

Movie buffs have double cause to celebrate



HONOURED: Anthony Minghella with Jean Hill secretary of Ipswich Film Society.

By HELEN JOHNS, entertainment reporter
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IPSWICH film buffs are celebrating today after scooping two awards at a prestigious ceremony.

The Ipswich Film Society was honoured by the British Federation of Film Societies (BFFS) during its annual round of awards.

At a ceremony at the National Film Theatre in London, the society was given the honour for its website, deemed the best of all film societies' websites in the country.

Website judged best of its kind in country

It was also among 11 societies receiving long-service recognition.

This award – the Special 60th Anniversary Award – honoured achievement and long service in the Federation's 60 year history. The Ipswich Film Society has been running for 71 years.

Both were presented to the society's secretary Jean Hill by film director, writer and producer Anthony Minghella,

chairman of the British Film Institute.

Neil Salmon, chairman of the Ipswich Film Society said he was delighted with the awards and praised both the website's maker, society member Simon Ashton, and the dedicated members who have kept the society running for so long.

He said: "I think the award is very gratifying for both the society and Simon.

"Like most amateur societies, it depends on the innovation and the commitment of a few people, and we've been lucky in that way. We have people who are dedicated and hard working."

Mr Ashton, who created and maintains the website in his spare time said: "We are quite elated about this one."

"It was very much a surprise to win. There are about 100 societies with some sort of website and it's quite important when someone of an official standing thinks you are the best of all of them."

Mr Minghella said: "Too often we hear commentators

state that specialist cinema is confined to London but film societies across the land have been providing that service for years.

"Community cinema is important to the entire industry and this celebration is a fitting appreciation of their invaluable contribution."

WEBLINK
www.ipswichfilmsociety.org.uk

■ Do you think community cinema is important? Write to Your Letters, Evening Star, 30 Lower Brook Street, Ipswich, IP4 1AN or e-mail eveningstarletters@eveningstar.co.uk

Inprofile Society and awards

■ Ipswich Film Society is the second oldest of its kind in the country and was set up in February 1935.

■ It shows a variety of films each year and is one of the main users of the Ipswich Film Theatre.

■ Anthony Minghella is best known for his 1996 film *The English Patient*.

■ When judging the entrants for the Best Website Award, the BFFS was interested in a website's accessibility, usability, clarity and quality of design.