



HERITAGE  
COUNCIL



2013/14 | HERITAGE COUNCIL  
ANNUAL REPORT

## Operational Structure continued

### Responsible Minister

Hon Albert Jacob MLA  
Minister for Environment; Heritage

### Enabling Legislation

*Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990*

### Legislation Administered

*Heritage of Western Australia Act 1990*

### Other Key Compliance Legislation

*Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972; Maritime Archaeology Act 1973; Planning and Development Act 2005; Building Act 2011; Auditor General Act 2006; Disability Services Act 1993; Equal Opportunity Act 1984; Financial Management Act 2006; Freedom of Information Act 1992; Industrial Relations Act 1979; Minimum Conditions of Employment Act 1993; Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984; Public Sector Management Act 1994; Salaries and Allowances Act 1975; State Records Act 2000; and State Supply Commission Act 1991.*

### Employing Authority (State Heritage Office)

Department of Local Government and Communities (DLGC)

**Background:** Heritage Minister the Hon Albert Jacob MLA (left) with Cygnet Cinema owner Colin Stiles at the announcement of the successful 2013/14 Heritage Grants Program projects. Photographer Darren Smith, Acorn Photography



## 4.6 Assistance for Heritage Property Owners

### Cygnets Cinema, Como (1938)

For more than 75 years, Perth movie-goers have been enjoying the ambience of the stylish Cygnets Cinema.

Throughout the years, the Cygnets survived through the advent of television and suburban multiplex cinemas. But it was the decision by movie distributors to phase out reel-to-reel film that almost spelt the end of this family-owned cinema.

Thanks to a \$100,000 grant from the 2013/14 Heritage Grants Program, the ongoing viability of one of Perth's remaining 1930s cinemas has been assured.

The grant will assist in upgrading the electrical wiring and fire prevention system, which allowed the owners, the Stiles family, to continue their efforts on migrating to digital technology.

The Stiles' father, James Stiles, was a cinema pioneer who established the Grand Theatre Company and commissioned the construction of a number of cinemas, including the Cygnets.

Originally named the Como Theatre, the Cygnets was the first purpose-built sound cinema in the suburbs immediately south of the city. Built in 1938 by cinema architect William Leighton in the Inter-War functionalist style, it is the most authentic suburban cinema still in operation in WA from this era.



Leighton's contribution to cinema design was revolutionary, with a focus on designing functional contemporary buildings that often included symbols of the 20th century machine age such as cars and ships.

The Cygnets incorporates nautical features including the curved tower, tubular handrails and port-hole windows that represent an ocean liner's bow.



The announcement of the successful recipients of the 2013/14 Heritage Grants Program was held at the Cygnets in December. Heritage Minister, the Hon Albert Jacob MLA, who announced the grants, said the survival of the Cygnets Cinema through the past 75 years is testament to the passion and commitment of the Stiles family.

**Photos:** Photographer Darren Smith, Acorn Photography