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Friday 10 July 2009

### **NFSA honours Ian Dunlop with film preservation award**

Internationally renowned Australian documentary filmmaker Ian Dunlop OAM has been announced as the 2009 recipient of the National Film and Sound Archive Award for Film Preservation, to coincide with NAIDOC Week.

Chief Executive Officer of the National Film and Sound Archive (NFSA), Dr Darryl McIntyre said the award was presented to Ian Dunlop in acknowledgement of his major contribution to the preservation of films of Australian Indigenous communities through his own work and his preservation and protection of the work of others.

“A pioneer of modern Australian visual anthropology, Ian documented traditional Aboriginal communities during a period of tremendous change and upheaval, his films helped build a broader awareness of the Aboriginal world view, the land rights movement and the impact of Western culture on the Aboriginal way of life.”

“Throughout his extensive career, Ian has been committed to the cause of preservation. Ian ensured the safeguarding of the early ethnographic films of Indigenous Australia by anthropologist Walter Baldwin Spencer and worked to preserve, contextualise and protect the interests of Indigenous communities whose lives had been recorded by earlier filmmakers,” Dr McIntyre said.

Through films such as *Desert People* and the *Yirrkala Film Project*, Ian has produced a significant and lasting audiovisual record of Indigenous history which is preserved in the collections of the NFSA and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS).

Filmmaker Ian Dunlop was born in the UK in 1927 and emigrated to Australia after World War II. After graduating from Sydney University, Ian joined the Commonwealth Film Unit (later Film Australia) in 1956. Ian spent over thirty years with Film Australia as a producer and director, his films include the *People of the Australian Western Desert* series, the *Towards Baruya Manhood* series of films about male initiation in Papua New Guinea, and the *Yirrkala Film Project*, an acclaimed series of films shot over twenty five years about the Yolgnu people of Arnhem Land.

Ian was the inaugural recipient of the Australian Film Institute Raymond Longford Award in 1968 for his contribution to Australian filmmaking and was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia in 1986 for public service, particularly in the field of ethnographic filmmaking. Ian also served a member of the NFSA's Indigenous Reference Group for many years.

The NFSA established the film preservation award in 1995 in commemoration of filmmaker Ken G Hall's advocacy of cinema and its preservation throughout his long career in film and television production.

The award is presented by the NFSA in recognition of an individual, groups, or organisation for their outstanding contribution to the art of moving image and its preservation. It is awarded to Australian or international candidates, whose work has impacted the Australian film industry. Such an impact may come in many forms like technological innovation, scholarship in the field, advocacy or involvement with the survival of film as an art form.

Previous recipients of the Ken G Hall Award include directors Paul Cox, Phillip Noyce and Peter Weir, producers Anthony Buckley and Joan Long, film preservation expert Tom Nurse of Kodak Australasia, film historian Judy Adamson, and the NFSA's own Senior Curator of Moving Image, filmmaker and historian Graham Shirley.

Ian Dunlop was presented with the National Film and Sound Archive Award for Film Preservation at a reception at AIATSIS in Canberra on Thursday 9 July 2009.

**Notes to editors:**

Interviews with Ian Dunlop are available on request.

**Media contact:**

Sarah Finney email: [sarah.finney@nfsa.gov.au](mailto:sarah.finney@nfsa.gov.au) phone: 02 6248 2173 / 0400 197 558

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