

Preserving Memories

A joint project of the City of West Torrens and the West Torrens Historical Society

WALLIS ...THEN, NOW AND FOREVER



Hughie Wallis began his business in Richmond as Wallis Refrigeration Services. His passion for film led him to showing films in the local RSL hall and then to building the first drive-in in South Australia.

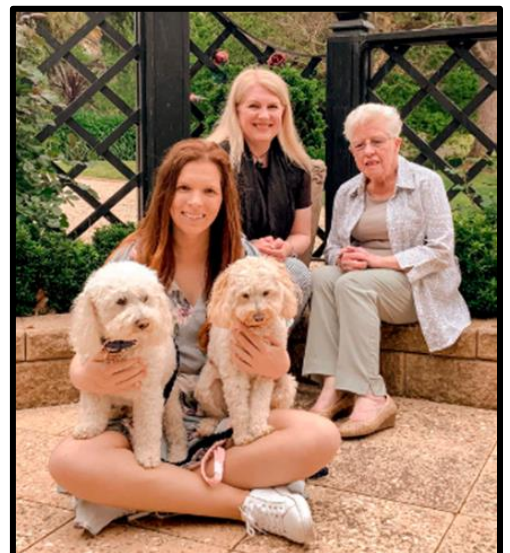
Lorna and Michelle Wallis recount their family's involvement in these industries.

Lorna met Hughie's son Bob in the 1960s. Following a dream and vision, Bob Wallis and his family have built and bought drive-ins and cinemas throughout South Australia and more recently in Mildura, Victoria.

Lorna Wallis has been an integral part of the Wallis Cinemas history with various roles not only at locations, but in supporting her husband Bob Wallis in continuing his father's vision. After Bobs passing, Lorna, along with her daughter Michelle, and recently her granddaughter Deanna, are leading the company through the business challenges, including the COVID-19 restrictions, evolving Cinema technology and the growth of streaming services. All three Wallis women are fiercely working hard to honour and protect Hughie and Bob's legacy.

The many jewels in the Wallis crown include the heritage restoration of Auchendarroch at Mount Barker and the art-deco Piccadilly cinema in North Adelaide.

Lorna Wallis was nominated South Australian Cinema Pioneer of the Year in 2021.



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Over the years...

- Wallis Cinemas was originally “Wallis Refrigeration” which made domestic fridges
- Prior to the Blueline opening in 1953, Hugh and Bob showed films in community halls across the state
- Hughie Wallis opened Adelaide’s first drive-in, the Blueline, also Australia’s second drive-in
- Developed the first multi-screen complex in Australia at Glenelg
- First Cinema complex with licensed bar – Glenelg
- First Cinema chain to introduce Dolby Sound
- Wallis Cinemas was the first fully digitized circuit in Australia
- Wallis city location (Academy) ran the film *Never Ending Story* for over 3 years
- Wallis Cinemas held the world premieres for *Breaker Morant* and *Robbery Under Arms*
- One employee has been with the company for over 60 years, and most of the management team have clocked up over 30 years each
- Wallis Cinemas operates a service Booking and Buying film for 90 independent screens across the country – from Katherine to Davenport
- Wallis Cinemas has a strong community focus and supports local charities with donations and access to film nights enabling charities to raise much needed funds

[From Wallis.com.au]

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Wallis Family Background

Hughie Wallis's paternal grandmother Elizabeth was born to English parents Horatio Burles of Canewdon, Essex and Mary Ann Carter from London.

Elizabeth married Richard Wallis in his birth town of Rochford, Essex, England. They migrated to South Australia on board the *Taymouth Castle* in 1855, settling in the Strathalbyn area. They had one son John in 1857.

Elizabeth had a second son William to William Palin in 1860. William Palin's family were from Shropshire, England. William arrived in Australia on board *Orator* in October 1849. He lived in the Strathalbyn area before moving with his family to farmland on the Yorke Peninsula.

William Wallis (27 Nov 1860 - 14 Apr 1941)

Like his brother John, William trained as a wheelwright. From the early 1890s he set up a coach building businesses in Franklin Street, Adelaide.

William, his first wife Amelia Clara Barford Stow (Clara) Coad, and their 6 children lived in Franklin Street, Adelaide.

Clara died in 1901, and in 1910 William remarried Anna Bella McKenzie (Annie) Nettle. The Nettle family were from Cornwall. Annie's mother Margaret McKenzie was from Scotland.

Williams seventh child, Annie's first, Hughie McKenzie Wallis was born later that year.

William and Anna Bella built their family home *Priscilla* at 130 Rose Terrace, Wayville.

They later bought a property in Beauchamp Street, Kurralta Park.



130 Rose Terrace, Wayville, 2009 [Streetview]

William died on 14 April 1941 and Anna Bella died in the family home in Rose Terrace in 1967.

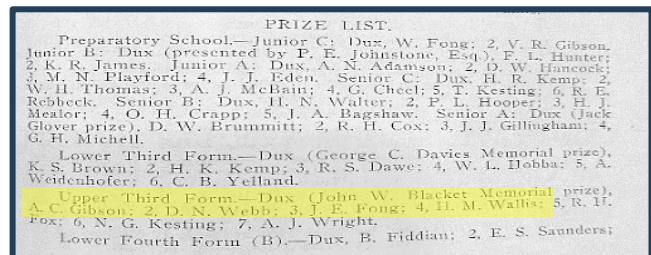
Hughie Wallis, as his mother's executor, sold the Rose Terrace property in November 1968.

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Hughie McKenzie Wallis (1910-1994)

Hughie McKenzie Wallis attended Prince Alfred College.



PAC Chronicle, 1924

He married Ann Adelaide Mary (Annie) Reuter.

Annie was the second child of Charlie Reuter (1888 - 1983) and Adelaide Stoeckel (1893 - 1973) from the Gawler area.



49 Beauchamp Street, Kurralta Park 2013 [Streetview]

Initially after their marriage they lived with Hughie's parents at Wayville, later moving to the Kurralta Park property. The family lived in this house until 1966.

Hughie and Ann had one child. Robert Charles William (Bob) Wallis was born 19 October 1939.

Ann passed away 1 April 1963.

Wallis Refrigeration Services

After training as a refrigeration mechanic, in September 1935 Hughie founded Wallis Refrigeration Services at 18 Elizabeth Street, Adelaide, between Currie and Waymouth Streets.

The business manufactured, sold and delivered kerosene refrigerators as well as conducting a 24-hour repair service. (Edward [later Sir Edward] Hallstrom had built Australia's first kerosene refrigerator in 1928).



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Keep Cool and Stay Cool.

The **WALLIS**

AT LAST WE HAVE WHAT YOU REALLY NEED—REFRIGERATION REAL ICE AND NO ELECTRICITY REQUIRED

A BEAUTIFUL AND HANDSOME REFRIGERATOR THAT WILL MAKE ICE BLOCKS, OR FRUIT BLOCKS, OR ICE CREAM AT A RUNNING COST OF

2d

PER DAY. NO WEARING OR MOVING PARTS AND A CHILD CAN WORK IT. COME AND INSPECT AT OUR SHOWROOM AND SEE THE

WALLIS REFRIGERATOR AT WORK.

H. B. EAST,

KADINA. PHONE 189.

Kadina and Wallaroo Times, 9 Dec 1936, p1

In the late 1930s a standard five cubic feet capacity Wallis Kerosene Refrigerator sold for around £42 in Adelaide – ‘a pint of kero a day keeps the heat away’, maintained the press advertisements. Country buyers were assured that the larger Wallis refrigerators had the capacity to store ‘a whole sheep as well as the usual perishables.’

Wallis was keen for expansion, selling refrigerators in South Australian country centres and in Queensland and Western Australia almost from the beginning. From the late 1940s sales extended into New South Wales and Victoria.

In May 1937 Wallis was elected a member of the South Australian Chamber of Manufacturers, perhaps an indicator of the success of his business.

In September 1937 Wallis relocated the business to 86 Gilbert Street, Adelaide, between Norman and Russell Streets. These premises were previously used by J.W. Mills Motor Garage, next to the Bell Inn (now the Gilbert Street Hotel).

Initially leasing the site, Wallis bought the property in June 1949 for £850.

36 Gilbert Motor Bodies
54-60 Motors Limited
Norman st
Apostolic Tabernacle
74 Muirhead, Mrs. E. M.
76 Matters, C. G.
78 Giles, Mrs A E, mxd bsns
80 Southwell, C. A.
86 Wallis, H. M., refrigerator manufacturer
88 Bell Inn—Hall, R. E.
Russell st
94 Mathison, C.
96 Smith, Mrs Mary
98 Meat Inspector's Dept
100 Kerrison, G., mixed bsns
102-104 Adelaide Woodwk Scht
wdwrk centres—Peake, A.
T. L. head teacher
108 Harrison, Mrs. E. J.
Considine pl

*Gilbert Street, Adelaide, 1939
[Sands & McDougall directory]*

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In October 1941, a potentially ruinous overnight fire at the Wallis Gilbert Street factory was quelled only by the courageous actions of a young employee, Alan Gloyn, who fought the blaze alone for two hours before calling for help.

Also in 1941, the name of the business was changed to Wallis Refrigeration and Services Limited.



Youth Who Fought Fire Plans To Join Navy Shortly

Alan Roy Gloyn, the 17-year-old youth who early yesterday morning fought alone for two hours to subdue an outbreak of fire in a city factory, was at work today, none the worse for his terrifying experience. He is going into the navy shortly.

After getting the fire under control **Gloyn** ran to the telephone almost exhausted and asked the police for help.

The outbreak occurred at Wallis Refrigeration and Services Ltd. in Gilbert street at 1 a.m. yesterday. The lad was the only one on duty.

"It was a very courageous action," said the secretary of the company (Mr. F. R. Jones) today.

"It would have caused great damage but for his action. As it was the damage amounted to only £70, but if he had not been here I don't think we would have had a factory today."

It is thought that insurance may cover the loss of the lad's suit which was destroyed in the fire. If it does not the management will make up his loss.

"We will be very sorry to have to release him to go into the navy," said Mr. Jones. "He is a fine worker."

News, 25 October 1941, p3

Although Wallis Refrigeration had manufactured a small number of electric refrigerators in the 1930s, from 1945, probably in response to consumer demand, the company moved more heavily into the production of electric refrigerators.



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Wallis electric refrigerators ranged in capacity from five to eight cubic feet and prices in Adelaide varied from around £88 to £97 in the mid-1940s to £130 to £160 for the improved models of the 1950s. Kerosene refrigerators sold for slightly less.



Original Wallis refrigerators on show at the Wallis HQ on Glen Osmond Road (Michelle believes that one of the double door fridges is still onsite at the old family home in West Beach)

After distributing other brands from the mid-1940s, from the early 1950s Wallis also made commercial refrigeration units.



Advertiser, 7 May 1947, p3

After paying £550 for the site, in August 1946 Wallis set up an additional refrigerator works in Gover Place, North Adelaide. In May 1947 quick action by the nearby North Adelaide Fire Service prevented another fire from razing this factory.

Wallis sold the site in February 1950 for £2,000.

As well as selling its products in a range of outlets around Adelaide, from 1948 to 1955 Wallis Refrigeration also operated its own retail premises at 26 Adelaide Arcade and 212 Rundle Street.

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The New **WALLIS** KEROSENE OPERATED Refrigerators

are **MORE Economical** and **MORE**
efficient than
ever before!



£42'10
(PLUS TAX)
£15 Deposit
£2 Monthly

It is being widely recognised that health and well-being are principally dependent on food . . . and the new Wallis Kerosene Operated Refrigerator provides perfect preservation of food. But the Wallis also provides other important benefits . . . there is a big money saving through prevention of food spoilage . . . great convenience results from the elimination of improvised cooling methods . . . it provides delicious ice cubes and sparkling cool drinks . . . and it is very easy to own on the Implement Company's EASY TERMS.

Has no moveable parts, does not require replacements!

The new 1939 Model Wallis Refrigerator is very compact in appearance.
The depth of the machine has now been reduced to approximately 23½ in. and the height has also been considerably reduced.
The water tank is now enclosed in cabinet.
The new evaporator has a steadier freeze, and produces a continuous refrigeration.
The machines are fitted with extra thick insulation, has Porcelain Interior, Chrome-plated Snap-action Hardware and Synthetic Enamel Exterior.
Also fitted with Porcelain De-frosting Tray with new improved burner assembly.

All that is necessary to operate the Wallis Non-electric Refrigerator is to fill the container with kerosene and light the burner once every 24 hours. The lamps automatically go out after burning approximately 2½ hours when the machine automatically operates for the next 24 hours.

The Wallis freezes generous size ice cubes.
Since there are no moveable parts, the refrigerator does not require replacement parts.
Colors:—White, but lacquered other colors at T/6 extra.
Packed for Rail or Shipping 30/- extra.



Fully guaranteed, against defective workmanship

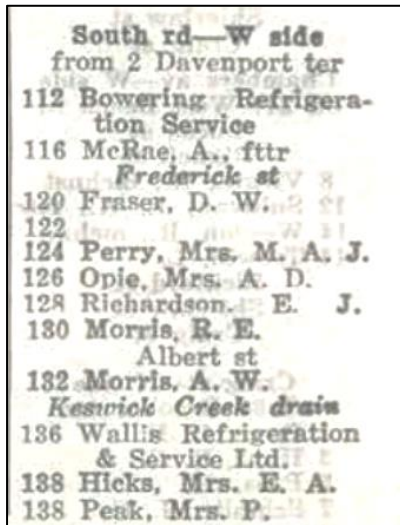
THE IMPLEMENT COMPANY

92-94 GRENFELL ST. PHONE C.3135. TELEGRAMS: "IMPLEMENT" Adelaide

Adelaide Chronicle, 28 Sep 1939, p7

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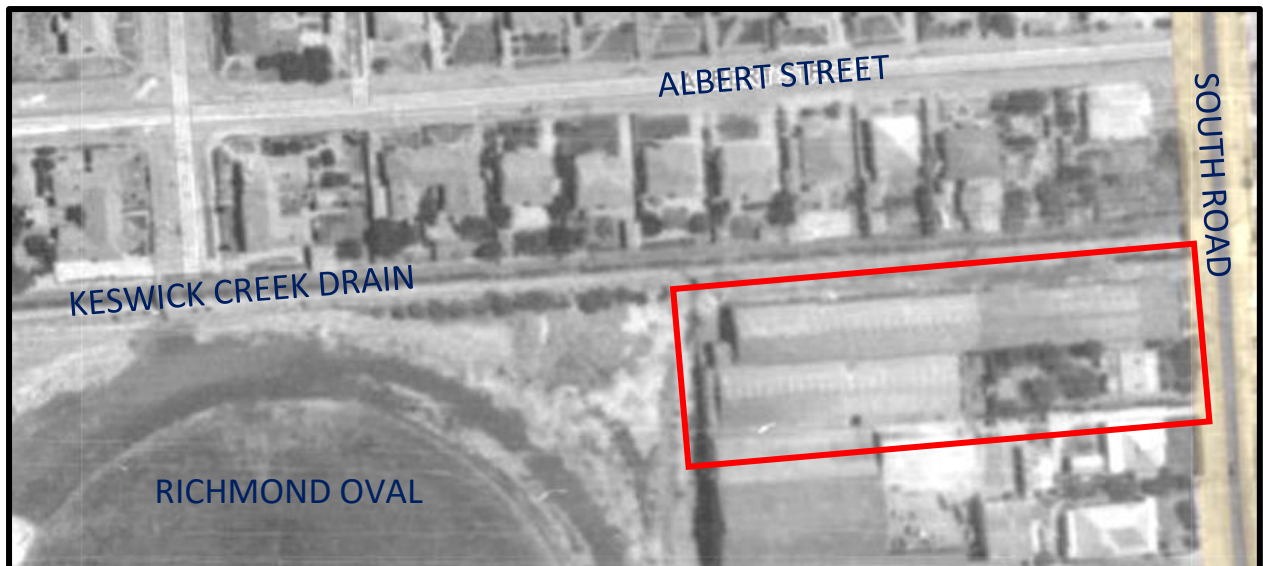
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Sands and McDougall directory, 1951

In the mid and late-1940s Wallis also briefly ran sales outlets in Waymouth and Wilcox Streets, Adelaide. (Although specialising in Wallis products the company's sales outlets also carried a small range of non-Wallis brands).

Enjoying solid financial success and seeking larger premises, in August 1950 Wallis moved the business to a 0.79-acre (around 32 hectare) site at 136 South Road, Richmond, virtually adjacent to the Richmond Oval (South Road was renumbered around 1966, this is now 336 South Road).



Wallis had bought the Richmond site in October 1949 for £1,500 and he sold the Gilbert Street site for £4,525 in November 1950.

With Hughie Wallis devoting more time to his burgeoning cinema business, in the 1950s Messrs K. McMahon (manager/secretary) and Max Beer (service manager) largely ran Wallis Refrigeration.


Although never the largest player, Wallis Refrigerators had nonetheless succeeded in creating a small but profitable niche in the South Australian refrigerator market.

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MODERN REFRIGERATION for all country homes "WALLIS"

Kerosene Operated Model



Types similar to illustration.

No one can imagine (other than by actual experience) the COMFORT, CONVENIENCE and ECONOMY of a Refrigerator in the home. Waste is eliminated, and tasty dishes are provided with minimum trouble. The

"WALLIS"
KEROSENE REFRIGERATOR

has won marvellous popularity. Its EFFICIENCY and LOW COST OF OPERATION are outstanding features.

INVESTIGATE OUR CLAIMS BEFORE
PLACING YOUR ORDER.

PRICE
£95

Including 25 p.c. Sales Tax Net. Case and packing for country delivery approximately 50/-.

Specification

CAPACITY. 5.5 cubic ft.
Interior Finish. Porcelain Enamel.
Interior Measurements. Height 30 in.
Width 22 in.
Depth 14 in.
Exterior Finish. Synthetic Enamel.
Exterior Measurements. Height 58½ in.
Width 27½ in.
Depth 25½ in.
SHELVES. 3.
PYREX DISHES, with lid. 3.
Glass Drip Dish. 1.
Ice Cube Trays. 4.
FINISH Ivory or White special Lacquered
ALL STEEL CABINET, Chrome-plated and Black Door Fittings.

OBTAINABLE FROM YOUR STOREKEEPER OR

COLTON'S

COLTON, PALMER & PRESTON LTD.
CURRIE STREET, ADELAIDE : Phone C3580 (8 lines), 8880 (6 lines).

REFRIGERATORS ARE SOLD ONLY UNDER PERMIT, and application forms are obtainable from our Electrical Department. Write now and make sure your refrigerator is installed before the hot weather.

Adelaide Chronicle, 19 July 1945, p39

WALLIS

Iced Delicacies

WALLIS
Iced Delicacies

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In the 1950s Wallis Refrigeration produced a small booklet, *Wallis Iced Delicacies*, containing 'over fifty proved and tested recipes for iced fancies and delicacies'. This probably accompanied a purchased freezer.

And in what perhaps indicated a satisfied workforce, in 1948-52 Wallis Refrigeration fielded a team in the lower grades of the Adelaide and Suburban Cricket Association.

Blackwood R.S.L. v. Wallis Refrigeration	
This match was played at the South Parklands. Scores:	
R.S.L. (first innings)	
Langley, b. Conoley	10
McNamara, b. Mitter	6
Munro, b. Mitter	0
Mackereth, b. Dowsett	54
Jones, c. Young, b. Dowsett	24
J. McNamara, b. Dowsett	15
Nosworthy, b. Dowsett	2
Bates, c. Graham, b. Dowsett	4
Holden, run out	7
Axford, not out	7
Davis, l.b.w., b. Dowsett	3
Sundries	8
Total	140
Bowling	
Dowsett 6/60, Mitter 2/29, Conoley 1/12, Beer 0/31.	
Wallis Refrigeration (first innings)	
Conoley, c. Mackereth, b. Munro	9
McMahon, c. Mackereth, b. Munro	1
Mitter, l.b.w., b. Munro	15
McCormack, c. Jone, b. Mackereth	3
Beer, not out	12
Dowsett, not out	1

Coromandel, 27 Nov 1948, p5

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Wallis Refrigeration & Service Ltd.
Brings Another Comfort into Your Home:
The "WALLIS" SPIN DRY WASHING MACHINE

FEATURING Baked Enamel Finish, Porcelain Drum, 'Dimet' Bowl, Vee-belt Spring Tension Drive.

PRICE £84
 Plus packing and freight
 22-volt and 240-volt D.C. Models can also be supplied for 10 guineas extra

ALSO
 "WALLIS" ELECTRIC SEALED UNIT REFRIGERATOR
 (71 cubic feet capacity)

Both the above Machines on display at our Showroom for inspection and can be ordered for immediate delivery.

CALL AND SEE THIS AMAZING WASHING MACHINE

Caravan Refrigerators built to order. Any quotations for Shops, Hotels, Coolrooms attended to immediately.

STANSBURY L. J. COUCH PHONE 62



Southern Yorke Pioneer. 1 Februarv 1952. p3

In the early 1950s Wallis Refrigeration manufactured Wallis Spin Dry Washing Machines, selling them both locally and interstate. Wallis maintained in its press advertisements that, retailing for around £80 in South Australia, 'Wallis Washers work wonders on wash days'.

Given that the machines were made for only a couple of years they did not perhaps work the sales wonders the company had hoped for.

REFRIGERATOR
GAS (Mallee) wants to know if it is possible to convert a kerosene operated refrigerator to gas, and what would be the cost? The refrigerator is a six cubic feet Wallis, purchased in February, 1952.

● Get in touch with the makers, **Wallis Refrigeration & Service Ltd., 136 South road, Richmond.** The approximate cost for conversion would be £12 10/.

Chronicle, 14 Oct 1954, p29 [Readers Question]

After also briefly operating under the name Richmond Refrigeration Sales and Services Company Limited, Wallis Refrigeration and Service Limited ceased business on South Road in the early 1960s.

The intensely competitive nature of Adelaide's refrigerator market, increasingly dominated by Frigidaire and the leviathan Kelvinator Australia, and Hughie Wallis's increasing commitment to his cinema interests, were probably the main influences behind the closure.

It appears likely that in its final years McMahon focused the business away from refrigeration manufacture and more towards repair services.

After leasing the South Road site to a series of small businesses over a decade or more, Wallis sold the site in October 1976 for \$97,750 to Graz Nominees.

A notable example of post-war expansion of a firm from cramped city premises into the wide-open spaces of Richmond is afforded by **Wallis Refrigeration & Service Ltd.** Mr. **Hugh Wallis**, operating until four years ago at Gilbert street, Adelaide, found his manufacturing business expanded rapidly after the transfer to Richmond.

He had to extend to get more room for sheet-metal working and other activities in washing machines as well as refrigerators.

Mr. **K. McMahon** is manager - secretary of **Wallis Refrigeration**, and Mr. **Max Beer** is service manager.

Also extended

Mr. **Jim Polson** built big and attractive showrooms and workshops at Deacon avenue two years ago, and **Polson's Refrigeration Service Ltd.** moved there from an overcrowded workshop at Morphett street, Adelaide.

He, too, had to extend soon after starting at Richmond. A cabinet shop was added for commercial refrigerator work.

Bowering Refrigeration Service is the fourth of the South road refrigeration cluster.

News, 1 Dec 1953, p26

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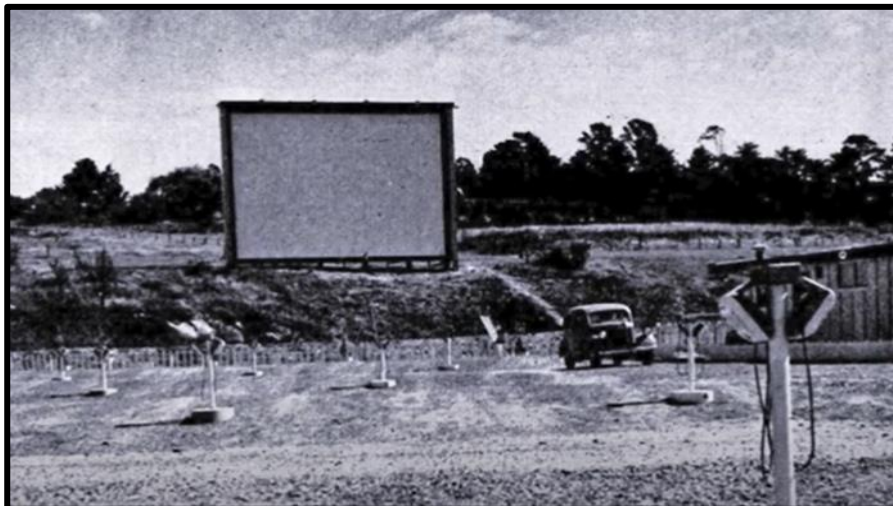
Community films at the RSL halls

Hughie Wallis always had a passion for film and started playing films, the golden classics of MGM, at local RSL halls. Starting in Morphett Vale and Reynella, he then began showing films at the Richmond RSL.

Bob joined in this hobby with his dad and was an usher at the Richmond RSL.

Wallis Drive-ins

On a trip to Melbourne the Wallis family saw the first Australian drive-in, the Skyline Burwood, which had opened on 18 February 1954.



Skyline Burwood [cinematreaasures.org]

Entrepreneurial, gutsy and with a great vision, Hughie leased and eventually purchased what was swampland at West Beach, west of the newly opened Adelaide Airport to set up the first South Australian Drive-in.



Site for the Wallis Blue Line Drive-in, 1949 [WestMaps public]



Daily News, 18 February 1954, p6

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Debate in the SA Parliament

During the second half of 1954 the *Places of Public Entertainment Act Amendment Bill* was debated in the South Australian parliament. With drive-in theatres in the offing, the first part of the bill related to them.

The Hon. E Anthony thought they were a good idea in a climate that supported year-round outdoor entertainment. The 'family man who, after coming home from work, often does not feel inclined to change ... could put his family in the car and go to the picture show without changing' (SAPD Council, 24 August 1954, p. 442).

A number of speakers were concerned with morality. Mr. Hutchens went into greatest detail: 'No doubt we shall see females attending in green French bathers, with their hair dyed red, and accessories to match. We should take all possible action to preserve the morals of our young people and I am glad we are to have legislation to deal with drive-in theatres' (SAPD Assembly, 5 October 1954, p. 881).

A young Don Dunstan disagreed: 'If people are going to resort to motor cars for the purposes of immorality they are not likely to purchase theatre tickets and drive in beside other vehicles to do what they might otherwise do on some lonely country road. I think drive-in theatres have an advantage in that people may go to them dressed more informally than they would be expected to dress at an ordinary theatre. They would be able to sit in coolness and enjoy greater comfort and that is to be encouraged' (SAPD Assembly, 5 October 1954, p. 882).

The legislation made no mention of dress standards or morality. Debaters were simply using the fact that calculations of the seating capacity of a drive-in were to be 'assessed on the assumption that the space occupied by each vehicle provides capacity for three persons' to assume the presence of a chaperone. However, the regulations under the Act did provide that anyone who acted offensively or annoyed others could be asked to leave the theatre.

[Drive-in Theatres, SLSA SA Memory]

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Drive-ins

Wallis Theatres opened or managed drive-ins in the Adelaide metropolitan area:

- Blueline, West Beach (1954-1998)
- Mainline, Gepps Cross (1955-2022)
- Hiline, Panorama (1957-1987)
- Harbourline, Outer Harbour (1958-1982)
- Oceanline, Christies Beach (1959-1986)
- Parkline, Mitchell Park (1964-1989)
- Valleyline, St Agnes (1965-2003)
- Starline Drive-in, O'Halloran Hill (1966-1984)
- Hollywood, Salisbury Downs (1967-1985)

Facebook: S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas

Six country theatres were established:

- Murrayline, Berri (1957-1983)
- Barossaline, Tanunda (1958-1984)
- Riverline, Loxton (1959-1986)
- Bonneyline, Barmera (1962-2008)
- Northline, Clare (1962-1988)
- Groveline, Renmark (1966-1988)



Over the decades as the drive-in culture faded and with the introduction of videos and home players, Wallis Theatres closed and sold most of their suburban and country drive-ins. Changes in the industry contributed to the closure of the Blueline in November 1998 and the Valleyline in May 2003.



18 Apr 1962



Wallis continued to operate the Mainline Drive-in as the last surviving drive-in theatre in Adelaide until its closure in early 2022.

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Metro Drive-ins

Blueline West Beach (1954-1998)

To pursue his vision of bringing drive-ins to South Australia, Hughie leased land on part section 228, Hundred of Adelaide, at the northeastern corner of Military Road and West Beach Road.

One part of the land was leased from J.H.H. Dunning of Myrtle Bank, accountant, from 1 September 1954 to 31 August 1959 for £250 for the first year; £625 in total for the second and third years; and the sum of £500 for each subsequent year ('the rent to be paid in advance'). In February 1956, the lease was extended to August 1965 under altered terms and covenants.

The second part (also on part section 228) was leased from Dunning to Wallis from 1 March 1955 to 30 August 1959 for £250 per annum, with right of renewal for five years at £375 per annum. In March 1964 Blueline Drive-In Theatres Pty Ltd (Hughie Wallis) bought eleven acres (around 4.5 hectares) of the West Beach site he had previously leased, for £66,000.



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Hughie had people dump landfill on the swamplands and he bought his own truck and bulldozer to form the ramps and roadways.

The BlueLine Drive-In opened on 28th December 1954 with a *Heckle and Jeckle* cartoon, News, a featurette (not named), then the main film *Genevieve* starring Kenneth More.



There were two nightly sessions starting at 8 and 10.

<p>South Australia's FIRST DRIVE-IN Theatre</p> <p>ALASKA ICE CREAM It Tastes Better IT IS BETTER Selected Exclusively for Adelaide's First Drive-in Theatre</p>	<p>THE BLUELINE GALA OPENING TONIGHT Two Sessions Nightly: 8.15 and approx. 10.25 Technicolor Comedy "GENEVIEVE"^g Heckyl & Jekyl cartoon & Aust. Newsreel</p> <p>Facilities include — A cafe and children's playground. Accommodation for about 390 cars. Motorists directed to parking places by attendants. Cars driven on to ramps so that all the occupants can see the screen easily</p> <p><i>Make a date to visit SOON!</i></p>	<p>South Australia's FIRST DRIVE-IN Theatre</p> <p>ARCWELD PLAY EQUIPMENT</p> <p>YOUR KIDDIES PLAY IN SAFETY AT THE BLUE LINE WITH</p> <p>ALL REFRIGERATION EQUIPMENT Supplied to the BlueLine Drive-in Theatre</p> <p>WALLIS REFRIGERATION & SERVICE LIMITED 136 SOUTH ROAD, RICHMOND, Phone LU 6641 All units used in Electric.</p>
<p>ALL EARTHMOVING WORK at the BLUELINE THEATRE was done by D. GEORGEFF Land clearing & Earthmoving contractors 463 TAPLEYS HILL RD., FULHAM PHONE L 8926</p> <p>Quotes given and orders taken for — LAND CLEARING ROAD CONSTRUCTION DAM SINKING GRADING And all other earthmovements in the Country or Metropolitan Areas</p>	<p>SOLVER PAINTS & ENAMELS</p> <p>were used for the beautification and protection of South Australia's first great</p> <p>Drive-in-Theatre Manufactured by W. P. CROWHURST LTD.</p> <p>THE SOLVER PAINT STORE MAKERS OF . . . "SOLVER" Prepared Paint . . . "SOLVAFLEX" Enamelised Finish . . . "SOLREX" Plastic Paint . . . "SOLVER" G.P. Enamel 95-97 GOUGER ST., ADELAIDE : : Phone LA 5255</p>	<p>Ask For . . .</p> <p>HALL'S DELICIOUS FRUIT DRINKS Made from Pure Australian Fruits</p> <p>LEMON QUENCH ORANGE QUENCH and "FRUITA"</p> <p>Obtainable at Adelaide's New BlueLine Drive-In Theatre</p>

The News, Tuesday, Dec. 28, 1954—17

Preserving Memories

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A full house was predicted for the opening, and the press on 29 December reported 'tangled traffic scenes' in the area when thousands of motorists tried to see the opening.

Cars were becoming more affordable, and families maximised the novelty with Sunday drives, journeys and touring.

The drive-in industry also captured this market and sparked a drive-in culture with teenagers piled into FJ Holdens, speakers hanging from car windows and kids munching on Chiko Rolls and Choc-tops in the back seat.

Traffic Jam At Open-Air Theatre

There were tangled traffic scenes on roads approaching the West Beach Blue Line drive-in theatre yesterday evening when thousands of motorists tried to see the opening of the theatre.

The nine-acre allotment was packed to capacity with nearly 400 cars half an hour after the gates opened at 6.45 p.m.

Cars were banked up for half a mile to Tapsey's Hill road and then for at least another half-mile each way north and south along Tapsey's Hill road.

Civilians tried to clear the continuous traffic snarls at the intersection before several traffic police arrived and got the streams of cars moving.

When it was learned that the theatre was full and enough cars to fill the allotment for the second session at 10.15 were queued up on the roads outside, no more cars were allowed to enter West Beach road.

The Blue Line's manager (Mr. E. V. Dunn) described the public response as "amazing."

The opening programme at the theatre is "Genevieve," a rollicking British film about vintage cars and their eccentric drivers. It is

Advertiser 29 Dec 1954, p4

MAKE A DATE TO VISIT

THE Blue Line SOON

South Australia's FIRST DRIVE-IN Theatre WEST BEACH

AGAIN TONIGHT AT THE BLUELINE

TWO SESSIONS, TONIGHT, 8 P.M. and 10 P.M. DRIVE IN FROM 6.45 p.m. Easy Entrance and Exit.

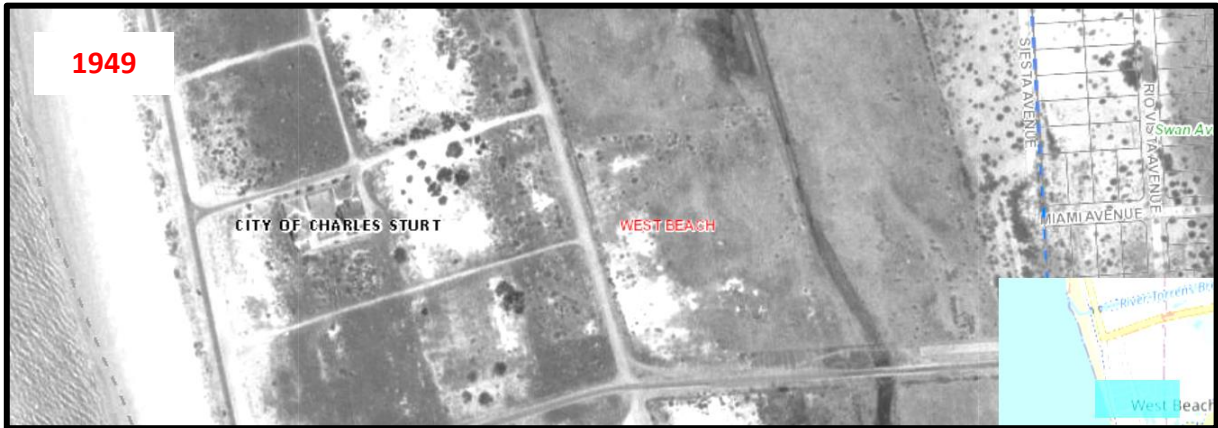
GENEVIEVE Hekyll & Jekyll Cartoon. Shorts

30th Sessions, in Color (G).

News, 29 Dec 1954, p16

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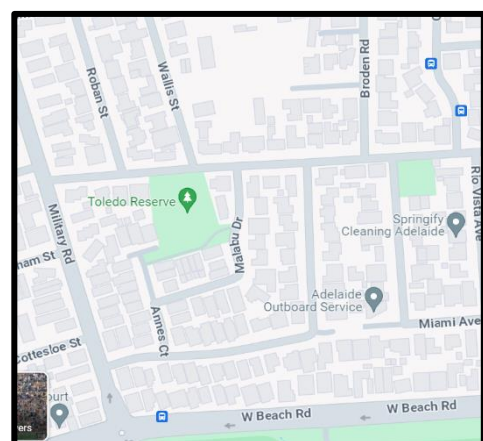
In August 1966 Blueline Drive-In Theatres Pty Ltd used about three acres (around 1.21 hectares) of the land to lay out a seven-allotment residential subdivision at the southern side corner of Military Road and Toledo Avenue.

In August 1990 Blueline Drive-In Theatres Pty Ltd sold a small northern portion of the remaining land to a private party. The land was used for housing.

The drive-in closed on 28th November 1998 with the last showing being *Babe 2: Pig in the City*.

In mid-1999 the remainder of the land (at the corner of Military and West Beach Roads) was subdivided into sixty-six housing allotments based around Annes Court, Malibu Drive and White Sands Drive.

The subdivision was carried out by Avireen Pty Ltd.



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BIRTH OF THE DRIVE-IN

By David Kilderry

It is generally acknowledged that the drive-in theatre was born on the night of June 6, 1933 in Camden, New Jersey USA, and that its inventor was Richard M. Hollingshead Jr.

Decades beforehand, many outdoor cinemas existed in both the USA and Australia. These venues were popular in beach resort areas and remote locations, a simple solution to the problem of a scarcity of buildings large enough to hold audiences clamouring for the cinematograph.

Some of these outdoor theatres reportedly included car accommodation, so it would be naive to suggest that the first patrons to ever view a film from a car were in New Jersey on that June night.

Hollingshead does deserve the credit however for developing the concept of the drive-in as we know it. He filed a patent for his invention, but it was determined that there was nothing new in what he had developed except for the formed gravel mound known as the ramp, the design of which enabled the viewers' vehicles to point upward towards the giant screen.

The screen was placed high upon a screen tower in order that several hundred cars could view it, rather than just those in the front row.

Decades of court battles dogged Hollingshead as he fought to enforce the novel aspect of his idea, and receive royalties from new drive-in operators. Ultimately, a court ruled that a pile of dirt could not be the subject of a patent.

Hollingshead by this time had returned to the auto parts business. He died in relative obscurity, comfortable at least in his own mind about what he had achieved.

The drive-ins built across the US in the 1930s struggled due to the lack of a suitable sound system. The sound was either blasted from a single large speaker from atop the screen tower or from several speakers located across the drive-in field; some were even located beneath the car and the sound vibrated up through the floorboards! Anyone within a mile or so complained bitterly of noise escaping from the field. It was not until RCA developed the in-car speaker in the 1940s that the solution was found.

At the end of World War 2 all the elements were in place for a drive-in explosion. By 1958 5,000 drive-in theatres had been built in North America.

Sir Norman Rydge, the Managing Director of one of Australia's two giant theatre circuits - Greater Union - commented in 1949 that drive-ins would not be successful in Australia. As far as he and Ernest Turnbull, the Managing Director of Twentieth Century Fox and the head of Hoyts in Australia, were concerned, there was no need for the expense of a new theatre circuit. Television was still years away and the hundreds of theatres in the country controlled by the majors produced big profits.

In Victoria Hoyts' Southern

Division Director George Griffith Jr. begged to differ. He headed a syndicate which built the first drive-in at Burwood, based along the lines of its North American cousins.

Roc Kirby, operator of the Melbourne suburban Kirby Theatres circuit founded by his father George, was one of many eyes watching developments at **Skyline Burwood**.

The accountants for Kirby Theatres were Bill Spencer and Ted Alexander. Bill Spencer, who owned land on Whitehorse Road Croydon, asked Roc what he knew about drive-in theatres. Roc replied that he knew all about them, and that they should build one on the land at Croydon. Whilst it was true that Roc knew something of drive-ins, he acquired all the additional knowledge required very quickly.

Hugh Wallis, a refrigeration mechanic and operator of a small Adelaide cinema circuit, experienced all the excitement of **Skyline Burwood** on a trip to Melbourne and decided that he could build one in Adelaide.

Construction commenced at a site in West Beach and in a short time his drive-in was achieving the success of Burwood.

In Western Australia the **Highway** at Bentley and **Skyline Floreat Park** led the charge in 1955, but they were pipped at the post by an outdoor cinema at Rolleston that accommodated 65 cars. Before that the small seaside resort of Dunsborough boasted horse and carts lined up amongst the Ford model T's in front of a large calico screen, way back in the 1930s.

Tasmania's first drive-in, at Elwick in Hobart, was built in the middle of a racetrack! Projection and sound were installed by Westrex.

Queensland boasted an excellent climate for the drive-in experience. Amongst the first to open was **Capalaba**, equipped by RCA. Westrex and RCA were two of the companies providing the specialised drive-in equipment required by drive-in theatres.

Expansion into NSW was delayed by the lack of suitable local planning laws. When drive-in regulations were finally passed, their strict and costly requirements ensured that NSW would lag behind the growth in other states.

Reports of clouds of dust stirred up by vehicles at Burwood and at other early drive-ins clearly influenced the

Cinema king who loved the movies

OBITUARY

Hughie Wallis

1911-1994

Mr Hughie Wallis, founder of South Australia's successful cinema group, Wallis Theatres, has died.

Mr Wallis, 83, died early yesterday morning in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, after a short illness.

He had headed Wallis Theatres until admitted to hospital recently, having acted as governing director with his son, Bob, as managing director.

The group is the largest independent cinema chain in Australia, with 20 screens across Adelaide.

It comprises the Academy, Glenelg, Piccadilly, Chelsea, Noarlunga and Oxford cinemas and three drive-ins.

Mr Wallis was widely admired as an Australian cinema entrepreneur, whose love for movies saw his company weather the introduction of television and video and emerge strongly into the cinema revival.

He was responsible for introducing drive-ins to Adelaide, when in 1954 he cleared an area of cheap suburban-fringe land at West Beach and installed speakers, a screen framework and a modest projection shed.

Mr Wallis has also been recognised for ensuring the survival of the cherished Chelsea and Piccadilly cinemas.

Mr Wallis, the widower of Anne, was a Sturt Football Club life member.

He is survived by his son, Bob, daughter-in-law, Lorna, his grandchildren Darryl and Michelle, and by his companion Jean Morrissey.

His funeral will be held at the Heysen Chapel at Centennial Park at 11.30am on Wednesday.

[www.cinemarecord.org.au]

Whilst also following his passion for film, Hughie had the vision to see that Drive-ins would be a good business move. The venture was a huge success which also led to he and Bob buying, building and managing 'hard-top' cinemas.

Hughie suffered from emphysema and passed away 18 March 1994.

Preserving Memories

A joint project of the City of West Torrens and the West Torrens Historical Society

Mainline, Gepps Cross (1955-2022)

Opening on 7 October 1955, the Mainline became the longest running of the Wallis drive-ins operating for almost 67 years when it closed on the 26 February 2022.

The first movie played was *Roman Holiday*, starring Audrey Hepburn and Gregory Peck. When it opened, the drive-in held two sessions a night. It could also accommodate walk-in customers.

The mounds, allowing cars to be elevated to view the big screen, were dug by Hughie Wallis using an old bucket tractor. The drive-in was run by the same person for twenty-two years.



Facebook: S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas

With the decline in interest in drive-ins in the late 1980s, Bob salvaged the last remaining drive-in at Gepps Cross by opening a Sunday Market. This utilised the grounds and earned a small income from the stall-holder fees. Starting as a 'Trash and Treasure' it operated for over 26 years. The market attracted up to 10,000 people per week with its extensive offering of fresh fruit and vegetables and wide selection of bric-a-brac and collectables. It became the largest market in South Australia.



Preserving Memories

A joint project of the City of West Torrens and the West Torrens Historical Society

The Wallis family made the difficult decision to close the Mainline Drive-In in 2022. The last season, *Our Last Summer – Memories That Remain*, played family favourites and classics.

Sessions sold out with Adelaideans wanting to experience the fun of the drive-in one last time.



W Mainline DRIVE IN GEPPS CROSS

JOIN US FOR

Our Last Summer

• MEMORIES THAT REMAIN •

\$25 PER CAR /MOVIE
MAX. 5 PEOPLE

<p>CLIFFORD THE BIG RED DOG (PG) DOGGIE DATE NIGHT PREVIEW 26 DEC 8.55PM 30 DEC 8.55PM 2, 4, 7, 12 & 25 JAN 8.55PM</p> <p>SPIDER-MAN: NO WAY HOME (M) 27, 28 & 29 DEC 8.55PM 26 & 30 DEC 11.15PM 7 JAN 11.15PM</p> <p>GHOSTBUSTERS: AFTERLIFE (PG) NEW YEARS EVE PREVIEW 31 DEC 9PM + SYDNEY FIREWORKS 1, 3, 5, 10 & 17 JAN 8.55PM 2 & 25 JAN 11.15PM 6 & 8 JAN 11.30PM</p> <p>SING 2 (PG) 6, 8, 9, 11, 15 & 19 JAN 8.55PM</p>	<p>THE MATRIX: RESURRECTIONS (CTC) 13 & 18 JAN 8.55PM 15 JAN 11.30PM</p> <p>THE KING'S MAN (CTC) 20 & 26 JAN 8.55PM 21 & 22 JAN 11.15PM</p> <p>ADDAMS FAMILY 2 (PG) 21 & 22 JAN 8.55PM 29 JAN 8.50PM</p> <p>WEST SIDE STORY (M) 24 & 27 JAN 8.55PM</p> <p>HARRY POTTER AND THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX (M) 28 JAN 8.50PM</p> <p>SCREAM (2022) (CTC) 29 JAN 11PM</p>	<p>Classic Sunday</p> <p>E.T. (1982) (PG) 40TH ANNIVERSARY 16 JAN 8.55PM</p> <p>JUMANJI (1995) (PG) 23 JAN 8.55PM</p> <p>GREASE (1978) (PG) 30 JAN 8.50PM</p>
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*Online bookings and card payments in the Diner preferred. Tickets available at the gate. Social distancing rules apply in public areas.

Michelle and Deanna attended each session for the last two weeks.

They heard some of the stories of the past - some PG but many not PG!

Lorna was at the last session and stood up to thank attendees and be thanked by them.

Many said they had not been to the drive-in for 20 to 30 years, which reflects the reason for the decline.

It was a sad and emotional time for them all.

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Hiline, Panorama (Sprinkbank) (1957-1987)

Hughie Wallis leased the land on Goodwood Road, Springbank (Panorama) that he used for the Hiline Drive-in Theatre from Mrs I.R.M. Schurgott of Springbank for four years from 5 December 1956. The annual rental was £700 per year, and he later bought the land.

The land was zoned for factory use and a proposal was put to council for approval to erect the infrastructure for the drive-in.

Approval was given subject to making the back of the screen more sightly and have a finished surface.

From the Council Minutes

Messrs. Piper, Bakewell & Piper forwarded opinion on Mr. Wallis' application to erect a drive-in theatre at Part Section 261 Springbank. The opinion states:—
(1) The application covers the erection of a canteen, bio-room, kitchen and conveniences, together with a screen and accommodation for 500 motor cars.
(2) The plans have been found to be in accordance with the provisions of the Building Act.
(3) The site is within a Zoned Manufacturing Area.

Cr. Brice moved, seconded by Cr. Cordon, that the Drive-In Theatre be approved subject to the back of the screen being made more sightly by being framed or panelled, and that the supports of the screen should be painted, perhaps green. Also that the applicants be told that the surface area of the Drive-In must be finished to the satisfaction of the Council.

Coromandel 14 Dec 1956, p3

The Hiline Drive-In opened 8 March 1957 with a capacity for 807 cars.



Hiline Panorama February 1988 [cinematreaures.org]



Hiline Drive-in [cinematreaures.org]



Hiline projection room 1969 [cinematreaures.org]

Lorna Wallis' fondest memory of working at the drive-ins was at the Hiline where they would have up to 800 cars (per session) on a Saturday night and serve three course meals!

Bob Parr OAM started here at the age of twelve as a tray boy, taking coke and hotdogs to the cars.

The drive-in closed on 17 October 1987 and the site is now residential housing including Kentucky Avenue and the southern end of Tafquin Street.

Preserving Memories

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Harbourline, Osborne (1958-1982)

Located at Victoria Road and Marmora Terrace, Osborne with a 500-car capacity, the opening movies, *Many Rivers to Cross* and *The Long, Long Trailer* were screened on 19 November 1958.



Clash of the Titans and *Tarzan the Ape Man* screened at the closure on 16 May 1982.



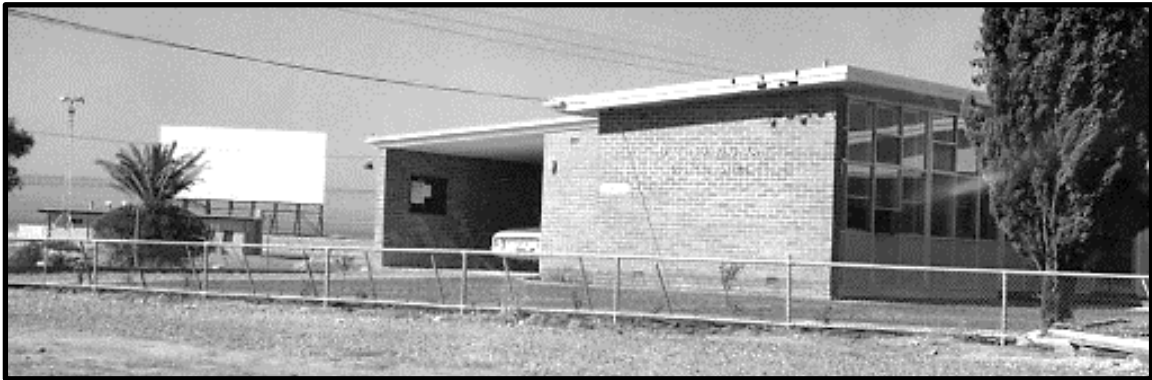
Harbourline Drive-in June 1964 [SLSA B70890/35]

Preserving Memories

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Oceanline, Christies Beach (1959-1986)

The Oceanline was the fifth drive-in built for Wallis Theatres. It was situated between Dyson Road, Blyth Street, McKinna Road and Barbara Street.



Oceanline Drive-in, Christies Beach [Facebook: S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas]

It opened on 14 February 1959 with *Private War of Major Benson* and *Walk the Proud Land*.

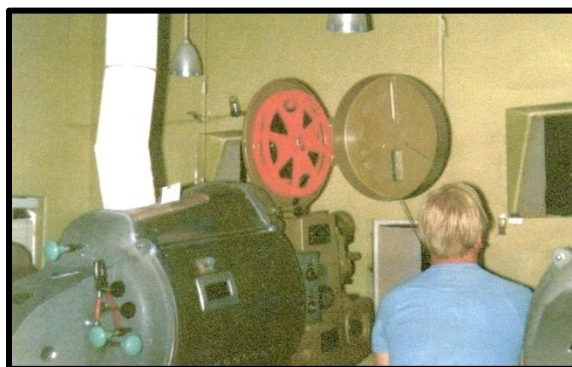


Oceanline circa 1980s [Facebook: S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas]

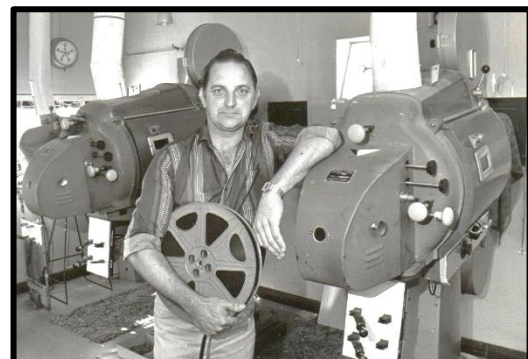


1956 poster [movieposters.ha.com]

It was first closed on 23 March 1985 screening *World Safari* and *World Safari 2*. It was reopened for a short time by Peter Maunder on 4 April 1985 before final closure on 25 October 1986.



Oceanline projection room [Facebook: S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas]



Oceanline closing night 1986.
[Facebook: S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas, Peter Maunder]

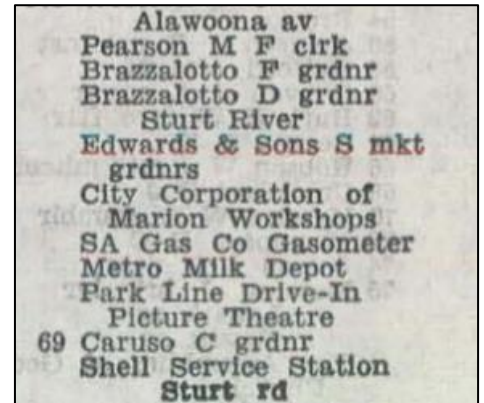
The site, now housing, contains three streets with actor names Hepburn Road, Bogart Court and Fonda Court.

Preserving Memories

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Parkline, Mitchell Park (1964-1989)

The Parkline on Marion Road with a 504-car capacity was opened on 3rd November 1964 with Cary Grant in *Charade* and *Wild Heritage*.



The services building: projection room on the left, cafeteria in the centre, toilets on the right. Behind the building were roof shields to prevent people viewing the R-rated films from the outside of the drive-in [Kino Cinema Quarterly Summer 2006]

Sands & McDougall Directory, 1967

Hugh Wallis purchased approximately 1 acre of vacant land in Mitchell Park for another drive-in theatre in 1964.

The land was bounded by Marion Road on the western side for access, with all other boundaries surrounded by gum trees, including the Sturt Creek running adjacent on the eastern boundary. This made the drive in very secluded.

A large services building was situated on the northwest boundary and included a large cafeteria with dining areas, kitchens, toilets, and a large projection room. The front of the cafeteria had a full-length glass window so that patrons could dine and watch the film in progress. On one side of the cafeteria, there was a viewing window to the bio box so that anyone interested could see the projectors in operation.

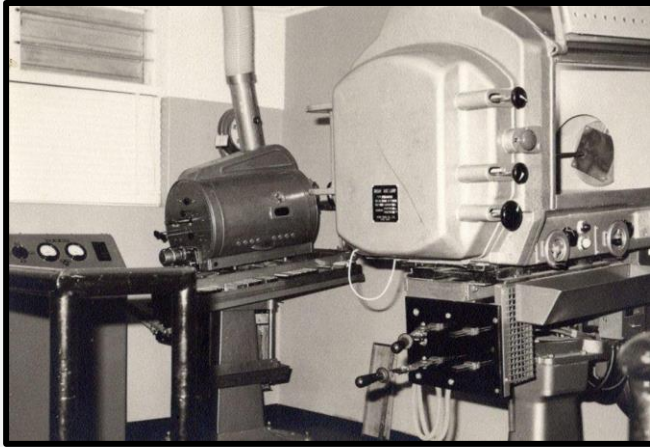
The huge screen measuring 90 feet by 39 feet (nearly 27.5 metres by 12 metres) was 20 foot (over 6 metres) from the ground and was situated on the southeastern boundary.

The projection room was part of the services building and not set in the middle of the field and this enabled more cars access. 206 posts, which had two speakers attached to each metal pole, supplied sound to the 411 cars. The distance from the projectors to the screen was 450 feet, being the longest 'throw' for any drive-in at the time.

Much of the Parkline's success was due to the venue being suitable for the screening of R-rated films, which in those days were subject to strict viewing controls, particularly drive-in theatres where screens were visible from well outside the driving boundaries. The fence heights along the road were increased and special screens were installed along the services building roof.

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Parkline projection room
[Facebook: S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas, Phil & Peter Kellett]

The projection room initially comprised two Kalee 21 projectors with the Japanese made 'Brian' carbon arcs, (12mm positives and 9mm negatives). These were huge arc lamps with 16-inch mirrors. The advertising and coming attraction slides were projected from a separate carbon arc slide projector.

The projector room remained a two-man operation for a few years with a 2,000-foot spool capacity on each projector. Later the projectors were modified to take 6,000-foot spools. Xenon lamps were also installed then the projection room became a one-man operation.

The sound was amplified via two 120-watt amplifiers, one amplifier for the half of the field speakers and one for the other half. In an emergency one amplifier could supply all speakers. The sound system as well as the Kalee 21 projectors remained unchanged throughout the life of the drive-in. Two feature films always made up the programme, usually commencing at 7.30 pm, with a 20-minute interval between the features - which kept the cafeteria staff on their toes with hot foods and drinks. Without a doubt, that cafeteria was very profitable.

With daylight saving from October to March, starting and finishing times got progressively later. During the peak of daylight saving, it was only possible to light up the screen around 9.00 pm. This meant late intermissions and very late finishing times when the full four-hour programme was scheduled, concluding around 1.00 am the following morning. Some sleepy car patrons had to be woken up by staff at the end of the show.

Parkline Drive-in remained virtually the same throughout its whole life of 25 years, except for the projection room changes. As the popularity of drive-ins declined, it was decided to sell the venue in early 1989.

Sadly, the Parkline was demolished to make way for commercial complexes and businesses. The Parkline era will not be forgotten by the many who enjoyed a night at the drive-in when movies were seen on a huge screen from the comfort of the family car.
[Jim East, Kino Cinema Quarterly Summer 2006]

It was closed on 15th April 1989 with Fisher Stevens in *Short Circuit 2* & Greg Evigan in *Deep Star Six*.

Preserving Memories

A joint project of the City of West Torrens and the West Torrens Historical Society

Valleyline, St Agnes (1965-2003)

The Valleyline with a 383-car capacity, on Tolley Road, St Agnes, opened on 3 December 1965 with *Gathering of Eagles* and *Raw Wind in Eden*.



Valleyline Drive-in 2001 [Facebook: S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas Bruce Richmond]



Valleyline Drive-in 2001 [Facebook: S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas]

After nearly 40 years, the last screening on 4 May 2003 was *Anger Management*. The Tolley Road site had been on the market for several years and was sold to metal products company Stratco.

Operations manager Bill Stone said “general yearly downturn” in drive-in business had contributed to the closure. “I think people in that area have turned more towards cinemas these days,” he said.

Will the last car to leave turn out the lights

By MELANIE BUCHANAN

FOR nearly 40 years, Valleyline Drive-in has been a staple of the St Agnes community. The drive-in, which opened in 1965, has been a popular spot for families and friends to enjoy a movie together. However, the drive-in is set to close its doors for good, leaving many fans wondering what will happen to the site.

The drive-in, which has a capacity of 383 cars, has been a popular spot for families and friends to enjoy a movie together. However, the drive-in is set to close its doors for good, leaving many fans wondering what will happen to the site.

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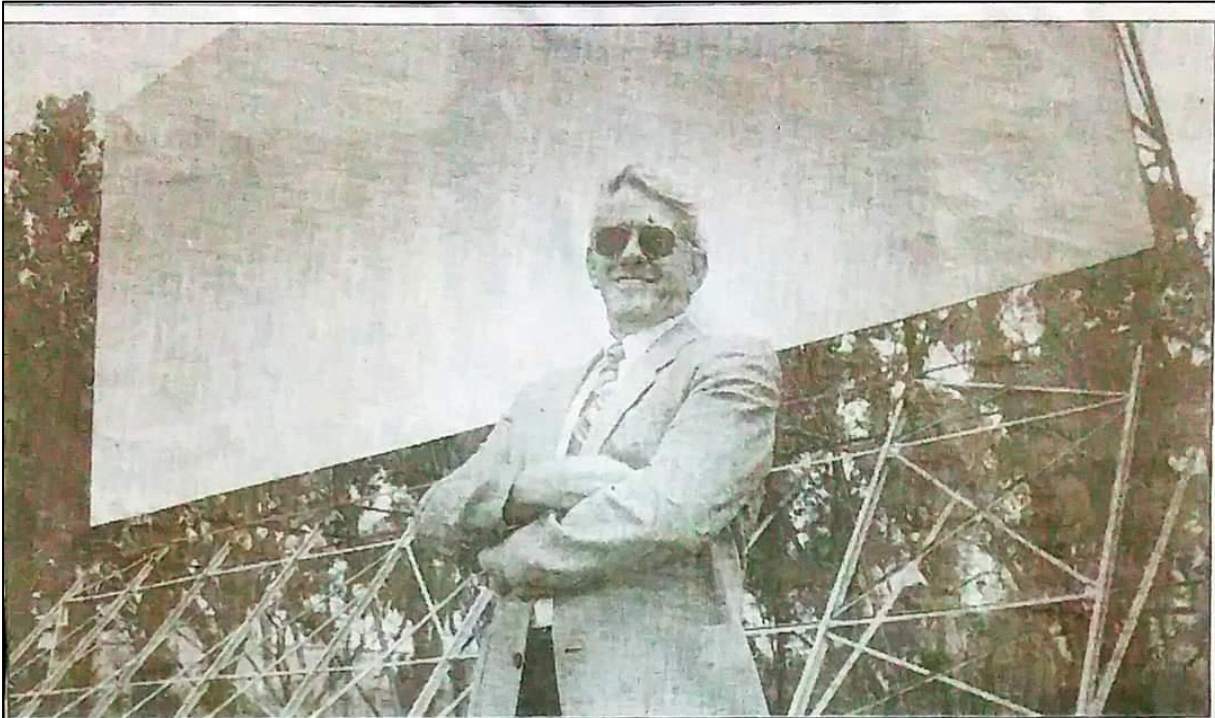
RISE AND FALL OF THE DRIVE-IN

- St Agnes Drive-in opens 1965
- First film shown is *Raw Wind in Eden*
- At its peak, the drive-in has a capacity of 383 cars
- The drive-in is set to close its doors for good
- The drive-in is set to close its doors for good

FANS: Enjoying the Valleyline drive-in are Rhonda and Alan Stone, Stacy Stone and Kate McCandless and, above, at the drive-in in 1965.

Preserving Memories

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Retiring Valleyline Drive-In Theatre manager Bruce Tonkin: "A woman came up to me the other night and said her first child was conceived here." 13779

Movie master set to show his final flick

By MARK ADDINALL

ALTHOUGH Bruce Tonkin has watched snippets of thousands of movies over the past 35 years, he is quick to admit he is no local Bill Collins when it comes to reeling of film titles and actors' names.

"I couldn't tell you what we showed last week let alone in the 1960s," says the retiring manager of St Agnes' Valleyline Drive-In Theatre.

On January 26, Bruce, 64, will open up the drive-in theatre for the last time — and probably sell one final choctop icecream — after 35 years in the industry and nearly 30 years at St Agnes.

Surprisingly, Bruce, from Valley View, has watched only one movie in its entirety — *Dave*, about two weeks ago — while working at the Tolley Rd theatre.

"You're too busy, doing administration, working in the canteen, helping sell tickets," he says. "You only see the start, the middle and the end."

Bruce may not have seen many movies, but his time at the drive-in theatre has produced many humorous moments.

Like the time he found his projectionist knee deep in unravelling film, "He just said: 'Help, Bruce, help!'", the four stolen safes, foxes stealing people's food, marriage proposals screened before movies and countless teenagers attempting to sneak into the drive-in for free by hiding in the boot of a mate's car.

"The silly thing is you could normally tell as the back of the car was a lot lower than the rest of the car," he says.

But Bruce would not discuss what some moviegoers got up to in the back of their parked cars, but admits drive-in theatres were renowned for their sexual encounters.

"A woman came up to me the other night and said her first child was conceived here," he says.

Bruce says her story was probably one of many, as during the late 1970s the St Agnes drive-in showed back-to-back sex films, such as *If You Don't Stop You'll Go Blind*, *ABC of Love and Sex Australian Style* and *Linda Lovelace for President*, to try and lure people away from their color TVs and video recorders.

"Videos are the biggest problem, the bane of our life," he says. "People now stop at home."

In the 1960s, SA had about 30 drive-in theatres, only about six remain, and Bruce says it would be a shame if drive-in theatres, like silent movies, became entertainment dinosaurs.

"You can bring down your chair and sit in front of the car and relax," he says. "That's one of the beauties of the drive-in. They're great for families."

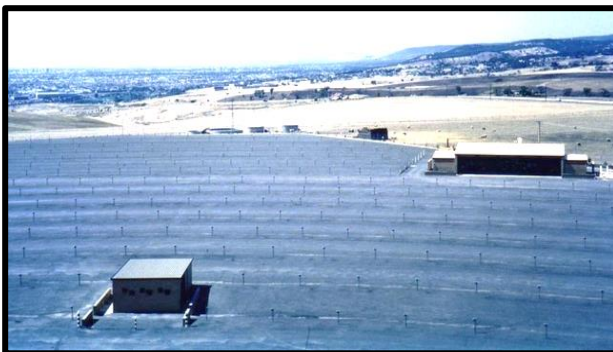
Bruce will spend his retirement travelling, working in his garden, relaxing with his wife ... and catching up on a few of those movies he missed over the past 35 years.

Preserving Memories

A joint project of the City of West Torrens and the West Torrens Historical Society

Starline Drive-in, O'Halloran Hill (1966-1984)

The 700 car Starline Drive-in at 7 Majors Road, Darlington opened in 1966 screening Sean Connery in *Thunderball*. The Sound of Music screened here for 14 months. Wallis managed this for some years during this time.

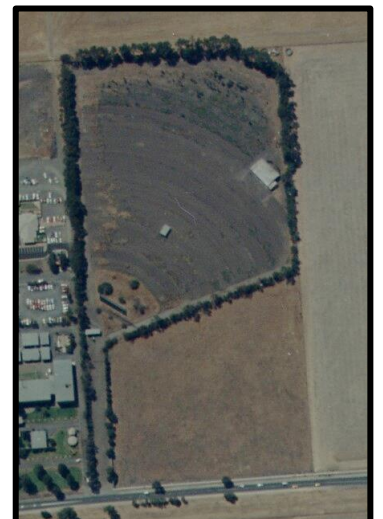


[cinematreasures.org]

Wallis managed the site when the drive-in closed on 4 April 1984 with a triple feature of *Screwballs*, *Polyester* and *Zapped*.

‘All drive-ins were losing money once VHS was introduced. O’Halloran Hill also stopped shows due to foggy nights.’ [Facebook: Open the O’Halloran Hill Drive In Again, 2013]

40 years later the site still exists but with the fire-affected canteen, some building supports and the rusted screen which measures nearly 30 metres. The site has been facing demolition orders since 2010 and there have been several campaigns to re-open the drive-in.



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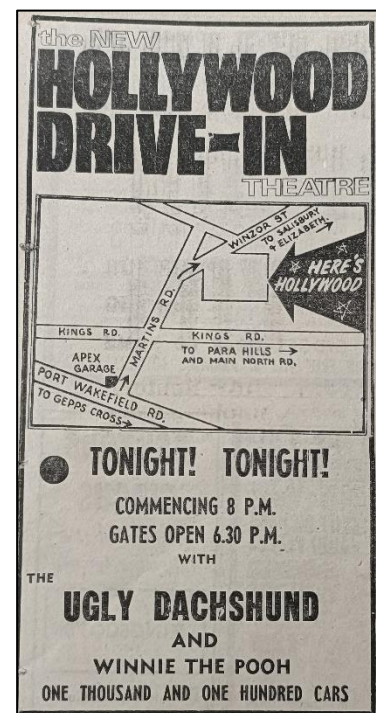
Hollywood Drive-in, Salisbury (1967-1985)

Hollywood Drive-in opened on 20th December 1967 and was run by Bob Wilson. It was the largest drive-in theatre in South Australia with a 1,100-car capacity. The screen measured 120 feet by 54 feet (approx. 36 by 16.5 metres).



Hollywood Drive-in [cinematreasures.org]

'There is a rumour that on the opening night that the movie (whatever it was?) was screened upside down by mistake.'
[Facebook, S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas]



On 28 January 1968, 5AD disc jockey Phil Mayer hosted a supper 'with dancing to specially selected dance recordings' and a special midnight screening of two films, *Jack of Diamonds* and *Village of the Damned*.

The drive-in closed on 26th January 1985 and was demolished to make way for the Hollywood Plaza Shopping Centre.

The screen was a local landmark, visible from the northern hillside suburbs, when it was made into a Hollywood sign.

This was demolished in February 2018.



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Country Drive-ins

Murrayline, Berri (1957-1983)



The Riverland's first Drive-in Theatre, the Murrayline was opened on 20 December 1957 and was situated at 1383 Old Sturt Highway on the Remark to Berri section, about a mile from Berri. *Not a Stranger* and *Stranger on Horseback* were the first films shown.

Facebook: S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas]

Trees and lawns were planted around the area, while the buildings were painted dark blue with pale pastel blue interior. The cafe complex provided meals as well as an outdoor do-it-yourself barbeque area.

Local press reported that 'the proprietor, Mr H M Wallis, said there was no need for those attending "to get all dressed up" as any style of dress was acceptable'.

The latest RCA projector equipment was installed in the bio box and the screen that weighed close to 16 tonnes was able to stand a gale force wind of 100 mph.

The venue remained popular until the popularity of television and videos in the home saw its closure on 24 September 1983 showing *National Lampoon's Class Reunion*, *The Challenge* and *Sea Killer*.

Today this site is occupied by various industries. The projection room was previously used as an office by Riverland Steel and today is occasionally used as a staff room with the canteen utilised as a storeroom.

MURRAYLINE
DRIVE IN
THEATRE
BERRI

Playground - Barbecue - Snack Bar

GALA OPENING
THIS FRIDAY
Dec. 20th at 8 p.m.
(Gates Open at 6.30 p.m.)
Proceeds in aid of Local Charities
(Opening Night)

Friday - Saturday
DECEMBER 20, 21

STANLEY KRAMER Presents
NOT AS A STRANGER

STAFFING
Olivia de HAVILLAND
Robert MITCHUM
Frank SINATRA
Gloria GRAHAME
Broderick CRAWFORD
Charles BICKFORD
Not Suitable for Children

UNITED ARTISTS

Joel McCrea
"STRANGER ON HORSEBACK" (G)
Cartoon - News

Looking back - an image from yesteryear



Drive-in theatre, Berri, 1957.

Casual dress, barbecues at region's first drive-in theatre

The Riverland's first drive-in theatre, the Murray-Line, was opened in December 1957, and was situated on the Sturt Highway on the Renmark to Berri section, about a mile from Berri.

Trees and lawns were planted around the area while the buildings were painted dark blue with pale pastel blue for the interior.

The cafe complex provided meals as well as an outdoor do-it-yourself barbecue area.

The proprietor, Mr H.M. Wallis, said there was no need for those attending "to get all dressed up" - any style of dress was acceptable.

The latest RCA projector equipment

was installed in the bio box and the screen that weighed close to 16 tons was able to withstand a gale force wind of 100 miles per hour.

The venue remained popular until the popularity of television and home videos saw its closure in 1983.

Today the site is occupied by Riverland Steel, Hoffmann Engineers, Berri Landscaping Supplies, NTP Forklift, Access TV and MLM Fabrications.

The projection room was previously used as an office by Riverland Steel and today is occasionally used as a staff meeting room with the canteen utilised as a storeroom.

Facebook: S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas]

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Riverline, Loxton (1959-1986)

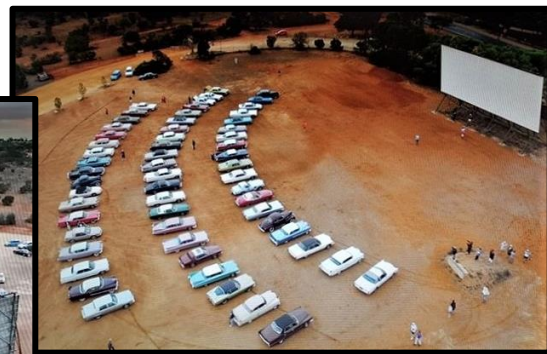
At 141 Karoonda Highway Loxton, the Riverline was opened on 26 December 1959. The car capacity was 285.

'The Riverline was one of the four drive-ins in a small area serving not much more than 50,000 people. This drive-in, like many, caused traffic jams on busy Saturday nights especially when local youths would drive continuously around the nearby roundabout and not let any other traffic back into town.' [Facebook: S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas]



[Facebook: S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas]

The drive-in closed on 29 March 1986.



Cadillac Nationals held at closed site

[Facebook: S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas Chris Schultz]

Northline, Clare (1962-1988)

The Northline was located at Hentschke Road, Clare and had a 215-car capacity. It was opened on 12 January 1962 screening *Pillow Talk* and *Posse from Hell*. Wallis operated the theatre until 1986 when it was leased to Robert Casson, a personal friend of Hughie Wallis.

In 1972 it was sold outright to Casson Investment Pty Ltd. Robert and his wife Elaine ran it until December 1984 when it was sold to Allan J Thompson. Thompson ran it until December 1988.



Clare HS Federation CD

The screen was sold and sent to Townsville in 1988.

The property was sold in March 1990 and is now a residential area.

CLARE Drive-In was a "meeting place" as a teenager in 1974 — the dress code Golden Breed T-shirts, windcheaters, cords and suede desert boots.

From Burra, 42km away, we travelled in car loads with friends from Hallett who made the 160km round trip every week. Admission was \$3.50 although a few rode in the boot or hid under blankets so as not to pay.

Inside the gate, there was no question where to park; we parked on the "snob side" of the hill. Families and quieter types parked elsewhere.

We didn't sit in one car for too long and socialised between cars watching for the "Ajax Man" stalking the rows in his white overalls and blinding torch. If caught "flicking lights or loitering" you were expelled.

At the drive-in, my cousin and I first noticed boys. In summer, the boys looked over each other's cars, guns and eight-track stereos — the girls looked on.

In winter, it would get fogged-out and misty. Wipers, demisters and the car running was necessary for the heater.

During the interval, we would "check out the talent" in the canteen, then after the film it was a drag race back to the Burra Roadhouse before midnight closure.

LYN HAYMAN
Roseworthy

Facebook S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas

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Bonneyline, Barmera (1962-2008)



Built and operated by Wallis Drive-in Theatres, Bonneyline opened 28 September 1962 at 17225 Sturt Highway Barmera, with a 200-car capacity.

The drive-in was situated on the shores of Lake Boney and the screen surrounded by palm trees.



Images [Facebook: S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas]

Double features played at this drive-in with carload discounts every night and an even better deal on Sundays.

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Sound was provided by speakers or FM stereo, and patrons could leave the heat of their cars in summer for the outdoor seating area located in front of the snack bar. A playground was built behind the snack bar and projection room building.



[Facebook: S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas]

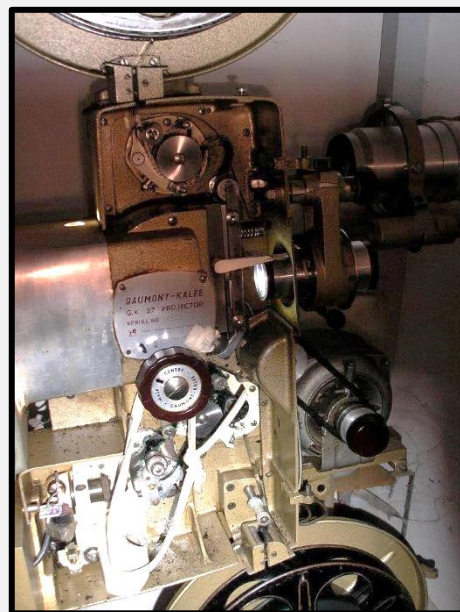
It was located just out of the main township on the Sturt Highway to Adelaide and was built on part of the old fodder block. It was a large area comprising 17 acres total, right down the lake shore but not all of the area could be used. The grounds allowed for just over 200 cars. The screen was 54-foot x 24 foot (16.4m x 7.3m). The first night was just a sneak preview but then the following night there was a screening of *Ladies Man* followed by the film *Undersea Girl*.

The manager for many years from opening until the 1970s was Mr R Mumford. Movie patrons would often be in semi-trailers and fruit trucks as well as all types of cars. Wallis closed the drive-in on Saturday 6 February 1988. The final movies shown on that last night were *Innerspace* and *Witches of Eastwick*.

The drive-in was reopened by Dave Waterman in July 1991 as the Riverland Drive-In, and he operated it for the next two years along with business partner Kevin Williams.

Dave was working at 5DN at the time and had worked with Hugh Wallis. He liaised with Hugh about re-opening the Barmera drive-in for the entire Riverland district.

The original projector was put back in place by Wallis, and Dave drove to Melbourne to purchase new huge transformers. This was the first drive-in in Australia to broadcast the sound rather than using the old speakers. Patrons would on arrival at the gate read a sign which advised them to tune into 88FM. This set a precedent with other drive-ins across Australia, many following suit.



Kalee 21 [Facebook: S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas]

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Dave and Kevin were also the first also to put a Cincinnati gate (boom gate) so it could be operated from the kiosk and let late-comers in without needing to keep someone at the gate after showtime. They also revamped and upgraded the old kiosk with staff wearing neat uniforms.



[Facebook: S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas]

There was huge line-up of cars along the highway on the first ‘free’ night and then again on opening night. Because they were still tied up with Wallis, they were able to receive the new movie releases at similar time to showings in the city which was well received by the public.

When Dave decided to step back from the drive-in, Kevin continued to run it by himself for a further 10 years then sold to Geoff Harris. Geoff ran the drive-in from 2001 until its permanent closure on 6th September 2008.

Lack of patrons forced the closure. Unfortunately, with new releases usually being released in the US summer, meant they would be released in Australia during our winter. This in turn meant patrons weren’t so keen to attend to sit in their car in the freezing cold of winter nights.



[Facebook: S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas]

With the popularity of the DVD and the beginnings of streaming movies it just wasn’t viable to keep the drive-in open. Whilst the busiest nights with popular new releases mean about 210 cars would attend, quietest nights could mean only 4 or 5 cars.

After the closure, Geoff subdivided the property into two parts and sold both. The original drive-in screen was removed by the volunteers of the Cobdogla Steam Museum, who then used the steel in various projects at the museum.

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The ticket booth at the entrance and concession/projection building still stand close by to where the new owners of the property have built a house.



[Facebook: S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas]

The projector and equipment for screening and the kitchen appliances in the kiosk were all left in place at the time of sale.

One of the most popular and biggest nights was the screening of *ET*. Other big nights were the showing of *The Fast and the Furious* and also *Shrek*. These were the nights when people needed to line up in their cars along the highway with quite a wait to get into the drive-in.

Teenagers of the time considered it almost an essential thing to head to Yamba after the drive-in to get a burger or a bacon and egg sandwich. It was the only place locally that would be open after midnight and on any Friday or Saturday night a large group of local teenagers would congregate there after the movies.

Sadly, the closure of the Barmera drive-in saw also the end of an era in the Riverland. Young people today will never get to experience that type of movie showing and huge crowds of friends meeting up.

[Facebook: Berri Barmera Council]

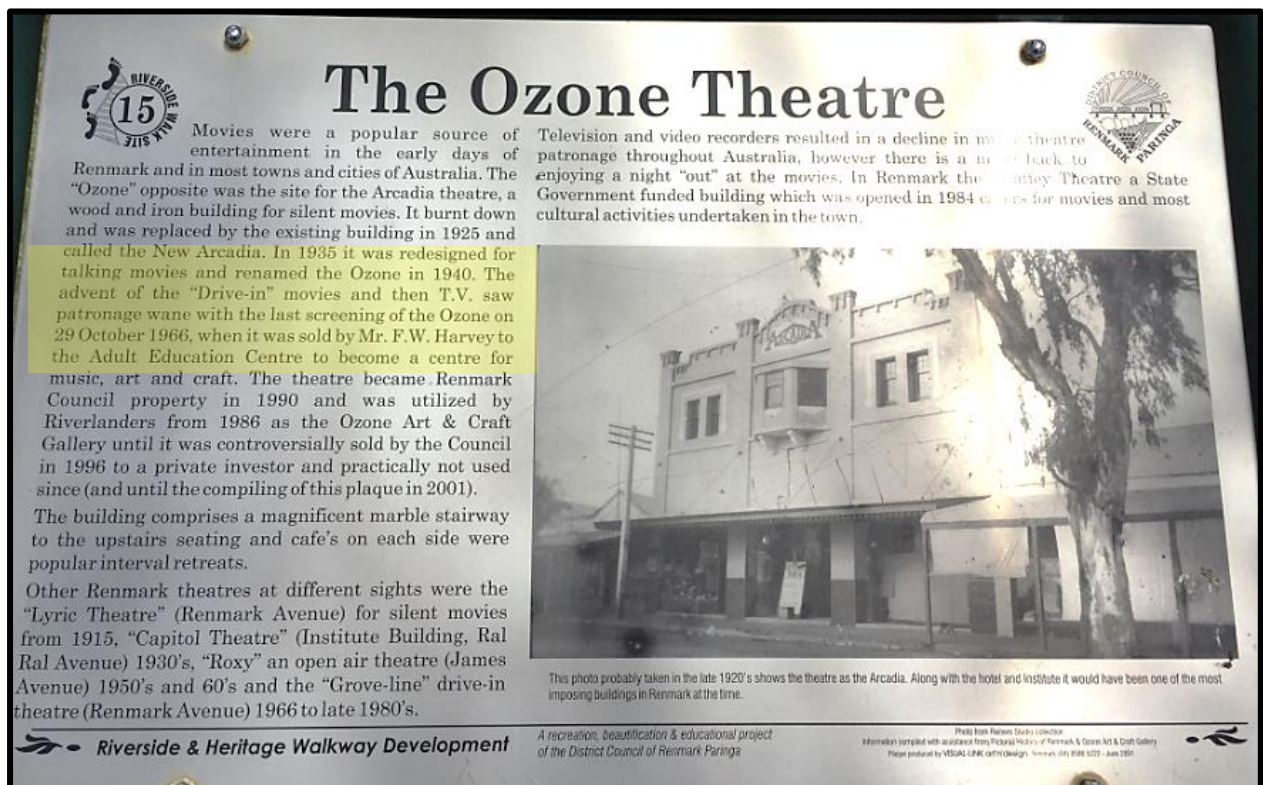
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Groveline, Renmark (1966-1988)

On 8 December 1966 at 255 Renmark Road, the Groveline Drive-in opened for 290 cars. *They're a Weird Mob* played with featurettes. The 'walk-in theatre' opened in February 1967.

Renmark had also boasted a cinema built in 1925, then called the New Arcadia. It was renamed to the Ozone Theatre in 1940. The last screening in the Ozone was in 1966, due to patrons preferring to go to the drive-in movies nearby.



Ozone Theatre, Renmark Heritage signage, 2016 [reddirtroad.life.com.au]

When the drive-in closed on 6 February 1988 with *Revenge of the Nerds* and *Predator*, Wallis had announced that country drive-ins were no longer viable with as few as 12 cars attending each session on a Saturday night.

The site is now an industrial area, the rear fence is still standing, behind John Deere and a car wash.

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Barossaline, Tanunda/Nuriootpa (1958-1984)

Located on the southwest corner of Seppeltsfield Road and Barossa Valley Road with a 316-car capacity, Barossaline Drive-In opened on 22nd December 1958 with Burt Lancaster in *Apache* and Edward G. Robinson in *Woman in the Window*.

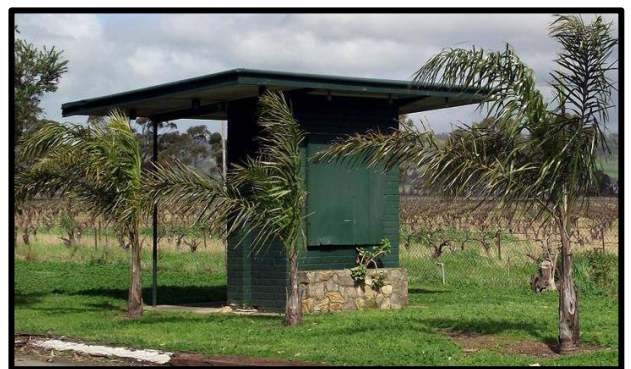


It closed on 27th October 1984 with Sean Connery in *Never Say Never Again* and Michael Pare in *The Philadelphia Experiment*.

The site is now part of the Chateau Dorien Winery.



Barossa line Drive-in [Facebook: S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas, Barossa Valley Junction Motel]



Ticket box, Barossa line Drive-in [Facebook: S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas, Barossa Valley Junction Motel]

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Building the Drive-ins

Bob and Hughie built the car ramps and roads using a tractor. The simple mounds of 'road base' angled the vehicle towards the screen.



Bob and Hughie on the tractor making car ramps, late 1970s



The distinctive speakers and junction boxes installed were used only by Wallis.

Modern cinemas now boast amazing sound systems, but the early drive-ins had tinny speakers that hooked over the car window. Many a car drove off after the movie with the speaker still attached! FM Radio was introduced in the early 1970s on a specific drive-in frequency.

Buildings like ticket boxes, the snack bar and amenities were built, and often the grounds included a small playground and outdoor seating areas. The projection booth was either incorporated into the snack bar or as a separate building central to the screen. The throw (distance between the projector and screen) was around 160 feet (50 metres). Originally 35mm film equipment was used but drive-ins still operating after 2013 were screened digitally.

Fencing needed to be at least 6 feet high to stop free viewings from outside the property and the screens were designed and built from steel trusses and anchored in concrete. A screen would be from 50 to 100 feet (15 to 28 metres) wide and the surface was at least 15 foot (5 metres) from the ground. Most were traditionally close to the scope aspect ratio between 2.0:1 and 2.2:1.

'My father Bob Whinnen and his mate "Bluey" John Burnett worked for HMW [Hughie] building the drive in theatre screens and the speakers at the Richmond factory and on site. HMW as he was affectionately known was a hard working and innovative businessman, also a very good employer. He used to go on fishing trips with dad and Bluey when he had the time . His mother and my father's mother were good friends, both being frugal Scots.' [Facebook: WTHS Dec 2023 Robert Whinnen]

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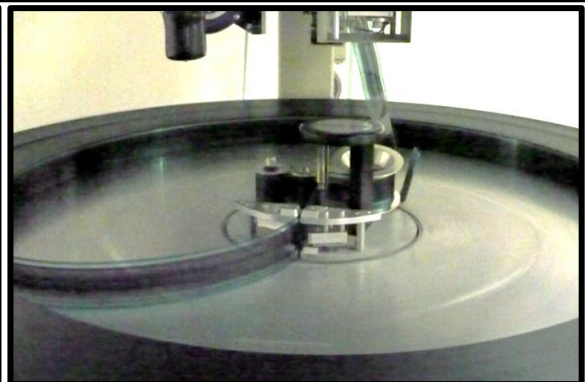
Film Technology

The original silent films were produced at 16 frames per second and the pictures would flicker between frames, hence the nickname for going to the 'flicks!'

In the late 1920s the frame rate increased to 24 per second. It wasn't until 2013 when making *The Hobbit* that the film rate further increased to 48 frames per second. In 2022 James Cameron produced the *Avatar: The Way of Water* at 60 frames per second, even though the eye can only see 55 frames per second. As screens are getting bigger the need for perfection is pursued.

Until the 1980s projectionists had to change one reel to another part way through the film. Film was then joined together on a platter.

The illumination bulb was changed from a carbon arc, due to the burn time limitations, to a Zenon bulb which would burn for 2000 hours.

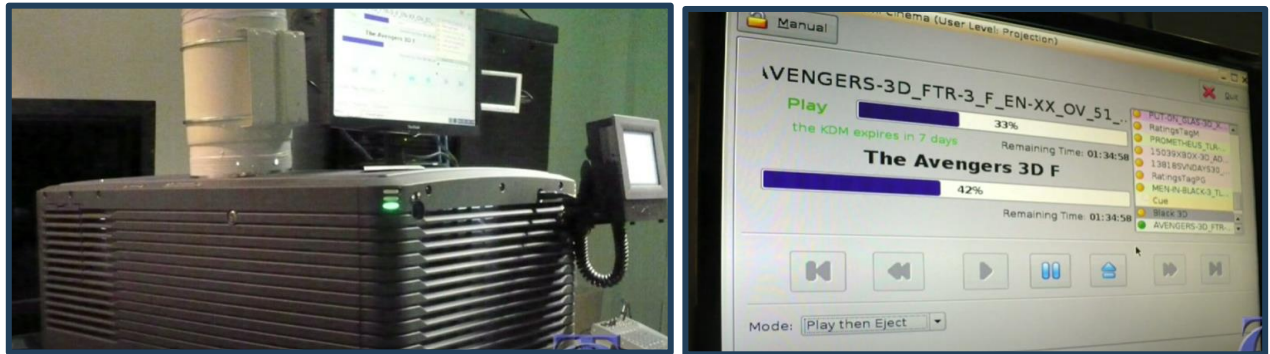


Mitcham Cinema, film platter

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Using 35mm film ceased in 2013 when technology moved to digital projectors with perfect colour and focus.



Mitcham Cinema, digital technology

[Information from Bob Parr on *About Time* Channel 44, Episode 353
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zAx98v_8K3Y]

Digital projection has changed the movie-going experience by providing exceptional sound quality and images. Digital is a more affordable form of distribution; in 2012, 72 per cent of all Australian screens were digital, and close to 60 per cent were 3D capable.

Digital enables more flexibility as films can run on multiple screens at different times, which was not easily achievable on 35mm.

The emergence of 3D technology aligned with digital projection has changed the infrastructure of the cinema industry. 3D is a premium product and showings attract audiences because of the novelty factor and technical quality.

“If the film is not right, people won’t respond. If the film is a good film, 3D or 2D doesn’t matter. You will do well.” Paul Bezanko. [Big Screen Family Values]

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Cinemas

Ozone Theatre, Glenelg Cinema Centre (Wallis 1971- 2009)

The Ozone Theatre at 119 Jetty Road Glenelg, designed by Kenneth Milne, opened on 5 November 1937, with seating for up to 1,920 patrons. The first film was a Technicolor screening of *A Star is Born* with shorts including a Robert Benchley whimsy *How to Vote*.

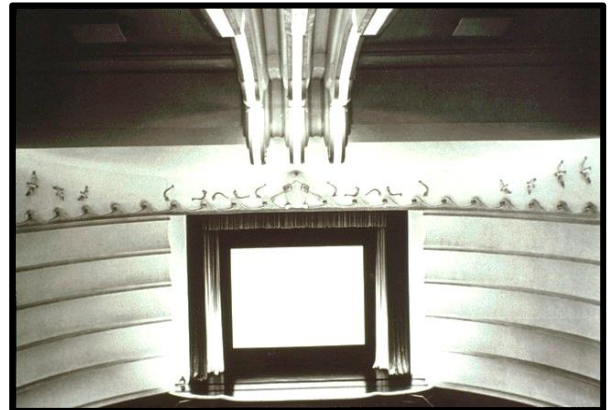
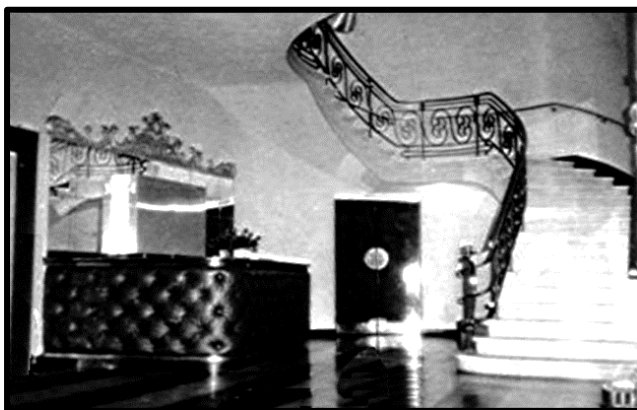
We offer you the public of South Australia a centre of entertainment unique in this state. Every luxury, every thought, every care that 27 years of experience dictates, that modern science knows, is here for your comfort, your convenience, your service. We present the showplace of Australia, the Ozone Theatre Glenelg.
[Gala opening night program, 5 November 1937]

Advertising material from 1938 says that the Ozone Theatre had air-conditioning throughout, a ladies smoking lounge, and a baby-friendly viewing area where mothers with screaming children 'will not be embarrassed.'
[Advertiser, 9 Oct 1937]

The Waterman family owned Ozone Theatres Ltd. Kenneth Milne, noted for designing the Adelaide Oval scoreboard in 1911, also designed major refurbishments undertaken to the theatre in 1940 to 1941.

In February 1945, the Ozone was ranked second in terms of size among Adelaide suburban cinemas, with a seating capacity of 1,853; the largest was the Star Theatre / Hindmarsh Town Hall, part of the Clifford Cinema Circuit, with a seating capacity of 2,012.

In 1951 the cinema was operated by Hoyts-Ozone Theatres Ltd., and remained as a single-screen cinema until 1971, when Wallis acquired it.



It had twin marble grand staircases and tartan carpeting throughout. The façade of the building included stone from Basket Range in the Adelaide Hills.

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The stalls and the dress circle were luxuriously appointed.

The proscenium was decorated with a nautical theme, suggesting waves, seabirds and gamboling sea creatures (some say dolphins), with a centrepiece representing a galleon as befitted the Ozone's situation in Adelaide's premier beach suburb. Sweeping lines and a strongly ribbed undulating lighting feature concentrated the audience's eye on the screen.

Under Wallis Theatres control the balcony was extended to the stage to form Cinema 1, and the Back Stalls area beneath was divided to form at first one and then two smaller cinemas. For some time, Cinema 3 was served by periscopic projection until a combined conventional projection room was devised to serve both.

[cinematreasures.org]

Renovations were undertaken to divide the large single cinema, dividing the massive room into two smaller screening rooms, with a 250 seat and 700 seat cinema created. By adding a second screen, Wallis transformed it into South Australia's first multi-screen cinema, and renamed it the Glenelg Cinema Centre.

At one stage 'Tom the Cheap Grocer' was a tenant in the theatre, with the rent helping to pay for the costs of running the complex. The experiment was short lived, and in 1978 a third cinema and coffee lounge were created once the grocer moved out.

The horizontal fins and the vertical signage were the same element used in the original construction.



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The cinema had the largest projection box in Adelaide.

The Glenelg cinema was used by industries like Phillips and Mitsubishi for their social club functions. On some Sunday evening's they would host about 700 people.

The increase of films being produced demanded suburban cinemas be multi-screened and Glenelg, with only three screens, was not able to compete. Patronage to the cinemas had suffered since the 1996 opening of the 30-screen Marion Megaplex and the Reading Cinemas at West Lakes.

Making the immensely hard decision to close the cinema, the final film on 1 February 2009, *Gone with the Wind*, was screened for free. Despite exploring many possible options, the building was demolished in mid-2011.

Managing director Michelle Wallis, granddaughter of the late Hughie Wallis who bought the then Ozone Theatre in 1971 said the decision to close the theatre was heartbreaking.

“Unfortunately (Marion) started the decline at Glenelg to a point that the business became financially (not) viable,” she said. “This location represented a vision by my grandfather. It also represents a tribute to my (late) father Bob Wallis, who saw a need for multi-screen complexes. It is with a genuine sadness that we are closing Glenelg Cinema.”

“I remember one time getting sunburnt because I was managing queues out onto Jetty Road and down to Rose Street,” Dean Hersey, cinema manager and [former] employee since 1990, said.

Melba Colbey worked behind the candy bar from 1975 to 2008 and poured thousands of buckets of popcorn. Geoffrey Ashton remembers as a boy being taken to the theatre by his parents in the 1930s. Mrs Jones worked as an usherette from 1941 to 1943.



Cinema 1, over 400 seats; first to have a bar and smoking area upstairs.

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In 1972, the cinema became only the second multi-screen theatre in Australia and was also the first in the state to have a licensed bar. [And first to screen an 'R-rated' movie called *I married you for fun!*]

Ian Black and Bob Parr OAM, worked together in 1971 at the now closed Clifford Theatre, Glenelg, until Mr Parr convinced Mr Black to move with him across to the Ozone Theatre, which had just been purchased by Hughie Wallis.

Mr Black, who went on to manage the cinema for 25 years, said it was "one of the best things I ever did. The years there were just such a wonderful part of my life. The place was so alive and busy. Every school holidays we'd have lines onto the street. I really never thought there would come a day when it would close. But I suppose you cannot run a theatre if it is not profitable."

Terry Holder was a projectionist at Glenelg for 28 years.

[Glenelg cinema exits the stage, Kym Morgan 29 Jan 2009, Guardian Messenger]



Main Entrance Plaques, 2011



Preserving Memories

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Chelsea, Kensington Park (Wallis 1971-2008)

At 275 Kensington Road, Marryatville, the theatre was originally built in 1925, in a late Edwardian style by South Australian theatre architect Christopher Arthur Smith (1892–1952), now recognised as one of the leading South Australian exponents of the Art Deco style.

It was first opened on 24 November 1925 by National Pictures Limited, as the Princess Theatre, showing *Little Annie Rooney*, starring Mary Pickford.

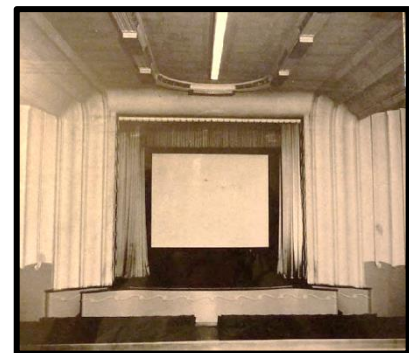


Advertiser, 25 Nov 1925, p16

The initial seating capacity was for 1500 people. Designed for silent films, it also presented pantomimes accompanied by the Princess Theatre Orchestra from the original configuration of an orchestra pit around the screen area. It is the oldest purpose-built cinema operating in Adelaide, has a National Trust Commendation and is on the State Heritage Register.

The Waterman family, who owned Ozone Theatres Ltd, purchased National Pictures Limited in 1928. The Princess Theatre cinema was adapted for talking films when they became available in 1929.

In 1941 a substantial upgrade to ArtDeco style was undertaken by architect Frank Kenneth Milne (1885–1980), the same architect as the Glenelg Theatre, and was reopened as the Ozone Marryatville on 30 May 1941, with a reduced seating capacity. The new facility and changes to internal structures, included a function room, parents' room and facilities for the hearing-impaired.



*Theatre screen prior to 1941 alterations
[City of Burnside Regal Theatre
Conservation Management Plan]*



*Door signage [City of Burnside Regal Theatre
Conservation Management Plan]*



*Looking towards foyer 2019 [City of Burnside Regal Theatre
Conservation Management Plan]*

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The foyer included a fireplace, and plaster mouldings adorning the roof and walls were added. The cinema was sold to the Hoyts Group in 1951 (after a merger with Ozone Pictures). A cinemascope screen replaced the smaller traditional screen in 1955.

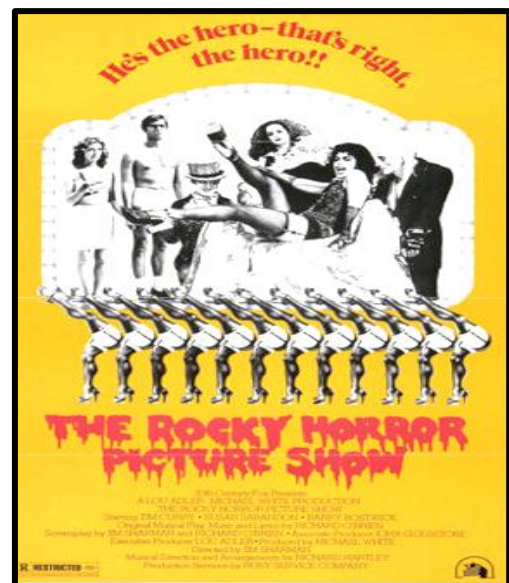
The building was up for sale in 1963 and Amoco Petrol Company was interested in buying the Cinema and building a petrol station on the site. Fortunately, Burnside Council purchased it and leased it back to Hoyts.

From 1 January 1971, Wallis Cinemas took over the lease, saving the cinema from another proposed demolition. It was renamed the Chelsea Cinema.

Business was slow at the time, and the equipment outdated; the projection equipment dated back to 1937! The screen was small, seats damaged, the curtains and carpet worn out. The cinema's future was discussed at a council meeting in 1977, due to the ongoing need for restoration of the cinema. Wallis replaced the screen and reduced the seating capacity, with some of the sections of the building found to be infested with white ants. [Landmarks of Burnside: The Chelsea Cinema". Celebrating our City: 150 Years (PDF)]

Phil Branford was the projectionist when *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* was released in 1975. The R-rated film had two sessions – late and midnight) and there were many sessions where all 1100 seats were full.

On 24 March 1983, the cinema was listed on the South Australian Heritage Register, owing to its significance 'both as a rare example of an Art Deco cinema and for being a notable example of an intact cinema interior representing an era when cinema-going was a major recreational activity and impressive cinema interiors were part of making a night at the pictures a memorable experience'.



1975 Movie poster[movieposters.ha.com]

After the State Heritage listing another major renovation took place in 1984.

The number of seats was reduced from 1145 to 586, a new floor, screen, acoustic equipment and carpet were installed; and the cinema was repainted for the first time since 1955. The cinema began to show first-release films at this time, increasing its attractiveness to audiences.

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In 2008, the City of Burnside was approached about selling the Chelsea Cinema and the adjacent May Street property. There was strong community activism campaigning for the building to remain in public ownership as a cinema in perpetuity.



Chelsea Theatre [theregaltheatre.com.au/history]

It then leased the cinema to a private operator, Republic Theatres in 2012, and was renamed the Regal Theatre on 1 February 2012.

In 2017, Council took over management of the cinema. The conservation management plan was updated in 2020 to 'guide the development, conservation and maintenance of the buildings', and refurbishment commenced in 2020. As part of the refurbishment, more than 500 new seats were installed, new carpets laid, and the paintwork refreshed.

The cinema now shows first-release films and in recent years has featured live performances, including Adelaide Fringe shows.

Features are the red brick external walls at the rear of the cinema complex, the replica 1941 Art Deco fireplace and mirror, lounge seats and column decorations, carved emblems in the main foyer, a wooden and chrome ticket box and soundproofed 'crying room' for parents and infants.

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Academy Cinema City, Adelaide (1976-2007)

The company's growth continued when Wallis purchased a warehouse in Hindmarsh Square, Adelaide and converted it into a twin cinema in 1976. A further three screens were added in 1980, and the complex was named Academy Cinema City.

The complex also boasted a popular arcade games room. Chimes and flashing lights let the players know that the movie was about to start!



In 1981 movies were typically screened at four specific times (11am, 2pm, 5pm and 8pm) with a featurette and intermission before the film where the patrons would purchase food and drinks at the candy bar.

In December for the screening of *Mad Max 2* the featurette was a bicycle tour of Tasmania. Both Bob Wallis and Bob Parr didn't think that the audience for a *Mad Max* film would be impressed with such a dissimilar featurette film. He suggested not showing it and having six sessions of the feature film instead. The concern was that the patrons wouldn't attend the candy bar without the interval. The gamble paid off and in the first week they took \$76,000, (compared to \$42,000 for the Town theatre in Perth, which generally took same amount per release).

This was a new initiative for cinema screenings in Australia and it was just a matter of training the patrons to buy their cinema snacks before they went in!

[From Wallis Documentary Part 2 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rzF8OC5Zmck>]

A fifty percent share was sold to Greater Union. In 2007 the Academy Cinema City complex was closed and demolished.



The property was redeveloped into a serviced apartment and hotel complex.

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Piccadilly, North Adelaide (1983 – Present)

The original building was built in 1940 at a cost £26,000 by R.J. Nurse of Norwood. The Piccadilly was created with the intention of providing a grand theatre for the residents of North Adelaide by D Clifford Theatres Ltd. Dan Clifford chose the name Piccadilly to reflect London's Piccadilly Circus, 'the centre of the worlds traffic'. To celebrate, Clifford commissioned a reproduction of the Piccadilly Circus mural by renowned English-Australian artist, F Millward Grey.



Clifford died in 1942 and the circuit was sold to Greater Union in 1947. In March 1967 Greater Union changed the cinema name to the *Forum*. The *Forum*, operating at a loss, closed on 26 February 1983 and demolition was considered. Bob Wallis loved the cinema and on his second attempt was successful in buying it, reopening it as the Piccadilly on 11 March 1983. The cinema lost money as a single screen facility, but Wallis redeveloped it in line with its State Heritage listing and started operating it profitably as a triple screen in 1990. Bob called this cinema 'the grand lady'.

After Bob Wallis', passing Wallis Theatre,s under the direction of his wife Lorna, daughter Michelle and granddaughter Deanna, the building undertook another major refurbishment during 2021 and 2022. This included the restoration of the Grey mural after being hidden for around 60 years.



In December 2022 Lorna cut the ribbon at a special Gala event to reopen the Piccadilly after the 18-month restoration to return it to its former glory, with its first screening, *Avatar*. The complex now holds a wine and gin lounge.

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ADVERTISER.COM.AU MONDAY DECEMBER 12 2022



NEW ERA FOR THE 'OLD GIRL'

TIA EWEN

FOR generations, the Wallis family has treasured the historic Piccadilly Cinema in North Adelaide.

Dearina Wallis's grandfather Bob Wallis bought it to save it from demolition in 1983 and converted the golden-age venue into a three-screen complex. "It was my late grandfather Bob Wallis's favourite," she said.

"My nana and granddad used to frequent the Piccadilly all the time and they always sat in the same seats, J10 and J11."

The cinema, which was opened in 1940, closed in June last year for renovations "to get the old girl reopen".

"The process has been a rollercoaster; it's been a massive emotional and financial investment by my family and our business," Ms Wallis said. "There's been a lot of consultation work with Adelaide City Council and heritage to ensure that we respect the heritage features, and to also ensure that we can make it accessible as well."

"It has been a bit of a logistic nightmare."

The upgrades includes two lifts so every cinema is accessible to all.

With a focus on maintaining the 82-year-old cinema's Art Deco roots, the renovations have exposed the original terrazzo flooring in the candy bar foyer and on the stairs.

The Piccadilly will have its grand reopening on Thursday to coincide with the release of blockbuster sequel Avatar: The Way of Water.

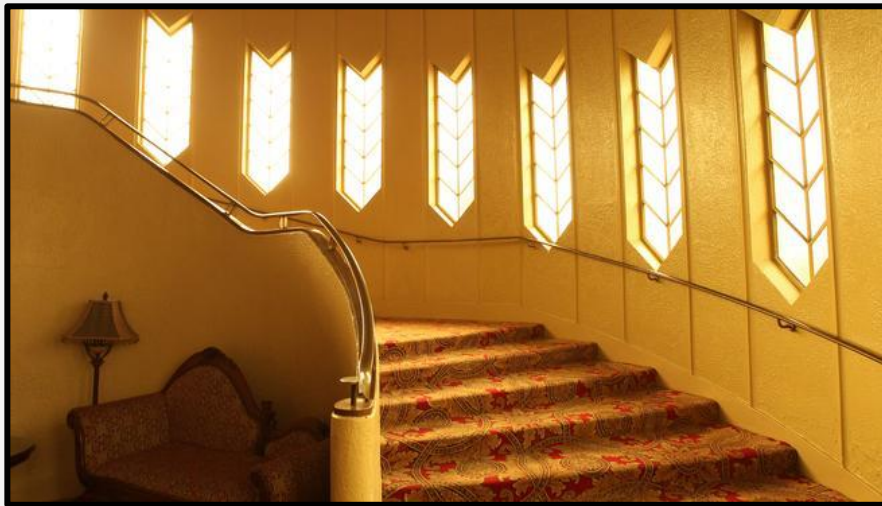


Dearina Wallis at the renovated Piccadilly Cinema, and insets, the new-look bar and box office. Pictures: NCA NewsWire/David Mariuz

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From the patterned daybeds that seem to melt into the red and gold floral carpet and the fake flowers lining the ground floor mirror, to the old rolled-up movie posters on sale for \$1 and the grand staircase leading to the golden stained-glass windows that drench you in that last bit of light before escaping to the darkness of the theatre, everything here seems special and nostalgic.



Very few cinemas feel like this.

Of course, the industry is competitive. The carpet is due to be replaced, but it needs to be passed by the SA Heritage Council. The cinema receives no funding from them though, which Wallis says makes things difficult.

“It needs a lot of work done to it,” Wallis says.

“We’ve tried to fix the salt damp too, which we’ve tried to fix and fix, then it comes back.



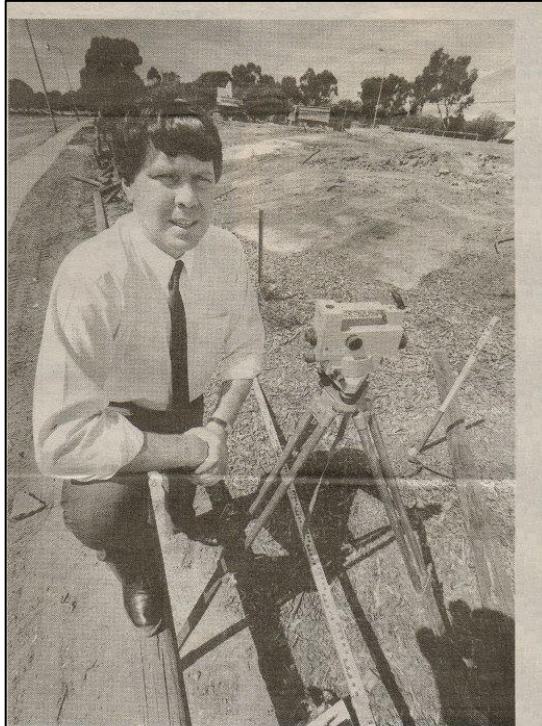
(Sidenote: anyone who’s ever been to the Piccadilly would know its bathrooms are among the best in town. The women’s has curtains and armchairs.)

[Step inside North Adelaide’s Wallis Piccadilly cinema 2017]

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Noarlunga Cinema Centre, Port Noarlunga (1991 – Present)



Measuring up well. Noarlunga Council planning director Bruce Harper checks out the site of the planned cinema complex at Noarlunga Centre. 77393

Christmas opening for cinema

THE \$5 million Noarlunga cinema should be open by Christmas following the start of building last week.

The five-screen cinema complex is a venture between Wallis Theatres and Noarlunga Council and will be built on David Witton Drv at Noarlunga Centre. Planning director Bruce Harper

said the cinema would have seating for 1500 people and would be the first major cinema south of Glenelg.

The council gave Wallis Theatres a "rates holiday" as an incentive to invest in the south.

"The construction of the cinema complex is an example of Noarlunga Council's pro-active approach to investment and town planning in Noarlunga," Mr Harper said.

The company built and opened the five-screen Noarlunga Cinema Centre in 1991 next to the Colonnades Shopping Centre.

Noarlunga Cinema Complex up and running

CONSTRUCTION work has started on the site of the \$5m cinema complex at Noarlunga.

The site is located at David Witton Drive, Noarlunga Centre, immediately north of the St. Vincents Recreation Centre.

Noarlunga Council's Director of Planning, Bruce Harper said that the five screen cinema complex is expected to open its doors by Christmas.

"The Noarlunga cinema complex is a result of extensive negotiations between Noarlunga Council and Wallis Theatres," Bruce said.

"Council has achieved one of the local community's major identified recreational needs.

"The Noarlunga cinema will be a large complex of five screens with a seating capacity for 1500 people."

"There is a huge demand for a cinema complex in the southern suburbs. But until now there has been no major cinema located south of Glenelg.

"Over the last 18 months, Council has been active in developing a proposal to build a cinema complex in Noarlunga. A land management agreement was eventually negotiated with Wallis Theatres.

"Under this agreement, Council sold the land in return for a commitment from Wallis Theatres to build the cinema within a specified period of time. Wallis was offered a

rates concession as an extra incentive to invest in Noarlunga."

"Cinema patrons will be able to park in the adjoining STA car park as Council has agreed on a joint-use arrangement with the STA.

"The new cinema complex will now form a triangle of recreational facilities in Noarlunga Centre including the Council owned Aquatic Centre and St. Vincents Recreation Centre.

"Nowhere else in South Australia would you find such a range of high quality recreation facilities in close proximity. The construction of the cinema complex is another example of Noarlunga Council's pro-active approach to investment and town planning in Noarlunga," Bruce said.



2001 [Facebook: S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas]



Looping at Noarlunga Cinema 4 photo [Facebook: S.A. Drive-ins & Cinemas Peter Maunder]

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Noarlunga Cinema Centre

Advertising Feature



Action on the big screen at Cinema 1, one of the five cinemas in Noarlunga's new 1500-seat complex.



Behind the scenes, projectionist David Burpee with the Cinema 1 projector.

Just the ticket

A GREAT Christmas gift for movie-loving friends and family members is the Wallis Cine Saver offer, which gives huge discounts on ticket prices.

The concept involves buying a book of 10 adult tickets for \$65 — a saving of \$45.

Ten children's Cine Saver tickets cost \$50.

The tickets give admission to any movie at a Wallis cinema and are valid for six months.

Cine Saver tickets are available at any Wallis theatre.

Top line-up

HOLLYWOOD'S diminutive superstar Macaulay Culkin is coming to Noarlunga, thanks to Wallis Theatres.

The independent cinema group has completed its \$5.5 million Noarlunga Cinema Centre — opening tomorrow — just in time for Hollywood's Christmas blockbusters.

In the sequel to last year's smash hit *Home Alone*, Macaulay this time is *Lost in New York*. Bumbling burglars Joe Pesci and Daniel Stern also are back, though not prepared for the havoc inflicted by the young star.

Also bursting on to the new screens at Noarlunga tomorrow will be the multi-million-dollar action thriller *Under Siege*. Tough guy Steven Seagal plays a navy cook pitched against terrorists who take over the battleship Missouri and plan to steal its nuclear weapons.

That Night, from the producer of *Pretty Woman*, also begins tomorrow. In this wonder "coming-of-age" tale a lonely 10-year-old compares her dull life to that of 17-year-old neighbor Cheryl. The movie stars Juliette Lewis and C. Thomas Howell.

Other summer and Christmas offerings at the five-theatre centre will include Whoopi Goldberg as a fiery lounge singer in the riotous comedy *Sister Act* and *A Few Good Men*, featuring Tom Cruise, Jack Nicholson and Demi Moore.

Rivalling each other in the fun stakes will be Australia's hit comedy *Strictly Ballroom* and the latest US classic, the Muppet Christmas Carol.

WALLIS THEATRES

NOARLUNGA

OPENS TODAY! cinema centre

The GREATEST ENTERTAINMENT EVENT EVER!

CHRUISE * NICHOLSON



A FEW GOOD MEN



HOME ALONE 2
LOST IN NEW YORK

MACAULAY CULKIN JOE PESCI DANIEL STERN

THE SUMMER HIS BESTTIME WAS THIS CITY THAT NEVER SLEEPS!



THAT NIGHT

WHOOP!



SISTER ACT

WALT DISNEY PICTURES
JIM HENSON PRODUCTIONS



The Muppet CHRISTMAS CAROL

ADULTS AT CHILDREN'S PRICES

ADULTS AT CHILDREN'S PRICES



FERN GULLY

STRICTLY BALLROOM



STRICTLY BALLROOM

ADULTS AT CHILDREN'S PRICES



BEVERLY HILLS COP

SECRETS



SECRETS

ADULTS AT CHILDREN'S PRICES



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Phone 258 5193

Congratulations to the Wallis Organisation on the opening of their New Cinema Complex at Noarlunga and are proud to have been chosen for the complete manufacture and installation of the THEATRE SEATING



McDonalds Noarlunga, Crn. Beach and Dyson Rds. (326 0599) are proud to be associated with the opening of the new Wallis Noarlunga Cinemas

95¢

SPECIAL OPENING OFFER

Cut this voucher out. Offer only valid on presentation of this voucher. 1 per person per day. Valid at Noarlunga store only until 20th. Dec. 1992

THEATRE
DAVID WITTON DRIVE
ROOM WALK →
BEACH ROAD

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In 2006, supported by Lorna, and knowing Bob's wishes, Michelle gave Noarlunga Cinema a \$2million refurbishment. The company focus is on upgrading assets with more sophisticated seating and decor, as well as guiding the company through the 'Digital' age.



Noarlunga Cinema, 2013

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Oxford Cinema, Unley (1987-2000)

The company had a short-term partnership with Allan and Fran Hall for the running of the single-screen Oxford Cinema on the corner of Unley Road and Oxford Terrace (entrance on Oxford Terrace). It had a seating capacity of 100 seats and was located in the Unley Town Hall. Operating from 1987 until it was closed February 2000. The hall now houses the City of Unley library.



Adelaide's inner southern suburb Unley had two purpose-built cinemas, one the Unley Odeon (operating from 1940 to March 1965) and the former Unley Star on Unley Road, remodelled into a beautiful modern Ozone, (operating from 1920 to February 1963). The cinemas were a few doors from each other, almost opposite was the Unley Town Hall. When the two theatres were demolished for a shopping centre, cinema enthusiasts Allan Hall and friends created the Oxford Cinema from a very run down hall into a fine movie theatre.

A great deal of re-building had to be done to create this, including new stepped flooring and carpeting in the balcony, extensive refurbishment of the walls and ceiling, and new lighting.

In common with other town halls, the stalls floor was flat to allow for dancing, but the lounge seating in the small balcony was stepped.

New carpeting was laid throughout the theatre and the refreshments/ticket area, had a silent era projector on display. It's probably a German built Ernemann, or one of two Adelaide built derivatives – a Garvie or a Benbow.

The city had several successful cinematograph equipment manufacturers.

These pictures [opposite page] were taken from a video that Allan made about the progress of the refurbishment and the hard work incurred by the cinema buffs.

<https://cinematresures.org/theaters/35517>

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Le Cornu Site, North Adelaide (1998-2001)

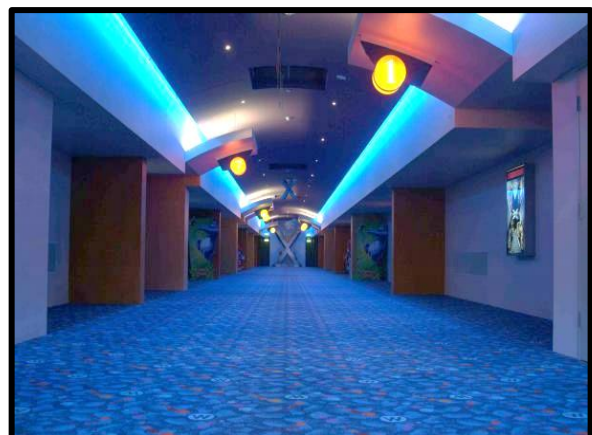
In 1989 the 1.6ha site of Le Cornu Furniture store was sold to merchant bank Tricontinental (Trikon) and the Oberdan family's Kellyvale Group. Over the years the site has had numerous proposals including the 1997 bid by Wallis Theatres and Kellyvale holdings for four boutique cinemas and an underground car park. In 1998 Kellyvale Group sold the site to Wallis Theatres Group. Legal disputes around building heights and council bids for the land led to Bob frustratingly selling to the Makris Group in 2001.

Mount Barker (2003 – Present)

Part of the Auchendarroch complex the seven screen, 1350 seat cinema opened 5 March 2003.

The site also hosts an outdoor cinema.

In December 2019 the family opened the cinema doors 'Noah's Ark' style to people and their animals affected by both the Cudlee Creek and the Cherry Gardens fires.



Mount Barker Cinemas [cinematreasures.org]

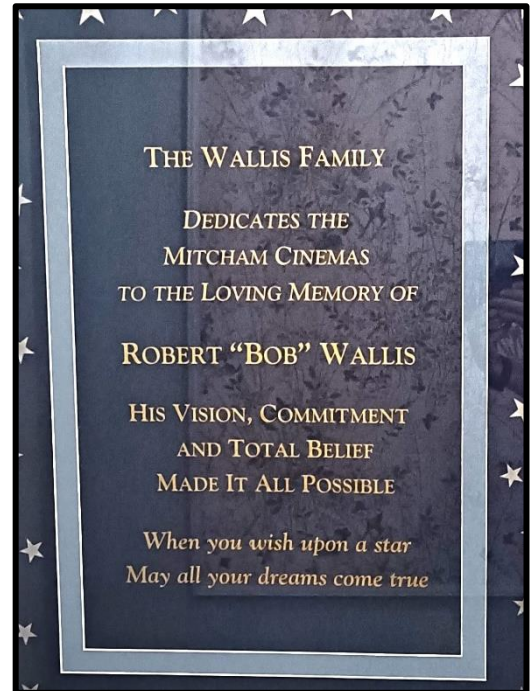
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Mitcham (2007 – Present)

After a fire at the Mitcham Shopping Centre Bob saw an opportunity for another cinema. The seven screen Mitcham Cinemas at Mitcham Shopping Centre, 119 Belair Road opened in June 2007.

Bob's vision was to build cinemas that had all the trappings of the multiplexes, but with the class of Piccadilly and Chelsea, a touch of the glamour from bygone eras. This was achieved, but sadly he passed away and he never saw his vision become reality.



The foyer, upside down wedding cake lighting feature with a Swarovski crystal chandelier.



Mitcham Cinema 1 has the exclusive *Quake Sound* system 7.1 which amplifies the sound so that low frequency rumbling in action movies is clear and defined. It is an immersive experience, with multiple channels and speakers.

Mitcham also has seven meeting rooms and all the auditoriums for hire for corporate presentations and social clubs with or without films and catering options.



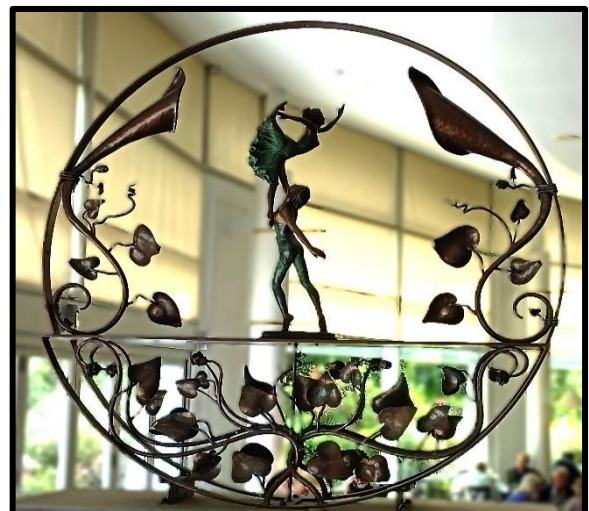
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Originally the Boulevard Lounge, Hugh's Bar received a facelift, reopening in November 2023.



The original lounge area included 'The circle of love' sculpture created exclusively for the Wallis family.



With the 2023 renovations to Hugh's Lounge and Bar, the sculpture was removed and is now on show at the Oak & Iron Tavern at Mount Barker.

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Mildura (Wallis - 2017 Present)

Previously independently operated, the 2-screen (one with 300 and the other with 162 seats), Deakin Cinema was opened on 23rd October 1975.



MILDURA'S new Cinema Deakin officially opens with a gala champagne and chicken premiere. For tonight only, the cinema will be run by Mildura and Irymple/Mildura Rotary Clubs to raise money for charity. Tonight's premiere follows a special screening, put on for the directors, shareholders, their friends, advertisers and the workmen who built the theatre.

Film for the gala premiere is *The Great Waldo Pepper*, supplied specially for the occasion by Cinema International Corporation. It stars Robert Redford, who rocketed to stardom following his lead role in *The Sting*. *The Great Waldo Pepper* will also be the attraction for the first official public screening.

There will be two sessions on the first day - at 5pm and again at 8 o'clock. There will be three sessions on Saturday and Sunday at 2pm, 5pm and 8pm. Sessions will then be held nightly at 8pm Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. A new picture will be shown each Thursday.

The premiere general exhibition film was chosen because it should appeal to all age groups. It will be supported by two color cartoons and a featurette.

Films to follow over the next few weeks include Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Orient Express*, said to be one of the best "who-dun-it's" ever released. It has a star-studded cast.

(Cinema Deakin's 1975 debut [Sunraysiadaily.com.au Originally published October 23, 1975])



On 18th December 1996, the adjacent Masonic Temple was purchased and converted into another two screens and the complex now has 800 seats.

It was taken over by Wallis Cinemas on 4 May 2017 (Star Wars Day)!

In early 2024 the cinema undertook renovations.

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Gawler Cinema (May 2022 - January 2023)

Wallis Cinemas took over the lease for Gawler Cinemas north of Adelaide from John and Joy Thorpe who had run the cinema for over 30 years. Opening on 4 May 2022, the Wallis group, with great optimism, were keen to revitalise the Gawler Cinema.

Unfortunately 'post COVID', streaming services and TV shows were still taking priority and the cinema was struggling to attract attendance. They exited the lease in January 2023.



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Auchendarroch House

Bob Wallis' greatest achievement was saving Auchendarroch House.

Oakfield Hotel to Barr Smith Summer House

Scottish immigrant Lachlan McFarlane purchased 42 acres in 1854 and in 1860 built the Oakfield Hotel, with a front bar and office and 2 accommodation rooms upstairs. Its first recorded licence was issued in 1861 and served many travelling from interstate by horse and cart.

In 1878 the property, including the hotel, was purchased by another Scotsman, Robert Barr Smith, for the price of £3,000. Robert renamed the hotel Auchendarroch House which is Scottish Gaelic for a 'Holy Place of the Oaks', aptly named as the home of many now heritage listed Oak Trees.

A young architect, John Grainger, was commissioned to convert it into a cool retreat for the hot summer months. It was hence used as a summer home by the Barr Smith family during the months of October to April each year, taking advantage of the cooler Mount Barker temperatures. Built around the hotel were thirty rooms in 'French Renaissance of the Modern School style', and lavishly decorated by Robert's wife Joanna.

The renovations took around twelve months and cost £6,000. A Drawing room, Billiard room, Entrance Hall, Loggia (verandah) and Model Kitchen were added to the ground floor. The first floor was adapted and extended for bedrooms. The home was decorated and furnished in 'William Morris' style with wallpapers, fabrics, furnishings and carpets by Morris and Co. The original hand-blocked 'Spring-thicket' wallpaper still adorns the current Ballroom (formerly the Drawing room).

A rear courtyard was made, and a large underground rainwater tank was constructed.

Later a two-storey southern wing and a conservatory were added.



Robert & Joanna Barr Smith outside Auchendarroch
c1908 [SLSA PRG 631/2/230]



Robert Barr Smith in his library at Auchendarroch
c1908 [SLSA B 59766]

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In 1883 Robert Barr Smith travelled to England to set up the firm's London office. This provided Robert and Joanna with the opportunity to browse in Morris & Company's new shop in London and to choose the quantities of carpets, curtain fabrics, wallpaper, chintzes, furniture and glassware which were to make their two houses in Adelaide remarkable repositories of the fine work of the celebrated company ... (p xxii)



“The poet, philosopher and designer William Morris aimed to replace the ugliness of mass-produced books and furnishings by reviving the crafts of the Medieval or pre-Raphael age. Morris & Co. advised Robert and Joanna on all aspects of their furnishing and décor for Torrens Park and Auchendarroch to create the Morris look. Joanna also bought embroidery kits with silk threads and instructions for cushion covers, tablecloths and screens for her daughters to work on. Morris’ daughter May ran the embroidery section and was reputed to have been friendly with Mabel.”

“The enormous quantities of items shipped out to Adelaide from 1883 onwards is staggering and made the Barr Smith collection of William Morris products a notable one. Their son and daughters also in time became buyers, and in such quantities that the Barr Smiths’ has been assessed as Morris & Company's largest account outside Britain. Much of the collection has drifted down to descendants of the family and some is in the Art Gallery of South Australia.” (p xxii)

[Joanna and Robert: the Barr Smiths’ life in letters 1853-1919. Adelaide: The Barr Smith Press, 1996]

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Establishing the gardens

The wealthy Barr Smith family hosted many public events, indoor parties, afternoon teas and croquet games on the full-sized court, in the perfectly manicured gardens. They were generous benefactors to many charitable causes.

The forty-two acres around the home was used for farming land, with three acres each was used for an orchard and a garden. The garden included large lawns and many exotic English trees, including cedars, chestnuts, maples, conifers, and around 50 oak trees, including 2 or 3 specimens of the rare Golden Oak. It also had flower beds and vegetable gardens, with the produce used for the house and also benevolently given away to the community.

Four large rose beds plus a round lawn surrounded the flower beds with a rose arbour in the centre with a tessellated floor and seats. Hedges were planted around the whole property.

Robert was overseas often for lengthy periods and Johanna's only contact were the long letters they shared (most held at the University of Adelaide's Barr Smith Library). Johanna suffered lost children and pregnancies alone.

After the death of Robert Barr Smith in 1915, and Joanna in 1919, Auchendarroch was put up for sale.

It was passed in at auction in October 1920, not reaching the reserve price.

AUCHENDARROCH PASSED IN.
On Thursday afternoon, at 2.30, Elder, Smith & Co., Ltd., acting under instructions from the Trustees of the Barr Smith estate, offered by auction in Adelaide the well-known home of the late Mr. R. Barr Smith, "Auchendarroch," at Mount Barker, and there was much speculation as to who would purchase the beautiful house and grounds. As the amount asked was not reached at auction the property was passed in at £6000. The Angus Street house fell to the bid of the Convent of Mercy at £8500.

Mount Barker Courier, 8 Oct 1920, p2

Hospital and Rest Home

In June 1922, following public subscription, Auchendarroch was purchased for £7,000 by the Methodist Memorial Hospital.

Internally partitioning was added to the first floor to create small rooms for accommodation and in 1923 electrical power replaced the gas lighting. Extra bathrooms were added, and the conservatory was demolished to make room for an ablution blocks.

"AUCHENDARROCH" REST HOME.
"The response to the appeal to secure 'Auchendarroch' as a rest and convalescent home at Mount Barker has been splendid from every quarter, and it is practically certain now that our object will be achieved. We could take over at the present time, but as our option extends till June we intend doing so on June 26, when the ladies will be called together and arrangements put in hand for the anticipated opening in September next." These remarks were made by the Rev. C. Doley, one of the energetic canvassers in Mount Barker, a few days ago, and naturally he and the other workers for the movement are delighted with the whole-hearted support received, which alone has made the success of the project possible.

Mount Barker Courier 2 Jun 1922, p2

Preserving Memories

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It opened on 29 September of that year as a rest and convalescent home where 'weary and worn humans may be strengthened for life's duties'.

The garden also played an important role in supplying food as well as an idyllic setting for rest and convalescing during the days. Most of the hedges surrounding the garden were removed and the garden layout was restyled.

During World War 2 it served as a Red Cross rest home for convalescing servicemen and then a RAAF Hospital. At the end of the war, it reverted back to the Methodist Memorial Rest Home.

In 1970 with changes in health care, diminishing clients, increasing costs and the buildings being in need of major repairs, the Hospital Board called for tenders to purchase the property.

Cooperative Housing

In 1976 the land was sold to the State Planning Commission and the house became the property of a private company who divided and altered the building into individual family living areas as a cooperative family homes venture.

It suffered further neglect whilst under this administration and the condition of the building considerably deteriorated later from squatters and fires being set inside.



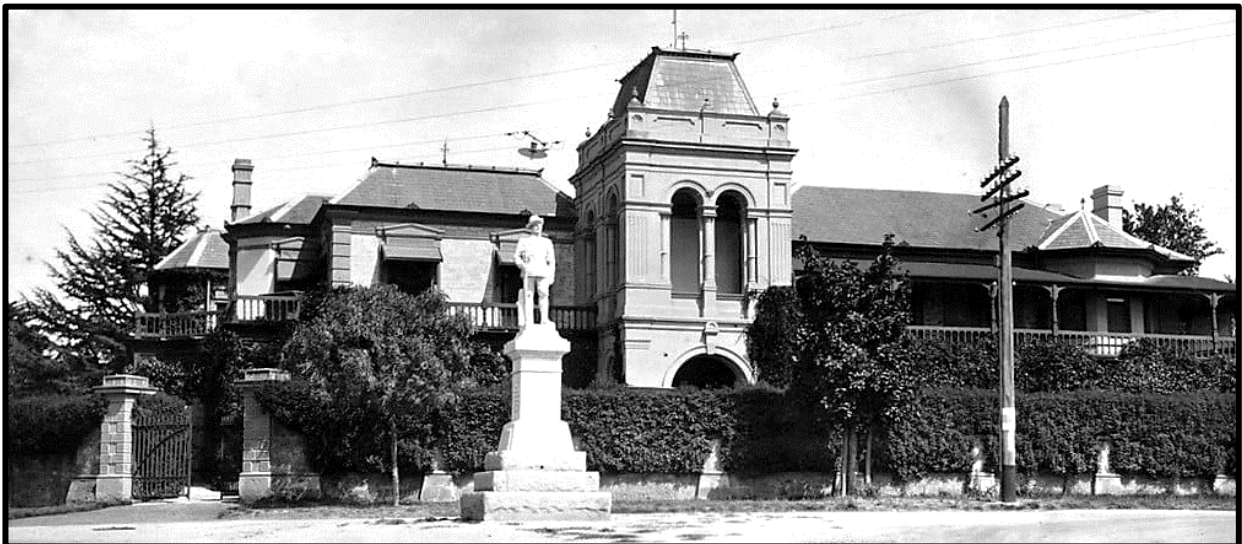
Auchendarroch before restoration, Mount Barker Heritage Survey, 2004

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Auchendarroch in 1922 [History Trust SA GN07770]



Front view of Auchendarroch from Adelaide Road in 1927 during the time it was used as a rest home. The War Memorial was erected in 1922 and has since been moved to Mann Street [SLSA B 4031]



Auchendarroch House, circa 1948, [MBHS PH-V55-0071]

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State Heritage Listing

Auchendarroch was confirmed as a State Heritage Place in the SA Heritage Register on 27 September 1990. [State Heritage ID13737]

Auchendarroch has very high historical significance due to its association with the Barr Smiths - one of the most important and prominent families in the South Australian social, business and political community in the latter half of the Nineteenth Century.

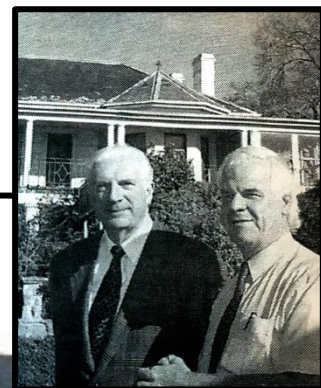
Designed as the Barr Smiths' summer house, to take advantage of Mount Barker's cooler climate, Auchendarroch was home to the family and their staff for almost six months of every year for approximately 40 years. The substantial two-storey sandstone and rendered brick building is also architecturally significant as the largest known residential example in South Australia of the French Renaissance (or Victorian Second Empire) style, a style uncommon in Adelaide.

Originally constructed as the Oakfield Hotel c.1860, the property was purchased in 1878 by Robert Barr Smith who commissioned architect John Harry Grainger (father of renowned musician Percy Grainger) to undertake its conversion to a large country house, set within an extensive estate which included gardens, orchards and farming land. Despite successive adaptations to accommodate its later use as a convalescent home, and the loss of internal decorative elements, (including most of the original William Morris and Company soft furnishings), Auchendarroch remains a significant reminder of the lifestyle of one of the State's most prominent families.

[Adapted from: Bruce Harry & Associates 'Conservation Plan of Auchendarroch' March 1994]



Bob with Grant Gilbert who helped 'sort out the red tape' around the purchase of Auchendarroch



Auchendarroch, 1994 [MBHS PH-V44-00051]

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Wallis Vision

In 1999 Bob saw an advertisement for the property in a Stock Journal magazine. The property still had stables, some of the original trees, lawn and roses. Despite Lorna's hesitancy, Bob and Michelle saw the potential and the family made a substantial financial commitment purchasing the property, and since then an enormous labour of love to restore it to its former glory. The work included the delicate restoration of the original William Morris 'Spring Thicket' wallpaper, numerous ornate timber and stone fireplaces and the grand timber staircase. All the fireplaces are the originals and the Ballroom displays the original stained glass.

Initial restoration work was undertaken on the Oakfield dining and Joanna's room, along with the Ballroom's rich décor, which featured William Morris wallpaper and leadlight windows. In 2009, further restorations to the Barr Smith Billiard Room also included William Morris wallpaper and luxurious curtains and swags. The Robert Charles Room, named after Bob Wallis, overlooks the award winning gardens and displays Swarovski Crystal curtains and ceiling lights. Handmade forged iron 'vines' adorned the bar.

The exterior was fully restored with specialist trades employed for the stonework, verandah mosaic tiles and timber verandah structures and balconies.

Lancaster Heritage Painters meticulously hand-painted two three-dimensional *Trompe L'Oeil* murals in the entrance to the main function centre using environmentally friendly paint from Milan, Italy.

One wall of William Morris wallpaper which had been significantly fire damaged took an artist three months hand painting the design from a projected image to replicate the original.



In the small hallway a waratah flower was hand-painted in each corner of the ceiling with green and burgundy lines to join them together.



Lancaster painters, 2009 [heritagepainter.com.au/portfolio/auchendarroch-house]

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The Wallis family-owned company invested \$17 million to bring Auchendarroch back to life as an entertainment complex. It now includes the Oak & Iron Tavern, function rooms and seven auditorium cinemas.



Auchendarroch and Wallis Tavern redevelopment, May 2002, [MBHS PH-V50-00013]



Auchendarroch and Wallis Tavern redevelopment, May 2002, [MBHS PH-V50-00036]



Auchendarroch and Wallis Tavern redevelopment, Jan 2003, [MBHS PH-V50-00049]

In 2018 further improvements were made to the Tavern area and kitchen, and the gardens were extensively renovated.

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THE RENOVATED HOUSE

Points Of Interest

- The original Tudor Rose Fireplace surrounded by 19th Century Elfin Tiles in the Barr Smith Billiard Room
- Stunning Clock over the fireplace in the Robert Charles Room was specially designed using pieces found in the house and from Wallis Cinema at Mitcham
- Original tapestries by Joanna Barr Smith's daughter-in-law surround the fireplace in Joanna's Room
- Original Charles Dickens Tiles are around the fireplace in the Chrysanthemum Dining Room
- Original Fireplace still stands in the Oakfield Room
- Original William Morris "Spring Thicket" wallpaper decorates the Ballroom
- Blue Jays are present throughout the house signifying clarity and vision.



For more information

[www.auchendarrochhouse.com.au/
the-house/the-history](http://www.auchendarrochhouse.com.au/the-house/the-history)



W A L L I S
AUCHENDARROCH
HOUSE

auchendarrochhouse.com.au [2019]

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ADVERTISER.COM.AU MONDAY FEBRUARY 15 2021

BOOMER 37

Beauty among the Oaks

CAROLE
WHITELOCK



AT a time when South Australians are worried and confused by the shortcomings of the State Government's soon-to-be-introduced planning code, and the latest revelations of its ineptitude and mismanagement, it's a joy to be able to highlight a good news heritage story.

I'm talking about the wonderful restoration and renovation of Auchendarroch (Holy Place of the Oaks), at Mount Barker.

Not only is this house of great historical importance through its connection with the Barr Smith family, but it also has the interwoven story of the Wallis family, founders of the SA cinema chain.

Robert and Joanna Barr Smith found the Oakfield Hotel in 1878, when they were searching for a cool summer retreat for their increasingly large family.

They had the vision to see what it could become and the means to decorate and furnish it throughout with the gorgeous fabrics and wallpapers of William Morris, so loved by Joanna Barr Smith.

Morris was a leader of the Arts and Crafts Movement,

with the strong belief that we should "Have nothing in your houses that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful."

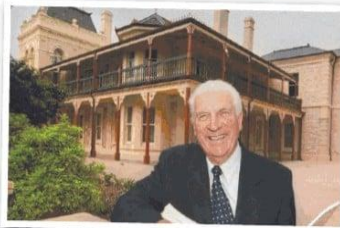
If only he were still around to influence the gloomy grey, black-and-white minimalists currently inflicting so much ugliness on us.

Having created such a treasure, the Barr Smiths didn't just keep it to themselves. They opened the house and gardens to the local community, hosting games, parties for children, even "grandmothers' parties", and events for charities, and were well known for their practical help to locals in hardship.

The circle of history repeated in 1999, when Robert Wallis and his daughter Michelle were looking for a site for a function and event centre, and cinema complex.

When she saw the badly neglected and dilapidated house, Michelle Wallis felt an instant emotional connection and, ignoring the opinions of some to "bulldoze the place", set about restoring its glory.

In some of the rooms, fragments of the William Morris wallpaper, floor coverings and tiles still survived, showing what had been. In reinstating the beauty of the house, Michelle has often felt the presence of



Joanna Barr Smith, guiding and approving her choices.

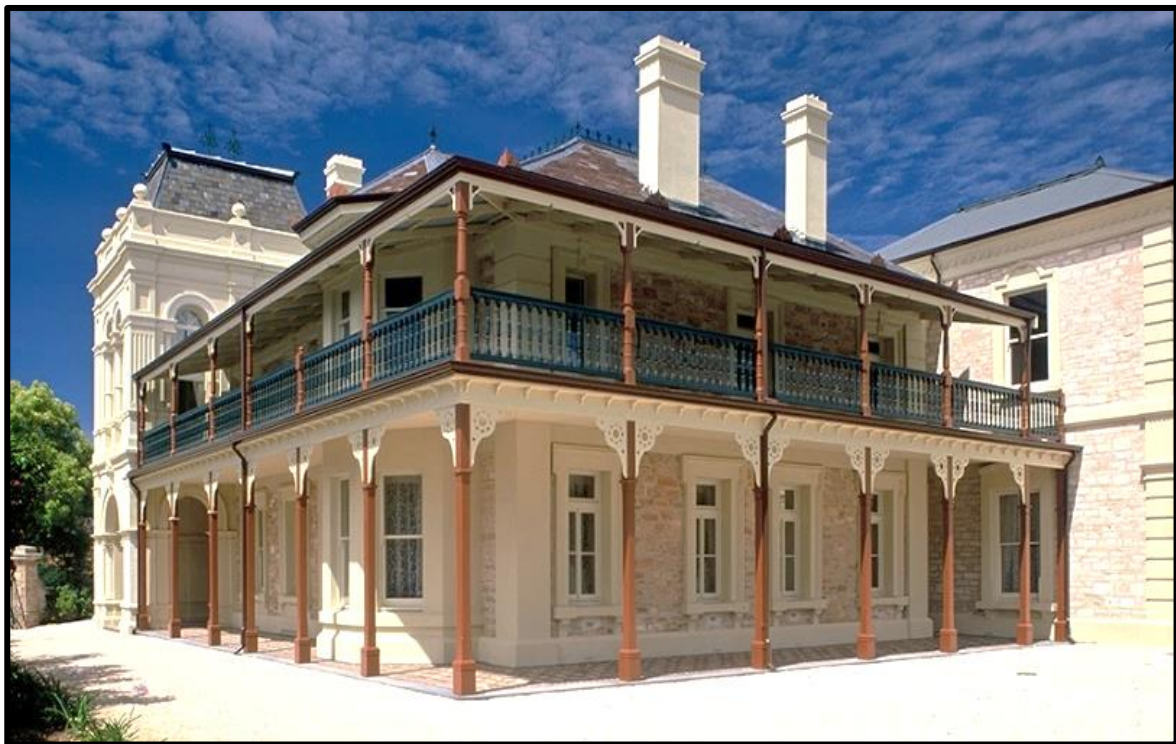
Joanna only disapproved once, when her picture was hung in the hall. Although securely fixed, it repeatedly fell until her image was placed next to her husband's.

Michelle, now managing director of the Wallis organisation, continues the family's long history of philanthropy, with an interest in cancer care, mental health and animal welfare. Australia Day events in the gardens echo the spirit of the Barr Smiths. Michelle's open-hearted generosity and affection for Auchendarroch shine through, as you walk from room to graceful room.

Watch for the upcoming documentary film *The Magic of Auchendarroch* or check opening hours and treat yourself to a visit.



Joanna Barr Smith in the morning room of Auchendarroch in about 1908. Picture: State Library of SA B59768; and, above, the late Bob Wallis, of Wallis Cinemas, outside the newly restored Auchendarroch House at Mount Barker, in 2003. Picture: Barry O'Brien



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Celebrated Opening

In 2003, at eight years old, Deanna gave the opening speech at Auchendarroch in front of Premier Mike Rann, newsreader Jane Doyle, the Hon Alexander Downer, the CEO and Tony Wales, Mayor of Mount Barker Council and many other distinguished guests.

“I stood on a round jarrah table and talked about Granddad’s journey and how proud I was of him.” [Deanna - SA Life, 4 March 2022]



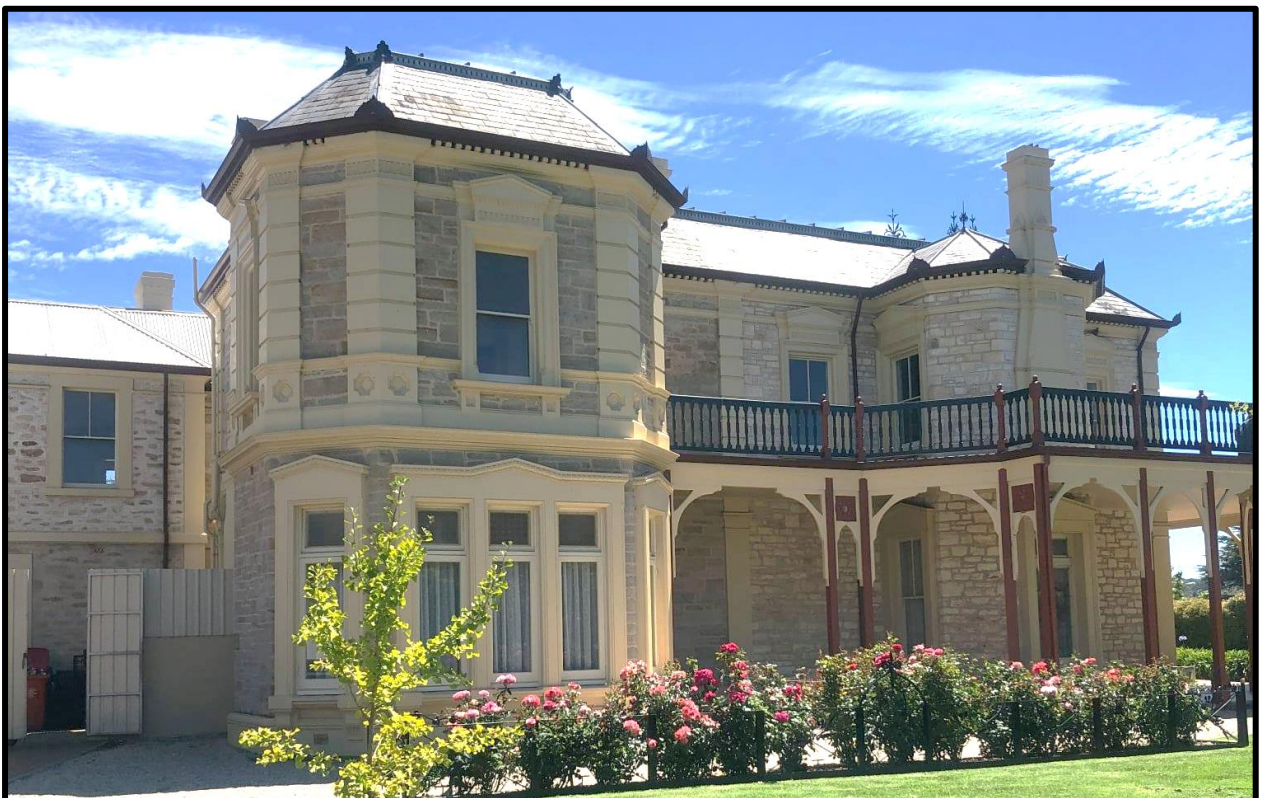
Premier Mike Rann, Lorna, Michelle, Deanna, Bob and Tony Wales, Mayor of Mt Barker Council Tony Wales

Preserving Memories

A joint project of the City of West Torrens and the West Torrens Historical Society

The Wallis family have improved the overall look and feel of Auchendarroch House, restored some parts to its former glory and expanded the facilities to better take advantage of the beautiful surrounds – ‘always maintaining its historical significance and respecting and honouring its association with the Barr Smith family who were one of the most important and prominent families in South Australian in the last half of the 19th century.’

The William Morris décor in the Robert Charles room includes ‘Gilt Trellis’ wallpaper in cream and gold, elegant geometric trellis with metallic highlights; ‘Tangley’ fabric Roman Blinds which depicts a flowering Peony tree in wine, antique and yellow; and ‘Orchard Forest’ tablecloths featuring delicate printed trees and foliage in mulberry and olive.



Preserving Memories

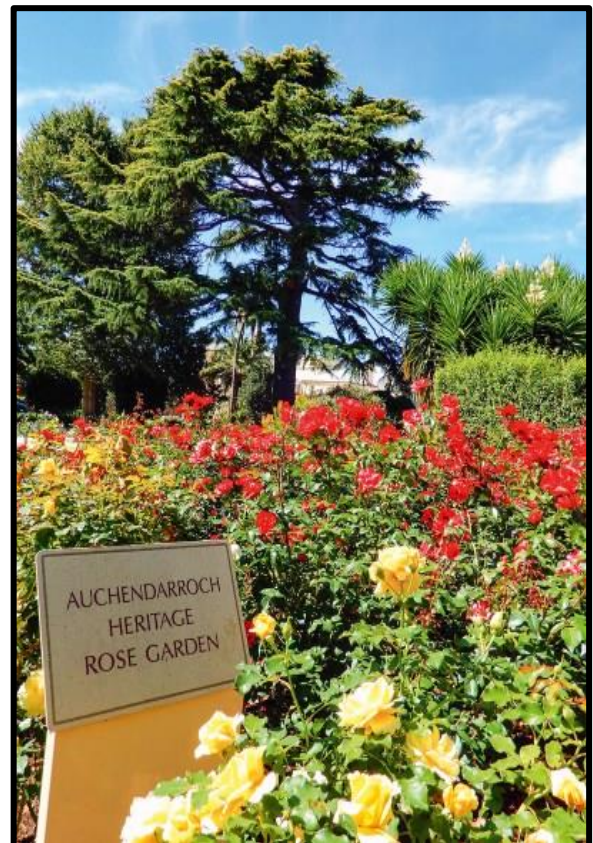
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Award-winning Gardens

Michelle has recreated the picturesque Heritage Gardens complementing the historic Auchendarroch House. With the help and advice of horticultural colleagues, including Trevor Nottle, Marilyn Kuchel, Kelvin and Merv Trimper and the Wadewitz family, the Auchendarroch garden boasts nine varieties of oak trees, 15 new camellias, drifts of spring and summer flowering bulbs in the garden beds, and meticulously maintained lawns and boundary gardens. The medicinal and herb bed reflects and acknowledges Joanna's role and the property's time as a convalescent home.



Auchendarroch garden view circa 1948
[MBHS PH-V55-00153]



The rose garden honours the family, past and future. It features roses such as *For Your Eyes Only*, the name of Hugh's favourite movie, and *Aloha*, a reminder of his love of holidaying in Hawaii. The *My Hero* rose was Deanna's addition, planted in her grandfather Bob's memory. David Austin roses and twenty-seven French Delbard roses have been planted to complement the rose collection. The garden attracts international visitors from Rose Societies.



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Bob - a distinguished gentleman

In December 2004, Business SA interviewed Bob and published the article titled 'Bob Wallis – a distinguished gentleman.'

When meeting Bob Wallis for the first time, you are overawed by his regal charm and iconic status within South Australia's film industry. As managing director of the Wallis Theatres' empire, his 50-year career is worthy of an Oscar and reads like a Hollywood classic. But the self-confessed movie buff is more comfortable playing the role of a distinguished gentleman with a burning passion for Australian Rules football. Nevertheless, from a teenage drive-in attendant to the head of South Australia's largest independent film exhibitor, Bob has virtually grown up in the cinema and experienced some remarkable changes along the way.



Business SA: Given your lengthy cinema career, what's your secret to success?

Bob: Knowing that there is someone more important than me - the customer.

Business SA: Has this 'customer comes first' ethos always been the backbone of the company?

Bob: Ever since my father Hughie established Wallis Theatres after World War II, there has always been a focus on customers. I think he understood the value of good old-fashioned service and that has filtered through to me. But it's also about the people working for you – you are only as good as your staff.

Business SA: You've been lucky enough to live every child's dream of growing up at the movies, how enjoyable was that?

Bob: Ever since my father filmed us as children on his old 16mm camera, I've always wanted to be around movies. But over the years I've developed more of a passion for showing movies to people rather than watching them myself.

Business SA: What is your earliest recollection of going to the cinema?

Bob: As a very young boy, I remember visiting Piccadilly theatre with my parents to watch Bambi. However, I became so upset by the storyline that my father was asked to take me outside.

Business SA: Besides movies, what other passions do you have in your life?

Bob: I love football and I'm an avid Adelaide Crows supporter. Sure, they're not doing very well at the moment, but I have no doubt they will bounce back.

Business SA: How difficult is it keeping in front of the technology wave?

Bob: We recently established a new state-of-the-art cinema at Mount Barker which represents a significant investment for the company. Still, we are mindful of staying abreast of technology as the digital age is upon us and we need to work ever harder.

Business SA: What motto do you swear by in your life?

Bob: There is one motto I always follow – treat some as you would like to be treated. Random acts of kindness can often result in good fortune!

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139 Richmond Road, Richmond

In December 1967 Wallis Theatres – as ‘Highway Drive-In Theatres Pty Ltd’ – bought a 0.25-acre (0.09 hectare) site at 139 Richmond Road, Richmond for \$7,500. The site was used to house Wallis Theatres’ main office; since 2003 the site has been occupied Big Screen Advertising, which at one time was part owned by Wallis Theatres.

The site was sold to the Commissioner of Highways in December 2023, an acquisition for use in the South Road expressway construction.



139 Richmond Road, Richmond, 2017 [commercialrealestate.com.au]

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Big Screen Advertising (first located at 139 Richmond Road)

Besides operating their cinemas, Wallis Theatres owned Big Screen Advertising founded in 2003. This company, now owned by previous partner John Nesbitt, is involved in the distribution and screening of advertisements at cinemas.

Big Screen Advertising supplied pre-film advertising to all of Wallis' cinema locations, when Val Morgan Cinema Advertising (Wallis' previous advertising agent) was absorbed by rival cinema chain Hoyts in 2004.



[Facebook: BigScreenAdvertising]

With a vision to help small to medium businesses with their local area marketing, the business used their knowledge and understanding of cinema advertising to create powerful, effective, entertaining, and affordable messages.

Wallis HQ, Frewville

In 2021 the Wallis company took over the building previously used as Swains Seafood and Steaks Restaurant and then Medallion Homes.

251 Glen Osmond Road, Frewville is now the Wallis Headquarters.



Michell Wallis 2008 [fbasa-hall-of-fame.com.au]

Wallis proudly supports women in management with the three generations of women running the business. Four of the five cinema managers are women and they boast a majority female head office team.

Preserving Memories

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Wallis Cinemas



Always moving forward

The Wallis Cinemas team is proud of its South Australian heritage and its small-scale footprint. The company has faced many challenges and strives to keep ahead and take initiatives to better the industry with an aim to deliver the best.

During the 1980s, films were in shown in the city and then allowed to be screened in the suburban cinemas 8 weeks later. Bob Parr OAM recalls that he and John Harvey, the program manager at the time, went to Sydney to see the Managing Director of International Pictures and persuaded him to allow suburbs to screen movies at the same time. This changed the dynamic of suburban theatres.

In 2008 the company was inducted into the Family Business Australia (SA) Hall of Fame. They are proud of their commitment to quality customer service and retain the values of running a family business.

A lot of our staff have been with us for 40 years, so we have very loyal employees. You have to have good people around you. Bob always told me that you're only as good as the people around you. The patron is number one and we believe in pleasant customer service and cleanliness in our cinemas. We're family. We're too small to go up against the big guys interstate.[Lorna Wallis]

FBA Hall of Fame honours food, fashion and film achievers

Updated 25 July 2008

Maggie Beer Products, Trims and Wallis Cinemas were inducted into the prestigious Family Business Hall of Fame at this week's Family Business Australia (SA) awards at the Sebel Playford Hotel in Adelaide.

Maggie Beer Products Pty Ltd is a first generation SA family business although a household name operating since 1979. After developing through the Pheasant Farm restaurant and signature product Pheasant Farm Pate, Maggie Beer Products Pty Ltd grew after an export kitchen was established in 1996.

Trims is a third generation family business set up in 1937 when twins Alf and John Trim started selling and hiring reconditioned clothing from a small store in King William Street. Today the company run by MD Russell Trim and his son Justin operates three stores in Adelaide, Westfield Marion and Oaklands Park.

Wallis Cinemas is also a third generation family business founded in 1950 by cinema devotee, Hughie Wallis. Today under the direction of Hughie's granddaughter Michelle, the company runs cinemas at North Adelaide, Noarlunga, Kensington Park, Gepps Cross, Mt Barker, Mitcham and Glenelg.

Hall of Fame convenor Rodney Martin says the three 2008 inductees were tremendous examples of family businesses that had built on humble beginnings to become leading forces in their respective industries.

in Business SA magazine, 2008

Avatar released in 2009 broke many box office records and was a turning point to believe the industry was still sustainable. The future keys are keeping up with technology and tracking audiences.

As a South Australian owned and run family business Wallis is also a South Australian icon. It is the largest locally owned cinema chain in the state. In 2010, of the 115 first release screens across Adelaide, Wallis controlled twenty-four, at six locations.

Typically, theatres pay a percentage of ticket sales to the movie studio as a form of rental fee. This percentage can range anywhere from 30% to 60% (Disney) of the box office gross. This is exclusive of Australian GST so the cinema is sometimes left with just 30% of a movie ticket sale. There is also a two-to-three-week policy relating to where and how many times the movie needs to be screened.

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Business initiatives

Since 1993 - Wallis Cinemas Programming

Over thirty years ago in 1993, the Wallis Cinema Programming team offered their expertise to other independent cinemas recognising how much this support could help them successfully meet the needs of their communities and to enable them to focus on the many other demands of their business. The team are now supporting independents in Australia and two chains in New Zealand.

As a further service to independent sites the HQ Team can use and adapt digital media assets to support independent operators who may not have the resources to do so. Wallis uses Vista Software for Box Office analytics, Report generating, Weekly line-ups, detailed Release schedules and Film forecasting.

2005 - Rebranding

In 2005, Wallis Theatres changed their branding for all public advertising purposes to 'Wallis Cinemas'. Officially, however, the company was still known as Wallis Theatres. This changed in late 2007 when officially it was changed to the new name Wallis Cinemas.

Another rebranding in 2019 was released, honouring the past and embracing the future. The new brand encompasses the colours of past logos and projects the future scope and intent of the business.



**Wallis is family,
Wallis is South Australia,
Wallis is Entertainment,
Wallis is Hospitality**

Preserving Memories

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2014 - Wallis Building, Glenelg Business Centre

Located on the site of the former Wallis Glenelg cinema the two-level contemporary commercial building was constructed by Marshall and Brougham Pty Ltd of Kent Town.

In 2014 the building won an award from the Master Builders' Association of SA awards for constructions in the \$5-10 million category. The building hosts thirty-four rooftop carparks and is leased out to various businesses. It was redeveloped in 2020.



2018 - Discover program

In August 2018 Wallis Cinemas launched the Discover program, an initiative to help launch Australian films. Programming Manager Sasha Close attended the CineEurope movie convention and saw an opportunity to develop a programming banner to support the variety and diversity of Australian content.

Opening with Jason Raftopoulos' drama *West of Sunshine and Lowest to Highest*, a half-hour documentary about five friends with disabilities who undertake a human-powered 2,150km ride from Lake Eyre to the summit of Mount Kosciuszko, paired with another documentary *Doing it Scared*, which features one of the five.

Discover aims to allow filmmakers and distributors of Australian content the opportunity to secure a cinema release and audiences the opportunity to experience and view content.

[IF Magazine, 13 Aug 2018]

2019 - Storm Boy remake premieres in Adelaide

Mitcham cinema hosted the world premiere of the remake of the 1970s classic South Australian film Storm Boy.



Storm Boy Premiere in South Australian Trevor Jamieson (Fingerbone Bill), Finn Little (Storm Boy), Director Shawn Seet with the original Fingerbone Bill - David Gulpilil and Erik Thompson (Malcolm Downer) reunite to celebrate the South Australian Premier of STORM BOY at Wallis Mitcham Cinemas.

[(AAP/Emma Brasier) Adelaide Confidential 6 January 2019]

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2020 - 70th year challenges

2020 marked 70 years of business in South Australia. Having survived the introduction of VHS, DVDs and streaming services, COVID-19 proved yet another challenge for the fourth-generation family-run business to overcome.

Employing 280 staff across their six locations, the length of service reflects the work environment at the cinema. In 2020, the marketing manager Paul Besanko had been employed for 43 years, and many of the casual staff have been employed for twenty to thirty years. The majority of staff during COVID restrictions were entitled to *JobKeeper*. Returning to work meant staff could tidy locations up, steam clean the building and keep them meaningfully employed

Reopening in June after three months of COVID restriction closures meant employing some creative strategies to entice people back to the facilities. From private hires, inviting people to play their PlayStations on the big screen, to screening a wedding video on the big screen for family.

After many changes to the industry the ability to adapt isn't a new concept. Adapting and responding to consumer needs along with the relationship with staff has contributed to the business continued success. [Advertiser, 25 October 2020, p61]



*Deanna Wallis (front) with staff and friends Madison Gilbert, Paul Besanko, Vicki Best, Kelly Gilbert and Jim Filipovic. celebrate Wallis Cinemas' upcoming seventieth birthday.
[Picture: Dean Martin, Advertiser, 25 October 2020, p61]*

Preserving Memories

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2020 - Create your own cinema at home with this Choc Top & Popcorn Take Away Service!

With the COVID-19 closures and restrictions placed on entertainment venues, the industry had to think outside of the box!

We might not know when cinemas will reopen, but local heroes will be making our favourite movie treats so we can enjoy them at home!

Adelaide's Wallis Cinemas will be making fresh popcorn and choc-top goodies to solve all your iso movie needs.

You can now drop by any of the Wallis Cinemas every Saturday from 1pm to 5pm and pick up your favourite Choc Top flavour as well as popcorn!



2021 - Two iconic South Australian Family Brands Chilling Together



Wallis announced in February 2021, that Choc tops would now be made with Golden North's ice cream, made from fresh milk and cream direct from Laura, the home of the Golden North Ice cream factory since 1923.

2023 - Wallis Releasing

Wallis Cinemas launched its business distribution arm, with its first acquisition Marion Pilowsky's documentary *Isla's Way*.

Wallis will use its leverage in the industry to help Australian films and documentaries secure screens and reach a wider audience.



Susan and Isla in 'Isla's Way'.

Preserving Memories

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2023 - Whispers in the Wall

Tapping in on the pull of a good ghost story, the White Lady legend was the centre of a History Tour of Auchendarroch in November 2023. The event was so popular another date was made in May 2024 as part of the SA History Festival.

Join us on a spine-chilling dark history tour of this enigmatic venue, where the echoes of the past intertwine with the legend of the White Lady. Led by renowned Psychic Medium Leanne Winston, delve into the haunting tales and mysteries that have plagued this location for ages. Hear the chilling stories that will send shivers down your spine as you walk in the footsteps of the past. And if you dare to seek further, book our exclusive paranormal investigation with Leanne Winston herself, where you can delve deeper into the realms of the supernatural. Uncover the secrets that lie within... if you dare.



2023 - Leasing Piccadilly space

Nestled in the back of the Piccadilly Cinema building, the Wallis company lease space to *That Retro Man* a furniture business owned by Mark Cawdron-White specialising in Mid Century furniture, restoration and home décor.



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Philanthropy

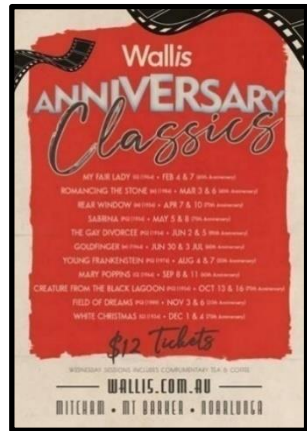
Wallis Cinemas is a proud family-owned business that has been providing entertainment and unwavering support to our local communities for over 70 years. Community engagement, philanthropy, and advocacy are deeply ingrained in the family's core values, leading to extensive support for numerous charities, causes, and community groups over the decades. These include esteemed organizations such as the Cancer Council, RSPCA, RSB, Endometriosis Australia, Warrawong Wildlife Park, and the promotion of the wellbeing of young individuals through partnerships with schools and The Body Image Movement. Moreover, Wallis Cinemas actively participates in various school and club fundraising events.

To maximize our philanthropic impact and shed light on a multitude of outstanding initiatives within our community, we recently decided to streamline our charitable endeavours. Consequently, we proudly introduce Wallis Supports, an initiative aimed at showcasing remarkable charities, organizations, and causes. This is accomplished through our commitment to donate 50 cents from every hot beverage sold across all our locations. [Wallis.com.au]

Trending...

Wallis continues to cater for Birthday Parties and taking advantage of multi-person gaming trends, the cinemas can be hired for gaming on the big screen.

Sensitive to community needs, Sensory Friendly Movie sessions were introduced in 2023.



Preserving Memories

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Wallis Wonder Wall

During the Cudlee Creek bushfires in December 2019, the Wallis family opened their cinema building as a refuge and support centre for those affected by the fires. Many community members and their pets found shelter and comfort in this space.

With funding through the Federal Government’s *Black Summer Bushfire Recovery* fund, the Mount Barker District Council partnered in 2023 with local artist and animator Luke Jurevicius (Vishus Productions) and the Wallis Cinema group to produce six diorama style murals, which when viewed with a smart phone or tablet, are brought to life using Augmented Reality.



Bob Dared to Dream

A depiction of the vision of Robert (Bob) Wallis for Auchendarroch House and the Wallis Cinema in Mount Barker.

The Blue Jay on Bob’s shoulders represents his love of Disney movies and the happiness portrayed in the stories.



The Blue Jay is watching over them.

[\[https://www.mountbarker.sa.gov.au/arts/places-to-visit/wallis-wall-of-wonder\]](https://www.mountbarker.sa.gov.au/arts/places-to-visit/wallis-wall-of-wonder)

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Robert (Bob) Parr OAM (1944 - 2022)



Bob Parr [screenhub.com.au]

Bob Parr was a mainstay of Adelaide film theatres for more than 60 years, serving as programme manager for South Australia's Wallis Cinemas for nearly five decades before moving into a senior advisor role.

He completed an apprenticeship as a Fitter and Turner with Holdens, but Bob Parr started his 65 years in the industry as a 12-year-old tray boy taking and delivering food orders from cars Hi-line drive-in cinema in Adelaide suburb of Panorama. This was the start of Parr's long link to Hughie Wallis and his family.

Bob was also part of the Wallis move into enclosed cinemas. His career with the group spanned from junior projectionist at Piccadilly Cinema in North Adelaide to the Wallis programme director, in charge of buying films and scheduling their timeslots, and manager of the theatre group.

His career also included manager of the historic Chelsea Cinema (later Regal) in Kensington Park.

"There wasn't a section of film-showing industry that the hadn't touched or worked in. Bob was my encyclopedia. He was an absolute wealth of information; in terms of the history and the stories he was able to tell." (Wallis Cinema chief executive, 2022)

Parr joined Independent Cinemas Australia as a board member in 2003 and was recognised for his contribution in 2015 with the Mark Sarfaty CEO Award. Other honours included an Order of Australia medal in 2011, recognising his service to the community as a contributor to charitable fundraising. He raised about \$200,000 each year for charities by screening films at the Chelsea Cinema. Parr also received an independent spirit award from the Australian Independent Distributors Association in 2011.

With his death in 2022, Parr's legacy would be celebrated with a new Independent Cinemas Australia award created with the Wallis family. The Bob Parr OAM Wallis Cinemas Mentoring Award provided a six-month mentor and booking support program to an Independent Cinemas Australia member, cinema owner or employee selected on merit and need.

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Uncredited articles and photographs from Wallis sources, Permission for use received from Lancaster Heritage Painters, Clare and Mount Barker Historical Groups.



The **Preserving Memories** project aim is to interview people who have lived in or had extensive connections to the West Torrens area. The West Torrens Historical Society in conjunction with the City of West Torrens invite them to share their memories and talk about the events and experiences which helped to make up their life's story. It allows us all the chance to reflect on the past and to preserve those memories into the future.

The initial interview with **Lorna Wallis** (*Lorna's words in italics*) was conducted 15 November 2023 by Graham Parry, member of the West Torrens Historical Society. The opinions and views expressed in this interview, and documented in this transcript, are not necessarily the views and opinions of the interviewer, the West Torrens Historical Society, nor the City of West Torrens Council, and therefore neither the Society nor Council accepts responsibility for any comments or opinions expressed by the person being interviewed.

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Thank you, Lorna, Michelle and Deanna, for participating and sharing the Wallis family story.