

Premier Theatre and Gardens

307 Stirling Street

The Premier Theatre was built by the East Perth Football Club in 1925. Films had previously been screened outdoors at Perth Oval and the club decided to build an indoor theatre. WR (Bill) Haynes, the club's patron, lent them the money for it but in 1927 he decided to take it over himself. Cyril Norton (secretary of the EPFC) became the manager.

The tiles along the front of the building were in the club colours of blue and black. The interior had a pressed tin ceiling. The theatre seated 1,000 patrons downstairs and 440 upstairs. In 1938 it underwent a major renovation both externally and internally to the Art Deco style, and new projectors and a sound system were installed.

“When it was a top film we used to switch with the new Oxford Theatre. They'd show the first half and we'd show it the second half. A chap on a motor bike used to run between the two theatres with the spools.” (Graham Norton)



Premier Theatre and gardens, 1956

The Premier Theatre Gardens were built in Stirling Street in the mid-1930s.

“The deck chairs were expensive and the garden seats were the cheap ones. When it rained they used to have to carry half of the projection equipment across from the gardens to the theatre and start 20 minutes later. Everyone from the garden's cheap seats used to head straight for the good seats upstairs.” (Graham Norton)



The entrance to the outdoor gardens



An outdoor screening

Bill Haynes died in 1945 and his will stated that if Cyril Norton paid the probate, he could have the theatre and gardens. Cyril subsequently owned and managed the Premier Theatre followed by his son Graham who took over its management on the death of his father Cyril in 1953.

1925	Built by Totterdell Brothers for East Perth Football Club.
1938	Underwent a major renovation when the façade and interior were upgraded.
1963-1982	Became an ice rink. During this time the frontage changed again, as the existing façade was damaged by fire.
1982-1987	Operated as a disco.
1987	Demolished and replaced by an office block.