

INTERNATIONAL INDEX TO FILM PERIODICALS

90-94 Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W1V 7DH
tel: 01-734 4221

EDITOR'S REPORT

April 1986

1. Office

Last January Infodoc gave notice that they would not now be leaving their office until our lease expires on 30 Sept 1986.

We are now negotiating with the landlords over the terms of a renewal of the lease on the West offices from October 1986. We hope to have some firm news soon on the rent to be charged, so that if the increase is excessive we have time to look for a new office before the present lease expires.

2. Computer plans

In view of Infodoc's decision to stay, and the continuation of my investigation into the best possible system that we can afford for future fiche production, we decided to continue using Infodoc's computer for the 1986 service. The intention now is to delay the purchase of the computer until October when we shall either be enjoying a new lease in Shaftesbury Avenue, or installed in new offices elsewhere. We shall then have time to conduct trials on the new system and iron out any problems which may arise before inputting begins in January 1987.

We are at present considering a proposal from Oriel Computers which will provide us with an improved layout on the fiche, obtained direct from our computer output - thus dispensing altogether with cards. This will save time in card sorting, make for a fiche which is both easier to use and bears more entries, and be cheaper than the present system. It does however require software specially designed for the purpose and this will add a certain amount to the once-only initial costs.

3. Publicity

A revised PIP leaflet with order form is at present being printed. As soon as it is ready this and the FIAF leaflet will be sent to over 200 new names and addresses collected since the last mailing. In late May the BFI publicity department is sending out a mailing to about 2000 addresses in UK and overseas. We shall include both leaflets in this mailing which will go to academics, teachers, individuals, institutions, libraries etc.

In addition I hope to send the leaflets with a British National Film and Video Catalogue mailing to about 1000 addresses divided between educational journals, teacher training establishments, teachers' resource centres and UK public libraries.

St. James Press advertise the volumes on their own account by listing them in their general catalogue, and also on a separate leaflet publicising their film book series. Their publicity has a very extensive circulation world wide.

4. Sales and subscriptions

The subscription situation is fairly stable and has shown overall a slight increase in the last two years. In 1985 there were three cancellations, one film (Bibliothèque Malraux), two TV (Polytechnic of Wales and INA). There were three new TV subscriptions (Arizona State University, Tulane University and UK Open University) and one new subscriber to both film and TV (Harlow College of Higher Education).

In 1986 there has been one TV cancellation (Southern Illinois

University), two new TV subscriptions (Barcelona and Madison University, USA) and one new film (Rio de Janeiro).

The position on book sales, which is of course crucial, is very complex. When we entered into the arrangement with St James Press we knew the first few years would be difficult, until increased sales compensated for the loss of income represented by the commission earned by St James. Factors unknown at that time were 1. the unpopularity in the USA of the paperback volume, 2. the unreliability of the US standing orders list. Of the 300 copies of the 1983 edition sent out in the USA 75 were returned because it was in paperback, and over 75 because the standing order had been cancelled. Eventually other buyers wrote to discover why they had not been sent the volume...

St James have worked hard to rectify this confusion and this has now paid off. 291 copies of the 1984 volume have been sold in the USA as of last week and we are faced with another, but more welcome problem: how many copies should be reprinted.

I am confident that given time the budget figure for sales of the volumes will be reached.