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PORN—UNDER THE BED

THE National Library of Australia's 'Last Film Search' has so far yielded 450,000 feet of historic film (the equivalent of 60 modern feature films). The search launched in October last year is now to be continued until 1986.

The purpose of the search is to locate Australia's 'lost' silent and early sound films before the nitrate film stock on which they were printed decomposes. The search has attracted considerable attention both in Australia and overseas and, as a unique project, is being closely watched by national film archives abroad.

Only one of the silent feature films known to be missing has been found in the search. This film, 'The Adorable Outcast', made in 1928, is by far the most significant of the year's finds. It was discovered in the United States by the American Film Institute, which is co-operating in the search.

Hundreds of short films, both professional and amateur, and fragments of other lost treasures have come to light. They range



from home movies of the poet 'Banjo' Paterson at his daughter's wedding in 1931 and the unveiling of the Gundagai's Dog-on-the-Tuckerbox 50 years ago, to personal movies of Federal and State politicians and the first hard-core pornographic film to be received into the archive.

The pornographic film, which a Sydney woman found under her bed, is believed to

The 'Last Film Search' field officer, Mr. Michael Cordell, centre, discusses some of the historic films that have been found with the Director of the National Library's film section, Mr. Ray Edmondson, left, and the National Film Archivist, Mr. Mike Lynskey.

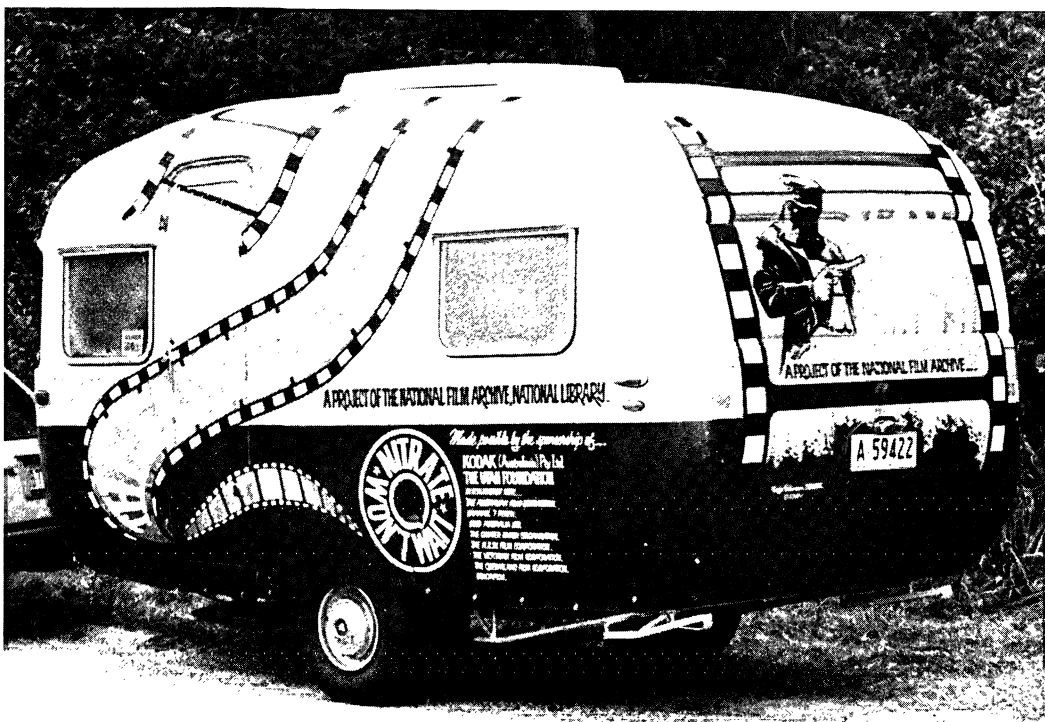
— National Library of Australia photograph

have been made between 1925 and 1934. It is definitely Australian and is described by archivists as 'gross' and 'surprising for its period'.

More than a quarter of the film footage found to date has come from Queensland, and a field officer, Mr Michael Cordell, is currently making a three-month search in that state in a special caravan which serves as accommodation, mobile office and film inspection room.

The Director-General of the National Library, Mr Harrison Bryan, says, 'The Last Film Search to date has been an unqualified success in terms of the quantity of material found, the significance of the finds and the way in which it has raised national awareness of the urgency of film preservation'.

It will be some considerable time before all the films are properly identified and copied on to safety-based stock, but the archive is being given additional staff to cope with the volume of the finds.



The specially decorated caravan in which the 'Last Film Search' field officer, Mr. Michael Cordell, is travelling around Australia. He is currently on a three-month tour of coastal and outback areas of Queensland. The caravan serves as living quarters, office and film inspection room.

— National Library of Australia photograph