

Item name: Brunswick Picture House**Location:** 30 Fingal Street Brunswick Heads 2483

Byron

Address: 30 Fingal Street**Planning:** Northern**Suburb/nearest town:** Brunswick Heads 2483**Local govt area:** Byron**Parish:****State:** NSW**County:****Other/former names:****Area/group/complex:****Group ID:****Aboriginal area:****Curtilage/boundary:** The property boundary**Item type:** Built**Group:** Recreation and Entertainment **Category:** Theatre**Owner:** Private - Individual**Admin codes:****Code 2:****Code 3:****Current use:** Performing arts venue for live theatre and films**Former uses:** Cinema**Assessed significance:** Local**Endorsed significance:** Local

Statement of significance: Formerly the Victory Theatre, this building is a representative 1950s building and continues to play an important role in the social life of the community as a performing arts venue. This building demonstrates historical, aesthetic and social significance. The Brunswick Picture House is linked to the historical evolution of the talking pictures in Brunswick Heads from the 1930s, and the development of a purpose built cinema venue for the town in its development as a popular seaside holiday destination. Although upgraded, and extended to the rear, this 1951 building demonstrates moderate aesthetic significance as a representative building of the 1950s era. The building has played an important part in the life of the Brunswick Heads community and demonstrates strong social significance. Its transition from cinema to a live performance venue for local and world class cabaret acts demonstrates the ongoing use of the place for arts and culture.

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Historical notes Local Background

of provenance: Brunswick Heads is a significant Aboriginal place and part of lands of the Bundjalung people and the place of the earliest European settlement in Byron Shire. The precinct is historically significant for its evolution as a settlement in response to historical, social, economic and transportation factors, having connection to early cedar getting, the fishing industry and a historical use for recreation and holiday destination.

Prior to European settlement, Brunswick Heads was part of the territory of the original inhabitants of the area, the Bundjalung people. As Europeans moved to the district, Brunswick Heads became one of the earliest ports in what is now Byron Shire, and by the 1850's, some raw materials (timber, tallow, whale oil) were being shipped to state (Sydney), national and international markets, and many new settlers, foodstuffs and necessities found their way into the district via Brunswick Heads. Dairying provided the greatest impetus to the settlement by Europeans of the region, and in the 1890's, when Brunswick Heads was bypassed by the Casino to Murwillumbah railway line, the town as a major port was eclipsed by the port of Byron Bay. By the 1920's, the major industries were fishing (with a well established local fishing fleet) and tourism, with a local river transport system (drogher lighters) supporting the upriver dairy industry.

The expansion of Brunswick Heads was affected by flooding, swampland to the west and the course of the river itself. The Pacific Highway was routed through the town for more than 50 years, but now bypasses the town which has left a township with a substantially intact architectural heritage, and with an atmosphere and charm unique in the Shire.

This item.

A timeline of news article references is shown below. Acknowledgment Susan Tsicalas, BVHS.

10 Jan 1929 The number of visitors during the holidays is estimated at about 45,000, and one can imagine the crowd had there been a carnival, etc. Dances, pictures, etc. were held each night and drew crowded houses.

1 Feb 1929 Bruns Hall committee grants sole rights for pictures on a guarantee of so many shows for 12 months.

6 Jan 1932 The New Year week end saw very much larger crowds. About 7000 visited the Heads on New Year's Day, splendid weather prevailing. Good line fishing was the rule. The three dances for the week end were crowded and more are being held this week, as well as pictures and a concert

22 Dec 1934 Brunswick Heads Talkies in Public Hall. Newly installed picture plant.

21 Apr 1950 Byron Shire Council approves application from L.F. Bailey of Fingal St for picture theatre

27 Jun 1951 L.F. Bailey advertises picture theatre business for sale.

17 Oct 1951 L.F. Bailey proprietor Porter Bros, agents for Mercedes Benz

31 Oct 1951 L.F. Bailey has sold picture theatre business.

SMH

3Mar1950: L.F. Bailey has picture theatre for sale.

Mullum Star& Bruns Advoc:

7 Dec 1949 L. Bailey, proprietor of the Pacific Theatre, Bruns, to open an open-air theatre in Fingal St and run both over Christmas.

13 Jan 1950 L. Bailey intends erecting a proper theatre on site of open air theatre.

16 Jan 1950 L. Bailey proprietor Pacific Theatre Bruns

18 Jan 1950 Open air picture theatre planned for Fingal St

3 May 1950 L. Bailey member of Bruns Progress Assoc and wants to form an Urban Committee.

6 Sep 1950 L Bailey elected vice-president Bruns Prog Assoc.

2 Jul 1954: Victory Theatre Bruns

4 Jul 1958: Victory Theatre passes from Merve Callow to Dick Giles.

The Cinema Treasures register states that 'The building opened as a cinema in 1941 with 186 seats*. By 1956 it had been renamed Victory Theatre and was listed with 240 seats. It was closed around 1986. It reopened at Easter 25th March 2016 as the Brunswick Picture House'.

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*The reference to 1941 would relate to its previous venue in Memorial Hall. Both venues were referred to as Pacific Theatre.

Themes: **National theme**
8. Culture

State theme
Leisure

Local theme

Designer:

Builder:

Year started: 1950

Year completed: 1951

Circa: No

Physical description: Single storey gabled roof main building with lower entry porch and awning to streetscape. 2020 two storey rear extension. Dwelling and garage to rear are of also fibre cement clad of 1950s period. Side garden is a leafy courtyard which serves as an open space for patrons.

Physical condition Excellent
level:

Physical condition: Refurbished and upgraded in 2020 this building is in excellent condition.

Archaeological Not assessed
potential level:

Archaeological
potential Detail:

Modification dates: 1963 Front extension.
1964 Garage
1971 Amenities at rear

2020 approved additions to rear to replace 1971 toilet facilities with a two storey extension to provide green room and updated facilities. General upgrades to building, including reroofing, and guttering removal of asbestos fibre cement cladding and replacement in new fibre cement sheets.

Recommended management: Conserve the original elements of the building, and retain ongoing use of site for theatre and related uses.

Management: **Management category**

Management name

Further comments:

Criteria a): The Brunswick Picture House demonstrates historical significance as it was the first purpose built cinema venue for Brunswick Heads. It is an important place which was part of the evolution of the talking pictures in Brunswick Heads from the 1930s.
[Historical significance]

Criteria b):
[Historical association significance]

Criteria c): The building demonstrates moderate aesthetic significance as a representative building of the 1950s era. Although modified by additions to the rear and general upgrades it retains its mid century character.
[Aesthetic/ Technical significance]

Criteria d): The building demonstrates high social significance as it has played an important part in the life of the Brunswick Heads as a cultural place for the community and visitors to the town over many generations. Its transition from cinema to a live performance venue for local and world class cabaret acts has maintained the ongoing use of the place for arts and culture.
[Social/Cultural significance]

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Criteria e):
[Research
significance]**Criteria f):** The building with its associated function is rare locally.
[Rarity]**Criteria g):** The building is representative of a purpose built community building during the immediate post war period.
[Representative]**Intactness/Integrity:** Moderate.

References:	Author	Title	Year
	Jim Brokenshire	The Brunswick- Another River and its People. 1988. ISBN 0 73	1988
		Pers Comm and historical information Susan Tsicalas Brunswic	2020

Studies:	Author	Title	Number	Year
	Donald Ellsmore and Ian	Byron Shire Community Based Heritage Study		2005
	Clarence Heritage	Historic Heritage Assessment Brunswick Heads		2021

Parcels:	Parcel code	Lot number	Section number	Plan code	Plan number
	LOT	13	7	DP	758171

Latitude:**Longitude:****Location validity:****Spatial accuracy:****Map name:****Map scale:****AMG zone:****Easting:****Northing:****Listing: Name****Title****Number****ListingDate**

Potential Heritage Item

Data entry: Data first entered: 21/01/2022

Data updated: 12/02/2022

Status: Partial

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Image:



Caption: Front elevation

Copy right:

Image by: D. Wray

Image date: 12/06/2020

Image number:

Image url: <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/maritimeheritageapp/resources/Heritage/shi/WebAPP/345d14202ba2ce4428f9b7e46f7b1375e8a.JPG>

Thumbnail url: http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/maritimeheritageapp/resources/Heritage/shi/WebAPP/Tumb_test345d14202ba2ce4428f9b7e46f7b1375e8a.JPG

Image:

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Caption: Interior

Copy right:

Image by: D. Wray

Image date: 12/06/2020

Image number:

Image url: <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/maritimeheritageapp/resources/Heritage/shi/WebAPP/34573e9ede936eb4ca78e6ca9b857540099.JPG>

Thumbnail url: http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/maritimeheritageapp/resources/Heritage/shi/WebAPP/Tumb_test34573e9ede936eb4ca78e6ca9b857540099.JPG

Image:

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Caption: Victory Theatre Signage

Copy right:

Image by: D. Wray

Image date: 12/06/2020

Image number:

Image url: <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/maritimeheritageapp/resources/Heritage/shi/WebAPP/345eddaa1a6007d40838ba7aef2270d79b6.JPG>

Thumbnail url: http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/maritimeheritageapp/resources/Heritage/shi/WebAPP/T_humb_test345eddaa1a6007d40838ba7aef2270d79b6.JPG