

**KOKUEI-KAN THEATER  
KOKUSAI STREET  
NAHA OKINAWA**



**KOKUEI-KAN THEATER IN POSTCARD SHOWS “CINEMASCOPE”  
SIGN ON FRONT OF BUILDING**

**CINEMASCOPE FIRST CAME OUT IN 1953 SO IT IS LIKELY THAT IT  
CAME TO OKINAWA IN 1954 OR LATER.**

**THE POSTCARD PHOTO PROBABLY DATES FROM 1956 OR LATER.**

**COPYRIGHT©2010 DONN E. CUSON  
REVISED 19 JULY 2010**

## **KOKUEI-KAN MOVIE THEATER**

**A FAMOUS AND UNUSUALLY DESIGNED BUILDING**

**BUILT IN 1951 IT HAS NOW BEEN DEMOLISHED**

**Demolition begins on historic movie theater**

**Date Posted: 2006-12-01**

**A 55-year-old theater in downtown Naha City is now feeling the wrecker's ball after decades of providing countless memories to movie buffs.**

**The Kokuei-kan movie theater on Kokusai Street served the Okinawa community for 51 years before closing its doors four years ago, pressured by growth of multiplex theaters in the Mihama area. The Kokuei-kan was the same design as Tokyo's Hibiya movie theater, an ultra modern dome design in its heyday. In peak times, it was one of seven movie theaters on Kokusai Street, holding out until it was the only one before succumbing to financial woes in 2002.**

**Demolition is under way, a process expected to take a month. Hundreds of spectators have gathered to witness the building's demise, which leaves only a single theater in the downtown area. Sakurazaka Hall Movie Theater, on Sakurazaka Street, struggles but is still in operation.**

**"We miss this movie theater," one passer by said. "but there is no way to keep this theater anymore. We understand it has been standing for over 50 years, and has given a lot of memories to everyone over 30 years of age."**

**The land beneath the Kokuei-kan theater is to be used for commercial facilities. Naha City is looking for public input December 3rd, on how to best use the land. The public hearing will be at Tembus Hall on Kokusai Street. City officials hope to begin new construction in the spring**

**PHOTOS THAT FOLLOW ARE GENERALLY IN ORDER OF THE  
DATE THEY WERE THOUGHT TO HAVE BEEN TAKEN, NOT THE  
DATE OF PUBLICATION**



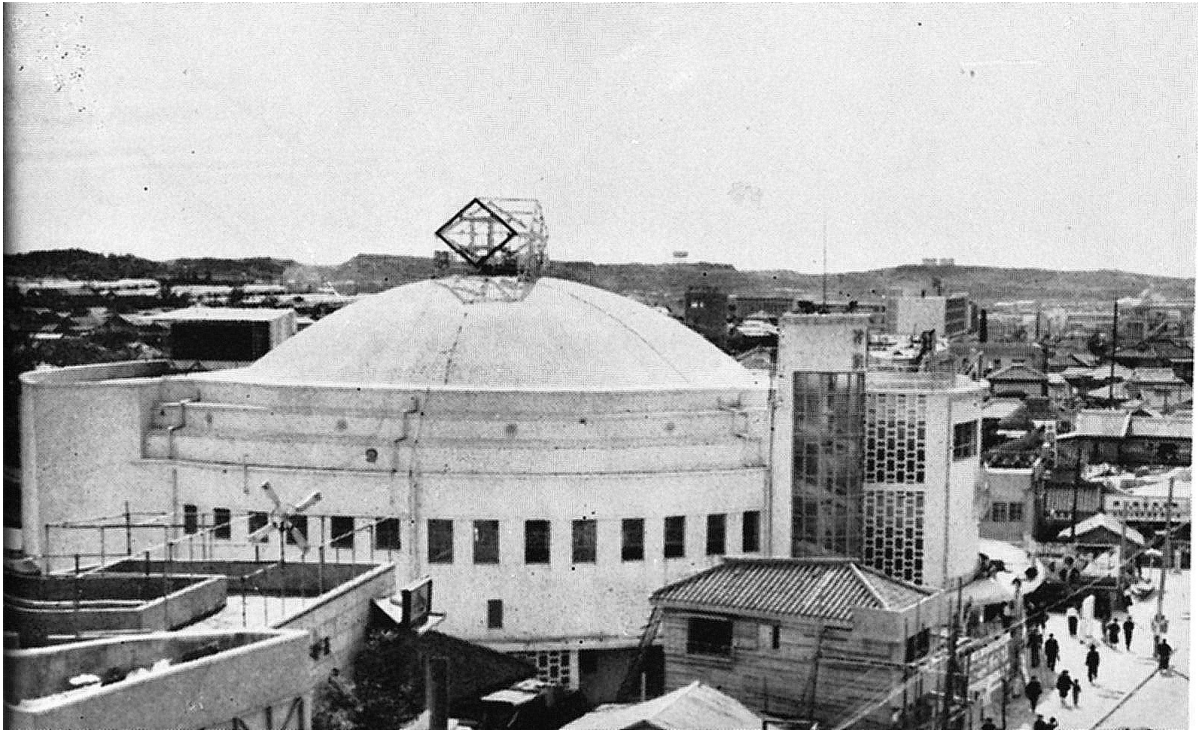
**THEATER UNDER CONSTRUCTION IN 1951**



**THOUGHT TO HAVE BEEN TAKEN FROM AN L-10 BEAVER SMALL  
MILITARY SCOUT PLANE BETWEEN 1952 AND 1954**

1956年 那覇市 国際通り／金城棟永  
 沖縄山形屋デパート屋上から琉球政府方向を撮影。  
 道路の両側に立ち並ぶ商店は、他の地域より早く発展した。  
 ドーム型の白い建物は国映館。







**1955 PHOTO PUBLISHED IN THE 1955-56 TORII YEAR BOOK  
OF THE KUBASAKI AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL**



①国映館 (KOKUEI THEATRE) ②山形屋 (YAMAGATAYA DEPARTMENT STORE)

**PHOTO FROM  
SHIN KYODO CHIZU, OKINAWA (NEW MAPS OF THE NATIVE LAND, OKINAWA)  
PUBLISHED IN APRIL 1957 BY THE OKINAWA TIMES  
PHOTO WAS TAKEN IN 1956**



**USCAR AERIAL PHOTO 1957-1959**



国映館 (KOKUEIKAN THEATRE) 55年にできた巨大な円形の劇場。工費は3千万円かかったといい、東京の一流劇場に劣らない。牧志大通りに面し、松尾にある。その新築は那覇の繁華街に一偉観を添えた。洋画専門で、シネマスコープの常設館である。

(SHOW CIRCLES)

**PHOTO FROM  
SHIN KYODO CHIZU, OKINAWA (NEW MAPS OF THE NATIVE LAND, OKINAWA)  
PUBLISHED IN APRIL 1957 BY THE OKINAWA TIMES  
PHOTO WAS TAKEN IN 1956**



**AERIAL FROM "OKINAWA CHILDREN IN PHOTOS" BY  
BLACKIE THE PHOTOGRAPHER, CA 1962**





**NOTE THAT THE MOVIE "TEAHOUSE OF THE AUGUST MOON" IS NOW SHOWING. THE MOVIE WAS RELEASED IN DECEMBER 1956, SO THE PHOTO DATES FROM SOMETIME AFTER THAT.**



CA 1958 PHOTO FROM "WELCOME TO NAHA AIR BASE" BOOKLET