

CATALOGUING COMMISSION

The Cataloguing Commission will hold its next meeting in late April 1981 in London. The meeting will be jointly sponsored by the National Film Archive and the Imperial War Museum.

The major topics for discussion will be the completion of work on the bibliography of filmographies useful in film cataloguing work, the cataloguer's film term polyglot glossary, and international rules for film cataloguing.

We are happy to announce that the Executive Committee has approved the appointment of our new member, Ani Velchevska from the Bulgarska Nacionalna Filmoteka.

Library of Congress Update: Off-air cataloguing

The Library of Congress Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division (M/B/RS) conducted a pilot project to study the feasibility of off-air cataloging of television programs.

This was done because our archive was authorized by Congress under 1976 legislation to tape certain kinds of programs off the air for archival purposes. Programs of several types were selected for the experiment: a special-events program (Pope John Paul II's US visit); a studio "talk show"; a children's program; and a dramatic program.

While the programs were being viewed and taped, data sheets were prepared; from the data sheets we created the catalog records. We found that although this procedure was expedient, it yielded data that was sometimes incorrect, and often insufficient for proper cataloging. Credits ran by too fast to be transcribed. The broadcasting station often truncated the program, deleting credits and omitting parts of the title. The M/B/RS catalogers found that, in order to create an acceptable cataloging record, they had to supplement off-air data by consulting television reference sources and re-viewing portions of the tape. We tried various cataloging systems to determine what type of final record would be most useful. A log system was tested, as were the Library of Congress MARC (Machine Readable Cataloging) format, M/B/RS film cataloging format, and a newly proposed format designed expressly for television cataloging, comprising three possible levels of complexity. The catalogers found this system best suited to their purposes.

Besides making a case in favor of supplemented off-air cataloging, and use of the newly proposed television cataloging system, we recommend the use of a time-date generator as part of the taping process, to create in the tape a counting and location system analogous to "footage" in film. We also recommend that the off-air taping be done by an engineer, who would fill out simplified data sheets, noting title, date, network, station, and time of broadcast. The cataloger would receive the tape and data sheet and proceed with cataloging, to whatever level was required.

Copies of the recommended data sheets are available from Harriet Harrison, Head, Processing Section, M/B/RS

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