



H. Howard Bonner

(Leading Personalities of Western Australia, 1950, p.326)

Herman Howard Hickman Bonner (1904-1975) was born 18 April 1904 at Newcastle, NSW the son of Thomas Hickman and Georgina Jefferies. Using the name H. Howard Bonner in his professional work, Howard took the Bonner name from his mother's second marriage. Howard Bonner secured his initial education at the Fort Street High School, Sydney and his architectural training at the School of Architecture within Sydney Technical College under James Nangle (1868–1941) and Professor Leslie Wilkinson (1882-1973). Bonner first entered the offices of A.G. Newman, and upon his death served articles with architects Copeman and Lemont in Sydney. Howard then moved to work with Wagga Wagga based Monks, Jeffs and Shaw. In this capacity he assisted with the design of Grenfell and Wagga cathedrals, and the Wagga racecourse. Bonner then became chief draftsman with the Melbourne-based architectural firm Bohringer, Taylor & Johnson (B, T & J).

Bonner's connection to Western Australia came through his work for B, T & J. Swiss-born architect Charles Bohringer (1891-1962) was a prolific theatre designer, and obtained commissions to produce the Hoyts Regent Theatre and the Ambassadors Theatre in Perth, with Bonner acting as the managing architect for the company. Bonner arrived in Perth in 1927 to supervise the finishing of the Regent, and then worked on the Ambassadors when building commenced. Bonner registered with the Architects Board of WA in October 1927 (no.115) and became enamored with WA, deciding to stay and practice on his own account. In 1929-30 both Bonner and B, T & J are listed in *Wises Directory* at 97 St George's Terrace, Perth suggesting there may have been a joint arrangement as the theatre work was completed and Bonner established his own clientele. Bonner parted company with B, T & J in June 1930.

Bonner's first marriage was at Sydney in 1924, to Ivy Myrtle McDonald, and they had a son Maxwell Howard Bonner in 1924. Sadly, Ivy passed away in Perth in 1927 aged just 23 years. *The West Australian* reported Howard's engagement to Dorothy Mosey, daughter of a well-connected Perth family in late 1928, but this proposal did not proceed. The newspaper had previously reported that Bonner had designed a residence for Fred Mosey to be built at Bellevue Terrace in West Perth, and in the 1930s Mosey is listed at 14 Bellevue Terrace. Howard married for the second time to Eena Iris Bick at St George's Cathedral, Perth in September 1932, and they had daughters Di and Rosie in 1938 & 1940. Max Bonner became a geologist.

In the 1930s, the Royal Institute of Architects of Western Australia (RIAWA) established a Building Revival Campaign, aimed at stimulating the home building industry, which was suffering the effects of the Great Depression. The campaign decided to run a competition for the best design for an ideal cheap modern timber house, and similarly for a brick house. The winner of the brick house section was a simplified Old English style design by Bonner. *Model Brick Home* is the name, for heritage-listing purposes; of the brick-and-tile house at 6 The Boulevard, Floreat designed by Bonner in 1932. The house was subsequently built on donated land, from donated materials and labour in 1934.

Bonner joined in partnership in early 1937 with William Harold Arthur Tracey (1903-1986) - Tracey had been a sole practitioner in Perth from 1929. Both Bonner and Bill Tracey enlisted in the Royal Australian Engineers during the Second World War and served 1942-1945, resuming practice in 1946. With regard to his professional recognition, Bonner became an Associate of RIAWA in 1932 and a Fellow of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects in 1949. Tracey left the partnership on 30 June 1950, and Bonner formed a partnership from 1 July 1950 with Bruce Frederick Robinson Atkinson (1920-1983), then trading as Howard Bonner & Associates. John Spence Finney joined as an associate in 1953. Over time Bonner's practice consisted of varied work embracing schools, theatres, shops, flats, residences, industrial buildings, grandstands, hotels and open-air picture venues. Robert Shand joined the practice in 1966, and it was named Howard Bonner Atkinson & Shand in 1968. Howard Bonner retired on 28 June 1974, and died at Claremont on 1 May 1975.

References:

- 'Bellevue Terrace Flats, Residence', *The West Australian*, 23 June 1928, p.4 (flats for Mrs M. Piesse, residence for Mr F. Mosey).
- 'Engagement', *The West Australian*, 26 November 1928, p.12 (to Dorothy Mosey).
- 'Theatre Evolution', *Daily News*, 28 September 1928, p.18 (Bohringer & Bonner backgrounds).
- 'Ambassadors Theatre', *Daily News*, 22 January 1932, p.8 (Bonner to WA).
- 'Kalgoorlie Racing Club', *The West Australian*, 25 March 1933, p.7 (new grandstand for ~1000).
- 'Model Homes Scheme', *The West Australian*, 4 October 1933, p.16 (Model Home description).
- 'The Model Homes', *The West Australian*, 20 February 1934, p.18 (Model Home soon to open).
- 'The Modern Theatre', *The West Australian*, 24 February 1934, p.7 (address to MB&C Assoc).
- 'Cinema Garden and Shops', *The West Australian*, 31 August 1935, p.6 (tender results, Lido cnr Marine Pde & Forrest St Cottesloe for L. Hatfield).
- 'Theatre and Cabaret', *The West Australian*, 14 September 1935, p.6 (Marine Pde Cottesloe).
- 'Reconstruction of Theatre', *The West Australian*, 24 October 1936, p.8 (remodelling of Wells Hall cnr Leake St & Stirling Hwy, Peppermint Grove into Cottesloe Picture Theatre).
- 'Modern Theatre for Cottesloe', *Sunday Times*, 24 January 1937, p.36 (Wells Hall).
- 'Suburban Theatre', *The West Australian*, 18 May 1937, p.9 (Ritz Theatre Hay St Subiaco).
- 'Ritz Theatre Subiaco', *The West Australian*, 22 May 1937, p.8 (cnr Catherine & Hay Sts).
- 'Churches', *The West Australian*, 21 August 1937, p.6 (St Peter's Church-School).
- 'New Church School', *The West Australian*, 7 March 1938, p.19 (St Peter's Church-School).
- 'Riverside Home of Mr T.W. Lynn', *Turners*, Sept 1938, pp.12-13 (Victoria Avenue, Claremont).
- 'Christian Brothers' High School Ellen Street Fremantle', *The West Australian*, 12 November 1938, p.8 (as with St Peter's, Catholic school work likely to have been procured by Tracey).
- 'Ambassadors Theatre Remodelling Completion', *The West Australian*, 24 December 1938, p.8.
- 'Two City Theatres – Contracts for Improvements', *The West Australian*, 29 March 1941, p.14 (His Majesty's & Ambassadors).
- 'WA Men Promoted', *Daily News*, 21 July 1941, p.15 (military appointment).
- 'Tenders', *The West Australian*, 19 August 1946, p.11 (residences for F.A. Strickland cnr Scarborough & Princess Rds Scarborough, for F.N. Atterton Circe Circle Nedlands [Dalkeith]).
- 'Cemetery Changes', *Daily News*, 24 June 1948, p.4 (work at Hollywood War Cemetery).
- 'Bonner, Herman Howard', *Leading Personalities of Western Australia*, [Organising: A. C. Lloyd. Editorial: Alan Ferguson] Paterson Brokensha Pty, Perth, 1950, p.326.
- 'H. Howard Bonner', *The West Australian*, 1 July 1950, p.40 (partnership with B.F.R. Atkinson).
- 'Circular Motif in New WA Hotel', *Sunday Times*, 10 May 1953, p.7 (cnr Albany Hwy & Tate St).
- 'Bonner, Herman Howard', WX29316, WW2 Nominal Roll, online at <http://www.wa2roll.gov.au/>
- Contributing author: John Taylor

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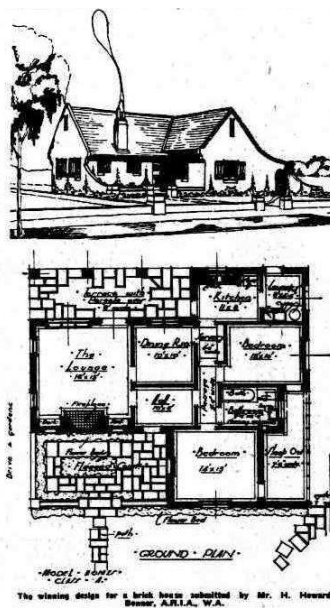
Taylor, Dr John J., 'Herman Howard Bonner (1904-1975)', *Western Australian Architect Biographies*, <http://www.architecture.com.au/> accessed DATE.



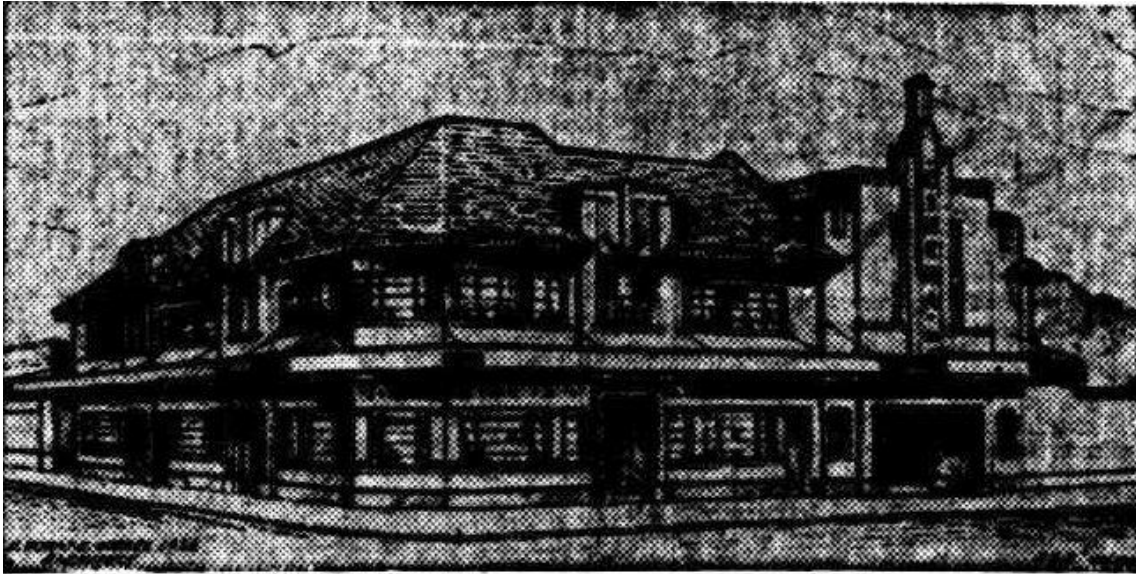
Bonner produced these now-demolished Bellevue Terrace, West Perth flats while with Bohringer, Taylor & Johnson (*The West Australian*, 23 June 1928, p.4).



Inter-War Old English style residence at 10 Bellevue Terrace, West Perth credited to H. Bonner [in Molyneux, Ian, *Looking Around Perth*, RAIA (WA), 1981, p.56] (Google 2013).



Bonner's 'Model Home' design, significantly changed, still exists at 6 The Boulevard, Floreat (*The West Australian*, 4 October 1933, p.16).



Perspective drawing of two-storey shops and flats and cinema garden entrance to be erected at the corner of Marine-parade and Forrest-street, Cottesloe, for Mr. L. M. Hatfield. The architect is Mr. H. Howard Bonner.

Bonner's design of the Lido for Lewis Hatfield, Marine Parade Cottesloe (*The West Australian*, 20 April 1935, p.12).



H. Howard Bonner, Esq., Architect.

Missen and Mills, Contractor

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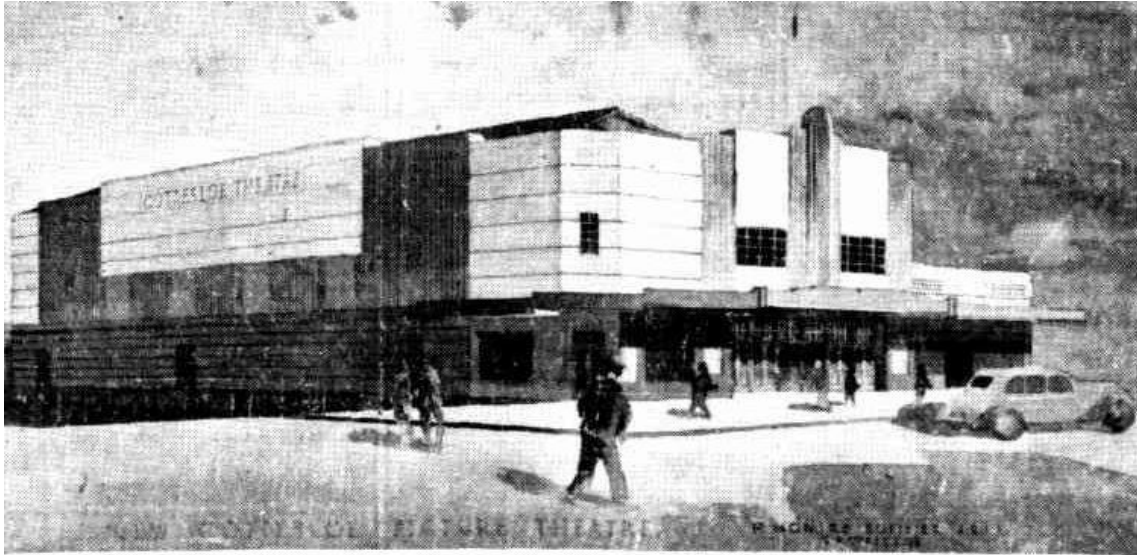
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It is likely the house pictured above is an 'attic-residence' Bonner designed for Dr Karl Knapp at 145 Victoria Avenue, Claremont [Dalkeith] – which has been demolished [Refer to 'Residences', *The West Australian*, 14 July 1934, p.5] (*The West Australian*, 18 January 1936, p.4).



Perspective drawing depicting how Wells Hall, at the corner of Stirling-highway and Leake-street, Cottesloe, will appear when reconstructed. The architect is Mr. H. Howard Bonner.

Another project for Lewis Hatfield, the reconstruction of Wells Hall into the Cottesloe Theatre, demolished in 1964 (*The West Australian*, 24 October 1936, p.8).



Wells Hall, converted into Cottesloe Picture Theatre (*Sunday Times*, 24 January 1937, p.36).



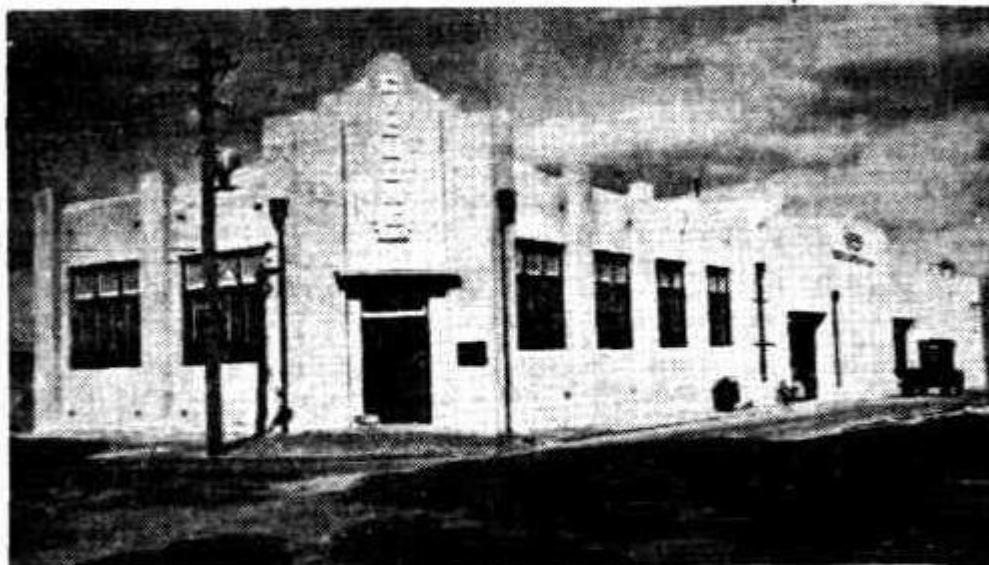
Perspective drawing of a new picture theatre and gardens to be built in Hay-street, Subiaco, by a syndicate.

Unrealised scheme for a Ritz Theatre on the corner of Hay and Catherine Streets, Subiaco (*The West Australian*, 18 May 1937, p.9). With the nearby Bill Bennett-designed Regal Theatre under construction in the second half of 1937, this project may not have been viable.



Perspective drawing of an 11-room residence that is being erected in Victoria-avenue, Dalkeith, for Mr. T. W. Lynn at a cost of about £2,500. The architects are Messrs. **Howard Bonner and Tracey**.

Theo Lynn's residence was built and remains to date at 116 Victoria Avenue Dalkeith (*The West Australian*, 12 February 1938, p.8)



New offices and showroom of the Cyclone Fence and Gate Co., Pty., Ltd., corner of Lime and Brown streets, East Perth, where large factory extensions have also been made. The new buildings, other work and additional plant cost £10,000. The architects were Messrs. Howard Bonner and Tracey.

The Cyclone Fence & Gate Co.'s premises at East Perth have been demolished (*The West Australian*, 30 July 1938, p.4).



Perspective drawing of shops and flats to be erected at the corner of Lake and Aberdeen streets, Perth, for Mr. D. J. Betti. The architects are Messrs. Howard Bonner and Tracey.

Shops and flats cnr Lake & Aberdeen Streets Perth (*The West Australian*, 15 April 1939, p.4).



Shops and flats (now 'backpacker' accommodation) n-w corner Lake & Aberdeen Streets Perth (Google 2013)