

Safet Mehmedović Čapko – cinema operator and a legend

I am Safet Mehmedovic, nickname Čapko. I was born in 1952. I finished primary and high school in Zavidovici. I played football, among other players there were brothers Sušić, but I got sick and stopped playing football at seventeen years old. Later, I moved to the soccer referees, I was one of the youngest football referees and a good referee. As I did not have the necessary height I participated till the level of the Republican league.

For the first time I entered in the Dom Kulture when I was six years old, because it interested me how they play movies. I went to the premises of projectionist, Hamdo Agić and Ranko Blagojević, and since then it attracted me as a magnet, and two of them liked me. I used to visit them and spend my time there also I started to help them. I could not reach the table, so they cut off the legs of the table so I could reach it. I used to rewind and stick broken films. There I have learned the job and to replace them sometimes. Then everything was done manually as rewinding and placing electrodes which were giving light. Later, after high school I worked for two years in Krivaja's Parquet plant. It was awesome. I played football for the company. Then I went to Greece for the first time. In the meantime, one cinema operator died in the accident (Ranko), the collective asked for me to pass to the Dom Kulture and to replace him. Since there was no school for the projectionist, they accepted me. So I was transferred to work as a cinema operator. There were more good times than bad. At that time, there were not sports hall, hotel "Kristal"... so at Dom Kulture palace were organized the best parties for New Year's Eve, the elite is coming, singers and performers from all over Yugoslavia.

The film projects worked until the war. When the war ended, we began with the projections again in 1996. The first movie after the war was "Strike Hard" with Bruce Willis, and it was visited very well. We earned some money that we invested in windows for the building and bought some working clothes for employees. It started well.

Later, with the appearance of a video library (vidoteka) began decline of interest in the cinema, because, the movies that were presented in the cinema were already viewed by the population. In some time the audience has dropped, and our equipment become outdated, so the cinema turned out. We hadn't a modern projector, because this technique was 25 mm. Now it's digital, we have to rent the projector from Banja Luka, for two projections in a month. For our town it's expensive to give 4 KM as entrance to the cinema. I hope there will be some understanding and we'll be able to buy a new projector and to renew cinema hall.

Before there was space for young people, they had a place for leisure such as cultural center, and sport hall. Now they have it also, but now, it is the biggest mistake that children have to pay the membership fee in the sport groups, many talents are perishing as they are not able to pay their fees.

There is a great poverty, unemployment, youth gather and drink alcohol in parks and streets. It's all up to the standard...

