

## Roxy Community Theatre (1930), Leeton

***An outstanding landmark art deco building that has served the Leeton local and regional communities entertainment needs since it opened in 1930***

Project	Works
Type of work	Physical conservation
Funding	Up to \$36,750
Project cost	\$67,633
Heritage listing	State Heritage Register heritage item
Local government area	Leeton
Applicant	Leeton Shire Council

**Project aim** To repaint the interior of the 1930 Roxy Theatre at Leeton and reupholster 80 lounge seats

**Funding focus** This program targets major cultural and community heritage buildings with cultural and community activities requiring maintenance, conservation works including upgrades for fire, security and safety access and adaptive reuse

***“The community was very eager to view the painting works and experience the overwhelming beauty of the re-painted theatre. The Roxy Manager had numerous visits by interested persons who just wanted ‘a peek’ at the work because they had heard a positive comment from someone else. They may have remembered how the Theatre looked back in the early days and wanted to see the transformation”, quote from the Heritage Branch project funding feedback questionnaire, prepared by Leonie Painter, for Leeton Shire Council***



*The Roxy Community Theatre in 2005*



*Restored Theatre interiors and dress circle seating*

You can't go to Leeton without visiting or at least passing by Leeton town landmark and centre piece - the Art Deco Roxy Community Theatre.

Opened in 1930 as a cinema, a stage was added soon after in 1933. The Theatre was privately owned and operated as a live

venue and film cinema until 1977.

1977 was the turning point for the Theatre, when threatened with decline and possible closure, a town meeting was called and the 'Save the Roxy' Committee was formed.

This was the impetus for the Theatre restoration. Substantial works were funded by community donations, Council funding and government grants. The Theatre's future was secured when Leeton Shire Council purchased the building.

A lot of care has been taken in completing essential works to the Theatre. Works required to keep the Theatre operating included rewiring, repainting, structural and other maintenance, safety and conservation works – all works that the public generally don't see and are unaware of.

The Theatre has been successful in securing three grants from the Heritage Branch to assist with conservation projects.

The dollar for dollar grant received in 2006-7 was used in the most recent project that engaged a local contractor to complete planned painting works, reported Council's project manager Leonie Painter.

"The contractor was very co-operative and flexible and understood that the works had to be co-ordinated with the Roxy Theatre usage to minimise disruption to the Roxy's income and stability" Leonie said.

"Unfortunately the seating refurbishment was not completed as planned. Due to the increased usage of the Theatre it was difficult to program these works without disrupting scheduled events", she said.

The Roxy Theatre is now actively managed on a day to day basis by Council with community input into policy decision making through the Roxy Theatre Management Committee.

The Theatre attracts patrons from around regional NSW and beyond. The Theatre has a regular program of movies showing on weekends and provides movies for special events as well.

The Theatre is also used for other community events such as the bi-annual Sunrice Festival, for a 1930s themed dance.

Leeton, as the overall winner of the 2006 Tidy Towns Awards was the host town for the annual Keep Australia Beautiful Tidy Town Awards weekend in 2007. The Roxy Theatre with a seating capacity of 800+, was the perfect venue for the Tidy Town Awards presentation ceremony and other celebrations.

The Roxy Theatre also conducts weekly tours to proudly showcase the Theatre to locals and tourists alike, and tell its story - its history, its community and how they have worked together to create a successful and viable future for Leeton's Roxy Community Theatre.

With thanks to Leeton Shire Council

Photos by the Heritage Branch Department of Planning

This article was written using the following references:

Heritage Branch Department of Planning Heritage Incentives Program 2006-8 completed project feedback questionnaire, completed by Leonie Painter for Leeton Shire Council

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