



SIGHT AND SOUND UPDATE

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AMMPT 2017 NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

With the sad exception of a handful of suburban theatres such as the New Oxford, Windsor, Astor and Grand Cygnet Theatre, Perth's golden age of cinema heritage has been razed to make room for office buildings shops or turned into store rooms. As AMMPT continues to acquire memorabilia from the past there are a growing number of questions we need to consider. Why were there so many single screen movie theatres in Western Australia? Why did so many of them close? And why for many years were some left in such deplorable shape? Similar questions could be asked about television in Perth although changes to that industry in the last decade have been implemented against a background of the lessons learnt from the demise of our picture theatres and the highlighted recognition of the need to preserve our history.

New technology seems to have been one culprit and cause of changes to both cinema and TV. Many Perth theatres were built between the First and Second World Wars. They were meant for vaudeville and silent films (e.g. Queens Hall / Hoyts Regent) but were later converted to show "talkies" when vaudeville declined. It is ironic that technology developed television that resulted in a fall of theatre audiences. And with the dissolution of the connection between production houses and theatres, an environment was created that allowed multiplexes to thrive. As a consequence, with it becoming increasingly difficult to fill large theatres eventually their owners closed them.

Technology continues its march forward with Perth's television facilities now having been downsized resulting in a reduced local production capacity and greater network centralised programming.

So what is our 2017 Resolution? The answer is be vigilant, keep the eyes open and make AMMPT aware of any opportunities to preserve our moving image history.



CLASSICS OF THE SILVER SCREEN GRAND CYGNET CINEMA MONDAY FEBRUARY 27th 10.00AM "THE YOUNG ONES"

Our first screening presentation for 2017 is The Young Ones. The film is a 1961 British musical, directed by featuring Cliff Richard, Robert Morley as his character's father, Carole Gray as his love interest, and The Shadows as his band. The story is about a youth club member and aspiring singer and his friends, who try to save their club in West London from an unscrupulous millionaire property developer

**NOTE THE CHANGE FROM WEDNESDAY TO MONDAY MORNING SCREENINGS OF
OUR CLASSICS OF THE SILVER SCREEN AT THE GRAND CYGNET THEATRE**

GRAND THEATRE COMPANY HELP

To assist AMMPT achieve a screening transition from a Wednesday to a Monday morning the Grand Theatre Company has undertaken to advertise AMMPT screenings on their website which receives many thousands of hits per month. In addition over the last three months in 2016 audiences at our Cygnet screenings were requested to leave their individual email contact address. As a consequence AMMPT now has a public mailing list which will be used monthly along with other media outlets such as Capital Radio to advertise screenings.

AMMPT 2017 MEMBERSHIP

Members are reminded that membership fees for 2017 are now due. Invoices were emailed and posted to people in December 2017. If you have not received an invoice contact membership officer John Fuhrmann on 94479837. Besides discounted entry to Classics screenings at the Cygnet members receive one complimentary double pass a Karrinyup Wurlitzer Organ show this year two of which include silent movies.

WIRELESS HILL CONTINUES TO SURPRISE

Member Trevor Kelly who spends time with the Wireless Hill Museum was the person principally responsible for AMMPT receiving much of that establishment's film and television collection when the original long standing exhibition format was changed. During the 2015 clear out AMMPT Museum Curator Roy Mudge identified the motor and control unit from a 1926 Western Electric sound on disc system. In a little used room at Wireless Hill, Trevor Kelly recently found more equipment including an item which Roy was able to confirm was the turntable unit for the system. In Perth this system was first used at The Prince of Wales Theatre for the film *The Jazz Singer* in April 1929.



The stand-alone system was soon replaced with the Universal base which combined the sound on film and Vitaphone disc on one projector.

There would have been only a couple of these stand-alone systems in Perth and it would be wonderful if ours was the unit from the Prince of Wales but we will never know. Vitaphone was the last major analog sound-on-disc system and the only one which was widely used and commercially successful. The soundtrack was not printed on the film itself, but issued separately on phonograph records.

The equipment has been donated to AMMPT and is now at Sunset. This is an example of meeting our 2017 New Year's resolution.

IN FOCUS PRESENTATION - - RSL Hall, in Fred Bell Parade, St. James – Wednesday February 15th - 7.30pm – “Don't call me Girlie – Women in the Movies”.

The first In Focus Presentation for 2017 will be a documentary survey on the role of women in Australian cinema from the beginning to 1940 using interviews and archival footage. Prominence is given to the collaboration between Lottie Lyell and Raymond Longford, the McDonagh sisters, and the careers of actresses Louise Lovely, Helen Twelvetrees and Shirley Ann Richards. AMMPT actually has a 16mm copy of the DVD in its film library. Some short documentaries on female actresses will also be screened. Free entry.