



WEDNESDAYS AT THE MOVIES

Film Brockville

By Russ Disotell

For film lovers a trip to the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) would be a dream comes true. The world comes to TIFF and it is the Canadian cinematic Nirvana. Unfortunately with travel, logistics and cost it remains just a dream for most. Imagine if there was a way for TIFF to come to Brockville. Actually you don't have to imagine, there's Film Brockville.

"We bring the film festival to you", says Dale Chisamore, the driving force behind this incarnation of Film Brockville. The original Film Brockville began when there was no movie theater in Brockville and filled the movie-going gap by showing first run movies once a month at the Brockville Arts Centre. Dale joined the volunteer group 5 years into its existence. This group disbanded 9 years ago when the Brockville Galaxy Cinema opened.

It soon became apparent to Chisamore that there was still a need for Film

Brockville as many "art house" films weren't making their way to the city. "The Galaxy is in the money-making business and it's understandable that some movies don't meet their criteria", says Chisamore. That's where Film Brockville comes in.

They are a member of the Film Circuit, a branch of TIFF that was created 20 years ago. "There are hundreds of members, from coast to coast, volunteer groups that run films. It provides our communication with the distributors of films", is the way Dale describes it. "We can only screen films that find distributors. This is probably less than half the films that screen at TIFF." The gap between when a film runs at TIFF and when it might screen here is anywhere from 6 months to a year.

Films run twice a month on Wednesdays, from September to May, with a break in December, at the Galaxy Cinema on Parkedale Avenue. Showtime is 7:30 p.m. with the cost being \$9.00, cash only. "For

8 years prices were \$8.00, which covered the bills", says Dale, "But we've been forced to raise them, although it's still a very good deal".

Film Brockville has a web page (www.filmbrockville.ca) and a Facebook page (www.facebook.com/filmbrockville). The web page includes a schedule and brief descriptions of each film. It also includes a link to join their e-mail contact list. At one point the contact list included 1,000 names, but after recent anti-spam legislation it shrank to 250. "We sent out consent forms for members to fill out, but many didn't realize this was necessary to remain on the list." Dale points to a recent encounter, "I met a former member who said he was sad the group had discontinued showing films. It turns out he forgot to fill out the consent form."

The group also believes in giving back to the community. There is an Alzheimer's Society fund-raiser every year that raises approximately \$500. "We usually try to pick a film with a theme that relates to the issue." There is also a donation jar on the ticket table for the Food Bank. This results in an annual donation of \$500 to \$600.

"Film Brockville has a great lineup of quality films, there is something for everyone", Dale enthuses, "Movie lovers should go to our web-site and join us at the Galaxy." So, seen any good movies lately? **LH**

