

Managing Slaley Film Club

This document covers the following aspects of running a Film Club for Slaley:

- Showing and selecting films
- Planning the programme
- Running the shows
- Managing money
- Donations

And some checklists!

All these tasks need not be carried out by a single person or group, and they could be easily managed by several different people collaborating together.

Showing films in the Hall

To begin with, this is not a club requiring membership – most people just turn up on the night and despite appeals, we never know how many people will actually arrive!

Showing films in the Commemoration Hall requires two things (apart from the projection equipment, and a DVD or BluRay disc):

- A licence for the Hall to allow **any** films to be shown.
- A licence for **each** film to be shown to an audience.

The first is provided by the Hall management, while the second is a “Single Title Screening Licence” (STSL). This allows you to show a film in a public setting on a per screening basis. With an STSL, you may also charge ticket admission and advertise your screenings.

STSL licensing is arranged via the Queen’s Hall in Hexham, which coordinates requests from the various film clubs and deals with licensing through FilmBank. They also subsidise the licensing costs, although these have increased since 2004 and for most of our shows are currently £52.17 per film. Without the subsidy, we could well be paying around £100 per film.

FilmBank was established in 1986 to handle non-theatrical distribution (public screenings outside of traditional cinema and home viewing), and now represent many of the leading Hollywood, Bollywood and independent studios and distributors in over 100 countries internationally.

Selecting films

The choice of films has usually been made by a small group of interested people. We don’t feel that a large selection committee is a good basis for choosing a film programme. Our aim has always been to include a wide variety of films and to introduce people to some that they might not otherwise think of seeing.

A complete record of all films shown since September 2004 is available if you are interested.

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It's a good idea to start planning the programme early (May or June) and aim to complete selection by July (to allow for booking via the Queen's Hall). For ideas & reviews, try newspapers, or online at:

Rotten Tomatoes (www.rottentomatoes.com)

The Movie Review Query Engine (www.mrqe.com)

The Guardian (www.theguardian.com/uk/film)

The Internet Movie Database (www.imdb.com)

or just Google!

We often tried to have a get-together in the summer to review and discuss film choices with those who are interested.

Programme planning

We normally showed one film a month, usually on the third Friday, and had a summer break with no films from June to August. This gives a programme of 8 films in all, but with occasional extra shows for special events (such as the March Tyne Valley Film Festival).

For each film being considered you need to check its availability from FilmBank (www.filmbank.co.uk); the Queen's Hall **only** arranges licenses from them.

In some cases (e.g. "Addicted to Sheep") it may be possible to book the license directly from the film producers, but this can cost up to £150.

The Queen's Hall now requires us to buy or borrow the discs for each performance, and it is often quite cheap to buy one online (used DVD or BluRay discs in "very good condition" are usually enough).

When films and dates have been selected, make the bookings for the Hall via the website or to Stella Douglas, and send the final list of films (by email) to the Queen's Hall. This currently goes to Lucy Dunlop (lucy.dunlop@queenshall.co.uk).

Publicity

When confirmed, publicise the new programme in the Slaley Newsletter, on the Slaley Parish website (slaley.org.uk), in Slaley Notes for the Courant, and by email to the subscriber's list. The Slaley website uses a package (RocketSpark) that makes editing quite straightforward, and Stella or Michael can offer assistance.

Running the shows

We arrange for posters to be prepared about a week before, and print laminated A4 copies to be displayed on the two boards put up at the western end of the village, and outside the Hall. These boards are now needing repainting or replacing. We also distribute A5 copies to the Shop and the two pubs if possible.

Setting up the Hall is usually done in the afternoon, and involves putting out tables, chairs, glasses, etc. for around 30-40 people. See the checklists below for more details.

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In the past we used to provide supper, cooked by a volunteer, and we felt that this made the evening more attractive and more of a social event. More recently we have switched to asking people to “bring a plate to share”, and most are now happy with this.

Money and payments

We normally accept payments in cash or by card at the Hall on the night, with a cashbox to keep cash safely. For card payments, we now have a Zettle card-reader, which needs an accompanying tablet or mobile device to log in to this payment system.

It is also possible to accept bookings online, and the existing film web page provides a link to enable people to fill in a form that will generate an email to the organisers. This provides names, an email address, and number of tickets required - which can help planning.

Our costs, in addition to film hire, are the hiring fee for the Hall (currently £48 for 4 hours), the cost of purchasing the DVD or BluRay disc, and expenses for providing suppers and purchasing raffle prizes.

Payments for hall hire and film licensing are managed by Stella Douglas (email: stellacdouglas@gmail.com, tel: 673001), and card transactions via Zettle go direct to the Film Club account. Cash taken at the Hall can be used to pay any costs for DVD purchase, raffle prizes, etc. The remainder is then delivered to Stella.

Stella Douglas handles the following payments:

- Hall hire charge (4 x £12 = £48)
- Film hire charge (currently £52.17)
- Pay DVD, raffle and catering expenses from cash taken (if possible)
- Finally, report audience numbers to Lucy Dunlop (lucy.dunlop@queenshall.co.uk) at the Queen’s Hall.

Donations

The other thing we have done over the years is making donations to support charities, disaster appeals, and other organisations (such as the Commemoration Hall). This is done by donating some or all of the evening’s profits, with a show of hands on the night to agree this. Since 2004 we have given a total of **£2,542.89** in this way, and we hope that this could continue.

Checklists

Each month:

- Prepare publicity (Slaley notes, Slaley website, posters).
- Send out details via email to the subscribers list.
- Prepare posters, decide if raffle is needed.
- Decide on food theme & supplies for catering.

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- Put up posters & display boards the weekend before the show.

Each show night:

- Check arrangements (who's projecting, taking money, cooking etc.).
- Count the cashbox contents (form in the box) & record first Raffle ticket number.
- Set up the Zettle card reader for use (requires a tablet, laptop or mobile to display and select payments).
- Set up tables, chairs, glasses, etc. for around 30-40 people.
- Move the A/V cabinet from the storeroom to its position near the wall sockets.
- If possible, check the DVD in the Hall equipment before the show!
- Set up projector & DVD (detailed instructions provided).
- Draw raffle during the interval (keep takings separate)
- Record the size of the audience

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After the show:

- Turn the projector off, let it cool down; then raise the screen, close and lock the cabinet, and wheel it back into the storeroom.
- Check & record catering expenses.
- Note final raffle ticket number.
- Count final cash total (including raffle).
- Subtract initial total to give amount taken.
- Check this against numbers (adults & under-16) and raffle receipts.
- Later, take down posters and boards!

Past history

Slaley Film Club started out in 2004, inspired by the Queen's Hall "Screen 1" initiative led by Christo Wallers. Since then we have had 18 successful seasons, thanks to the continued support of Queen's Hall Arts and our loyal audience.

Over these years, we have shown 149 films, with an audience ranging from 11 to 63, with an average of 27.

In October 2008 the Hall had its own equipment (projector, amplifier, DVD player and screen) installed by the Queen's Hall staff; we provided some £350 of this cost from our accumulated profits.

Later in 2018, we received a grant of £5,200 from the National Lottery, along with other grants and our own funds, to update the Hall Audiovisual system at a total cost of around £7200.