

In Memoriam – Mark Harrison (1968 – 2021)



With great sadness we report that former Chairman of Stafford Film Theatre Mark Harrison has died, aged 52.

Mark will be remembered by past and present members as a mainstay of the film theatre over many years. For over twenty years he gave dedicated service to the delivery and presentation of good films in Stafford.

Many will remember him as the cheerful face of the Film Theatre before each of our film presentations, introducing the film, updating members with the latest events and holding the raffle.

He saw the transition from Stafford Film Society to the Stafford Film Theatre that we know today. We moved from the Malcolm Edwards Theatre to the Gatehouse and from 16mm to 35mm and then on to Digital media and he played a major part in those changes.

He threw himself enthusiastically into helping to organise a number of the film festivals and viewing sessions which we ran. Until the later years, he could always be found holding the fort on film nights until the rest of us arrived!

His taste in films was eclectic.... horror films being a particular favourite. He saw, and could recall, hundreds of films he had seen, the artists and the intricate detail of storylines and productions. He relished attending the film viewing sessions that were held nationally twice a year, where representatives of film societies could preview the excellent but little known films to be brought back for subsequent seasons.

His love of drama, acting and films was perfectly exemplified in the roles he frequently obtained as a film extra. These were a side-line to his main work and he would use his annual holiday in order to take part. His stories from the sets and the roles he often played - especially representing police officers, for which he was eminently qualified to do – would amuse us for hours when we went to socialise in the pub after our film nights.

In recognition of his services to Stafford Film Theatre he was awarded a Life Membership.

Mike Loveless, Committee Member, Stafford Film Theatre

Personal Note from Mike Loveless:

After he developed ill health particularly with his eye condition, he found it increasingly difficult to maintain such an active role in the Film Theatre. Although he drifted away from us in later years, it was always a topic for conversation when we met in the street... How was it going? What were we showing? and so on.

His personal life suffered many setbacks, more perhaps than many of us have or will experience, but he was always stoic in the face of adversity and great company to be with.

I will miss him.