



CONCERT BY THE ABERDEEN DOMINOES.
 - A high class troupe of 15 concert artists from the Aberdeen liner Themistocles gave a surprisingly good entertainment at Thompson's Avro Picture Drome, Bulimba, on Thursday. A crowded audience enjoyed the efforts of the party, who are regarded as among the best variety performers on the high seas, and who on this occasion had the advantage of excellent lighting effects. The artists included Bryden and Wood, in American novelties; W. Sproule, in burlesque Italian mimicry; L. Berrill, in ballads and light comedy; C. H. Trotman, comedian and dancer; Holdham and Shillinglaw, in American ragtime and dances; H. McCourt, baritone, from principal London halls; Darmanan, Ramsey, and White, expert mandolinists; Harry Moss, comedian; W. Mizen, siffleur, in bird imitations; D. W. Chapple, solo pianist and accompanist; and J. W. Hall, a London comedian.



The **Avro Theatre** is located in the inner Brisbane suburb of Bulimba - four kilometres northeast of the CBD and on the southern side of the Brisbane River. The original 'theatre' comprised a secured paddock, which sloped up from Oxford Street, with the screen located at the street-front end of the block and the bio housed in a tin shed at the rear of the block. After opening in 1912, the open-air theatre closed permanently shortly after the end of WWI. A new theatre was built on the adjoining block of land around 1920. The new theatre - known as the **Avro Picture Drome** - comprised a timber structure and weatherboard frontage. The theatre's name derived from a nearby airfield. The earliest advertisement of the Avro Picture Drome [see left] was found in the *Brisbane Telegraph* dated the 19th March 1921. The theatre also operated as the **Avro Picture Palace** and the **Avro Picture Theatre**. The structure was, however, short-lived. A new theatre opened as a covered, hard-top theatre in 1926. Set back from Oxford Street, the new theatre was far more ornate than its predecessor. At the time of opening the theatre was operated by Henry Thompson and his family as a single-level auditorium with sloping floor. Following Thompson's death in 1947, directorship of the theatre fell to Henry's son, Alexander. It was under Alexander's directorship that the theatre underwent major structural changes, with the addition of a foyer and four shops added to the theatre in 1954. The shops provided an important revenue stream during the leaner years following the introduction of television. A new, wide screen

was installed in October 1954. The first film to utilise the new screen was the comedy, ***It Should Happen to You***. When Alexander died (a mere ten years after Henry), his son - Warren - assumed joint management of the Avro with his mother. Warren was responsible for many improvements to the theatre, including the installation of 70mm; as the second suburban theatre in Brisbane to be equipped for wide-gauge presentations. The Avro was fitted out with modified Kalee 7 projectors, with the operating system in reverse. The mechanical side of the projector became the operating side, with extended drive shafts and 70mm only gates and sprockets manufactured by Cummings and Wilson. Notable 70mm screenings at the Avro Theatre between 1967 and 1970 included: ***The Great Race*** plus ***The Miracle of Todd-AO***, and exclusive, "first time in 70mm in Brisbane" screenings of ***Doctor Zhivago***, ***Zulu*** and ***Becket***. It was during this period that the theatre underwent several name changes - firstly, in 1968, to the **Avro Garden Cinema** and, then, to the **Cinema Balmoral** in 1971. The theatre was sold to Leo Catalano - owner of the nearby Hawthorne Cinema - in 1990. Catalano retained Warren Thompson as Manager. The Avro Theatre has survived to the present day - having incorporated the Avro as Cinema 1 of the now 6-screen **Balmoral Cineplex**.

70MM OPENINGS	OPENED	CLOSED	WKS
The Great Race - reissue	20/07/67	TBC	
The Miracle of Todd-AO - reissue	20/07/67	TBC	
Doctor Zhivago - First Time Brisbane In 70mm	TBC	TBC	
Zulu - First Time Brisbane in 70mm	03/04/69	23/04/69	3
Becket - First Time Brisbane in 70mm	24/04/69	07/05/69	2
2001: a space odyssey - reissue	31/07/69	TBC	
2001: a space odyssey - reissue	11/09/69	TBC	
The Jolson Story - reissue	26/03/70	08/04/70	2

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS - Tabloid adverts for ***The Great Race***, ***Doctor Zhivago***, ***Becket*** and ***Zulu*** sourced from the Brisbane Courier Mail microfiche at the New South Wales state library.



**AVRO BULIMBA,
 BRISBANE
 WIDESCREEN TIMELINE**

**PREMIERED 70MM
 THE GREAT RACE
 20th July 1967**



**DOCTOR ZHIVAGO
 Day Month year**

Doctor Zhivago
 Advert

**BECKET
 24th April 1969**



**AVRO BULIMBA
 162 Oxford Street, Bulimba
 OPENED
 as the Avro Picture Drome
 Day Month 1920**