

Chairman reflects before sabbatical

Beveridge entered film profession by chance

By WARREN CLEMENTS

When James Beveridge left Vancouver for London in 1939, he had every intention of getting into the publishing business.

He never made it. "I had countless letters of introduction," Beveridge recalled last week. "The first one I presented was to John Grierson of the GPO film unit."

"There was a blue flash, and I was into the movies. I never got to meet the publishers."

The 56-year old chairman of York's film department ("I prefer to think of it as being born in the year of the Russian Revolution"), Beveridge will end his five-year chairmanship this summer with a filming sabbatical for two months to Japan and for a year to India.

"I've felt a very strong need to renew my ties with the professional world," he explained. "I don't want to continue doing the same thing."

Beveridge's 1939 leap into professional film coincided with Grierson's founding of Canada's National Film Board, and until 1950, Beveridge worked on NFB documentaries from London to Ottawa. In 1954 he was given a free hand to develop Shell's public relations and information programme in India.

"We filmed 40 subjects based more or less on the film board style, India-made for Indian use. They had a film board, but we gave the impetus to private production and documentary work."

In 1962 Beveridge tried his hand at programming for the state of North Carolina under



Carlo Squassero, photo

Film chairman James Beveridge

"Kennedy liberal" Governor Sanford.

"We were somewhat involved in films of civil rights," he explained. "Then there was a change in the government: the liberals went out and so did I, one step ahead of the posse."

Expo '67 beckoned and Beveridge, at the head of his own production company, set up the multi-screen, animated live-action film for the theme pavillion Man in Control, in a special chamber "like the inside of the great pyramids."

His career in education began suddenly with an invitation to teach in the mean streets of lower east side New York, at New York University. And in 1969, he received a call from Joe Green of York's fledgling fine arts department, asking him to set up a film department. Theatre had already been running for a year; Beveridge set up film the same year as art; and the following year, dance and music followed.)

"The university financing was very buoyant at the start, for a euphoric three years with very decent financing. Those budgets are now either stationary or reduced, but I think we're well provided for as long as we don't lose any of our current funding."

The department is currently working on a graduate programme in film, but Beveridge admitted that it has only conditional approval from the province, and may take a year or two to start. The theatre and visual arts departments have already received official sanction.

Taking over from Beveridge as film chairman is John Katz, a teacher trained in film and education.

"We have established strong connections in a professional way with the Toronto film community," said Beveridge. "Now I am concerned that film study be fully acknowledged as a programme within the university."

"I would particularly like to see experimental work with the new faculty of education. Film is a language, one which reaches far into the con-

sciousness. It is now essential for educational purposes that serious theoretical attention be paid to this new language.

"People need to be literate in film. It's as valid, forceful and influential in modern attitudes as literature for many people."

"This goes far beyond the classroom film, into video-journalism, experimental, documentary, large areas we would like to work on."

"In this context, Katz is a good chairman for the next phase. He is a university man rather than a film professional, and we have plenty of film professionals to keep a good balance."

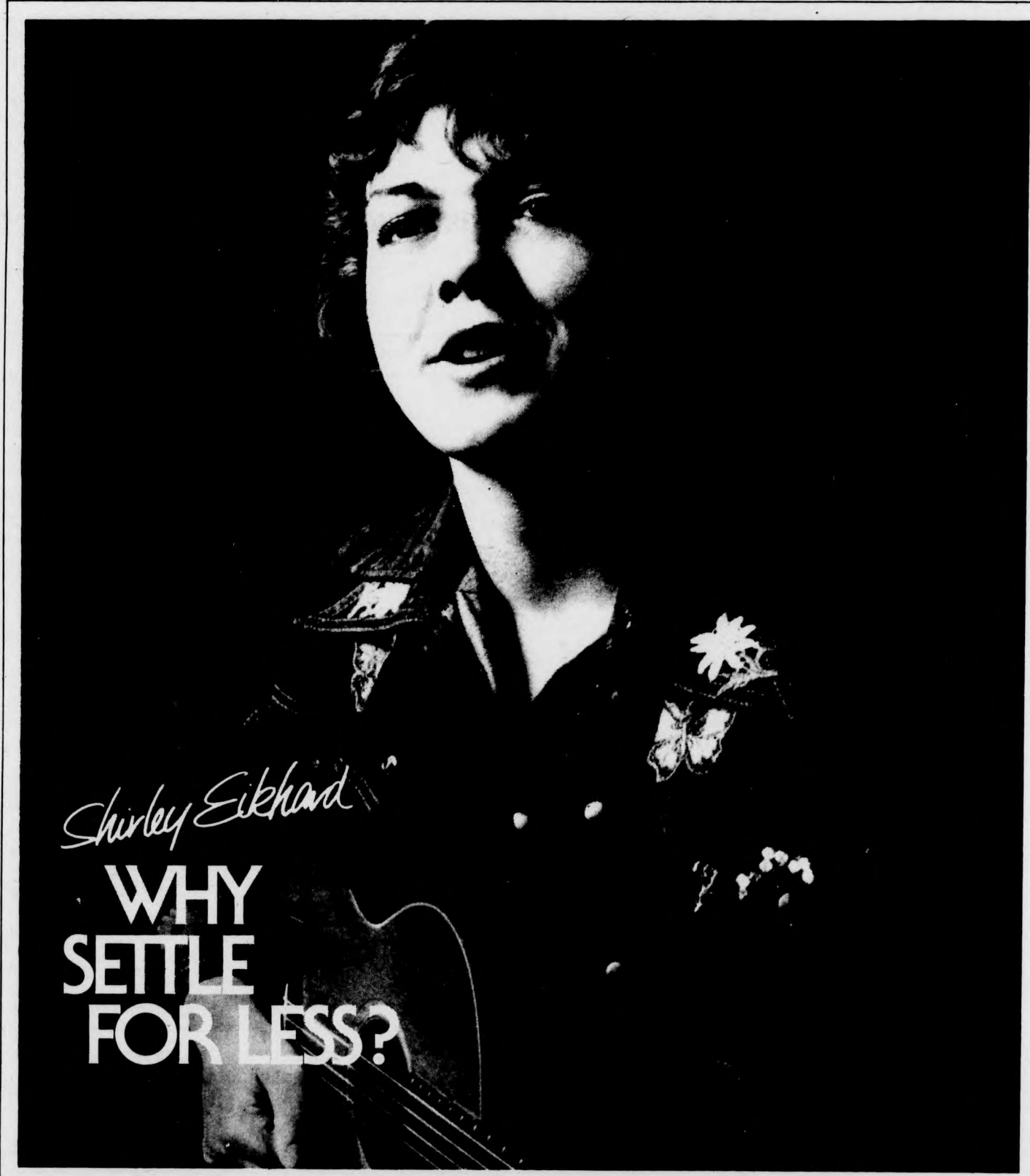
He expressed some worry at the emphasis put on the job situation in the film department.

"We're not a vocational training school and we're not a job placement school. We shouldn't lose sight of the fact that we're studying in a university context. We must put a strong emphasis on film content and purpose rather than pure technique, if we want to get anywhere in developing new areas of film growth."

"Admittedly if all our graduates are unemployed, it doesn't look good, but so far there's no worry."

On his return from sabbatical, Beveridge plans to do some work with the proposed graduate programme, develop a Canadian films studies course ("the feature film field is the most public and glamorous, but it's only a small part of what's going on in Canada"), and work on "other private enthusiasms."

GETTING A JOB THIS SUMMER?



Hi! I'm Shirley Eikhard. Because I'm young, the Youth Secretariat—our Channel 1 to the Ontario government—has asked me to remind you that there are many different jobs out there. Jobs that can open up whole new worlds. You can spend a few months

out in the open, working on a farm. Or get into mining, forestry, industry, or government. Contact your Student Placement Office or Canada Manpower Centre soon. And get yourself the best summer job around. Why settle for less?



Our Channel 1 to the Ontario government. The Honourable Dennis R. Timbrell, Minister without Portfolio.

New subway opens, transit schedules start falling apart

Because of the opening of the new Yonge/Finch subway station, new schedules are being circulated effective April 1, 1974, the date on which York buses commenced operations from the new subway station.

Due to an error in the timetable under Etobicoke Service, the Auxiliary Bus system personnel ask those in possession of this schedule to delete column 6, 10:15 to 11:30 pm run.

A new schedule of summer operations commencing April 29, 1974 will be circulated in the near future.

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