. A new 9.5 mm bevel splicer for instance or a new British improved type of 9.5 mm camera loading.

At this crossroads in the advance of 9.5 mm, we must ask ourselves whether the French have always made the right decisions. Did they do the right thing by abandoning chargers, and producing magazine loading cameras in the medium price range? Now there are no charger-loading cameras in France—only the Rio remains as the lowest priced French camera.

The handicap with magazines is that they cost more to post than chargers or spools, and are more prone to damage in transit. The snag with 50 ft spools is that a large amount of film is fogged in loading, even in subdued daylight. The snag with 100 ft spools is that one can grope for several

minutes trying to attach the film between the narrow flanges of the take-up spool—if working in darkness.

As soon as you design a 100 ft spool loading camera on any gauge, you increase both bulk and weight, so little charger loading cameras will always have an undoubted appeal.

Suppose we wanted to stick to

chargers, and could obtain a new British charger loading camera—there's no doubt that the charger would need re-designing.

My good friend Bernard Beeton has remarked on the rough moulding of some "H" chargers which were made in Britain. This roughness is at the extreme ends of the light-trappings and after a correspondence with Bernard I rubbed some chargers at these same points with finest emery paper and a little oil, finishing off with soap and water. This certainly made the chargers quite smooth, with no danger of scratching the film.

The very fact that this manoeuvre was necessary at all proves that we need a new design of charger, if we want charger-loading cameras.

There is no apparent reason why a charger should not be as slim as a magazine. The inclusion of a gate in a magazine means that the magazine must cost more than a simpler charger, and of course you must make many magazines for every camera that is purchased.

A possible compromise is a charger which actually holds a

spool and a design of camera which apparently nobody has yet invented—a *spool-loading camera which has a light-trapped upper section* out of which the leader of the 9.5 mm film could protrude for threading through the gate and for attachment to the lower spool in daylight. This same camera could be unloaded in a changing bag but would *not* need a changing-bag for the actual loading.

In weighing up this problem, you must ignore any equipment which you possess at present. You must decide what will be most convenient and dependable in use. When you have decided what form of loading we want, we can then concentrate on chargers, magazines or my idea of a daylight-loading spool camera. Our ninefive suppliers have to decide what must be on sale.

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THE NINEFIVE COLLECTOR

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### THE SILVER BULLET by Maurice Trace

*The Silver Bullet* is a second feature or "B" Western made by Universal International during the early forties when there was a tremendous demand for such films. During this period hundreds were made each year, but *The Silver Bullet* must rank as one of the best and a perfect example of the genre. In April, 1954, Pathescope released it on 9.5 sound in six reels.

The plot tells how Silver Jim Donovan (Johnny Mack Brown) roams the West searching for the masked murderer of his father. His only clue to the killer's identity is a flash-shaped scar on his arm. Jim arrives in Wyatt during a full-blooded election and, in a saloon brawl, his life is saved by one of the candidates, Walt Kincaid (Leroy Mason).

Shortly afterwards Kincaid visits the other candidate Doc Morgan (William Farnum) to have a scar removed from his

arm. The doctor is shot when he realises Kincaid's identity and suspicion falls on Donovan. The film ends with a big gun battle in the town and the meeting of Donovan and Kincaid in the deserted main street.

All the traditional ingredients of the Western are contained in the film but are served up with remarkable freshness. The story moves at a brisk pace throughout and the production values are splendid.

Johnny Mack Brown, who makes a very stalwart hero, was one of the best of the post-1930 Western stars and a fine action performer. Starting out in pictures in the late twenties, he played mainly in dramas and drawing-room comedies opposite such stars as Greta Garbo and Joan Crawford. There were no signs that Johnny would become a top Western player until 1930 when he played the title role in



*Billy The Kid* He then played in many super-Westerns intermingled with several series of "B" Westerns, which in those days warranted elaborate production and widespread distribution. In 1938 Johnny went to Universal where he made six films with Bob Baker another six with Tex Ritter and starred solo in sixteen before he left to join Monogram in 1942.

The supporting cast in *The Silver Bullet* is exceptionally strong and demands a close look. William Farnum was a very well-known star of the silent screen and had made many Westerns including the famous original version of *The Spoilers*. For many years he was voted one of Hollywood's top box office attractions, but in 1924, while making *The Man Who Fights Alone*, he was very seriously injured and for years declined anything but brief parts. Later on he played mainly character roles in such films as *Eagles Brood* and *Captain Kidd* which are both on 9.5 Sound.

Leroy Mason made his name as a notorious villain and in his time menaced most of the cowboy heroes. In *The Silver Bullet* his evil partner Rance Harris is very well played by Rex Lease himself at one time a well-known Western star. They had previously appeared together in *Fury Below*, a mining drama which is on 9.5 silent in three reels. In this Mason was once again the villain, but Lease was on the side of law and order.

Claire Whitney who plays William Farnum's screen wife, Emily Morgan, was a famous silent actress who starred in the first Fox feature *Life's Shop Window*

way back in 1914. She had already appeared with Farnum in the 1915 production of *The Nigger*.

Among the supporting bad-men is the well known figure of Charles "Slim" Whitaker, while briefly glimpsed in a bit part is Kermit Maynard, the brother of another famous cowboy hero Ken Maynard. Kermit himself had starred in many Westerns such as *Northern Frontier* which is on 9.5 Sound.

In 1939 Universal made an expensive large scale Western called *Destry Rides Again* with James Stewart and Marlene Dietrich. One of the best features of the film was a particularly fine musical score by Frank Skinner, which Universal used again in *The Silver Bullet*. The whole of the rousing music over the opening credits and certain passages later on originated in the earlier film. (There are some original songs used in *The Silver Bullet* and one of the composers was Jimmy Wakeley who a few years later embarked as a singing cowboy in a series of his own.)

The director, Joseph H. Lewis, was originally a film editor who developed into one of the best directors of "B" Westerns and ultimately graduated into high-bracket melodramas. About this time Universal had developed interesting new techniques in shooting riding close ups and the running inserts and fast tracking shots used by Lewis in this film are extremely good.

Thus with all these elements *The Silver Bullet* is quite a collector's item. In addition it is a thoroughly entertaining film and well worth a showing by all nine-fivers.

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## Group 9,5 presents . . .

Our New Year Newsletter last month reported generally on November's successful annual show so have *Amateur Cine World* and *Ninefive News Service*. Now *The 9.5 Review* takes a closer look at the films screened at Kensington.

The programme began with real impact—a lip-sync introduction shot by Larry Pearce on an electrically driven Webo M and separate tape recorder. The sync was spot-on and the participants tell us the technical problems were slight compared with the rigorous nine hours of rehearsal and shooting for our inexperienced “cast”. Then came Reg Uphill's *Brands Hatch Go Kart Racing* which made very effective use of natural sound on its stripe track. It would have been better had it shown a greater variety of activity around the race track. Ted Vowles contributed a Kodachrome magazine film *Putting You in the Picture*, notable for its high quality colour and smart titles.

From Group 9.5's London section came *Heavy Commercial Vehicles Rally*, a record of the colourful annual run from London to Brighton. There were impressive shots of the historic vehicles, though much of the film appeared to have been shot into the sun. The loneworkers section produced *Newsreel '66*, which first looked at the 9.5 scene with Anne and George Whitfield and Larry Pearce, then saw the withdrawal of steam engines from a Gloucestershire railway line with Robert J Coombes and London's reaction to the death of Churchill,

finishing with Ken Wilkins' interesting visit to a guide dog training centre at Leamington Spa. Sound was on stripe.

Ted Spink's film on the Watford Centre for Spastics was a record of human patience and understanding—and, for the filmmaker a good example of spontaneous documentary shooting with available light. *State Opening of Parliament* by Gordon Clarke was a vivid and colourful record of the event but one wished for closer shots of the coaches and occupants! Attractive hand-drawn titles were a feature of John Thornton's film *Our Point of View*, which was a scenic tour in England and Wales.

Some ninefivers had the opportunity of seeing themselves in L. G. Pearce's film of our 1965 Get together. A.C.O. presented a striped demonstration film of the Heurtier Supertri and Andre Ligonie of Paris had loaned us a Kodachrome demonstration film, showing minute flowers and snails enlarged to fill the screen by means of extension tubes on the Webo M.

Bob Bayley of Birmingham had offered his ingenious and painstaking animated films *The Triangle*—a Ten Best star winner—and *Fantasy* while Reg Hooper of London showed *Simple Wipes*, a well-made instructional film on titling.

The show concluded with Keighley Cine Circle's startling excursion into the field of horror. *Misadventure* directed in colour by our good friend George B. Whitfield.

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# WALT DISNEY

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Ninefivers have been privileged to enjoy the wonderful cartoons of Walt Disney in the home through the popular releases of the Pathescope catalogue and they will have been saddened by the news of Disney's death in December following a major chest operation.

Walter Elias Disney was born in Chicago Illinois on December 5th, 1901 one of five children. When he was five years of age the family went to live on a Missouri farm and here Walt gained some of the love of and interest in animals which was to characterise much of his life's work. After leaving the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts the young Disney added to his true age in order to serve with the Red Cross Ambulance Service during the First World War. *Life* magazine rejected the cartoons Walt submitted, but on his return to the States in 1919 he found a job as an artist in an advertising agency before running his own business, contracting for press art work.

Whilst in his next post with the Kansas Film Advertising Company Disney began making animated films of his own and soon left to operate his own company. His first films achieved some success, but to keep the wolf from the door Disney had to work as a freelance cameraman. Even this was not enough to save his company from bankruptcy. In the summer of 1923 Walt Disney went to Los Angeles where his elder brother Roy was recovering from war injuries. Walt tried to break into Hollywood as a director, but without success.

Roy provided him with capital to start production again and they sold a series of shorts to a West Coast cinema chain. Then the Disney brothers secured a contract for a series of fifteen cartoons under the general title of *Alice in Cartoonland*. A live girl portrayed Alice, filmed against a white background and Disney then shot the animated footage which he built around Alice and other live characters. In 1923 a girl called Lillian came to work for Dis-

ney. They married two years later.

The *Alice* series kept the animators occupied for three years, but Disney then turned to an all-cartoon formula with an animal star, Oswald the Rabbit. When they came to negotiate a new contract for Oswald films in New York the Disneys discovered that a clause they had overlooked in their contract vested the rights of the character in the distributors. Walt and Roy also learned that the distributors had an option on the services of the Disney artists which they would take up unless the Disneys reduced their prices. This was out of the question and Disney abandoned Oswald and returned to Hollywood in quest of a new cartoon character. His answer—Mortimer Mouse—the name he first thought of for the fellow introduced to the world as Mickey in 1928.

At first distributors were reticent, unwilling to risk money on an unknown character. First to give Mickey a chance was the manager of Broadway's Colony Theatre, Harry Reichenbach, and Mickey appeared on the screen, a scrawny unshod little mouse, this not the plutocratic rodent of later films!

In 1927 Warner Brothers had shattered the silence of cinema with *The Jazz Singer* and Disney knew his cartoons must become 'all talking pictures' too if he was to compete. Mickey Mouse's fourth picture, *Steamboat Willie*, was issued with a sound track, not on the conventional disc of the period, but on film using the Cinephone system.

Wishing to widen his scope and develop the medium further, Disney turned from Mickey Mouse to the *Silly Symphonies*, beginning with *The Skeleton Dance*. It was a *Silly Symphony* that first carried off an Oscar for the Disney studio. In colour it was called *Flowers and Trees*. With the quality full-colour movies made possible by the Technicolor process, Disney went into colour in a big way with *The Three Little Pigs*.

In 1934 Donald Duck—a voice before he was a character—made his



ungainly entrance with *The Wise Little Hen*.

To improve standards of animation, Disney set up his own school for animators. Later, for *Bambi*, he even introduced live animals for study, though these proved of little value and were only kept as pets.

The success enjoyed by the *Silly Symphonies* encouraged the Disneys to attempt the first full-length all-cartoon feature *Snow White*. Two years in the making, the film's production debt mounted to alarming proportions, but after showing the partially completed film to Joe Rosenberg of the Bank of America, Disney was allowed to borrow a further 250,000 dollars to finish *Snow White*. It is still one of the world's most popular films and its music and characters will never be forgotten.

Disney was determined to continue the production of full-length cartoon features. In 1940 came *Pinnocchio* and *Fantasia*, followed by *Dumbo* in 1941 and *Bambi* in 1942. During the war years, Disney's facilities were taken over by the United States government for the production of instructional films.

The war over, Walt Disney followed up with *Make Mine Music*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Peter Pan*, *Cinderella* and *The Three Caballeros*. Music had become an integral part of the Disney tradition and was to remain so; indeed it was the complementary techniques of action and sound that Disney made the hallmark of the animated cartoon. Walt often had a hand in writing lyrics himself and a music publishing company forms part of the Disney empire which also runs a mammoth amusement park in California and a marketing organisation for products developed around Disney characters.

Disney came to England to make *Treasure Island*—a live-action feature which initiated a whole series of live-action pictures, a number made in this country.

His interest in animals now focused on live-action too and teams of Disney naturalist cameramen brought back records of life in the wild which are unsurpassed. His *True Life Adventure* series gave us *Seal Island*, *Beaver Valley*, *Secrets of Life* and above all *The Living Desert*.

Even television, which Hollywood feared would eclipse the movie indus-

try, proved grist to Disney's mill. The half-hour *Disneyland* series, which he compered himself, became extremely popular and was shown in this country by both the BBC and Independent Television. Later, an hour-long programme, *The Wonderful World of Color*, was transmitted weekly across America on the NBC television network. An hour's TV show on the making of his feature *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* not only helped to sell the film but won an Emmy award for the best single television programme of the year.

Side by side, production of all types of film that Disney had made his own went on. There were charming full-length cartoons like *Lady and the Tramp*, live-action features like *Polyanna* with Hayley Mills, the nature films and the television shows, *Davy Crockett* starring Fess Parker and Buddy Ebsen, raked in royalties from its theme song and the sale of Davy Crockett toys.

With *Mary Poppins*, Walt Disney reached a peak combining live-action with cartoon characters in this fantasy musical for children of all ages. *Mary Poppins* won five Academy awards and is one of the greatest box-office successes of all time. The Disney studio now has to its credit more than nine hundred awards—medals, Oscars, citations and plaques.

Their latest offering, *Follow Me Boys*, is currently on release and is typical of the Disney genre—a film for children which adults can enjoy.

Walt Disney is dead. The motion picture giant whose fame followed a mouse and dwarfs around the world, the man who had a corner on the sophisticated cartoon, the producer of human and animal adventures. But, of course, the output of the Disney studio will continue, even without the inspiration which guided it these forty years. The products of those years will be shown on television, in the cinema and on home projectors for as long as film exists.

Sadly, Walt Disney died just before Christmas, which television and the home movie have made the season of cartoon. The man who earned the title *Showman of the World* could wish for nothing finer to leave behind than a tradition of family entertainment which has delighted three generations.

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## FRED WOOD'S

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# SOUND TIPS

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### Tape Recorder Maintenance

Most modern tape recorders can operate reliably for long periods without any attention in the form of regular maintenance by the owner. In spite of this, regular cleaning of the tape transport mechanism will help to keep "wow" and "flutter" to a minimum, and at the same time reduce the possibility of sound reproduction being impaired by dirt on the record/replay head.

During operation of the tape deck, a film of brown coloured oxide slowly builds up on the tape heads, pressure pads, tape guides, capstan and pinch wheel. As the thickness of the deposit on the record/replay head increases, the quality of sound reproduction gradually deteriorates. At first only the reproduction of the higher frequencies will be affected. This may not be noticed by the owner, but as time goes on, the available volume of sound will be reduced. These effects will be very noticeable at the lower operating speeds. In extreme cases, oxide build-up on the erase head can result in tapes not being completely erased.

These troubles can be avoided by regularly inspecting and if necessary cleaning the components which transport the tape



It is difficult to advise on how often this inspection should take place; it depends on the amount of time the tape recorder is in use. New tapes tend to deposit more oxide on the tape deck mechanism than those which have been used several times. Initially, the tape deck could be examined once a month and if large deposits of oxide are found then you could reduce the interval between inspections to two weeks.

Before you attempt any of the cleaning operations to be described please refer to the instruction book of your tape recorder. Usually this will give details of the methods to be used in cleaning the various tape deck components.

The first stage is to remove all tape spools from the recorder and then *disconnect the recorder at the mains plug*. Remove the plastic cover which protects the tape heads and tape transport mechanism. Refer to the instruction book for the precise method of doing this. When the tape heads are exposed, *avoid bringing any metal object close to this part of the tape deck*.

The working surfaces of the tape heads may be cleaned with the aid of a match-stick wrapped in a clean, dry handkerchief.



Gently rub this over the surface of the head to remove any oxide deposit.

Next look at the tape head pressure pads: build up of oxide on the working surface of these will reduce their efficiency. They may be cleaned by carefully rubbing them with a small gate brush. Be very careful when cleaning the pressure pads because in most cases they are only glued to the pressure pad arms and can be dislodged by rough handling.

Remove any oxide deposit from the tape guides by using a soft cloth. Next inspect the pinch wheel which will be a free-running bush made of either brass or neoprene. If necessary clean it with a soft dry cloth. If it is made of neoprene and has a large deposit of oxide on it, use a slightly damp cloth.

Finally look at the working surface of the capstan. This will be either a steel spindle, brass bush, or neoprene bush, depending on the make of recorder. If necessary clean this with a soft, dry cloth. It may be necessary to

clean a neoprene capstan with a slightly damp cloth.

Do not attempt to oil anything. Generally the mechanism of a tape deck will run for very long periods without lubrication. The only possible exception is the pinch wheel bearing which may eventually bind a little. To lubricate this part it is necessary to remove it from the pinch wheel spindle so that both components can be cleaned and lightly oiled before they are reassembled. If you are at all doubtful about doing this job yourself, contact a competent service engineer.

I hope that these brief notes will be of assistance in maintaining the standard of reproduction which you expect to get from your recorder. It is not possible to go into great detail on this subject because of the many differences between the various models of tape recorder. If you are in any doubt at all about the correct methods you should use to clean the components on the deck of your tape recorder, then refer to the instruction manual and, if need be, consult a competent service engineer.

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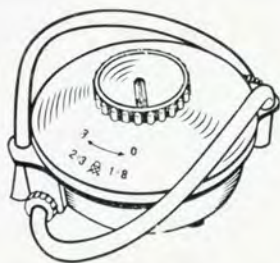
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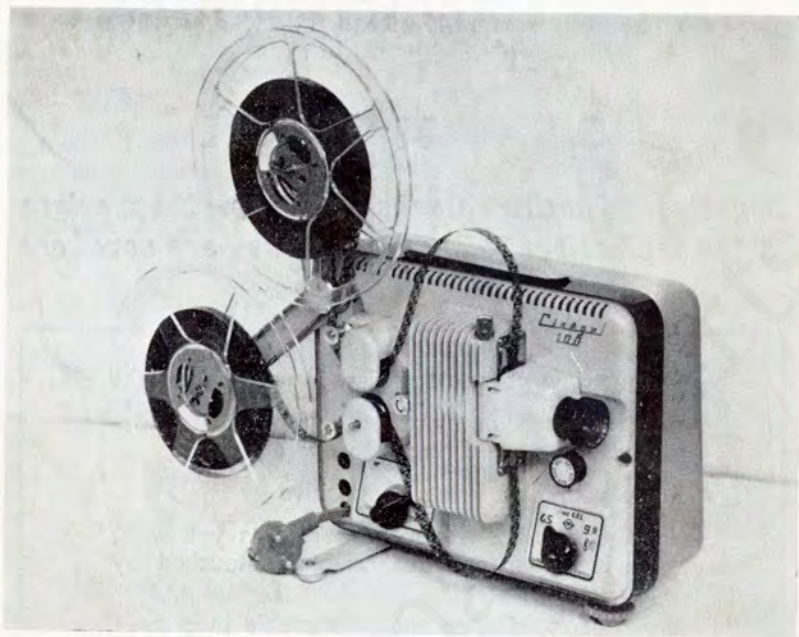
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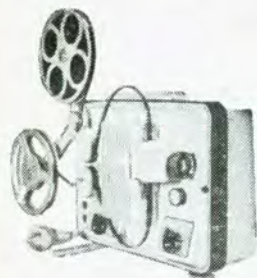
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