



NEWCASTLE STORYBOARD – Newcastle is located on the east coast of Australia, 159 kilometres north of Sydney. Newcastle is the predominant city of the Hunter Region of New South Wales. The first CinemaScope presentation in Newcastle took place at the Hoyts Civic Theatre and the first 70mm equipped theatre in Newcastle was the Hoyts Royal Theatre. The Royal was also the tenth theatre in Australia to be equipped for 70mm presentation. During the period of the Roadshow Engagement [1958 to 1974], there were three key city theatres in Newcastle fitted out for the 70mm presentation. These three theatres have been tabled below in order of their first 70mm presentation.



1st Theatre in 70mm - 15/03/1962 - The **Theatre Royal** opened on the 16th June 1924. It was the first cinema outside of a major state capital city in Australia to be equipped for 70mm; opening with *Can-Can* and the 30 frames per second featurette, *The Miracle of Todd-AO*. The Royal was twinned in 1980 - reopening with *The Empire Strikes Back* in 70mm.



2nd Theatre in 70mm - 21/05/70 - The **Kensington** was an independently operated cinema, run by Margaret and Theo Goumas. It opened in 1970. Converted from a HG Palmers electrical store, the 418 seated Kensington cinema was a single level auditorium. The official opening took place on the 21st May 1970 with *My Fair Lady* screening in 70mm.



3rd Theatre in 70mm - 01/10/1970 - The **Strand** Theatre opened on the 27th April 1916. The Strand came under the direction of Union Theatres [later to become Greater Union] in 1919. The Strand was equipped for 70mm in 1970 - opening with *Airport*. The theatre closed after the opening of Greater Unions new, triplex in King Street, Newcastle.



Newcastle **Civic Theatre**, is a heritage listed building on Hunter Street, Newcastle. Built under the direction of the Council of the City of Newcastle, the theatre opened on the 12th December 1929 with *Behind That Curtain*. At the time of the theatres opening, the lessee was George B. Dean. Designed by New Zealand born architect, Henry Eli White, who had designed the Sydney State and Capitol theatres, the exterior of the building is in the Georgian Revival style. The interior, by way of contrast, is in the Spanish Baroque style, with a marble staircase, terrazzo balcony and chandelier. In 1947, Hoyts acquired an interest in Newcastle Theatres - becoming the exhibitor at the Civic. The Civic was equipped for CinemaScope in 1954, with Kalee 21 projectors. Opening with the film *The Robe* on the 17th November 1954, this was followed by *How to Marry a Millionaire* [08/12/1954] and *Beneath the Twelve Mile Reef* [23/12/1954]. The Civic closed on the 10th October 1973 with the film *Fist to Fist*. The theatre was then leased to independent exhibitors. Three years after the devastating Newcastle earthquake in 1989, the Civic [which had sustained minor damage] underwent restoration works. The Civic remains operational today as a live theatre.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS – Tabloid advertisements for *The Robe* and *Can-Can* sourced from the Newcastle Morning Herald microfiche held at the New South Wales state library. Thank you to our proof readers Greg Beasley, David Coles, Bruce Potter, Greg Donnan and Crosley Carpenter.

Compiled by Doug Loudon



**NEWCASTLE
WIDESCREEN TIMELINE**

**CINEMASCOPE
THE ROBE**

17th November 1954



**PREMIERED 70MM
CAN-CAN
15th March 1962**



**ROYAL
KENSINGTON
STRAND**