

## FREEMAN - STORE – AMBASSADOR.

Discussion with and historical findings from Geoff Freeman. (U 8 / 229 Waterworks Rd., Ashgrove. Tel 33666848) Wednesday 11th January 2012.

- Geoff's father (Owen Harold) took over the Lease of the Shop at the side of the Ambassador Theatre in 1951 and sold the Lease in 1953. Geoff was 5 years old when they left.
- The family lived in a flat in the rear (Royal Parade end) behind the stage in the Theatre building. It comprised of three rooms – an all purpose Kitchen, with two Bedrooms and a Bathroom.
- They were there before the Hintons (who took over after them)
- Mr Hyde resided there in a small flat on the creek side (the enclosed west side Verandah). Mr Hyde was also a Piano Tuner and carried out his working in the room on the other side of the enclosed Verandah. He recalls him fiddling with the maintenance / tuning of the pianos. This was the area where the steep steps were up to the Projection Room.
- Patrons came in via the side door on Gresham St into a room (like a Foyer) where tickets were purchased at the counter with a glass front above the timber base. (The sales lady sat behind this). It was important to book the seats as it was likely no seats were left at start time.
- The seating was slung canvas on a frame and some of the young bought cushions to sit on so they could see over the head of the seat in front. Some also bought small stools on which they sat in the aisle.
- Recalls the seats were set out (facing the screen at the royal Parade end) with a major aisle in the middle and small aisles along the sides.
- Interval was quite a rush as a lot of the patrons went out the west side door to gain access to the back of the store to purchase all sorts of confectionery and drinks. Saturday night was the only night of picture showing a week.
- The main other business was the general store for the suburban community with an entry off Royal Parade where there were grocery items and fruit and vegetables. (purchased early each morning from the City Markets before the store opened)
- On the west side of the Theatre there were four Tennis Courts and the players purchased drinks etc from the shop.
- At the sale of the Shop Lease the Family purchased and moved to a new house at 77 Royal Parade where they lived for many years. Geoff moved out about 10 years later when he was married in 1971.
- Recalls the creek bank was covered in Chocó vines.

Other People who may have further info are the Thomsons further up Royal Parade , Vic Wimm who lives at Kings Beach , Caloundra and Rob Hopgood the son of the Hopgood of the tree.