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A mixed economy: 9.5mm in Ciné-Club Environments Crystal Productions –
Bournemouth Film club

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A Mixed Economy: 9.5mm in Ciné-Club Environments
Crystal Productions – Bournemouth Film club

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University of West London



Pictured: Pathéscope 9.5mm reels for projection



Research Context: Ciné-Clubs

- Ciné-clubs as sites of democratisation
- Access to equipment, skills, and networks
- Growth in interwar Britain

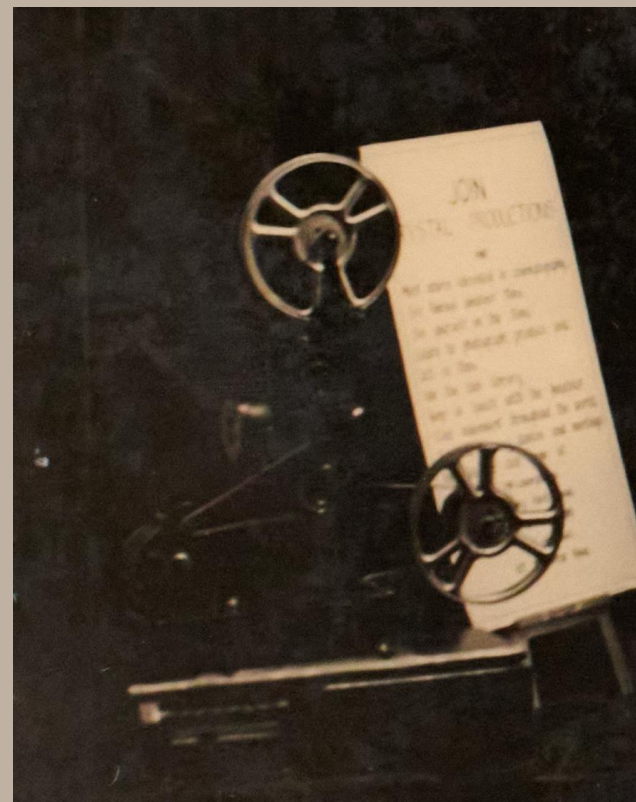


Research Focus

- Crystal Productions as case study
- Role of 9.5mm film
- Affordability, access, collaboration

A Mixed Economy

- Borrowed, sponsored, and purchased equipment
- Strategic gauge choices
- Shared resources



Images L-R

- Advert for Baby Ciné in *The Daily Mail*, 4 December 1926, p.19.
- Pathescope H (Courtesy WFSA)
- Crystal Productions 9.5mm projector (Courtesy WFSA)
- Closed canister of 9.5mm for projection (Courtesy WFSA).

Ciné-Clubs and Democratisation

- Growth after 1922
- Narrow-gauge film
- Inter-class participation



Screen stills from *Retribution* (AV14/10), 1930

Bournemouth Amateur Film Society.

On Thursday last the Technical Committee held their first club meeting which was well attended by members. The evening was devoted to tuition in **ciné** technique and acting tests, under the direction of Mr. E. A. Guidotti, ably assisted by Mr. R. G. Torrens, who acted as cameraman and also arranged the lighting. Members will have an opportunity of seeing themselves on the screen at the next meeting of the series on Thursday, July 24th.

On Sunday afternoon a party of acting members spent an enjoyable time at Sandbanks, when a short comedy was "shot."

A tennis club is being formed by the social committee, and members and friends are invited to get in touch with the hon. secretary, Miss G. De Coninck, Flandris, Uplands-road, **Bournemouth**, who will forward particulars to all interested. A court at Dean Park is being reserved for the use of members.

Mr. J. Grime, the hon. secretary, being unable to give the necessary time to the work, Mr. G. F. Mapp, 44, Portchester-road, **Bournemouth**, has consented to take over his duties.

Swanage Times & Directory - Friday 18 July 1930 p.2

The Affordability Debate



lowest possible running costs

YOU will appreciate that it's the running costs that count in amateur cinematography. Consider them carefully before buying your outfit. Compare the cost of Pathéscope apparatus with other makes, bearing in mind that Pathéscope film costs only 2/7 per reel taking over 1,000 pictures.

PATHÉSCOPE
Pioneers of Home Cinematography. LTD.
5, Lisle Street, LONDON, W.C.2.

Write for full particulars of apparatus and name of nearest dealer.

Advert in Cinematography For Amateurs, 1930

'You will appreciate that it's the running costs that count in amateur cinematography. Consider them carefully before buying your outfit. Compare the cost of Pathéscope apparatus with other makes [...]'

Advert in Cinematography For Amateurs, 1930

'Inexpensive – yes; many a toy costs far more.'

The Times, 29 May 1925, p.11

'Making 'movies' has a fascination all of its own, and with the Baby Ciné it is a very inexpensive hobby'

The Times, 29 July, 1925, p.19



A Seaside Holiday in Grandfather's day

was incomplete without that orthodox souvenir, the daguerreotype photograph. Rigid, austere—lifeless.

Came the nineties, and snapshots. Pictures that were at least lifelike.

And now comes the **Baby Ciné**—pictures that are living! A wonderful motion-picture camera, so simple that a child can use it, yet by no means a toy. Small—yes. Inexpensive—yes; many a toy costs far more. But fully efficient and built to last.

"Baby Ciné" CAMERA

Obtainable from all Photographic Dealers

The Camera costs only **£7-10-0**
The price of the Projector is **£6-15-0**
Films for Camera (to take 1,200 pictures) 2/3 each

PRODUCTS OF PATHÉ CINEMA, PARIS


Pathé of France Ltd

5, LISLE STREET, LONDON, W.C.2.



The Times, 29 May 1925, p.11

Pathé and 9.5mm



**The BELL HOWELL
AMATEUR CINE
CAMERA**

takes perfect motion pictures by the mere pressure of a button. Simple to use—no tuition necessary. No more expensive than taking ordinary snapshots. Used by H.R.H. The Prince of Wales and the elite throughout the World. Write for illustrated Price Lists to Dept.

Wallace Heaton Ltd.
119 New Bond Street, London, W.1.
Phone: Mayfair 2066.

ROOD & CO. LTD.

Over half a century's reputation for Value.

FINE JEWELS

52-53, BURLINGTON ARCADE, LONDON, W.1.
Jewels purchased, valued, exchanged & re-mounted.

Bell and Howell advert in *The Times*, 30 April 1927, p.10

'No more expensive than taking ordinary snapshots'

The Times, 30 April 1927, p.10

'...costs only...'

The Illustrated London News, 14 November 1925, p.975

'Now only
£5
complete'



**The
"Baby Cine"
Ideal
HOME CINEMA**

A product of Pathé Cinema of Paris.

"Baby Cine" brings into your home all the fun of the cinema—comedy and drama, sport and travel, and films on every topic are at your call—when and where you please. Over 1,000 reels to choose from.

So simple a child can work it—and it's safe—the "Baby Cine" films are guaranteed non-flammable.

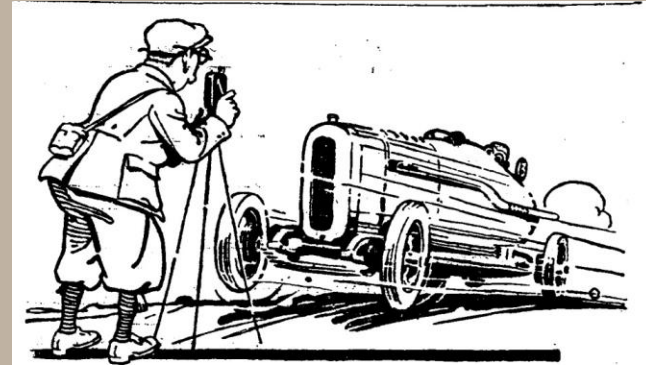
See Yourself on the Screen!
Using a Baby Cine Camera is as easy as snapshotting.

**NOW ONLY
£5
COMPLETE**

"Baby Cine" Library Films ONLY 3/6 each. Will not be exchanged or sold for a few pence. Stocked by over 1,000 Photo Dealers. Write for nearest APPROVED DEALER.

PATHÉ OF FRANCE, LTD.,
25, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C. 4.

The Daily Mail, 4 December 1926, p.19



Every kind of movement, barring the Oxford movement and the first movement of "The Unfinished Symphony," is faithfully recorded by the

"Baby Cine" CAMERA

Making 'movies' has a fascination all its own, and with the **Baby Cine** it is a very inexpensive hobby. Which fact, plus the remarkable simplicity and efficiency of the outfit, explains its great and growing popularity.

This wonderful little moving picture maker is just as easy to use as any snapshot camera. And how much more interesting it is to record your children's doings—your holidays, your sports—in living pictures.

Obtainable from all Photographic Dealers

The Camera, inclusive of Tripod and Leather Camera Case, costs - - - - - £7-10 and the Projector £6-15. Films (to take over 1000 pictures, equal to 90 feet of standard film) are non-flammable and cost 3/4 each. Refills: 2/7 each. Your photographic dealer will develop and reverse your films for 2/- each.

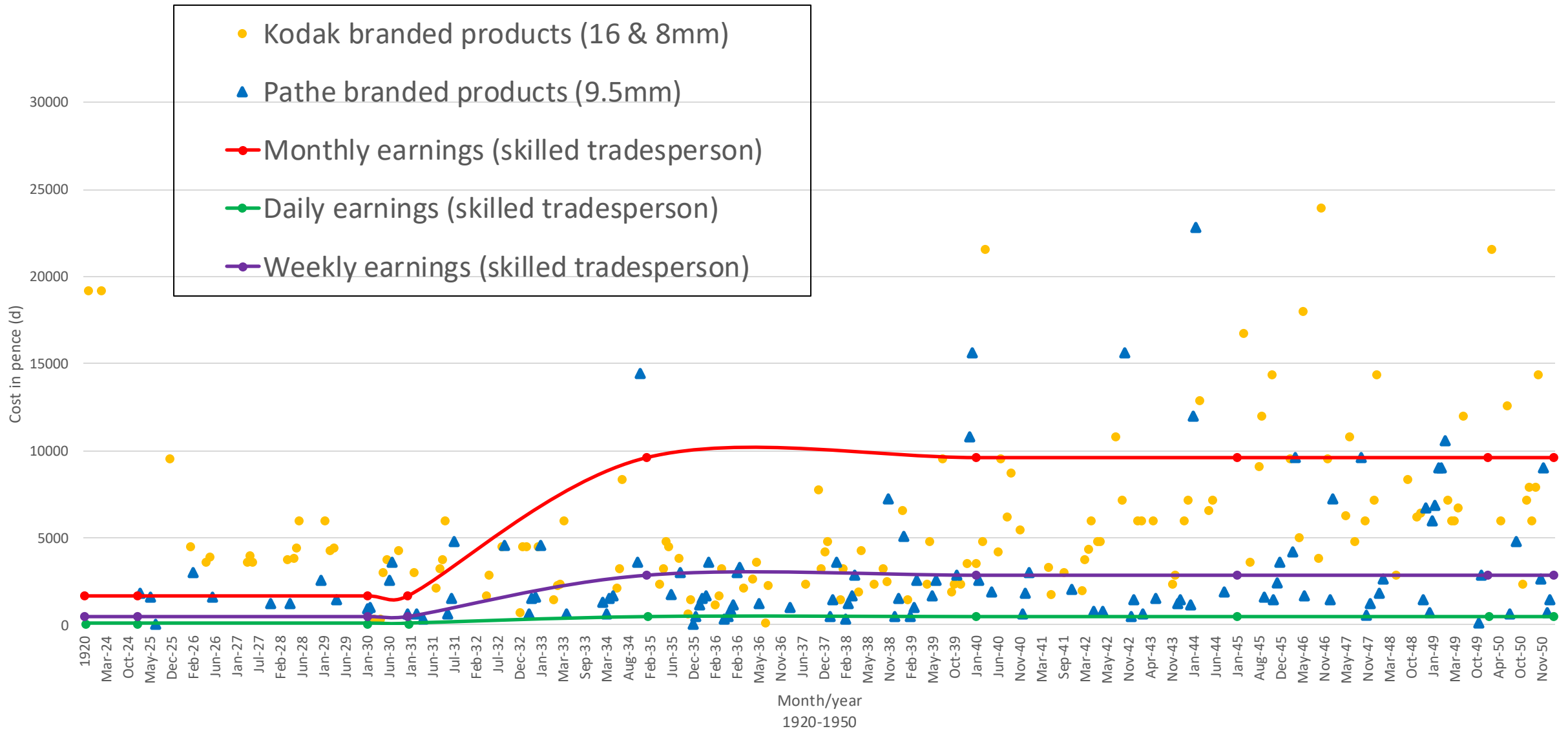
PRODUCTS OF PATHÉ
CINEMA, PARIS

Pathé of France Ltd.

5, LISLE STREET
LONDON W.C.2.

The Times, 29 July 1925, p.19

Cine Equipment Costs: Kodak & Pathe branded goods 1920-1950

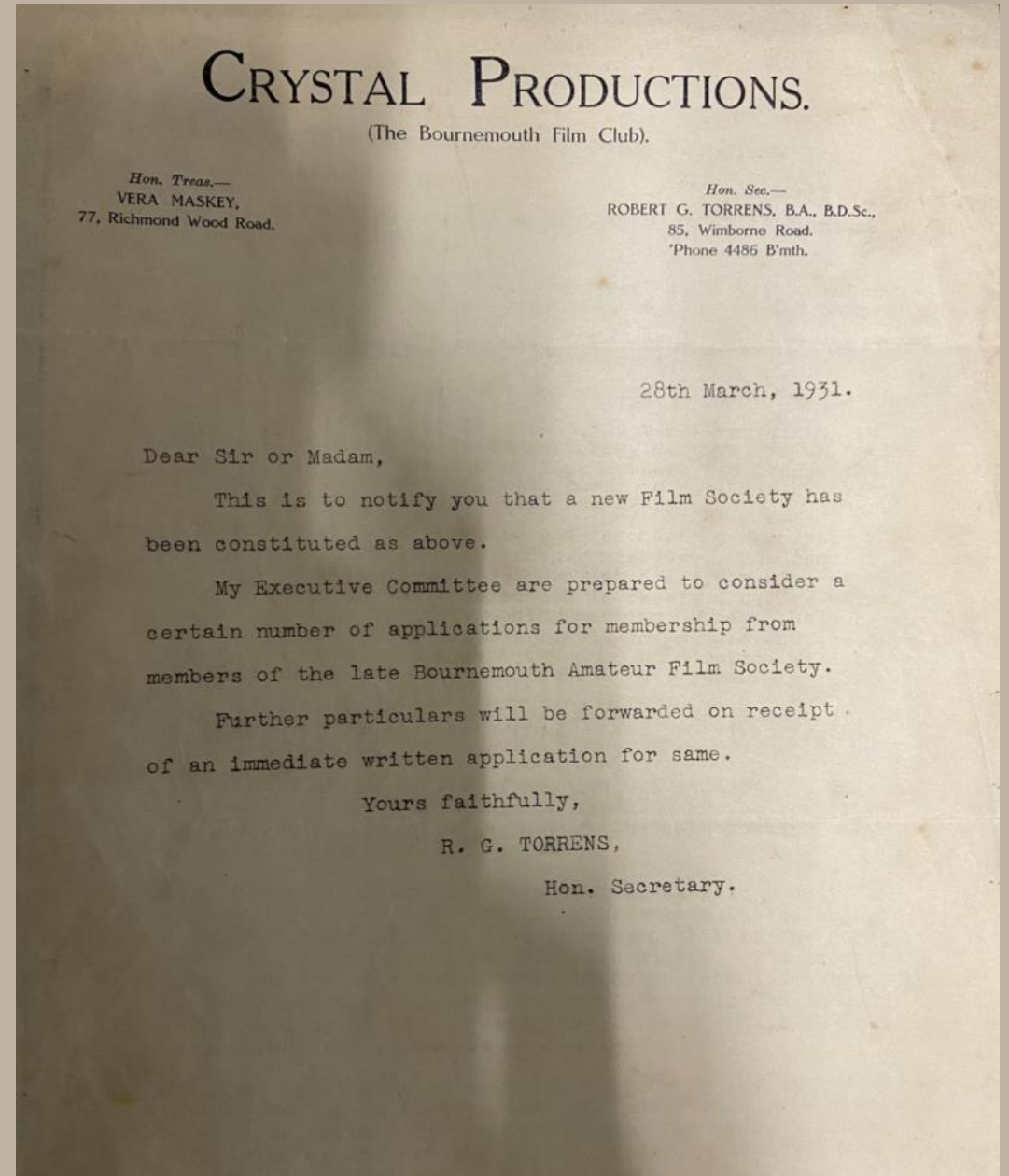


Crystal Productions

Excerpts from the constitution:

*'(a) To produce films, plays and other material for the screen and stage
(b) To arrange meetings for the private of public entertainment in accordance with the wishes of its members.'*

'Any group members may form themselves into a unit for the production of material in accordance with the objects of the Club.;[...]



Constitution letter as contained in scrapbook AV14/D1 (Courtesy WFSa)

Club Finances

- Minimal capital
- Home-based meetings
- Shift from 16mm to 9.5mm

the Projector
complete with
pace - 12 1/2 ins.
ins. deep.
super reel arm
er PATHÉSC

24 "Rolling Along"

Holiday Shots on Norfolk
Broads, by Eric C. Notley

--- 000 ---

JOIN CRYSTAL PRODUCTIONS
THE BOURNEMOUTH FILM CLUB

The finest value for money
Club in the town!

CRYSTAL PRODUCTIONS

The Bournemouth Film Club.

Membership Ticket.

Admit

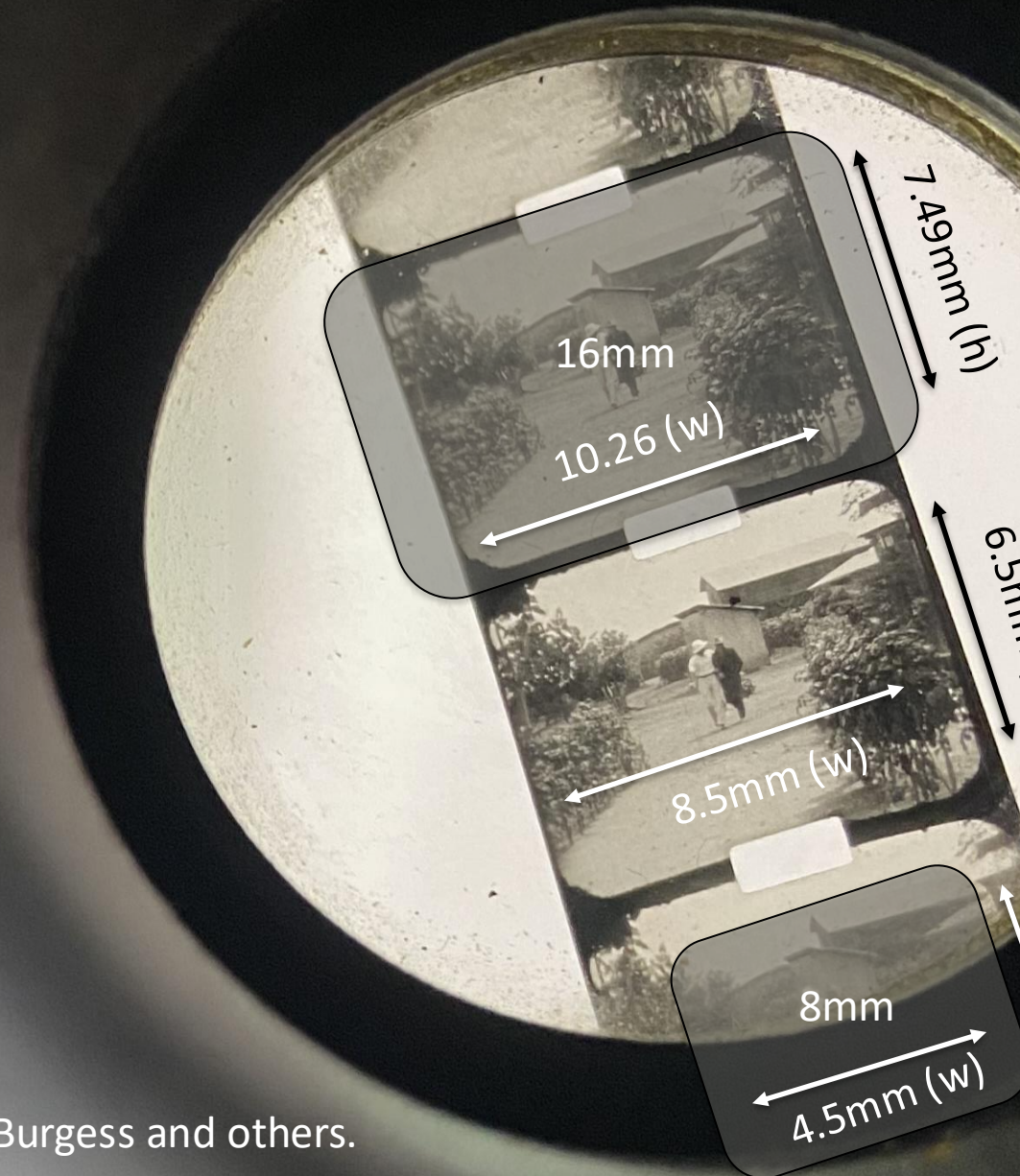
During 193

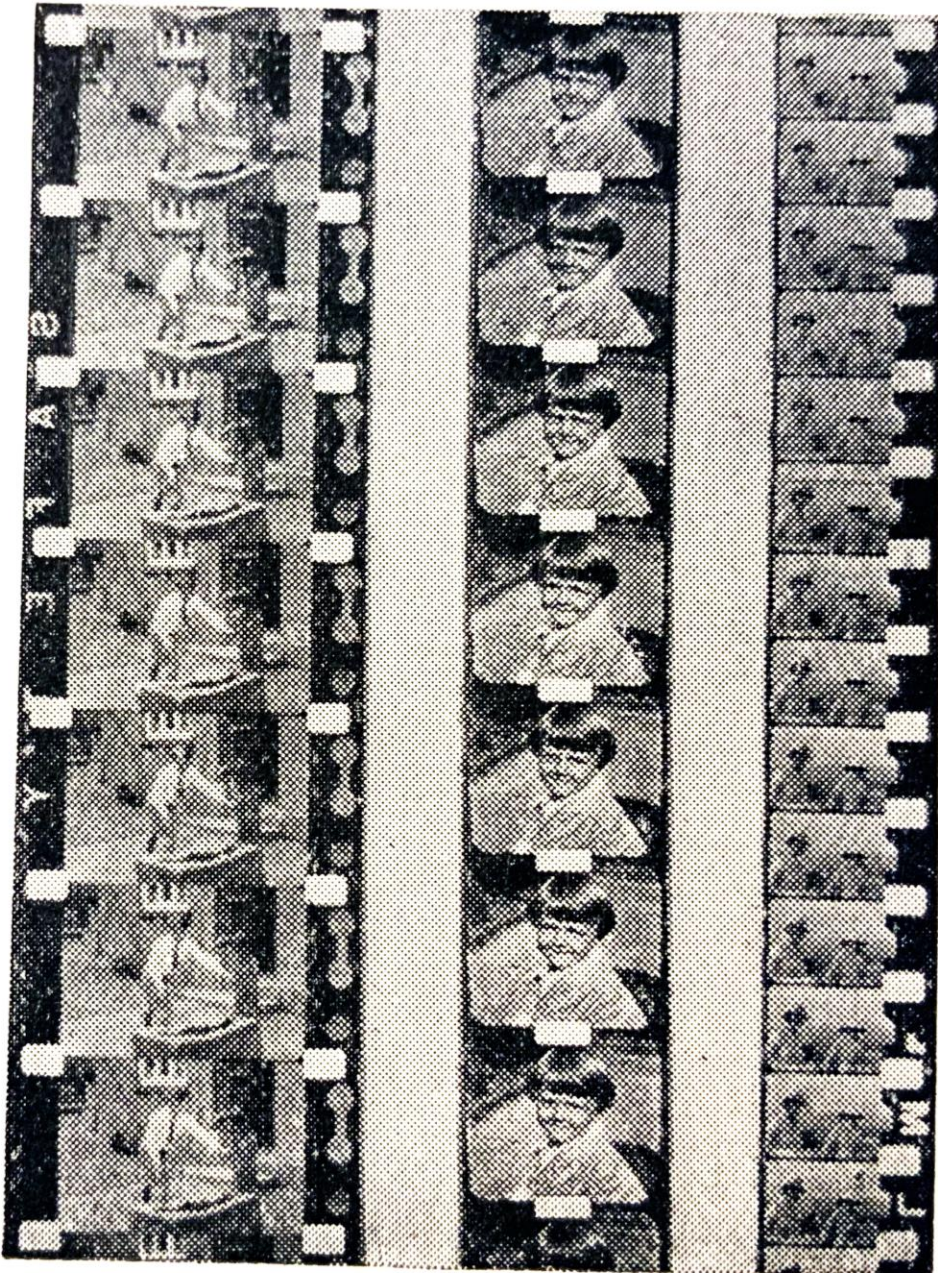
1/- month. Introduced by 10/- year.

Why 9.5mm?

- Cheaper than 16mm
- Comparable frame size
- Economical film use

Frame size references: MacIntosh, Abbott, Burgess and others.





Gauge

Frame width

Frame height

16mm

10.26

7.49mm

9.5mm

8.5mm

6.5mm

8mm

4.5mm

3.3mm

* Pathé manuals quote 8.5 x 6.5mm frame dimensions for 9.5mm, whereas MacIntosh (2000) gives 8.5x6.04. Pathé quotes 10.5x7.62 for 16mm, however myriad modern sources agree on 10.26x7.49mm.

Burgess (2025)

Image comparing 16mm, 9.5mm and 8mm film strips.
Abbott, the Complete 9.5mm Cinematographer (1935)



Membership Demographics

- Broad social mix
- Employed women participants
- More diverse than lone filmmakers



JOIN
CRYSTAL
PRODUCTIONS

THE
BOURNEMOUTH
FILM
CLUB



Gender and Access

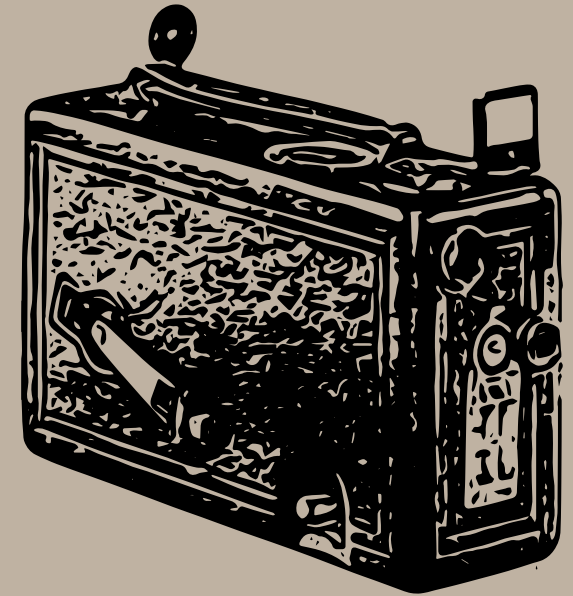
- Inclusive membership
- Production costs limited key roles
- Finance shaped authority

Creativity and Experimentation

- Shared risk
- Sponsored experimentation
- Conservative self-funded work



9.5mm Pathé Baby



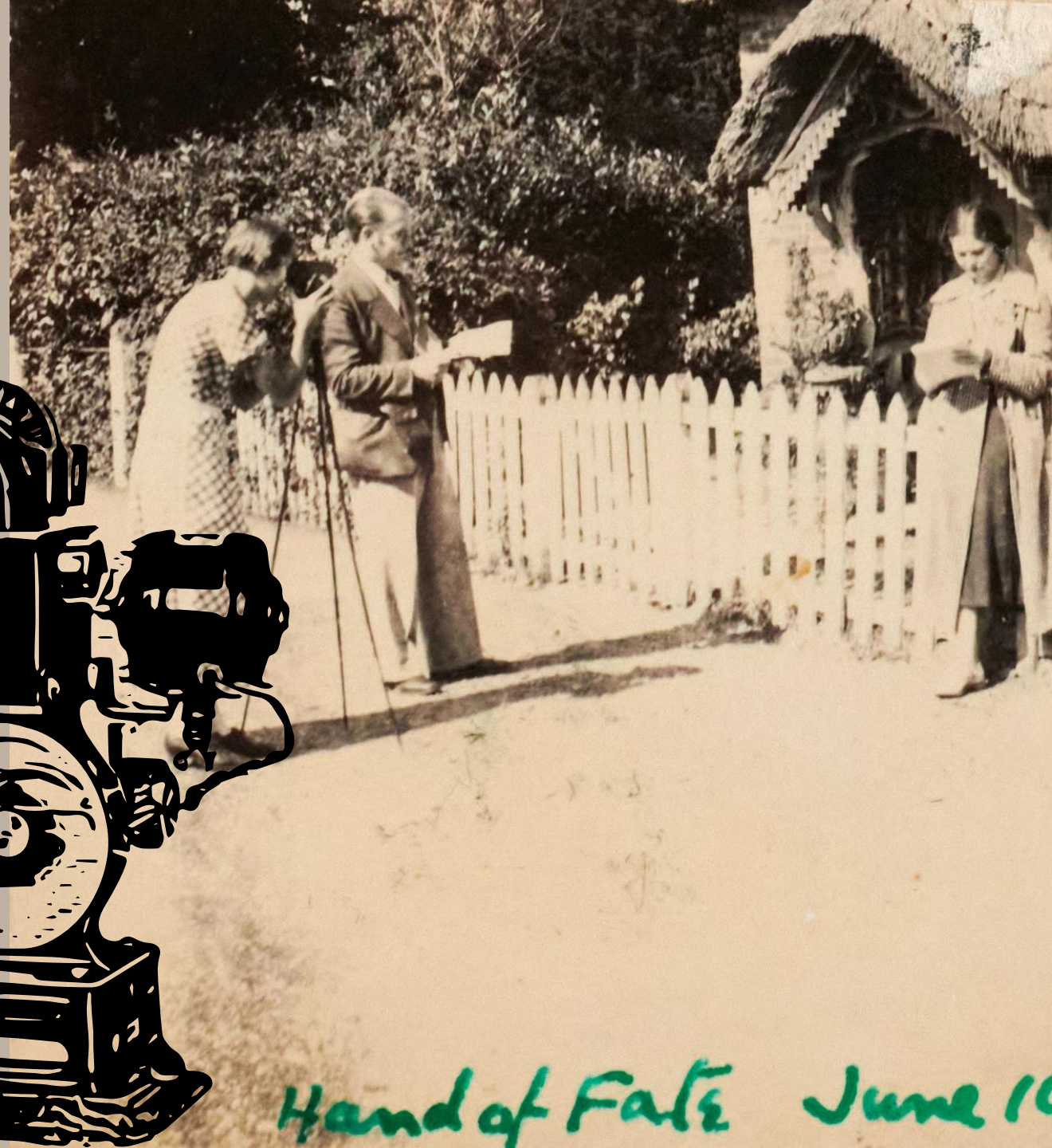
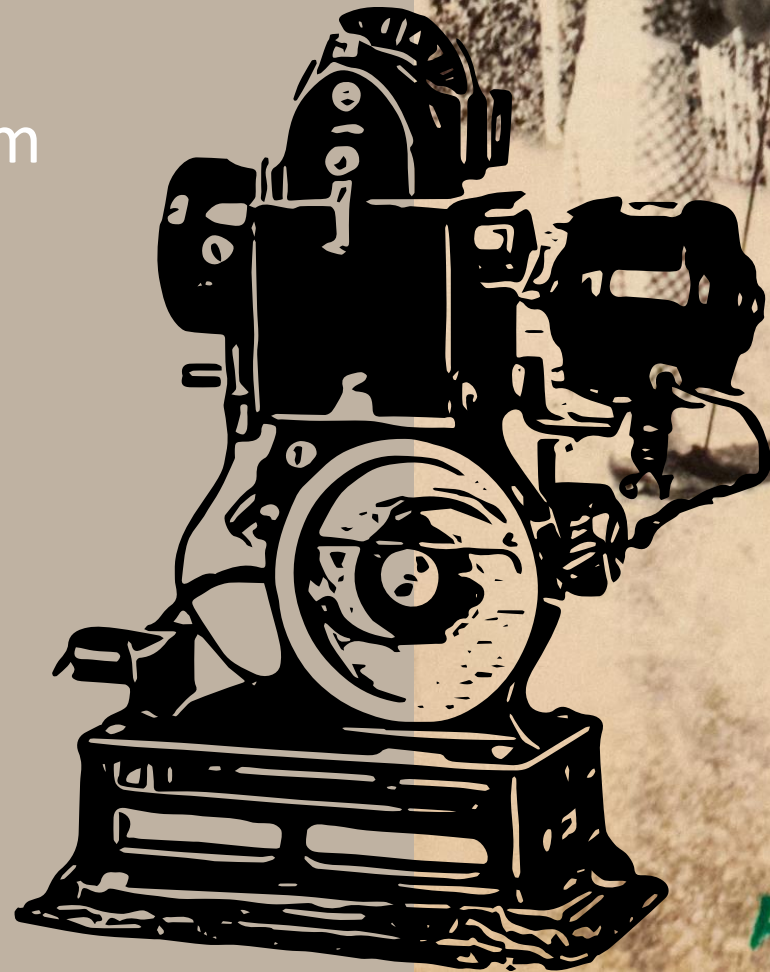
Cine Kodak 16mm



Screen stills from *Where Bournemouth Dances* (AV14/6), 1930

Rethinking Amateur Film

- Not exclusively elite
- UK-specific context
- Importance of 9.5mm



Right: Pathéscope projector
Far right: Dora Phillips pictured behind
the camera on *The Hand of Fate*, with
Robert Torrens (AV14/2) Courtesy
WFSa.

A black and white illustration of a man in profile, wearing a hat and a suit, holding a vintage camera. In the background, a woman is holding a young child. The style is a high-contrast, woodcut-like illustration.

Conclusions

- 9.5mm enabled sustainability
- Supported democratic practice
- Calls for archival re-evaluation

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AV14/D1 Scrapbook of R G Torrens of Bournemouth | WFSA/Item. 1931.

Filmography

All within the collection of Wessex Film and Sound Archive

Where Bournemouth Dances (1931) (AV14/6)

Retribution (1931) (AV14/10)

The Hand of Fate, directed by Robert Torrens (1933) (AV14/2)

The Broken Swastika (1932) (AV14/4)

BAFS Screen Tests and Dramas (1930) (AV/12)

Bournemouth Through the Guidebook & Words (1932) AV14/1)

Films shared courtesy of



**Wessex Film &
Sound Archive**