

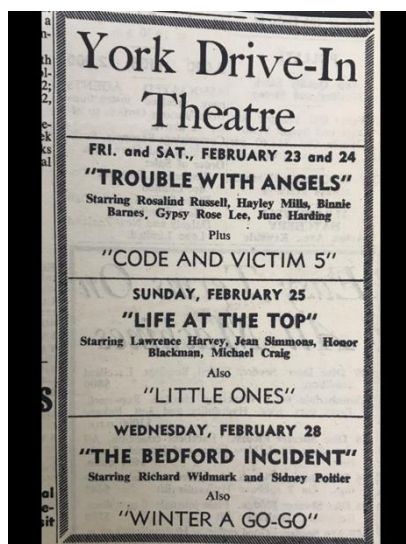
The Streets of York

Wheeler Street & the York Drive In

Brothers Robert Shelton Wheeler and Charles Britton Wheeler and their families arrived in Australia on the Emma Eugenia in 1858 from Shrewsbury in England. Robert started work immediately as an assistant police warder at Fremantle Prison but was discharged due to ill health in 1859. He hired two Ticket of Leave men to travel with the families to York where Robert established *Wheeler Bros. Ironmongers* in Horley Street, Blandstown. This street was later to be renamed Wheeler Street. Along with the business two houses were also built for the family, Revett House and Wheeler House. The Wheelers employed cottage builders who erected Wheelers Cottage, Eglantine and Kitty Paw. Revett House was originally two storey but was damaged in a storm in 1945 and the second storey removed. Charles appears to not have had much input into the business, continuing with the police service until 1865, and then taking his family to South Australia. Robert was an accomplished man, recorded as an accountant, silversmith and jeweller and in 1862 was employed as registrar for the District of York. His son Robert John was equally accomplished, registering as a wheelwright and blacksmith and taking out a Wayside Inn License for the Travellers' Arms at 19 mile in 1875 and a small holding at Woottating where he cut timber, also establishing Millbrook at Mount Hardey and branching out into coach building and furniture making.

The York Drive In Theatre, on the corner of Wheeler Street and Avon Terrace, opened on Friday 16 February 1968 with "Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines" recording capacity crowds and heavy sales of cool drinks and ice cream due to the hot February weather. The original exhibitor was Ted Rainch.

It had a capacity of less than 100 cars and initially opened on Fridays, Saturdays, Mondays and Wednesdays. It closed in 1992 after years of dwindling attendance due to the advent of television and video plus the proliferation of rural drive-in theatres throughout the 1960s and 70s, there being sizeable theatres in Beverley, Tammin, Northam and Quairading, although



York's Drive In was to last longer than Beverley's, which opened in 1966 and closed in 1974.