

UQFL423

Gail Lipke Collection

Size	1 box, 3 parcels
Contents	Photographs, newspaper cuttings, reports and correspondence relating to the history and restoration of the Empire Theatre, Toowoomba. Includes photographs of other theatres in Australia and overseas.
Date range	1908 to 1997
Biography	Toowoomba's Empire Theatre opened for business on 29 June 1911. It was the town's first purpose-built picture theatre and quickly established itself as the district's leading entertainment venue, offering a varied program of silent movies and live performances. In 1929 it screened <i>The Jazz Singer</i> , the world's first commercially successful talking picture. During the early years of the Depression the theatre continued to attract large audiences but on 22 February 1933 a fire almost completely destroyed the building. The owners quickly rebuilt and in November an even bigger Empire opened on the site. With a seating capacity of 2,400, it was the second largest theatre in Queensland after the Brisbane Regent and the largest theatre in Australia outside a capital city. It remained a popular venue over subsequent decades but with the advent of television and smaller theatres in the 1950s and 60s its audiences began to decline. It ceased cinema operations in March 1971. The complex eventually fell into disrepair and was redeveloped by the Toowoomba City Council in the 1990s with professional support from the firm Conservation Management Planners and Associates. It was officially reopened as a cultural centre on 28 June 1997. This collection comprises material produced and gathered by the firm and its consultant, Gail Lipke.
Notes	Open access

Box 1

VHS video recording of a 1989 television news broadcast incorporating footage of the Empire Theatre fire on 22 Feb 1933.

Folder 1

Reports, plans, typescript histories, poster templates, correspondence and newspaper cuttings relating to the reconstruction and reopening of the Empire Theatre, Toowoomba, 1990-1997

Folder 2

Historical photographs, plans, small posters, programs and newspaper cuttings relating to the history of the Empire Theatre, Toowoomba, 1908-1943

Folder 3

Historical photographs, programs and newspaper cuttings relating to the history of the Empire Theatre, Toowoomba, 1950-1994, and a copy of *Kino* journal (37, Sep 1991) containing an historical review of the theatre

Folder 4

Photographs, newspaper cuttings, programs and correspondence relating to Toowoomba theatres other than the Empire, 1918-1993. Includes the Princess Theatre, The Strand, The Elite Theatre and The Coronet Theatre.

Folder 5

Photographs and newspaper cuttings relating to Queensland regional theatres and a brochure about the Majestic Theatre, Pomona, Queensland, 1930s-1990s

Folder 6

Newspaper cuttings, photographs and published articles relating to Brisbane theatres, 1920s-1990s

Folder 7

Newspaper cuttings, programs, published articles, postcards and photographs relating to Australian theatres outside Queensland, 1928-1990s

Folder 8

Photographs and newspaper cuttings relating to the Savoy Theatre, London, and the Wintergarden Theatre, New York, 1916-1990s

Parcel 1

1 publicity poster for the Empire Theatre, 1937

10 architectural plans for the reconstruction of the Empire Theatre, produced by T.R. Hall & L.B. Phillips Architects, 1990s

27 large historical photographs of the Empire Theatre, 1933-1990s

1 large, partially coloured drawing of the Empire Theatre, c1933

1 souvenir edition newspaper, *Empire Theatre Grand Opening*, Jun 1997

Parcel 2

Photographs and corresponding negatives documenting the reconstruction of the Empire Theatre in the 1990s. Parcel 2 contains images 1-300 in the series.

Parcel 3

Photographs documenting the reconstruction and reopening of the Empire Theatre, 1990s. This parcel contains images 301-504 in the series.

Also photographs and corresponding negatives of cinemas and theatres in Australia, mostly in Queensland:

- Photographs 505-536, unlabelled photographs of Queensland theatres, some showing the name of the theatre on the facade
- Photographs 537-540, Regent One
- Photograph 541, Regent Two
- Photograph 542, Regent Three
- Photographs 543-544, Regent Four
- Photograph 545-555, unlabelled but clearly showing the Regent Theatre
- Photograph 556, Albion, Dec 1992
- Photograph 557, Redcliffe Entertainment Centre, Dec 1992
- Photographs 558-559, Scarborough Picture Hall, Dec 1992
- Photograph 560, Woody Point School of Arts, Dec 1992
- Photographs 561-562, Bay, Scarborough, Dec 1992
- Photographs 563-570, unlabelled photographs of Queensland theatres
- Photographs 571-572, Cinema Lismore
- Photographs 573-579, ex-Vogue Lismore
- Photographs 580-582, Kyogle
- Photograph 583, Nambour Little Theatre
- Photograph 584, Nambour Rep Theatre
- Photograph 585, Nambour Twin Cinema Foyer (looking east)
- Photograph 586, Nambour Twin Cinema Foyer (looking west)
- Photograph 587, Star Cinema.
- Photograph 588, Empire Theatre inspection, 1993
- Photograph 589, Frontage of State Theatre, Melbourne
- Photographs 590-591, The Embassy Theatre, Malvern, Melbourne, 1947
- Photographs 592-593, unlabelled photographs, one of Capitol Theatre

Photograph 594, unlabelled photograph of orchestra on stage