

IN FOCUS MEETING - AUGUST



The next In-Focus meeting will be on Wednesday 18th of August commencing at 7.30 pm. The venue is the RSL hall, Fred Bell Parade Bentley.

The presentation is called Early Film Production in WA and will feature those early movie pioneers who were responsible for film production in WA. The presentation will also discuss our most famous movie made in this state, “Nickel Queen”, and will look at the people responsible for it, as well as the so called “feature movies” which preceded it.

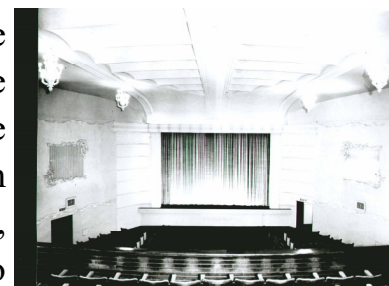
Also covered will be the history behind the Nickel mining bubble that burst, the many local actors and staff employed, the fate of Googie Withers and her husband and the origins of filmmaking in WA.

To conclude the programme there will be a short tribute to the late David Hawkes who had a history of AMMPT involvement. The evening should be quite interesting so please come along and support this worthwhile event as it is the last one for the year.

CINEMA HISTORY - THE ORIANA



On the 4th August 1938 Hoyts Fremantle opened its doors with “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs”. Situated on High Street, the new theatre replaced the old Majestic which had opened in 1916. Seating 1210 patrons, the new theatre was designed as Art Deco Modern. The projectors were Simplex with a Raycophone sound system and a floating screen that rolled off to the side of the stage for live acts.



In 1949 the theatre underwent some alterations to the auditorium and projectors and sound were replaced with Westrex and RCA.



In 1954 Cinemascope and four track stereophonic sound were installed for “Three Coins in the Fountain”. In 1961 Hoyts sold the theatre to City Theatres and the name was changed to Oriana. For it’s 30th birthday in 1968 a new wider screen forward of the old proscenium was installed.

On the 4th of December 1971 the Oriana finally closed its doors after 33 years with the screening of “Nickel Queen” and was demolished in March of 1972.



MORE CINEMA HISTORY - THE ROYAL

As one of only two theatre/hotel complexes to be established in the heart of Perth's central business district, and the first purpose-built theatre in Western Australia, the Theatre Royal was one of the most historically significant of the State's theatres. Initially seating upwards of 2,000 patrons, the building was also designed with the largest sliding roof in Australia. Situated at 637 Hay Street, the Royal operated as a place of amusement for eighty years, first as a venue for drama, musical theatre, variety, and Perth's earliest film screenings, before being converted into a permanent cinema in 1936.



The Theatre Royal opened on Easter Monday 19th April 1897 with the stage production of "Silver King".

The Royal's long association with cinema started on 26th December



1897 with a screening of the Corbett- Fitzsimmons prize fight and became the first place of amusement to devote a whole programme to film.

In July 1934, James Stiles negotiated a lease of the Theatre Royal on behalf of the Grand Theatre Company, and a contract for first release in Perth of all MGM films was arranged. From this time on the theatre became exclusively a cinema house and no live performances were ever staged there again.



In 1937 the stage was taken out and the screen set further back, and in 1939 a major reconstruction was undertaken which gave the theatre a modern look.

Another major reconstruction of the Theatre Royal took place early in 1965 for the opening of "My Fair Lady".

The seating was reduced to 970 making it a modern, more intimate showcase.

The Theatre Royal shut its doors for the last time on 9th February 1978, the building was sold to developers, who constructed shops inside the shell of the old building.



FILMS SCREENING IN PERTH 28th DECEMBER 1940



Theatre Royal
"Gulliver's Travels"



Hoyts Ambassadors
"My Love Came Back"



Plaza
"Irene"



Piccadilly
"French Without Tears"



Metro
"Waterloo Bridge"



Grand
"South To Karanga"