

ENHG Library Audio-visual resources

The ENHG library contains a number of videotapes, CDs and DVDs which may be of interest to members. For several years, these items have been sitting comfortably on the shelves of our library in the work room at Al Ain English Speaking School. Today, however, time has passed them by and many of us do not even have videotape players!

We have recruited several volunteers to help us to make these items available to our membership. Our friends at Kowkab Studio, Jeff Imes and others have invested many hours to convert the collection to digital format.

Initially, we planned to attach labels to the individual DVDs but it has been noted that a paper label can peel from the disk in a DVD player and damage the player. A label can also upset the balance of a DVD. As a result, disks are hand-labeled.

As a benefit of membership, we are making the set available to members only for a flat fee of Dh 100. In converting the films to digital format, the technicians tried to format the material so that it can be viewed on a computer as well as on a standard DVD player attached to a television set. However, some of the material is in 'flash' format so can only be played on a computer.

Below is a list of the items with a brief description of each along with an estimate of the running time of each.

The quality of the items varies considerably. Some are poor copies of difficult-to-get films. For example, the Wilfred Thesiger film "Arabian Sands" appears to be a copy made by using a video camera to tape the film as it was projected onto a screen. Other films are copied directly from television – for example the Discovery Channel's episode on the UAE – while others are copies of videotapes or DVDs.

It is hoped that, by making these items available via DVD, more members will be able to appreciate some of the items in our library collection. To order the complete set, please sign up at one of our general meetings. We will not sell the DVDs individually.

The chapter does not wish to make money from the project; the intent is to get these films into wide circulation. After recouping costs for blank DVDs, DVD cases and other miscellaneous costs, proceeds will go towards our recycling program.

The items have not been tested exhaustively but all of the material does work on a standard computer using Windows Media Player (no video acceleration) and other DVD players that you may download free of charge from the Internet. For those items using rare or unusual codecs, the necessary codec has been bundled with the files on the DVD.

The list of movies or programs includes (all times approximate):

Disk One

Quality: very good.

Content: 135 minutes

Eden: The Inside Story

“Eden: The inside story is just that – a unique ‘behind the scenes’ record of the birth of one of the world’s most remarkable projects. Over 2000 hours of film have been edited to the 135 minutes you’ll find on this DVD. Its all here – from construction against the odds during some of Cornwall’s worst ever weather, to the sourcing, nurturing and planting of over 120,000 plants from across the world – all against the clock.”

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Disk Two

Quality: good to very good.

Content: 40 minutes

a. Al Ain

The “story” of Al Ain with emphasis on the copper smelting industry. Features Dr. Walid and finds at Hili. This is the English-language version of the film that was always on display at the Al Ain Museum. Most of the sequences were filmed in and around Al Ain including the Jebel Hafit tombs, Wadi Jizzi copper smelters and forts in the city.

b. Al Ain

As above, in Arabic.

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Disk Three

a. Al Ain 1964

Quality: poor.

Content: given the age and copying methods employed, the video is, at times, very poor but the voice-over is good to very good.

Dr. Longjohn, one of the original doctors at Al Ain Oasis Hospital, brought a Super 8 film camera along when he brought his family to Al Ain. These clips begin with the family flying from Bahrain, over Qatar and into the old Sharjah airport in 1964. The original film footage is very interesting and includes Sh. Zayed and a very different downtown Al Ain.

b. Al Ain (English)

As Disk Two

c. Al Ain (Arabic)

As Disk Two

d. Traveller's Tales: Arabian Sands

Quality: poor to good

Content:

Copied from television, this is an episode of the series 'Traveller's Tales' and features the story of Thesiger's first trip across the Empty Quarter. This is a modern version of the original film of the same name. This film includes interviews with the men who accompanied Thesiger.

e. Farewell Arabia (Parts I and II)

Quality: good to very good

Content:

This is a film made in the 1970's profiling Sh. Zayed and the emerging oil industry. Lots of very good film footage of Sh. Zayed and life as the oil industry was being established. The film was a joint production of several organizations including the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC).

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Disk Four

As a part of its presentation to judges in the Nations In Bloom competition, the city of Al Ain had two short films prepared; copies of those films are here along with a film review of the first Al Ain Flower Festival. There are two versions of the film produced for the city of the first Al Ain Flower Show and Festival in 2000. There is no commentary of the two films produced for the city. ENHG members will recognize several individuals in the film clips including Geoff Sanderson, Brigitte Howarth, Hasan al Naboodah, and Abdulla Al Kuwaiti. The Flower Festival films run with no commentary (musical accompaniment). 'Magic Carpet Ride' (Nations in Bloom profile of Al Ain) is eight minutes long while The Nations In Bloom 2000 submission is 10 minutes in duration; both have English commentary.

a. A Magic Carpet Ride

Quality: good

Content: 8 minutes

An eight-minute film produced to support the city's nomination for the Nations In Bloom competition.

b. Nations In Bloom 2000

Quality: good.
Content: 10 minutes

A ten-minute film produced to support the city's nomination for the Nations In Bloom competition in 2000.

c. Al Ain Show and Flower Festival 2001

Quality: good.
Content:

The short version of the film produced for HQ Creative summarizing the events and highlights of the Festival.

d. Al Ain Show and Flower Festival 2001

Quality: very good.
Content: 32 minutes

The long version of the Festival.

Disk Five

Quality: poor to good.
Content: 52 minutes

Arabia Sand, Sea and Sky

The popular film on Arabia. The copy in the ENHG library was a copy of the original videotape.

Disk Six

Quality: taped from the satellite broadcast; good to very good
Content: 28 minutes

Discovery Channel profile of UAE

This is the episode on the UAE that appeared as part of the Discovery series several years ago. The host visited the UAE during Ramadan. It is a very tourist-oriented presentation of life in the UAE.

Disk Seven

Quality: good to very good
Content: Hot Fossils English 5:27 minutes; Missing Link 28:47 minutes

Abu Dhabi Eight Million Years Ago (total four films)

These films were produced after the discovery of fossil remains in the western region of Abu Dhabi emirate. Four of the five links work with two items available in English or Arabic. 'Hot Fossils' documents the fossil remains while 'Missing Link' is a longer discussion of paleontology in the UAE.

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Disk Eight

Quality: good.

Content: 90 minutes

National Geographic Centennial

"For a century National Geographic has participated in and chronicled many of the world's greatest explorations – unlocking the secrets of the oceans, lifting men into the stratosphere, and mapping the very boundaries of the earth, sea and sky. Now you can relive some of the most significant expeditions in history. Follow Robert E. Perry to the North Pole . . . join Jane Goodall for her pioneering work with chimpanzees . . . climb Mount Everest on the first American ascent. Marvel at 100 years of exploration in the Society's official centennial presentation." Length: 90 minutes

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Disk Nine

Quality: good.

Content: 35 minutes

Petra

A made-for-video/TV production of the ruins at Petra.

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Disk Ten

a. The March to Progress

Quality: March to Progress is an old film and the sound is poor.

Content: 39 minutes

'The March to Progress' is a film produced in 1982 by Abu Dhabi Television (Ministry of Information) featuring a young Peter Hellyer as narrator. 'The Emirates A Great Development' was produced a few years later and contains footage of the Jebel Hafit road after it first opened, UAE University in early days and other developments. The dates for the two films are 1982 and 1989 respectively.

b. United Arab Emirates: A Great Development

Quality: Emirates, A Great Development, is a film with music and commentary with better quality of video and sound.

Content: 33 minutes

‘The Emirates A Great Development’ was produced a few years later (1989) and contains footage of the Jebel Hafit road after it first opened, UAE University in early days and other developments. Length: 33 minutes

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Disk Eleven

Quality: poor to good.

Content: 62 minutes

Empty Quarter

A copy of the original Thesiger film. It appears the videotape was made during a public screening of the film so the quality is poor. This is the original Empty Quarter film and not the more recent movie which includes footage of the Omanis who traveled with Thesiger. This movie features Thesiger himself.

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Disk Twelve (flash)

Quality: very good.

Content: mixed media

This contains a number of books, films and other resources.

Books:

- UAE Yearbook 2008 (English, Arabic and French)
- UAE At A Glance (English, Arabic)
- The Emirates, A Natural History

Films:

- **Abu Dhabi: Home of the Legendary Mammals** (film about the Dugong)
- **Creative Energy – Shaping the Emirates** (story of the way energy has shaped the history of the UAE in English, Arabic and French)
- **Sheba’s Greatest Treasure** (story of a dam built to create a lake in the desert in English and Arabic)
- **Dubai** profile
- **Sharjah** profile
- **Fujairah** profile
- **Masdar profile** (Masdar is the Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company)

Screensavers; Wallpaper; Quiz; Abu Dhabi Interactive Map

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Disk Thirteen

Quality: very good.

Content: 30 minutes

The Little (Book and) DVD of Dubai (four languages)

Released by Motivate Publishing, this is a promotional film which includes some footage from 1950. The film highlights the celebrities who have participated in concerts and sporting events and touches on all of the tourist attractions (malls, desert drives etc).

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Disk Fourteen

Quality: very good.

Content:

Feast of Dates (Arabic)

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Disks Fifteen -- Eighteen

Quality: good.

Content: 13 episodes each approximately 60 minutes

Land of the Emirates

Disk Fifteen (episodes 1-4)

Disk Sixteen (episodes 5-7)

Disk Seventeen (episodes 8-9)

Disk Eighteen (episodes 10-13)

The film series Land of the Emirates was produced in the 1980's and was available on videotape for many years. The films, produced by Dubai TV, feature Shirley Kay as host and are an exceptional snapshot of the UAE at that time. Many of the sites presented over the thirteen episodes are now gone. There were publications based on the series though most of the titles are now out of print.

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Disk Nineteen (CD) (computer only)

Quality: very good.

Content: (mixed media)

United Arab Emirates 2002

Contains many articles on an inter-active CD. Includes 2002 Yearbook in Arabic, English and French, inter-active map of the UAE, introduction to birds of the UAE, three-dimensional view of traditional jewelry and much more. There are no films.

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Disk Twenty (interactive DVD – computer preference)

Quality: very good.

Content: (mixed media, film running times noted below)

United Arab Emirates 2004

- Books:**
- Yearbook in Arabic, English and French
 - United Arab Emirates – A New Perspective
 - Feast of Dates (45 pages PDF format)
 - Sir Bani Yas – An Arabian Ark
 - Ancient Magan – The Secrets of Tel Abraç
 - Archaeology Conference Papers

- Films:**
- **Feast of Dates** (Arabic and English) This well-produced film covers the history of dates and is the movie accompanying Dan Potts' book of the same name.
 - **Lethal Legacy** (Arabic and English) This film documents the work of the UAE in southern Lebanon to clear unexploded ordinance, especially land mines. Length: (English) 28:24 minutes (Arabic) 30:22 minutes
 - **Sheba's Greatest Treasure**

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Disk Twenty-one (interactive DVD – computer preference)

Quality: very good.

Content: mixed media

UAE 2007 (3 films only)

- Films:**
- **Creative Energy** (English) This film reflects on the changes in the UAE with interviews of men who can remember the UAE before oil wealth. Pearl diving footage as well as early color film of oil development. Several examples of comparing life in the past with modern life. Length: 26 minutes
 - **Pearl Diving in the UAE** (Arabic) This film shows how the men and women experienced the annual pearl diving season. Some remarkable footage of community life and life on the pearl boats, including the lashing of a less-than-enthusiastic man to the mast of one of the boats. Length: 1 hr 23 minutes
 - **Abu Dhabi 1974** A remarkable snapshot of the UAE in 1974. Length: 25 minutes

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Disk Twenty-two (interactive DVD – computer preference)

Quality: very good.

Content: mixed media

UAE 2007 (complete contents) Note: this DVD will automatically adjust your screen profile. Do not be alarmed; as soon as you close the program, your original screen resolution will return.

Films: as listed above plus **Lethal Legacy** and **Feast of Dates**

Books: **UAE Yearbook 2007**
The Emirates – A Natural History
Feast of Dates
UAE at a Glance

Also: Online index with Internet links to “comprehensive and up-to-date information on the UAE”.
Shopping for books and DVDs
Interactive: quiz on the UAE

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Disk Twenty-three (interactive CD – computer)

Quality: very good.

Content: mixed media

UAE 2000. The first interactive CD published with articles, maps, links

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Disk Twenty-four (CD)

Quality: good.

Content: 18 minutes

Land of the Nimr A film produced by the Arabian Leopard Trust and sponsored by Shell. The film talks about the decline in leopard populations as the animals were hunted almost to extinction.