

MEMORIAL HALL



Memorial Hall Koroit front elevation 2009



Memorial Hall Koroit interior of auditorium 1 2009



Memorial Hall Koroit interior of auditorium 2 2009



Memorial Hall Koroit detail of dress circle seats 2009



Memorial Hall Koroit kitchen 2009



Annotated floor plan.jpg



Memorial Hall Koroit Candy Bar.JPG



Memorial Hall Koroit Candy Bar front counter.JPG



Memorial Hall Koroit Candy Bar detail.JPG



Memorial Hall Koroit dress circle seat and carpet.JPG



Memorial Hall Koroit Hearing loop and power point dress circle.JPG



Memorial Hall Koroit, projector chimneys.JPG



Memorial Hall Koroit nickel plated front door handles.JPG



Memorial Hall Koroit all glass advertising slides.JPG



Memorial Hall Koroit advertising slides 1.JPG



Memorial Hall Koroit advertising slides 2 .JPG



Memorial Hall Koroit advertising slides 3.JPG



Memorial Hall Koroit advertising slides 4.JPG



Memorial Hall Koroit light fitting .JPG



Diagram 2222.jpg

Location

147 COMMERCIAL ROAD KOROIT, MOYNE SHIRE

Municipality

MOYNE SHIRE

Level of significance

Registered

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H2222

Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO47

VHR Registration

December 3, 2009

Amendment to Registration

February 21, 2019

Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - February 21, 2019

What is significant?

The Memorial Hall, Koroit, constructed in 1957 as a multi-use complex with full cinema and entertainment facilities including original projection and sound equipment. Significant elements include the exterior and interior features, including the stainless-steel candy bar, original seating, carpet and lino, light fittings, signage, heating and other services, box office, kitchen fixtures and architectural detailing as well as its original seating as well as projection, sound and related equipment, as well as glass advertising slides (held at the Koroit Historical Society).

How is it significant?

The Koroit Memorial Hall is of architectural, and historical significance to the State of Victoria. It satisfies the following criterion for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register:

Criterion A - Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history.

Criterion B - Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history.

Criterion D - Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and objects.

Why is it significant?

The Koroit Memorial Hall and the objects integral to the place are significant at the State level for the following reasons:

The Memorial Hall, Koroit is historically significant as one of the last purpose-built cinemas in rural Victoria. The Hall is also significant for its association with the Catholic church and for its demonstration of the moral and spiritual influence the church exerted on the lives of Catholics in that period. [Criterion A]

The Memorial Hall, Koroit is architecturally significant as an outstanding late example of the work of Cowper Murphy & Associates, one of the most important and prolific firms of cinema architects in Australia. Its high degree of integrity, including a stainless-steel candy bar, original seating, carpet and lino, light fittings, signage, heating and other services, box office, kitchen fixtures and architectural detailing, is unusual and rare. It is also of note as possibly the largest building of several constructed at this time using portal frame construction. [Criteria B and D]

The Memorial Hall, Koroit is significant as a mid-century cinema for its retention of its original seating as well as projection, sound and related equipment, and glass advertising slides. These objects add to an understanding of the cinema's operation. [Criterion D]

Permit Exemptions

General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must **notify** the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

Specific Exemptions:

General Conditions: 1. All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object. General Conditions: 2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object, then the exemption covering such works shall cease and Heritage Victoria shall be notified as soon as possible. Note: All archaeological places have the potential to contain significant sub-surface artefacts and other remains. In most cases it will be

necessary to obtain approval from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria before the undertaking any works that have a significant sub-surface component. General Conditions: 3. If there is a conservation policy and plan endorsed by the Executive Director, all works shall be in accordance with it. Note: The existence of a Conservation Management Plan or a Heritage Action Plan endorsed by the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria provides guidance for the management of the heritage values associated with the site. It may not be necessary to obtain a heritage permit for certain works specified in the management plan. General Conditions: 4. Nothing in this determination prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions. General Conditions: 5. Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authorities where applicable. Minor Works : Note: Any Minor Works that in the opinion of the Executive Director will not adversely affect the heritage significance of the place may be exempt from the permit requirements of the Heritage Act. A person proposing to undertake minor works may submit a proposal to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is satisfied that the proposed works will not adversely affect the heritage values of the site, the applicant may be exempted from the requirement to obtain a heritage permit. If an applicant is uncertain whether a heritage permit is required, it is recommended that the permits co-ordinator be contacted.

Exterior: Installation or removal of external fixtures and fittings such as, non-original hot water services and taps.

Interior:

Installation, removal or replacement of projection and sound equipment (excluding Registered Objects Integral to the Place) providing this does not harm, destroy or remove the fabric of the place or integral objects, or involve structural alterations.

Painting of previously painted walls and ceilings in colours to an exact match to the original 1959 colours, provided that preparation or painting does not remove evidence of original paint or other decorative scheme.

Installation, removal or replacement of carpets (excluding early carpet integral to the place in the dress circle and upstairs foyer) and/or flexible floor coverings (excluding early linoleum integral to the place in the kitchen, projection room and film winding room).

Installation, removal or replacement of screens or curtains, including cinema screens and curtains (and associated structure), curtain tracks, rods and blinds, other than where structural alterations are required (excluding the original projection screen, red stage and black masking curtains and associated winches, tracks, ropes and pulleys).

Installation, removal or replacement of hooks, nails and other devices for the hanging of mirrors, paintings and other wall mounted art works.

Removal or replacement of non-original door and window furniture including, hinges, locks, knobsets and sash lifts.

Installation, removal or replacement of ducted, hydronic or concealed radiant type heating (excluding the original diesel fired furnace under the stage) provided that the installation does not damage existing skirtings and architraves and that the central plant is concealed.

Installation, removal or replacement of public address systems, detectors, alarms, emergency lights, exit signs, luminaires and the like on plaster surfaces (excluding original exit signs and light fittings).

Installation of new fire hydrant services including sprinklers, fire doors and elements affixed to plaster surfaces.

Installation, removal or replacement of electrical wiring.

Installation, removal or replacement of fixed seating (excluding early or original seating in the dress circle).

Objects:

Non-fixed objects

The temporary relocation or movement of non-fixed objects (excluding the dress circle seating) within the Memorial Hall building or the Koroit Historical Society Building does not require permit approval by the Executive Director pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017 where the activity is performed in accordance with the accepted standards, policies and procedures of the National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries. This

includes movements resulting from works to the building(s) which house the Collection. The Executive Director must be notified of all such activities.

Temporary external movement, relocation or loan of non-fixed objects (excluding the dress circle seating) to Australian or Victorian government cultural institutions which have materials conservation departments does not require permit approval by the Executive Director pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017, where the activity is undertaken or supervised by qualified conservators, and performed in accordance with the accepted standards, policies and procedures of the borrowing organisation concerned. The Executive Director must be notified of all such activities.

Theme

9. Shaping cultural and creative life

Construction dates	1957,
Architect/Designer	Cowper Murphy & Appleford,
Heritage Act Categories	Registered place, Registered object integral to a registered place,
Other Names	KOROIT THEATRE, KOROIT MEMORIAL HALL,
Hermes Number	112818
Property Number	

History

The Memorial Theatre, Koroit is situated in the middle of the main shopping strip of Koroit. It was built for the Catholic Church with J.P. O'Collins DD, Bishop of Ballarat laying the foundation stone on 2nd June 1957. The architects were Cowper Murphy and Associates, the most prolific cinema architects in Australia who were responsible for at least thirty new designs and major refurbishments (For a full list see Heritage Matters Pty Ltd, *Jaffas Down the Aisle*, 2008). The firm existed from the later 1920s until the mid 1930s when it became Cowper Murphy and Appleford, reverting to the former name in 1948. They had just completed a commercial cinema in Port Fairy, now called the Reardon Theatre. The Koroit cinema is their last known cinema design and is probably one of the last single screen cinema to be built in Victoria, with the Shire of Heytesbury Town Hall completed in 1965, the only known later example.

The Borough of Koroit was very small, so it is not surprising that the notably Catholic community of Koroit with its hinterland built the hall. The principal parishes were: St Patrick's, Koroit; St Patrick's, Kirkstall; and St Brigid's, Crossley. Other Catholic halls with full cinema facilities were built in rural Victoria such as St Thomas's Hall, Terang, built in 1930 and the Cathedral Hall, Sale built in 1955. The architect for the former is not known. The architect for the latter, according to its foundation stone, was A E Avery. The Moyne Heritage Study states 'St Patrick's Hall, where pictures were shown from 1925, became increasingly crowded in the 1930s. In 1937, the Koroit Catholic Church had plans drawn up for a larger building, which would serve both as a picture theatre and for other community purposes. Due to difficulties with finance and the intervention of the War, commencement of the new theatre was delayed. In 1954, the Church proposed instead to purchase the Koroit Mechanics Hall for use as a theatre. This was rejected by the Trustees of the Mechanics Hall, however, as they believed it would be unsuitable for one section of the community to have control of a public building. . Building funds were raised mainly by the Koroit Young Christian Workers group. The building also serves as a memorial to those men of the Koroit Catholic Parish who were killed in the Second World War.' (Helen Doyle, 'Moyne Heritage Study, Stage 2', SITE ID: 2264)

Many 'memorial' theatres were built after both Wars, with the name possibly being used to attract government funding. For its quality and scale, the Memorial Theatre, Koroit is one of the most impressive post-World War Two examples of a multi-function hall although these were usually built by municipalities. The Memorial Halls at Willaura and Lake Bolac, built by the Shire of Ararat in the same year, 1957, are typical. Commercial cinemas, until the advent of television, were lucrative and helped pay for these substantial buildings. It must be

remembered that TV did not reach western Victoria until the mid-1960s.

CATHS research states 'Over the years the *Film Weekly Motion Picture Directory* lists the exhibitor of films in Koroit as various Catholic Church connections. Three locations were used, the Koroit Mechanics Institute (600 seats) . the St Patrick's School Hall (230 seats) and finally the Memorial Theatre (408 seats)' (Kennedy, *Cinema Record*, Issue 7, April 1995). The original design was for a raked floor but, according to CATHS, 'the bishop insisted that a flat floor be built'.

The portal frame structure is notable. The system was introduced generally after World War Two and became possible because of the increased availability of suitable steel, its lower price and the engineering expertise in designing the critical junctions. It had been used at Cathedral Hall, Sale which was designed by a different architect and built two years before. It was also used at the Memorial Hall in Streatham which was built by public subscription in 1957 but not at the Port Fairy cinema designed by the same architects and built just a few years earlier. Importantly, the steel frames and the purlins supporting the roof are exposed as expressed structure. It is also notable for having very little auditorium space under the dress circle. The last single screen cinema to be built using portal frame construction was probably the hall which is part of the former Shire of Heytesbury municipal offices complex, completed in 1965.

The cinema screened films regularly on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays into the mid 1960s when the advent of television had the usual effect on its custom. At a statewide level, the Catholic Church expressed a strong position on the censorship of popular films in the 1950s through the editorials and film reviews of the newspaper, *The Advocate*. It is not known certainly but there was probably some influence from the local clergy on the selection of films for screening and the times were generally conservative. By the mid-1960s the advent of television in south-western Victoria had changed popular entertainment utterly. The cinema The building was sold Moyne Shire in the 1990s. This has ensured its almost complete integrity with the dress circle completely intact, most of the projection equipment surviving and the ancillary areas such as the kitchen and supper room completely intact. The building remains available for public use but films are not screened although the rare projection equipment is turned on to ensure its viability.

References

Doyle, Helen with Context Pty Ltd, Moyne Shire Heritage Study, Site ID 2264

Kennedy, Gerry, *Cinema Record*, Issue 7, April 1995.

References (amendment)

KEY REFERENCES USED TO PREPARE ASSESSMENT

Doyle, Helen with Context Pty Ltd, Moyne Shire Heritage Study, Site ID 2264

Kennedy, Gerry, *Cinema Record*, Issue 7, April 1995.

Heritage Matters Pty Ltd, *Jaffas Down the Aisles - A study of Cinemas in Country Victoria*, June 2008

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Richard Twentyman, Cinema and Theatre Historical Society of Australia Inc., (CATHS)

John Gunn, Committee of Management, Koroit Theatre

Jacqueline Anderton, Moyne Shire

Plaque Citation

A late design by prolific cinema architects Cowper Murphy and Associates, this multi-purpose venue with full cinema facilities was built in 1957 for the Catholic community. It also serves as a Second World War memorial.

Assessment Against Criteria

Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history. Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history. Criterion D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places and objects. The Koroit Memorial Hall and the objects integral to the place are significant at the State level for the following reasons:

The Memorial Hall, Koroit is historically significant as one of the last purpose-built cinemas in rural Victoria. The Hall is also significant for its association with the Catholic church and for its demonstration of the moral and spiritual influence the church exerted on the lives of Catholics in that period. [

Criterion A]

The Memorial Hall, Koroit is architecturally significant as an outstanding late example of the work of Cowper Murphy & Associates, one of the most important and prolific firms of cinema architects in Australia. Its high degree of integrity, including a stainless-steel candy bar, original seating, carpet and lino, light fittings, signage, heating and other services, box office, kitchen fixtures and architectural detailing, is rare. It is also of note as possibly the largest building of several constructed at this time using portal frame construction. [Criteria B and D]

The Memorial Hall, Koroit is significant as a mid-century cinema for its retention of its original seating as well as projection, sound and related equipment, and glass advertising slides. These objects add to an understanding of the cinema's operation. [

Criterion D]

Extent of Registration

NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the **Heritage Act 2017**, I give notice under section 53 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by modifying the following place in the Heritage Register:

Number: H2222

Category: Registered Place; Registered Objects Integral to a Registered Place

Place: Memorial Hall

Location: 147 Commercial Road, Koroit

Municipality: Moyne Shire

All of the place shown hatched on Diagram 2222 encompassing all of Lot 1 on Title Plan 518196, and all of the objects integral to the place being:

Location: Projection room

1. Two Gaumont Kalee GK19 film projectors with President carbon arc lamp houses and flues
2. Slide projector (unknown maker) with carbon arc lamp house and flue
3. NTS GK National Selenium twin channel 65 rectifier (Model 2SR 42/65/1)
4. Knife switch for the rectifier
5. Gaumont Kalee Duosonic Sound Amplifier
6. The curtain and masking control switchboard
7. The monitor speaker for the projection room
8. Raycophone storage cupboard with spare parts for amplifier
9. 'Deaf' amplifier for hearing aid sound system
10. Bank of 5 dimmer switches
11. Wall mounted sliding shutters (6) to the projection room ports
12. Projection room switchboard

13. Stool with legs made of black electrical conduit

14. Clock

15. Two narrow timber benches

Location: Rewinding and splicing room

16. Two part motor driven film rewinder mounted on timber bench

17. Timber bench with shelves above and film reel holders below

18. Film reels (6)

19. Pyrene fire extinguisher and stand (originally in the projection room)

20. Holder for film repair fluid plus two bottles of 'Film cement' and 'Weld set'

Location: Dress Circle

21. 'Dunlopillo' seating in the dress circle upholstered in red and green

22. Timber chairs (12) in the Crying Room

Location: Stage and area behind and under

23. Piano and one stool

24. Projection screen

25. Speaker (possibly Vitavox brand) located behind the projection screen

26. Original red stage curtain, black masking curtain and their winches and tracks

27. Footlights at base of stage and frames for holding colour medium

28. Stage switchboard

Other locations:

29. 'Dunlopillo' seating upholstered in red from the stalls, now located in various areas of the building

30. Piano in supper room

31. Original fireplace insert from the upstairs foyer fireplace, now located in the downstairs switch room

32. Original fridge in the secondary kitchen area behind the stage

33. Original stove from the kitchen now located in the storage shed

Location: Koroit Historical Society

34. Glass advertising slides (89)

35. One lead printing plate used to advertise the cinema in the local newspaper.

Dated 21 February 2019

STEVEN AVERY
Executive Director

[*Victoria Government Gazette* G 8 21 February 2019 301-302]

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>