



CINEMA
THEATRE
ASSOCIATION

www.cta-uk.org

BULLETIN

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The three-screen Curzon Eastbourne, which is due to close later this year – see Newsreel p22; photo taken April 2008



The entrance to The Point Milton Keynes, for which a listing application has been refused – see Casework p5; photo taken August 2004

FROM YOUR EDITOR

I must begin with an apology to those members who tried to ring the visits registration line to book for the Bromley [etc] visit at the end of November. Unfortunately the number printed in the Bulletin visit announcement on p3 was wrong – by one digit. I gather some people checked with the CTA website and found the error but apparently most of those who got the wrong number just turned up anyway and had an enjoyable visit. I am sorry for the mistake and have flagellated myself with a wet lettuce leaf on your behalf. The correct number is printed at the bottom of the next column and will be in each Bulletin.

I am happy to have been able to include the index to last year's [2019] Bulletins on p16; I hope you find it useful. If you would like a copy of the original Word document and/or a pdf, please email me [address opposite] or send SAE if you want a printed copy.

I have been asked again, how is it that something can appear in the Bulletin when it was sent to me after the published deadline date? I have always said that the deadline date published below [always the 20th of the month prior to publication] is the last date I will guarantee to get something in the Bulletin. I may be able to get other things in after that, depending on what it is and how far I have got with doing the layout. If I have a column inch or two to spare, I would rather put in some relevant material than a 'filler' such as an old advert or similar.

On that note, I ran into the 'multiple of four pages' restriction again this time so I have had to go up to 32 pages. Looking on the positive side, it has given me the opportunity to include some holiday snaps, a few of which I have had in store for a while. Unfortunately I have had to spread them over three places. I still have a few held over for another time but please keep them coming. I have also been able to clear my stock of 'miscellany' items. I know a couple of them are not directly related to cinemas but I hope you will find them entertaining.



On the subject of entertainment, the BBC showed the 1970 film *The Railway Children* on New Year's Eve. It reminded me of the time I saw the film at the ABC Leicester, when it was first released. As we were coming out, there was a woman mumbling to herself, "That's not Yorkshire – I've been there and I know". Funny how some things stick in your mind for years. Above is a photo I took of Oakworth Station [it really is in Yorkshire] in May 2013.

Harry Rigby, CTA Bulletin Editor



Owing to a shortage of suitable material and pressure on the editor's time, the 2019 edition of *Picture House* has been delayed and will be issued very shortly.

Allen Eyles

**DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE
THURSDAY 20 FEBRUARY**

CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

(Founded January 1967)

promoting serious interest in all aspects of cinema buildings

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CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

BULLETIN: Members are invited to submit items for possible publication to the Bulletin Editor. However, it is stressed that the publication of an item does not necessarily imply that it reflects the views of the Cinema Theatre Association, its Committee or its Bulletin Editor.

It is assumed that submissions are for publication, unless stated otherwise; items may be shortened or edited at the discretion of the Editor. Please state if you require items to be returned and enclose SAE, otherwise everything will be passed on to the CTA Archive.

VISITS: Members and non-members are reminded that they attend visits entirely at their own risk and no responsibility can be accepted by the Cinema Theatre Association or the owners of the buildings for any accidents or injury sustained during the course of any visit.

PRODUCTS: The Cinema Theatre Association does not necessarily recommend or endorse any products or services advertised in the Bulletin or in any flyer or document included in any mailings to members.

Typeset in Franklin Gothic Book by Harry Rigby

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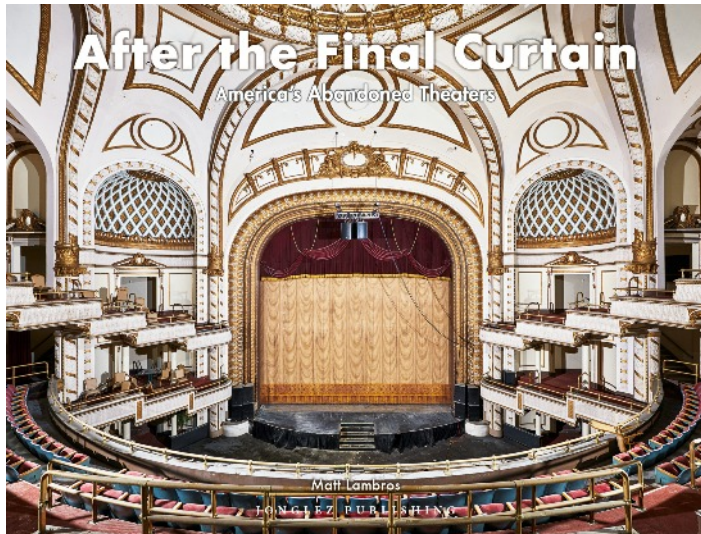
VISITS AND EVENTS

After the Final Curtain 2: America's Abandoned Theaters

Illustrated talk by Matt Lambros

Saturday 22 February; The Gallery, 5:30pm (doors open 5pm)

In the first of what we hope to be a short series of events featuring international guest speakers, the CTA welcomes back noted cinema theatre photographer Matt Lambros from the USA, who splendidly entertained a 'full house' in February 2018 with interior images he had taken of long-closed movie theatres in the USA, which were featured in his book *After the Final Curtain – The Fall of the American Movie Theater*. The quality of the images were truly amazing and we were stunned by his ability to photograph the beauty of dereliction in such difficult circumstances, while Matt gave running comments on his exploits and adventures gaining access into theatre buildings that had been abandoned for decades.



Matt's book was so successful he has released *After the Final Curtain: America's Abandoned Theaters*, copies of which will be available for sale to CTA members on the evening. Come early to grab your seat for another evening of images of what remains after the last ticket was sold.

Venue: The Gallery, at Alan Baxter Associates, 75 Cowcross Street, Farringdon, London, EC1M 6EL.

Getting there: On leaving Farringdon Underground (old) station (not the Turnmill Street exit) turn left – or when leaving Farringdon Main Line (new) station, turn right – walk east 150 yards towards the 'SnappySnaps' shop. The entrance to the Gallery is opposite; walk through the large gates and across the courtyard to the far end, turn right down the steps and you're there!

Admittance: £10 on the door. Guests welcome (includes wine and light refreshments).

CTA Bookstall: The CTA Bookstall will be at the event. Limited copies of Matt's book will be on sale and available for signing.

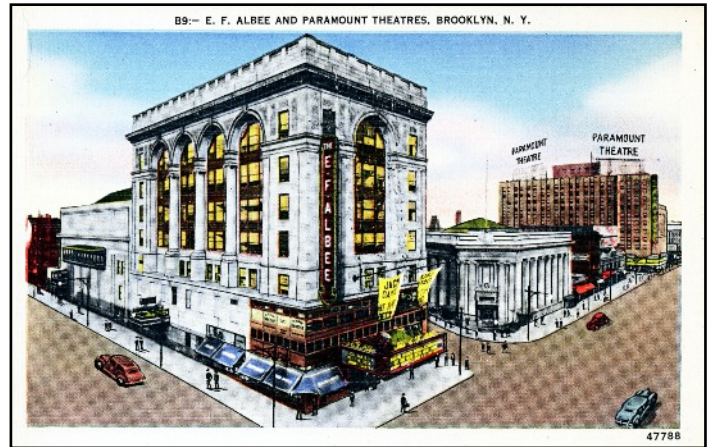
The photograph on the cover of Matt's new book is the 2,000-seat Orpheum Theatre, St. Louis, Missouri (architect G Albert Lansburgh – 1917).

A Brooklyn Bite of the Big Apple

Illustrated talk by Cezar Del Valle

Saturday 28 March; The Gallery, 5:30pm (doors open 5pm)

In the second event of this short series of presentations featuring international guest speakers, the CTA welcomes former cinema manager, distinguished theatre historian, author and tour guide Cezar Del Valle from Brooklyn, New York City. Fellow CTA member Cezar will be well known to other members who attended the two successful visits to New York organised by Ken Roe and assisted by Cezar in November 2000 'Big Theatres in the Big Apple' and in October 2007 'Another Bite of the Big Apple'. Many visitors to New York go to Manhattan and miss out on some of the real treats to be found in the other Boroughs; Bronx, Queens and Staten Island. The same is true for Brooklyn, the largest of the five Boroughs.



A 1929 postcard of the Albee and Paramount theatres Brooklyn

In this presentation Cezar will take us on a tour around these less-beaten tracks, which in 1941 had 233 cinemas operating, the most in any of the five Boroughs. Brooklyn had large movie palaces in its Downtown; Loew's Metropolitan (3,618 seats, architect Thomas Lamb – 1918) now restored as home to the Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir; the Brooklyn Paramount (4,124 seats, architects Rapp & Rapp – 1928) currently being restored as a concert venue; the RKO - Keith Albee Theatre (3,246 seats, architect Thomas Lamb – 1925) demolished in 1978; the Brooklyn Fox Theatre (4,088 seats, architect C Howard Crane – 1928) demolished in 1971; the Strand Theatre (2,894 seats, architect Thomas Lamb – 1918) now repurposed and altered as a live theatre. All these and more were within a few minutes' walk of each other!

There were also many splendid cinemas in other districts, such as Brooklyn's Broadway, Bushwick, Flatbush Avenue, Crown Heights and Bedford Stuyvesant, plus dozens of smaller neighbourhood theatres, which will be featured in Act 1 of the presentation. Act 2 will be devoted to the playground of New York, the famed Coney Island and adjacent Brighton Beach, with its wide Boardwalk, beach, and amusement parks such as Luna Park, Steeplechase Park, Dreamland and today Astro Land. Over the years, it hosted 48 roller coasters! Its connection to the movies includes locations for Harold Lloyd in *Speedy* and Woody Allen filming sequences for *Annie Hall* plus movie theatres of course.

If you have never visited Brooklyn or have been and want to re-live memories, then this is your opportunity to take a stroll with Cezar along the streets and avenues featured in films such as *The French Connection*, *Saturday Night Fever* and many others. On the way Cezar will be thrilling you with historic stories of the glamour, the heartache and the ups and downs of the movie theatres of the Borough of Brooklyn. Don't miss... It will be an evening to remember!

Venue, Getting There & Admittance: same as for talk in left column.

Movie Magic 'Round The Moor

Coming June 2020

Exmoor is one of Britain's finest landscapes. Large areas of open moorland contrast with wooded valleys, high sea cliffs and magnificent coastal views – a landscape that has inspired poets, writers and artists for hundreds of years. Surrounding the moor are market towns, picturesque villages, seaside resorts and small ports, where there are some sixteen functioning venues and around twenty former cinemas still standing.

Those currently operating are a mixture of traditional single screens, multi-use venues including theatres occasionally on film, conversions of earlier buildings and one purpose-built multiplex. They are the Central Cinema and the Queen's Theatre in Barnstaple, the Deckchair Cinema, Croyde, the Dulverton Cinema in Dulverton, the Plough Arts Centre, Great Torrington, the Embassy cinema and the Landmark Theatre in Ilfracombe, the Lynton Cinema in Lynton, the Regal and the ABC in Minehead, the Twitchen House Cinema at Mortehoe, the Brew-house and the Odeon in Taunton, the Tivoli in Tiverton and the Wellesley in Wellington. The Woolacombe Bay Hotel, an extravagant 1880s 'Tudorbethan' pile, has recently opened a luxury first-run bijou cinema, the Neo, where a private screening is planned as part of the tour.



The interior of the former Gaumont Taunton, now on bingo

Foremost amongst former cinema buildings is the listed Gaumont (later Odeon, now bingo), Taunton, with its grandiose Art Deco interior. Other former venues now mothballed, in other use, altered or partially demolished include the Regal and the Foresters Hall Picture House in Barnstaple, the Plaza, Agricultural Inn, The Cinema and the Parish Hall in Braintree, the Palace, the Alexander Theatre and the Northfield Picture House in Ilfracombe, the BB, the Methodist Hall and Town Hall Cinema in Lynton, the Cosy and the Queen's Hall in Minehead, the County Cinema in Taunton, the Memorial Rooms in Tiverton, the Ritz and the Cosy in Watchet and the Rex in Wellington.

The week-long tour, planned for the first week in June 2020, will circumnavigate Exmoor visiting or making photo-stops at as many of these venues as time and circumstances permit.

To register your interest and receive details of the tour itinerary, joining instructions and a booking form, please send an email to [deco55@btinternet.com]. Alternatively, send SAE to David Vinnels, CTA Exmoor, 24 Cloudeley Square, London, N1 0HN to arrive by Monday 10 February.

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or email membership@cinema-organs.org.uk

www.cinema-organs.org.uk

Other Events of Interest [not organised by the CTA]

Details of these events are given in good faith but the editor or the CTA cannot be responsible for any inaccuracies; please check before travelling.

THE PLAZA STOCKPORT

Friday 24 January Judy (2019) [12A] 11am & 7:30pm
Saturday 25 January Organ Coffee Morning 10am admission free
The Current War (2017) [12A] 3pm
Fritz Lang's Metropolis (1927) [PG] 7:30pm
Sunday 26 January The Wizard of Oz (1939) [U] 3pm
Friday 14 February Valentine's Day: Pillow Talk (1959) [PG] 7:30pm
Behind the Scenes Tour at 11am on Mondays 27 January, 24 February & 30 March. £8. Book or simply turn up.
Box Office: 0161 477 7779; website [www.stockportplaza.co.uk]

THE REGAL EXPERIENCE, WYMONDHAM Norfolk

3 February Bad Day at Black Rock (1955) [PG] plus
The Gentleman From Texas (1946) [U]
10 March Gentlemen Prefer Blondes (1953) [U] plus
A Dog's Life (Look at Life series)

Shows on Sundays at 2:30pm at the Wymondham Ex-Service's Club (former Regal cinema) NR18 OAT [tinyurl.com/zddvkq4].
Further information from Michael Armstrong [01953 603246]

THE FECKENODEON Feckenham, Worcestershire, B96 6HN

This year's programme is now on-line. CTA members wishing to attend can book tickets (£5) at [www.feckencodeon.co.uk] or by phone through TicketSource on 0333 666 3366 (local call rate) – or you can contact the Society directly on [films@feckencodeon.co.uk].

25 January All Is True (2018) [PG]
29 February Three Days of the Condor (1975) [15]
28 March Four Weddings and a Funeral (1994) [15]

Shows on Saturdays at 7:30pm. Licensed bar at all performances.

REGENT CHRISTCHURCH PREMIÈRE

Sunday 9 February at 7:30pm

The Regent is delighted to welcome the Dodge Brothers, Mark and Neil Brand, back for a première of their new live musical accompaniment of the silent movie: *City Girl* [U]. Film critic Mark Kermode is also a member of the band. The film was directed by FW Murnau in 1930. Best-known for *Nosferatu* and *Sunrise*, this was Murnau's last Hollywood film before his early death in 1931.

THE FORGOTTEN SHOWMAN

There is a temporary exhibition at the National Science & Media Museum in Bradford on the subject of RW Paul, filmmaker and pioneer of cinematography in Britain. Like most exhibitions at the SMM it is free entry. It runs until 29 March 2020. More details at: [scienceandmediamuseum.org.uk/whats-on/forgotten-showman].

REGENT CHRISTCHURCH CINEMA MUSEUM OPEN DAYS

Calling all cinema enthusiasts! Step into a bygone era with a behind-the-scenes tour of the Regent Christchurch (Dorset) projection room. Enjoy a live demonstration of our 35mm projector, which has been lovingly restored by a team of volunteers. The extensive collection includes countless photographic images, old cinema posters, antique cinema fixtures and more! Ideal for anyone with an appreciation for the pre-digital days. Theatre tours are also available.

Tickets: £5 per person. [tinyurl.com/y9c5r62m] or 01202 499199.
Spaces are limited to 8 per tour – book now to avoid disappointment!

INTERNET CORNER

- ★ [tinyurl.com/smovpz2] An excellent history of the double-decker Elgin and Winter Gardens Theatres in Toronto [Canada]. Includes a good 7½minute video and a link to a virtual tour and more photos. CTA members visited in June 2000. {872}
- ★ [tinyurl.com/wmk9hsm] An article from the *New York Times* about the Kameo theatre in Brooklyn and the 'restore or sell' dilemma faced by the church that now owns it. {3863}
- ★ [tinyurl.com/wfowvnp] A *Playbill* feature: take a look inside London's Royal Opera House - 27 photos.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/sk5yjrj] A *Liverpool Echo* article: The lost cinemas of Liverpool 8.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/rpg3mg9] A history of the Civic Theatre in Auckland, New Zealand. Includes photos and a 2¾minute video.

HERITAGE CASEWORK

By Tim Hatcher

Grade II Listed



The Grand Westbourne [Bournemouth] in May 2006

Proposals to convert the Grand in Westbourne into open-plan office spaces are to be opposed assiduously by the Association.

Historic England is reviewing the listing designation of the Picture House in Leicester. Although a rear façade comprises the only original extant feature, the CTA is to express support for retention of protected status; the local Conservation Officer endorses this stance.

A pre-application relating to planning consent appertaining to the Savoy in London's Burnt Oak has been lodged with Brent Council.



The Phoenix East Finchley [North London] in April 2006

Architects and designers are being sought to develop possible schemes to facilitate construction of a second cinema auditorium adjacent to the current single-screen Phoenix in East Finchley.

Unlisted

The Mayfair [Embassy/Gaumont] in Chadwell Heath is currently operated successfully as a wedding venue. However, it is unfortunate that permission for this utilisation has not been granted and a local group has now requested that the CTA supports opposition to the aforesaid usage as it wishes to purchase the leasehold, although no funding has been procured for that purpose. Concern arises that the building could remain unoccupied and subsequently deteriorate if the current enterprise ceases trading; furthermore it would become vulnerable to redevelopment inasmuch as it is located in close proximity to a Cross-rail station. Therefore it has been determined that a neutral stance is the appropriate response to the current circumstances.

A planning application concerning the Byron in Hucknall has been approved; it envisages two screens on each of two levels and a replacement for the current unoriginal fin. Investigation is afoot in an attempt to ascertain that retention of the admirable stained glass features is envisaged.

Unfortunately the application to list the Odeon in Ashford has been rejected by Historic England. It is reported that a competition will be launched to seek a design for the redeveloped auditorium.

In similar vein, the Association's re-application to list the Point in Milton Keynes and a request by a third party to list the Curzon in Eastbourne have each been declined by Historic England. In the latter case a major justification stated in defence of rebuttal was that the building is not currently under threat. The illogicality and irrelevance of this factor to the assessment of a building's merit is palpable and once again serves to demonstrate the flawed nature of the listing process as exercised by Historic England. *Both photos on front cover.*

Shaun Earle of Earle Architects, the practice involved in the initiative to update the Forum/Cineworld in London's Fulham Road, has advised that no major changes are contemplated; merely a modest refurbishment is envisioned.



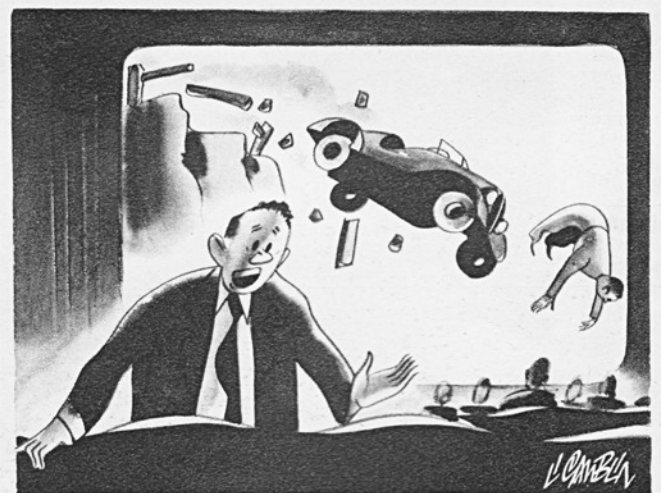
The Odeon/Gaumont Eltham Hill on bingo in August 2019

In its Local Plan, The Royal Borough of Greenwich's Council designates the Odeon/Gaumont at Eltham Hill as appropriate for redevelopment into housing stock. The CTA has objected strongly, emphasising not only the architectural significance of the structure but also its value as a social asset to the community.

Deplorably, Pyke's Cinematograph Theatre in Shepherd's Bush was demolished in June of 2019. The fate of the terracotta plaque on the flank wall of the cinema is unknown and investigation is to be initiated.

Inclusion of the façade, door threshold and window configuration of the Odeon at Kensington into the new building intended for that site has been advocated in a missive to the Conservation and Design Officer of the responsible council. No reply has been received and no activity is currently discernible on the plot.

CARTOON CORNER



from the Joyce Braddon collection of *Film Weekly*, 1938-1939

PUBLICATIONS

Back Numbers Available

PICTURE HOUSE MAGAZINE

Listed below are the back numbers of *Picture House* that are still available, along with the main articles the particular issue contains.

No 6	£1.50	Television in the Cinema; Atherley Southampton; Hippodrome, Blackpool.
No 8	£1.50	Sol Levy; Reginald Cooper; ABC in NW London.
No 17	£3.00	Special Issue featuring the Cinemas of George Coles with 26 original photographs reproduced in sepia.
No 18	£3.00	Sydney Colwyn Foulkes; United Picture Theatres; Tivoli Wimborne.
No 19	£3.50	Co-operative Cinemas; Ideal Lambeth; Dursley; Alister Macdonald; Granada Tooting.
No 21	£3.50	100 Years On; Travelling Shows; Reggie Rea; Albert Hall Sheffield; Regal Wells; West End Adverts; Scotland.
all issues below have colour cover and inside pages		
No 25	£4.50	Oldest Cinema (Brighton); FE Bromige; Committee's Choice; Gaumont Managers; Carlton Swansea.
No 26	£4.50	Paramount Newcastle; Edward Stone; Granada Men; E de Wilde Holding; Electric Portobello Road.
No 27	£4.50	New Victoria/Apollo ; Whiteladies Bristol; Clark & Fenn; Compton Organs; Tim Foster Associates.
No 28	£4.50	James McKissack; WJ King; Torbay Cinema ; Tabs.
No 29	£4.50	Cinerama in Britain; Braziers the Builders; John Fernée; Waller Jeffs; John Duffin's paintings.
No 30	£5.00	The Davis Family, Croydon; Apollo Hammersmith Organ; Norwich Roadshows.
No 31	£7.50	Special 84-page edition: Essoldo – A Family Business: Sol Sheckman and the Essoldo Circuit.
No 32	£5.00	Harry Myers Photographs; Cinemas at the Coalface; Shaws of Darwen: Edward A Stone.
No 33	£5.00	Theodore Komisarjevsky; Circuit & other releases of 1956; The case for saving the New Victoria Bradford.
No 34	£5.00	Beaufort Birmingham; Granada Tooting in 1934; Rank in post-war Scotland; J Braddon's Cinema life.
No 35	£5.00	Holophone lighting; Imitations of Odeon ; Cradley Records; 1909 Cinematograph Act; Kingston Showmanship.
No 36	£6.00	Leslie Kemp; Jeremy Perkins on Brighton; The Clifton Circuit; Circuit Releases of 1960.
No 37	£8.50	Special 92-page issue; saving the Electric Palace Harwich.
No 38	£6.00	Northern Morris Associated Cinemas; Point Milton Keynes; Going to the Cinema in Birmingham; Palace Conwy; Carlton Haymarket; Military Cinemas; Cinema Murders.
No 39	£6.00	WWI and the Film Trade; Tale of Two Regals ; Odeon North Finchley; Majestic Oxford; Films at the Royal Albert Hall .
No 40	£6.00	Tolmer Euston; Michael Stringer memories; West End in the 1950s; Stafford Entertainments; Will Onda & James Atroy; Stephen Waddingham – a Granada man.
No 41	£6.00	CTA's 50 th Anniversary; Plaza Stockport; Majestic Leeds; Grosvenor Rayners Lane; Pascal J Stienlet.
No 42	£6.00	Odeon Elephant & Castle, Plaza Crosby; Depot Lewes; Cineworld Chelsea; Gaumont Sheffield Figures.
No 43	£6.00	Virgin Cinemas; Peter Jewett's ABC memories; Scala Kings Cross; Picture House Campbelltown; Beeston/Nottingham memories.

BINDERS FOR PICTURE HOUSE MAGAZINE

These binders are to a new, revised design, which should allow easier storage for the more recent thicker copies of the magazine. The 'Wirex' system allows copies to be inserted easily and removed if required. There are twelve wires per binder, although the number of copies that can be inserted may vary depending on the thickness of the issue. The binders can also be used for the thinner, earlier copies of the magazine. Featuring a red leather-look finish and the magazine title on the spine in the current format.



Price: £6.00 per binder, supplied in a special postal carton. Please add £3.00 to your total order for post and packing.

There are also available a few second-hand copies of out-of-print issues of *Picture House* 9, 10, 14/15, 16, 20, 22, 23 & 24, priced £5.00 each, plus postage. A list of their contents was printed on p4 of Bulletin 52/2 or can be obtained by SAE or email from the Sales Officer or Bulletin Editor.

BULLETINS

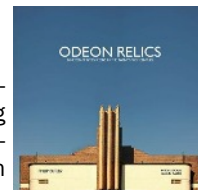
We can supply back numbers of most Bulletins from Volume 21 (1987) to date. Prices for issues from 1987 to 2018 are £4.00 per year (6 issues), individual issues are £1.00 each. Prices for issues in 2019 and 2020 are £5.00 per copy. All prices include postage. There are some issues available from earlier years – 1967 to 1986. Please send enquiries to the Sales Officer.

Recently Published

Odeon Relics by Phillip Butler

144 pages, hardback, fully illustrated, 225mm x 225mm. £25.00 plus postage.

Photographer Philip Butler has travelled the country capturing what remains of the ground-breaking **Odeon** empire in the 21st Century. The book showcases a collection of exterior photographs, each presented with summarised histories of the building in question. A 12-page introduction by architectural writer Jason Sayer introduces the series, looking into the birth of the chain and the cinemas and illustrated by the period images of John Maltby. There is a map of locations and a comprehensive list of **Odeon** cinemas built during the period and their subsequent fate.



Ordering

For post and packing: Total order value up to £20.00 please add £3.00, Total order value from £20.01 to £40.00 please add £4.00 Total order value from £40.01 to £60.00 please add £6.00. For larger orders and overseas, please contact the Sales Officer, email: [sales@cta-uk.org]. Orders to Jeremy Buck, CTA Sales, 34, Pelham Road, London, N22 6LN. Cheques/POs payable to Cinema Theatre Association, or send credit/debit card number with expiry date and security code. A complete sales list is available by sending an SAE and all the books can be seen on the CTA website [www.cta-uk.org] where you can also place your order using PayPal. A sales list is sent with every order.

SMALL ADS

The rate for small ads from members is £3 for 25 words with name and address free, plus 15p for each extra word. Non-members rates: £5 & 25p respectively. Please send cheque or postal order (payable to the Cinema Theatre Association) to the Bulletin Editor, address on p2. Please quote membership number. Advertisers are requested to reply to all respondents who supply SAE for that purpose.

Display rates: eighth page – £15; quarter page – £25; half page (horizontal or vertical) – £45; full page – £80

CINEMAS IN BRITAIN

A **MUST** for your collection

A History of Cinema Architecture

by Richard Gray

First published in 1996 to celebrate the centenary of cinema in the UK. In this fully revised edition, the text has been completely rewritten and expanded and there are extra photographs, 10 in full colour. Of particular interest is the 24-page gazetteer of cinema buildings, telling the reader what there is to see in most places in the UK. There are useful appendices about listed cinemas, a glossary of architectural terms and a comprehensive bibliography.

Hardback, 180 pages, fully illustrated in b/w & colour.

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Jeremy Buck, CTA Sales Officer

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REWINDING BACK

Sent in by David A Ellis

EMPRESS HALL RUNCORN



The Empress Runcorn in later years; it closed in June 1973 and was subsequently demolished

Though heavy rain fell on Monday evening, the **Empress Hall**, Runcorn's latest place of amusement was well patronized at both houses. The charm and comfort of the new hall were much appreciated by the audience at the first house, which included the members of the Urban Council. There was little in the way of opening ceremony. The orchestra under Mr J Horton's baton opened the proceedings by playing the National Anthem, the audience joining in. The picture programme proved to be a capital one, the films being projected with absolute noiselessness, while the sharpness and freedom from flicker were admirable. *The Famine* is a Japanese tragedy acted by real Japanese in an appropriate setting. *Miss Deceit* set the house rocking. *The Pathé Gazette* gives the latest pictures including scenes on the release of Harry Thaw and the American steamboat disaster. The star film is *Memory* a three-reel drama. *Fatty's Wine Party* is one of the amazing Keystone conceptions. *The Day That is Gone* tells an old story with a quaint sadness. There will be new pictures for the latter half of the week. Matinées will be given at the **Empress** every Monday, Wednesday and Saturday in the future.

Runcorn Guardian - Tuesday 17 August 1915

DAE writes: The altered hall was opened on Monday 16 August 1915. Before alterations there was a level floor and no balcony. Robert Hamilton, who took over from Alfonso Smith, installed a sloping floor and balcony. Before the makeover it had mainly been used for bazaars and dancing.

A GOOD LINE

"A full review of the greatest topical event for twenty years." That is the attractive line that is being used by the **Majestic Picture Theatre** Liverpool to advertise the special film of the Preston Guild, which is held once every twenty years and took place last week.

CINEMA SPOTS

At the **Collins' Palace** New Brighton a novel competition designated 'Pat Collins' Spots' is in vogue. The competition is held by a limelight and a small hand mirror making a small bright spot among the audiences. Whoever is spotted wins a prize. The novelty is attracting big audiences.

A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

Interviews with representatives of all sections of the Trade leaves little doubt that the arrangement of the winter programmes is proceeding apace. Renters are busier. Exhibitors report a fairly good trade but the weather is exerting an important influence on the volume of patronage. Of course, some of the suburban theatres are not so adversely affected, having a regular clientèle.

SUPER CINEMAS' MUSIC

The **Scala** and **Futurist** super cinemas' [Lime Street, Liverpool] winter series of musical interludes has been resumed. A repertoire of music is presented on the screen and the audience select the musical items by sending a note to the director of the orchestra. At the **Futurist** the orchestra pit is being enlarged to permit of an augmented orchestra and when it is completed it will be decorated with coloured or 'jazz' lights. Mr Stafford W Picton, the general manager of the **Scala** and the **Futurist** expresses the opinion that when the period usually associated with summer has spent itself, there will be no more complaints concerning poor attendance at cinemas.

A PARAMOUNT UPLIFT

Mr Denton, of the Liverpool office of Famous-Lasky, says that the clamour for better pictures will be gratified by the new Paramount productions. The next Paramount Trade Show will be on 29 September.

The Bioscope - 14 September 1922 [above five items]

GUARDIANS THANK EXHIBITOR

The House Committee of the Chester Board of Guardians has passed a vote of thanks to Mr Collins of the Cinema de Luxe Chester and his manager Mr Locker for allowing patients of the mental block to visit the cinema throughout the year. Mr Collins allowed the patients to go to the cinema free once a week throughout the year. Mr Collins ought to blush for the kind things said about him at the Guardians' meeting.

The Bioscope - 28 January 1926

TWO NEW LIVERPOOL CINEMAS

Two applications for approval of plans for new cinemas will be made to the Liverpool licensing magistrates on 5 September. The first will be made on behalf of Paramount Film Services Ltd, who propose to erect a theatre of 3,000 capacity on a site fronting London Road, Pudsey Street, Hotham Street and Lord Nelson Street. The plans were prepared by Frank T Verity, FRIBA of London.

The other application will be made by WJ Speakman of Southport, whose scheme provides for erection of a cinema to seat about 1,400 persons in Carr Lane, on the border of the Norris Green housing estate.

The Bioscope - 27 August 1930

SCALA RUNCORN TAKEOVER

The Echo learnt today that the **Scala Theatre** Runcorn has been acquired by Cheshire County Cinemas Ltd. The Cheshire Cinemas own the **King's** and the **Empress**, two other entertainment halls. The **Scala**, which is centrally situated and is one of the town's popular entertainment places, is to close down from next week and will reopen after certain alterations and improvements have been effected.

Liverpool Echo - 27 November 1930

CINEMA TAKEOVERS

The owners of the **Gnoll Hall Cinema** Neath, Glamorgan have purchased **Vint's Palace** Neath, a variety and repertory house, for the purpose of converting it into a 'Talkie' house. The existing repertory contracts of the **Palace** will be allowed to run their course, after which the building will be enlarged, redecorated and wired for cinema purposes.

The owners of the **Gnoll** have also acquired the site of the old **Hippodrome Theatre** at Neath, which was gutted by fire some twelve years ago. I understand the new owners of the site are to prepare plans for the erection of a new cinema there early in the New Year.

The Bioscope - 10 December 1930 [above two items]

HISTORIC LONDON CINEMA CLOSING

After a comparatively short life of just over seven years, one of London's most elegant and luxurious small cinemas, the **St James' Picture Theatre** in Palace Street will, it is understood, definitely close down on 31 March, the property having been acquired by a syndicate headed by A Horne, who propose to convert the property into a smart intimate stage theatre. The conversion and necessary architectural alterations, including full stage space, scenery dock, flies, dressing rooms etc will, it is considered, take the best part of six months to complete and the theatre will not be ready for opening until the early autumn. The **St James'** was built essentially as a 'Society Picture Theatre' and on its board of directors were included several names prominent in public life.

Members of the Royal Family were for considerable time amongst its regular patrons. Despite its small seating capacity the theatre cost over £100,000 to construct and equip and was the last word in luxury. Singularly enough it was erected the site of a famous old seventeenth Century chapel known as St Peter's Chapel of Ease. More interesting still is the fact that the chapel itself was built partly on the strength of a £1,000 English lottery prize, which had been won by the infamous Dr Dodd, who all students of Georgian history know met his end at Tyburn Tree for forgery. The management of the theatre, which has been for some time past in the capable hands of Harry Johnson, who has by his smart showmanship and publicity efforts created a big following will, of course, terminate with the closing down of the theatre.

The Bioscope - 18 March 1931

BEST OF BERKS

A report of the CTA visit to Slough and Windsor on Tuesday 22 October 2019

by Ian Grundy

On one of the very few clear sunny days of the autumn, a crowd of CTA members gathered in Slough for another of Ray Ritmeester's infamous early starts. We found ourselves outside the Queensmere Shopping Complex, which incorporates the Empire Multiplex and on paper (and standing outside) I thought this an unpromising venue. How wrong was I? There was plenty to see and much to admire.



Screen ④ at the Empire Slough

There are ten screens spread over four floors in a confusing layout, the result of a 1987 conversion of an existing venue – the Fulcrum – which itself included both the Planet Theatre and the Thames Hall. It has gone through many owners over the years under several names including Maybox / Gallery / Virgin / UGC and Cineworld before being rebranded the Empire.

It is surprisingly roomy inside with a generous foyer at upper level and some notably large auditoria, particularly screens ⑤ (the former Planet Theatre, now an Impact screen) and ④, which I believe is part of the former Thames Hall. Sadly the surviving stage and dressing rooms, unused for decades, were inaccessible on our trip.



Screen ⑤ [Impact Screen] at the Empire Slough

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The ballroom, auditorium and central vacuum at the Adelphi Slough

We then moved on to the Buzz Bingo Club, which opened as the Adelphi Theatre (dual-purpose cinema and theatre) in 1930, designed by Eric Norman Bailey. It remains largely intact with a splendid ballroom above the foyer and a stalls and balcony auditorium, which once seated 2,042. The splay walls and proscenium now lie under extensive curtaining, the Christie/Compton organ removed and the stage adapted as a kitchen and bingo area but otherwise the fittings and plasterwork are much in evidence. We were able to get backstage here and were amazed to find a central vacuum unit still in place. The Adelphi has now been on bingo for longer than it operated as a cinema and theatre but one wonders for how much longer?



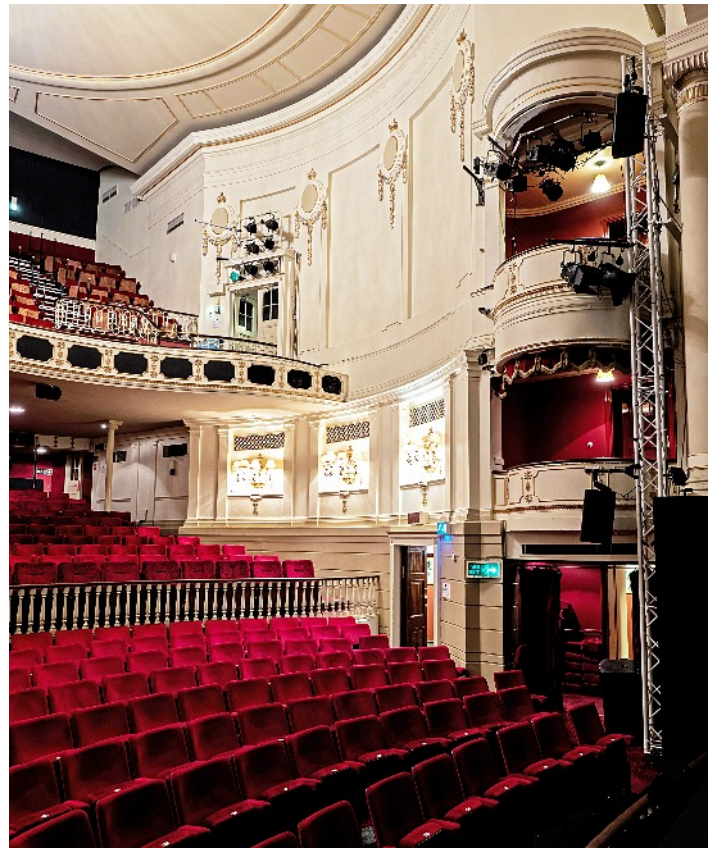
The auditorium at the Curve

En-route to the station we took in the Curve, a new £22 million library and community theatre, which opened in 2016 and by luck was hosting an exhibition pod about the cinemas of Slough. The theatre, which also shows films, seats 288 on a retractable rake.

After a short train ride to Windsor we had time to enjoy lunch or a walk in the beautiful sunshine, before our first venue – the amazing Theatre Royal, which became the Royalty Cinema for a few years before World War II. We were treated to an extensive attic to basement tour of the Edwardian Theatre (it was rebuilt to the designs of Frank Verity in 1910 following a fire). It is Grade II listed, seating 644 effectively on three levels, although the stalls account for two of those, with a complete split between the Front Stalls and the Royal Stalls. *The Mousetrap* was playing during the week and we were able to view the set from the unusual angle of the Fly Floor, before descending to the stage to see it up close. The auditorium is decorated in white and gold with red plush fabric, making it appear unusually bright and spacious but the theatre is constrained by minimal front of house space.

Our final venue of the day was the Screen at the Old Court, again like all previous visits a dual-purpose cinema and theatre. It is housed in a former Magistrates Court and Fire Station, which opened in 1907 and finally closed in 1966. The building was then used as offices but struggled to find a purpose until 1981 when it was adapted to an arts centre known as the Fire Station. Following a refurbishment and under new owners, it reopened in 2018 as the Old Court. The main auditorium is an adaptation of the Courtroom with 160 seats in a steeply raked bank, around two-thirds of which is retractable. In the basement is a second studio theatre available for theatre and music, whilst there is a cafe and bar where once the fire engines were stored.

Thanks as always to Ray Ritmeester for all the organisation, also to the management and staff of the venues for allowing us around and making us feel so welcome.



The Theatre Royal Windsor



The auditorium at the Old Court



The Theatre Royal Windsor



The Old Fire Station in April 2009

THE OTHER BBC

A report of the of the CTA visit to Bromley, Bellingham and Catford on 25 November By Adam Unger

The first port of call was the Vue Bromley, which opened in November 2018, situated in the St Mark's Square development. The modest size of the entrance belies the size of this multiplex, as it is below ground, descending two floors to access most of the nine screens, (except for Screen ①, being on the first level down).



The foyer & screen ① at the Vue Bromley

We were able to view most of the screens, a total of 672 seats – screen ① being the largest with 183 seats. All the auditoria conform to the same design, with large floating screens, equipped with Sony 4K projection and Dolby Surround sound. They are well-fitted out, with an overall monochrome scheme of black and leather seating, which is very comfortable with, of course, ample legroom. As is common with some other Vues, such as Leicester Square, the foyer ceilings have the ducting and services exposed painted black.

After leaving the Vue, we walked up the High Street passing the site of the Gaumont (1936), by WE Trent, which undoubtedly was the premier cinema in the area, with a full working stage and a large seating capacity of 2,583 seats. Closure came in 1961, when much was demolished for conversion into a department store and subsequently has been divided into several retail units. The only discernible feature from the Gaumont appears to be the tiled corner elevation surviving in basic form.



The façade, foyer & screen ① at the Picturehouse Bromley

Further along the street was the Palais De Luxe / Astor, dating from 1911 and then rebuilt in the 1920s followed by modernisation in the 1950s. An interesting use came in 1948, for experiments in demonstrating large-screen television. After closure in 1977, it was converted to bingo. Following closure after this brief spell on bingo, it was demolished in the 1980s.

Just across the road, is the newly refurbished Picturehouse, which was completed in June 2019. Previously the Empire, it opened as the Odeon in 1936, designed by George Coles, seating 1,500. Earle Architects must be commended for a sensitive restoration; reinstating the full-height of the fins on the exterior, which flank the concave frontage – the new faience facing being indiscernible from the existing.



Screen ④ at the Picturehouse Bromley

The curved canopy is very sympathetic to the original, along with the signage atop. Internally, every effort has been made to reveal original features and I do recall Earle Architects contacting us to view our archive for material on the Odeon. It would be nice to think that we provided the images to have aided this restoration. The large main entrance foyer has survived intact, with a double flight of stairs, sporting attractive deco metalwork. A new floor has been laid, copying as near as possible the original geometric design. Picturehouse have added two new screens, making a total of six, the largest being Screen ① with 293 seats, which occupies the former circle level. Screen ④ below is in the former front stalls, with the original ribbed plasterwork surviving on the splay-walls and two small screens under the circle. The refurbished auditoria have enlarged screens, with mainly red seating, which enlivens the dark colour scheme. We ended up in the large café bar for refreshments, which is effectively top-lit for natural light. This area has been imaginatively incorporated as part of the cinema from an adjacent 1930s office building and displays salvaged art deco doors and panels from a demolished Co-op department store.

We then boarded a bus to Bellingham, passing on our way the site of the Splendid, Downham, a large scheme of 2,232 seats by WJ King in 1930. This was an early closure in 1957, replaced by a petrol station. We thought that we could discern some surviving boundary wall of the old cinema, in the fleeting glimpse from the bus.



The exterior of the Fellowship Inn



The auditorium at the Fellowship Inn

Arriving at The Fellowship Inn, a most interesting building, built as part of the LCC Bellingham Estate in 1923-4, in an imposing 'Stockbroker Tudor' style, by FG Newnham, the house architect for the brewery. It was designed upon 'improved' lines, this being extended community facilities of halls, games rooms and refreshment rooms. In 1963, the boxer, Henry Cooper, was temporarily residing and training at The Fellowship, with the Lower Hall being used as a cinema. By late 2017, the pub had deteriorated badly, reopening in June 2019 under new ownership and name, The Fellowship and Star. The semi-derelict building has been transformed, with the Lower Hall renamed the Bellingham Film Palace, which is still easily recognised by the original classical beamed ceiling and columns along the wall. The ceiling is effectively lit by concealed lighting panels. The auditorium has a very nice ambience, with new armchair seats that have reduced the capacity to 86. There is digital projection, which has made cinema use viable for these spaces. Other restored areas include a function room and café. The main saloon bar has also been restored, with much original woodwork and joinery surviving, including vintage tip-up seating at one of the tables – possibly from the Lower Hall.



An auditorium at the Catford Mews

Our final visit was Catford, with the opportunity to have a short lunch in the Catford Mews development before going inside the screens. This has been created by the Really Local Group, who are a local community hub in the area. The Catford Mews had also recently opened in September 2019, in the former indoor market, later Poundland. You enter a long entrance area, which seems quite austere, with various eateries ranged along a wall, before coming to the three screens, totalling 220 seats. The auditoria are well fitted-out and comfortable. Programming is done in conjunction with the Independent Cinema Office, along with consultation with the local community. In addition, there are spaces for live entertainment and exhibitions.

Such is the pace of openings, if we had of visited a year before, apart from the Vue, none of the other venues would have been open! It is very encouraging to see these new openings, with digital projection making it viable to use some spaces not practicable before.

Our thanks go to Kevin Gooding for organising the trip and to Ray Ritmeester, along with the management and staff at all the venues.

Photos by Kevin Gooding

GONE TO PIECES – THE DONCASTER FRIEZE

By Allen Eyles



The Gaumont Palace Doncaster c1945, showing the frieze [CTA]

When it opened in 1934, the Gaumont Palace Doncaster was among several cinemas designed by WE Trent (here in collaboration with his son, W Sydney Trent) that featured sculptural decoration by his younger brother, Newbury A Trent (1885-1953). The theme here was the process of making a film from writing through set construction to photographing and directing the leading actor. The 33-foot-wide work in bas relief came in seven panels and was the most elaborate example of Newbury Trent's work for cinema.

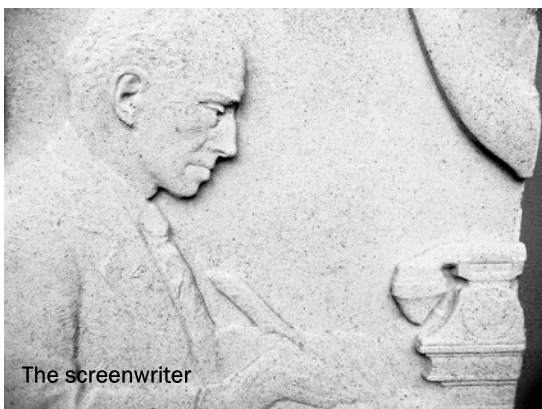
The Gaumont Palace also had a colourful safety curtain by Frank Barnes, which showed Doncaster's principal industries – coal mining and the manufacture of railway engines – with its well-known race-course in the background. The frieze remained on view until a drastic



The Gaumont in December 1980, showing the 1968 cladding [AE]

modernisation in 1968 when the frontage was covered in aluminium cladding – a fate that befell many other cinemas, including the former Dominion Harrow, where it may soon be uncovered. The stone panels at Doncaster were saved when the rest of the cinema was demolished – they were to be incorporated into a replacement building, which has never happened, the site being used as a car park. The panels were stored, unprotected from the elements or wilful damage, in a farmyard. The Cinema Theatre Association, with the support of local member and former Gaumont projectionist Ron Curry MBE, campaigned for them to be moved and properly displayed. The Council stepped in but stored them in a local cemetery. Following protests, they were removed to Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery in 2018 but were too heavy and large to fit inside, so were placed against the left side wall.

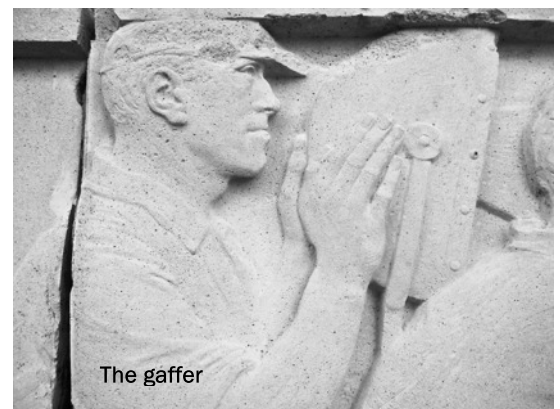
The frieze has survived remarkably well. The sections have been little damaged in their travels. They were cleaned by specialists from the Red Cross who had worked on local war memorials. Propped up against a side wall under an overhang and behind an open mesh fence, the frieze is visible even when the Museum in Chequer Street is closed. The rich detail can be observed in a way that was not possible when it was placed high up on the Gaumont frontage. However, the seven sections have been spaced out rather than brought together. A display provides an illustrated history of the frieze. But there was nothing that I noticed inside the Museum drawing attention to the frieze.



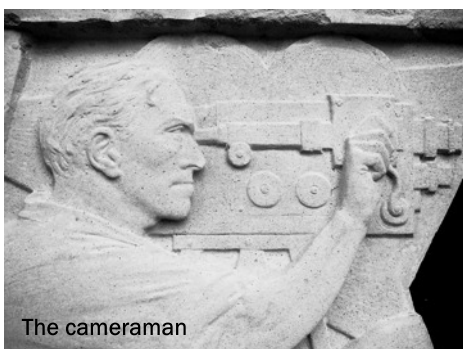
The screenwriter



The carpenter



The gaffer



The cameraman



The director



The star

Six sections of the frieze, photographed in its current storage location [AE]



The frieze, stored along the side wall of the museum [AE]

Smaller panels by Newbury Trent from the former Gaumont Wallasey are also in need of a new home. Saved by the Cinema Theatre Association, they are in storage in Wales awaiting a suitable new home. The Trent panels from the Gaumont Finchley were also saved when that was demolished, intended to be part of a replacement cinema that didn't materialise. As at Doncaster, they depicted the making of a film but with a completely different design and were mounted on a curved tower. They were reported to be in the garden of a member of a local historical society but that was more than thirty years ago.

The frieze at Doncaster still faces an uncertain future. The Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery is due to close in about a year's time for relocation as part of a new complex 100 yards nearer the town centre that will incorporate the public library and other civic services. It is hoped that the frieze can be incorporated into the design for a forthcoming multiplex at the Frenchgate shopping centre. Previous decoration by Trent for the Gaumont Palace Cheltenham was saved in the demolition of that 1932 cinema and put on display on the outside of a new development there (see "Cheltenham's Celluloid Ladies", *The Veteran*, issue 152, Autumn 2016, page 21 and back cover).



The 'Cheltenham Ladies' in their new home [DS]

However, as the Doncaster multiplex will be situated within the town's former BHS store, it may be difficult to place. In any case, rather than submit the frieze to the vicissitudes of a commercial development, it would be safer for the new Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery to display it. There is great potential for it to be a popular attraction, given the number of visitors who would remember the old cinema and who have an interest in films.

Other surviving work by Newbury Trent can be seen in London on the two panels to each side of the Wilton Road main entrance to the Apollo Victoria, at the entrance to the Adelphi on John Adam Street and on a building to the east side of St James's Square.

First published in *The Veteran*, the Magazine of the British Cinema and Television Veterans.

Photos by: [AE] Allen Eyles; [DS] David Simpson; [CTA] CTA Archive

HOLIDAY SNAPS



This is the CineMotion in Bremerhaven, Germany in September 2019. It is a six-screen multiplex. [www.cinemotion-kino.de/bremerhaven]

Malcolm Davies



This is the three-screen Royal in Biarritz, south-west France. [https://www.royal-biarritz.com]

Anthony Wills

ISLE OF MAN CINEMA ADVERTS

Further to the article on Isle of Man Cinemas on p8-11 Bulletin 53/4, here are some adverts. When I acquired these cuttings in the early 1980s, I expect the decision on the fate of the Regal had been made. With the seating capacities of these venues, it always surprised me that one of these sites was never subdivided in the 1970s with the other sites closing. But things don't always happen the way you expect. One wonders what is going to happen to the Palace when the Omiplex opens up.

Strand 1,050 seats – later 308 in circle – closed 12 May 1988;

Picture House 1,100 seats – closed 1 April 1988;

Regal 1,200 seats – closed 1983

Tim McCullen

STRAND

Thursday, July 17 for Seven Days
Steve McQueen, Ali MacGraw in
THE GETAWAY (X)
A Film by Sam Peckinpah
also (except Sunday Night)
Katherine Ross, Sam Elliott in
THE LEGACY (X)
Screened Weekdays only at 6.10. This support
will NOT be screens Sunday night
Late Show Nightly at 11 pm. Sunday 10.30
Thurs, July 17, Sat 19, Mon 21, Wed 23
BLUE FANTASIES (X)
Fri, July 18, Sun 20, Tue 22
QUICK STEPS TO LOVEMAKING (X)
Thursday, July 24 for Seven Days
A Film for the Whole Family
James Mason, Bernard Cribbens
Joan Greenwood in
THE WATER BABIES (U)
Screened Twice Nightly at 6.20 and 8.15
Sun once at 8 pm. Matinee at 2.15 if wet
Late Shows Nightly at 11 pm. Sunday at 10.30
EMMANUELLE 3 (X)
Showing Thurs, July 24, Sat 26, Mon 28
and Wed, July 30
EMMANUELLE IN TOKYO (X)
Showing Fri, July 25, Sun 27, Tue July 29

PICTURE HOUSE

Thurs, July 17 to Wedn July 23
Once Nightly (Inc Sun) from 7.30 pm
Mat 2 pm If Wet
Super Spectacular Action!
Maximilian Schell, Anthony Perkins in
THE BLACK HOLE (A)
(Scr 8.35)
supported by
THE GREAT AMERICAN COWBOY (U)
(Scr 7.30)
Thurs, July 24 to Wed, July 30
Cont 6.15 pm. LCP 8.25. Sun 8 pm
Mat 2 pm If Wet
The Star Wars Saga continues
Mark Hamill, Carrie Fisher in
THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK (U)
(SDcr Wkdays 6.20 and 8.30. Sun 8 pm)
• No Reduced Prices after 6.30 pm (Inc Sun)
• Late Shows Thurs, July 17 to Wed, July 23
Wkdays at 11 pm. Sunday 10.30 pm
Ray Gange in
RUDE BOY (X)
First IoM Screening

REGAL

Thurs, July 17 for Seven Days
Wkdays Cont from 6.30 pm. Sun at 8
mats 2.15 pm (If Wet)
**Roger Moore, James Mason
Anthony Perkins in**
NORTH SEA HIJACK (A)
(Scr Wdays 6.45 and 8.45 pm)
Thurs, July 24 for Seven Days
Wkdays Cont from 6.30 pm. Sun at 8
Mats 2.15 pm (If Wet)
Walt Disney Productions present
**Elliott Gould, Genevieve Bujold
Ricky Schroder in**
THE LAST FLIGHT OF NOAH'S ARK (U)
(Scr Wkdays 6.45 and 8.45 pm)

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AND COUNTING

by Mike Whitcombe

In the mid-1990s when Associated British Cinemas briefly returned to High Streets across the land, the remaining ABC sites on the south coast would call the ABC Portsmouth each evening with their daily takings. Our duty manager would compile the figures before submitting them to a Head Office answering machine. We would often cast a critical eye over the end-of-day takings, hoping that our cinema had come out on top. One site that often seemed to finish bottom was the two-screen ABC (known by everyone as the Picturedrome) in Bognor Regis, a West Sussex seaside town where business was dependant on seasonal tourism.



The Picturedrome Bognor Regis in March 2009

Fast forward a couple of decades and the only cinema still operating from those sites that dutifully submitted their daily takings is the Picturedrome at Bognor, the site we all thought would be the first to close. Now a successful cinema owned by the local Council but run by Adam Cunard's Electric Theatre Company, it became in June 2019 one of the few cinemas in the country to accurately claim to have been a full-time picture palace for one hundred years.

By the time the Picturedrome became a full-time cinema, the building itself had already stood for over thirty years, having opened in May 1886 as the New Assembly Rooms. It was designed by local architect Arthur Smith and was built at a cost of £4,500. There was a main hall (now screen ①) and a smaller hall upstairs (now screen ③) that allowed the building to be used for a variety of community activities including shows, dancing, roller-skating and badminton. The most prominent feature, though, was the octagonal tower, which today houses screen ④. Originally this contained a revolving light operated by a boy pedalling a bicycle-type mechanism.

Film played a role at the site even during these Victorian days. Traveling showmen who saw the riches made possible by the newly invented moving pictures, often hired the building. The first moving image to be shown was in December 1897 when David Devant hired the main hall to screen a film called *The Fire Brigade Call*. It was a success and films soon became a popular part of the touring variety shows that entertained Bognor folk. In November 1909 part of Lloyd's Grand Illustrated Concert was a cinematographic record of Shackleton's voyage to the South Pole.

In August 1911 at the zenith of British Imperial power, the New Assembly Rooms were renamed the Queen's Hall to commemorate the coronation of King George and Queen Mary. At the same time, the ceiling in the main hall was lowered to improve acoustics and a customised projection box was attached to the outside of the building. Films were becoming more and more popular but when World War One broke out three years later all entertainment was stopped and the building became an army barracks.

At the end of the war, a company called The Picturedrome (Bognor) Ltd took control of the venue. Eastbourne architect Peter D Stonham, the man responsible for the Picturedrome in Worthing, now the Connaught Theatre (see Bulletin 52/5), headed the company. He was supported by two local businessmen, builder and bathing machine owner Frederick Jenkins and chemist CT Cooper.

Together, these three men turned the venue into a full-time cinema, renamed it the Picturedrome and redesigned the main hall into the auditorium we recognise today. It took just four months from when Stonham's conversion plans were submitted in February 1919 for the Picturedrome to be showing films daily.

To achieve this the screen and the projection box were reversed. The recently-built projection box was converted to an orchestra room – don't forget, films were then silent with live musical accompaniment – and a screen placed on this wall. At the rear of the auditorium four boxes were constructed, two on either side of the original proscenium arch and a new projection box built inside the arch but above the boxes. (A century later the projection room and the luxurious boxes, recently refurbished, are still in use.) The entrance into screen ① that is used today was also constructed at this time. Stonham also designed the striking glass entrance canopy, which still impresses with the Picturedrome name set in coloured glass against a sunburst pattern.



The stained glass canopy at the Picturedrome

The opening night was Thursday 5 June 1919. James Fleming, benefactor of the town's new War Memorial Hospital, performed the opening with the day's takings being donated to his cause. The first programme contained the Pathé Gazette and a British feature called *Boundary House*. This was a drama directed by British film pioneer Cecil Hepworth about a man who forces a young girl to pose as his dead wife. Alma Taylor, who in 1915 was voted more popular than Charles Chaplin by readers of *Picture and Picturegoers*, played the heroine. In June 1969 when the cinema celebrated its 50th anniversary, Taylor sent the Picturedrome a congratulatory telegram. Musical accompaniment on the night was by the Picturedrome Orchestra, conducted by Miss Beatrice Travers. John Douglas Geils, a Canadian from Winnipeg who had served during the Great War, was manager.

At this time, the Picturedrome faced competition from a cinema on the pier but in 1922 the Pier Theatre and the Picturedrome were taken over by MW Shanley and A Carter through the Bognor Pier Company. In 1930 the talkies came to Bognor when both sites were fitted with Western Electric sound. Sadly, this meant that Mrs Eve White, the Picturedrome pianist, was no longer required after ten years' faithful service.

Real cinematic competition came to the town on Saturday 14 July 1934 when Odeon opened a purpose-built cinema in nearby London Road. Incredibly, it was the fifteenth cinema opened by Odeon in less than a year. Capacity of the Odeon Bognor was 920 seats, making it one of the smaller purpose-built Odeons. But with Bognor then boasting a population of just 18,000, it was a considerable size and a threat to the 700 capacity Picturedrome. Fast becoming one of the dominant cinema circuits, Odeon could book the very best films and their site at Bognor often benefited from this. Unhindered locally by main rivals, the Odeon also screened a Gaumont release for half a week if the Odeon release itself was weak. On occasion, they would even screen a current ABC release. The first night saw Odeon founder Oscar Deutsch personally attend, accompanied by tennis star Fred Perry, who had just won Wimbledon.

Despite pressure from Odeon, the Picturedrome comfortably soldiered on until the night of 27 April 1954 when the interior was damaged by fire. The site remained closed for four months for renovation. During this time it was decided to increase the width of the screen. CinemaScope was the current rage as the film industry tried desperately to lure people away from television. While 700 new seats and new carpet were fitted, the screen was doubled in width to an impressive 30 foot.



The Odeon Bognor Regis, on bingo in March 2009

A gala reopening on Tuesday 14 September saw the first British-made CinemaScope feature hit the big screen when MGM's *Knights of the Round Table* starring Robert Taylor played a nine-day run. It would be another three months before the Bognor Odeon screened a CinemaScope presentation, even though they had their CinemaScope screen installed two days before the Picturedrome.

The Pier Theatre had stopped showing film in 1951. When the Odeon closed in 1974, the Picturedrome remained the only full-time cinema in Bognor. By then the lease of the building was owned by John Robertson. He had bought it in April 1962 and oversaw the introduction of bingo in the small hall upstairs (now screen ③). After his death in 1975, Robertson's son inherited the business and ran the cinema until July 1983 when he sold the lease to the Cannon-owned Classic Cinemas for £60,000.

The cinema was rebranded Classic in August 1983 and a series of improvements were started. This resulted in a second screen upstairs in place of the bingo hall. Classic ② opened on Friday 17 August 1984 with a screening of *Star Trek 2*, which moved from the main screen, where *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* began a successful run. In December 1985 the cinema was again renamed, this time becoming Cannon.

A series of different cinema chains then ran the Picturedrome. In the early 1990s when Cannon went bankrupt, MGM cinemas took over but retained the Cannon signage. In 1996 Virgin Cinemas, who had acquired MGM cinemas, ran the site for a few weeks before selling it, along with other High Street cinemas it owned, to the newly reformed ABC Cinemas. In November 1996 Picturedrome Theatres became the new operators before selling it to Reeltime Cinemas in 2003. Uncertainty over the future of the Picturedrome during these corporate games increased with each transfer of ownership.

A saviour was needed and in 2007 it arrived in the form of a young, enthusiastic Adam Cunard, who founded the Picturedrome Electric Theatre Company to become the new operator of the cinema. He had high hopes and high standards and within the first twelve months he claimed to have overturned a £25,000 loss into a small operating profit.

A series of events then led to the rejuvenation of the cinema, although, at first, it seemed that the cinema would close. In February 2009, the building's freeholder, The Bognor Pier Company, raised the rent paid by owner Anaid Holdings from £16,000 to £75,000. Adam Cunard, as the cinema's operator, appealed and at arbitration the adjudicator decided on an annual rent of £45,000.

This figure still spelt disaster but on 15 July 2009, while this continued to be contested, Historic England awarded the cinema Grade II listing. The reason given was that it was an "unusual example of an early cinema, which has retained its original architectural character." Special features such as the coloured glass Picturedrome sign, the external projection room, the original proscenium and the unusual survival of an early pay desk all helped with the decision. The report concluded that the Picturedrome was "notable as exemplifying an entertainment building in a traditional seaside townscape."

The listing was important as it cast a shadow over what the Freeholder could do with the property. And when the Bognor Pier Company quickly submitted plans to turn the main auditorium into three flats there was a huge public outcry, which led to an emotional public meeting in screen ① on Tuesday 1 September (see Bulletin 43/6).

The auditorium was completely full with many people forced to stand. Speaker after speaker passionately voiced their support for the cinema. Only Peter Langrish, who represented the Bognor Pier Company, believed the cinema should cease trading but he was shouted down time and time again. By the end of the evening, it was concluded that the Picturedrome was a unique public asset, a point Bognor Regis Town Council agreed with. In September 2010, the Council paid BPC £445,000 for the freehold and gave Adam Cunard the green light to continue as operator.

Ten years later and the cinema now boasts state-of-the-art projection and sound equipment and a further two auditoria. The first, seating 33, opened in the landmark octagonal tower on 26 March 2015 while the latest, a 102-seat screen attached to the rear of the building and occupying the former car park, opened on 21 December 2018 after many delays (see Bulletin 53/2). Total seating capacity in the four screens is now 544 with the auditoria numbered in relation to capacity.

Save Our Cinema Films Not Flats!



All this could be lost forever
if the planning
application is approved to turn
Bognor Regis Picturedrome
Cinema into flats

See overleaf for how you can help

Leaflet for the 2009 public
meeting that led to the
saving of the cinema.



The 85-seat screen ③ [was screen ② when photographed
in March 2009] in the former bingo space

The cinema industry has always been highly competitive. Unfortunately, many of those at the top act like mere accountants who have no feel for films and are interested only in profit margins. In such an unhelpful atmosphere, a dollop of good fortune is needed for a cinema to remain open and the Picturedrome is no exception. If the cinema hadn't had the good fortune to be run by the Robertson family during the 1960s, 70s and 80s, when local movie theatres were closing weekly, the Picturedrome might well be another forgotten statistic. And if Adam Cunard hadn't stepped in to run the cinema just over a decade ago, the building would most likely be flats with another greedy private landlord getting rich by exploiting a local community struggling to survive.

Tourist guides always concentrate on forgotten churches or dusty council chambers when extolling local virtues yet rarely mention the much loved cinema, which is often the real hub of a town. That's certainly the case with Bognor. The thriving Picturedrome is the cultural centre of this engaging seaside resort and the fact that it has been showing films for a century only confirms it. From silent movies to the talkies, from black and white to Technicolor, from John Gilbert and Clara Bow to Leonardo DiCaprio and Saoirse Ronan, the Picturedrome has proved to be a saving grace for earnest film buffs, carefree young lovers, giggling children and middle-aged couples escaping the mundane. In an uncertain world, it's a beacon of hope. Happy Centenary, Picturedrome!

Cinema photos by Harry Rigby;
Leaflets courtesy Picturedrome;
[R] Sleeve for the Picturedrome Gift Card
featuring the coloured glass
Picturedrome canopy.



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compiled by Harry Rigby

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PAVILION

HODDESDON.

PHONE..... 171

Western

SOUND

Electric

SYSTEM

Attractions

for

FEB., 1935.

Continuous Nightly from 5.30.

Matinees on WED., THURS., SAT.
and Bank-Holidays at 2.15 p.m.

PRICES (Incl. Tax) 2/- 1/6 1/3 1/- 9d 7d

Reduced Prices to Matinee Performances
(Bank Holidays excepted)

STALLS 7d. BALCONY 1/-.

Deaf Sets are now installed in this Theatre.

AT EVERY PERFORMANCE—

THOMAS GROSCH

AT THE

Mighty Organ.

MISCELLANY

ANOTHER CANNABIS FARM

A secret tunnel has been found leading to an underground cannabis farm in the basement of the former Broadway Theatre in Deptford [SE London]. The 70ft passage ran from the toilet of a terraced house into a vast space below a row of shops that replaced the theatre after it was demolished in 1963. Police found the tunnel after neighbours reported an attempted break-in and officers noticed that the toilet floor was hollow. Detectives believe the illegal factory may have been operating for more than a decade, raking in more than £4m each year. A criminal gang is understood to have tapped into the main power supply cables to heat the cannabis plant. The Broadway opened in December 1897 with 1,327 seats on four levels. It became a full-time cinema from 1911 and was renamed Century from August 1955. It closed in April 1960. {29221}

Daily Mail – 4 November; sent in by Margaret Burgoine & Tom Laughlan

SIX OF THE BEST

Film director Ken Loach has revealed feeling bad about a scene in *Kes* where a little boy gets the cane because some other boys have made him hide their cigarettes. “We didn’t tell the boy he would be caned because it would have taken the shock away. A little tear escaped from his eye. But he got double payment, so he was laughing all the way to the piggy bank.”

Daily Mail – 21 November; sent in by Tom Laughlan

ARE YOU KIDDING?

A rare photograph showing gunslinger Billy the Kid is going on sale for £800,000. Thought to have been taken in 1877, the second confirmed photo of the outlaw shows him playing cards with fellow wanted men.

Metro – 21 November; sent in by Tom Laughlan

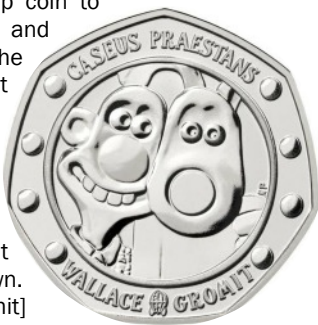
DIRECTORS’ GUIDE TO SEX AND NUDITY

Guidelines for directing nudity and sex scenes have been issued by the professional body, Directors UK. Backed by the BFI and BAFTA, they suggest actors wear bikinis or trunks instead and propose performers bring a chaperone. If a callback audition requires semi-nudity, actors and agents must be given 48 hours’ notice. The guidelines also state the production must have explicit written consent from performers prior to filming them nude or semi-nude.

Daily Mail – 22 November; sent in by Tom Laughlan

CASEUS PRAESTANS

The Royal Mint has released a 50p coin to commemorate 30 years of Wallace and Gromit. The coin was designed by the plasticine duo’s creator, Nick Park. It will not enter general circulation but can be bought in a range of different finishes, starting at £10. A silver proof version will cost around £65 and a 15.5g gold proof £980. Meanwhile, 50p coins minted to mark Brexit on 31 October will be melted down. [www.royalmint.com/wallaceandgromit]



CityAM – 29 October; sent in by Tom Laughlan

YOU CAN’T HAVE YOUR CAKE

A film fan has accused staff at the Curzon Oxford of ‘abrupt and confrontational’ treatment after they refused to let him take a cake into a cinema. Four staff surrounded him and demanded to know what was in his bag. He had bought the cake for his wife’s birthday but refused to leave it outside as he feared it would be damaged. He asked for a refund and was given one. Curzon said its policy is to only allow food and drink purchased from their bars and restaurants to be taken into the screening rooms.

Oxford Mail, Metro – 15 October; sent in by Stuart Jarvis & Tom Laughlan

THE LAST PROJECTIONIST

Britain’s ‘oldest cinema projectionist’ has died, aged 82. John Newcombe became a rewind boy at the ABC Northampton in 1952. After completing his National Service he returned to the operating box. He became projectionist at the 103-seat Lighthouse arts centre in Poole in 2002.

Daily Express – 9 October; sent in by Margaret Burgoine

BLAZE DESTROYS OAP’S VINTAGE FILM COLLECTION

An 87-year-old Southampton pensioner lost his priceless collection of about 3,000 vintage films in a fire. They were kept in a two-storey building about 40ft from his house. The movies destroyed included a rare 1930s copy of *The Wandering Jew*. The man used to run a film business, which is said to have ceased trading in 2012.

Daily Echo, Southampton – 4 December; sent in by Ian Patterson & Philip Stevens

CINEMA BARGE



Barge Fiodra boasts 20-seat micro cinema, art gallery and storytelling space and travels the canals and waterways of the country. You won’t see blockbusters here as it is mainly boating-related films, however this does include *The Bargee* from 1964 starring Harry H Corbett and Eric Sykes. Owner Bob Chase is also a mindfulness teacher offering workshops on the waves. Its location is currently unclear as no events are listed on the website. [fiodra.co.uk].

Time Out – 29 October; sent in by Gavin McGrath

HOSPITAL SPECIAL SCREENING

A hospital patient was desperate to see the new *Star Wars* movie, released on 19 December but was unlikely to live that long. Staff at Rowans Hospice near Portsmouth went online to ask if anyone could help. The head of Disney and actor Mark Hamill arranged a private screening at the Hospice.

Daily Mail, Daily Express – 28, 30 November; sent in by Tom Laughlan & Ian Mitchell

THEATRES DROP ‘LADIES AND GENTLEMEN’

Theatres are bringing the curtain down on the traditional request “Ladies and Gentlemen, please take your seats” to avoid offending transgender customers. The term has already been dropped by other organisations, including Transport for London. Saddlers Wells and The Barbican said they had removed gendered phrases and the National Theatre said it no longer used ‘ladies and gentlemen’ backstage. Nimax Theatres said they used “Good Evening” or “Welcome” when addressing audiences and have begun to ask performers to choose the pronoun they prefer to be known by, on the first day of rehearsals. It follows guidance by actors’ union Equity on how best to work with LGBT performers.

Daily Mail – 4 November; sent in by Tom Laughlan

THE WESTERN FRONT

Forget Hollywood – the world’s first western was shot in Blackburn! *Kidnapping by Indians* was filmed by Mitchell & Kenyon in 1899, four years before *The Great Train Robbery*, which was until now seen as the genre’s first film. The information was “in plain sight” in the BFI records. Blackburn had links to the Wild West: cotton workers had worked in the USA and they told stories of the wild frontier. The one-minute film, courtesy of the Cinema Museum can be seen on the BBC website at [tinyurl.com/y3dzewene].

BBC News website – 30 October; sent in by Philip Crompton

PHONELESS SCREENINGS

Research from Odeon shows that we are well-versed in turning our phones to ‘silent’ in the cinema but 23% still check their devices during a film. Odeon is encouraging guests to lock away their phones during screenings and has installed 60 charging lockers at the Odeon Greenwich.

Advanced Television – 11 December; sent in by Geoff Gill

SKY STUDIOS

Sky is to build a new TV and film studio at Elstree as it takes on streaming giants Netflix and Amazon. Costing hundreds of millions of pounds it will have 14 stages and is expected to create more than 3,000 jobs. It is set to open in 2022.

Daily Mail, Daily Mirror – 4 December; sent in by Tom Laughlan & Barry Quinton

ROCKETMAN AT THE SHARD

The Elton John biopic *Rocketman* was shown 800 ft up at London's The Shard on 20 November. The £45 ticket included a free G&T and popcorn.

Time Out – 12 November; sent in by Tom Laughlan

BANK CINEMA

Staff at Lloyds Bank in Salisbury turned their banking hall into a mini-cinema for a showing of a new documentary *Secret Spitfires*. The film tells the story of how nearly 2,500 of these planes (about 10% of the total production) were made in garages and small hidden factories around Salisbury. An appeal was launched in Salisbury Cathedral to raise £100,000 for a life-size replica of the famous WWII fighter. [www.secretspitfiresmemorial.org.uk]

Salisbury Journal – 24 October; sent in by Barry Quinton

ROW AT THE OPERA HOUSE

The Royal Opera House in London's Covent Garden is at the centre of a row after it emerged that tickets for six performances of *Fidelio* have sold out – 24 hours before going on sale to the public. 'Friends of Covent Garden' paid up to £2,300 for 'early bird' access but no tickets were kept back for general sale. That leaves fans with only a slim chance of picking up tickets in the highly competitive 'Friday Rush' where 49 are released on a 'first come, first served' basis. The theatre has a capacity of 2,256. A similar thing has happened previously, when less than 100 tickets went on public sale. Within days, pairs of stalls tickets with a face value of £570 were being sold online for almost £7,000.

Evening Standard – 23 October; sent in by Barry Quinton

WE WILL FIGHT THEM IN THE CINEMAS

A BBC4 documentary has shed fresh light on Winston Churchill's passion for film and his relationship with producer Alexander Korda. The biographer of Korda is convinced that Churchill initially gave the film-maker the idea of making *Lady Hamilton* starring Laurence Olivier and his wife Vivien Leigh, in an attempt to draw parallels between Napoleon and Hitler and hence draw America into the war against Germany. The biographer also suggested that Churchill had scripted a pivotal scene in the 1941 film, released in America as *That Hamilton Woman* where Olivier, as Nelson, warns that his adversary Napoleon "can never be master of the world until he has smashed us up." Nelson adds, "You cannot make peace with dictators, you have to destroy them." *Lady Hamilton* was swiftly followed by Churchill knight-ing Korda, the first such honour for a film producer. Churchill's private secretary told the biographer that Korda built the Prime Minister a basement cinema in his home at Chartwell, Kent.

The Times – 19 September; sent in by Barry Quinton

OVERSEAS NEWS

MOSCOW (Russia)

The Solovyevo cinema has been demolished. It opened in 1959 and lately had 24 screens.

Moscow Times – 4 December

NEW YORK (USA)

Streaming giant Netflix has taken out a ten-year lease on the 571-seat Paris Theatre on W 58th Street. It opened in September 1948 and closed in August 2019. Netflix reopened it on 6 November with their movie *Marriage Story*. {307}

Variety – 25 November; sent in by Terry Hanstock

Daily Mail – 27 November; sent in by Margaret Burgoine & Tom Laughlan

OLDENBURG (Germany)

The Globe was built by the British Forces on the site of the old Oldenburg-Donnerschwee barracks in 1954. It entertained soldiers sent to Germany on National Service. After the withdrawal of the British Army, many of the troop cinemas passed into the hands of the newly-founded Bundeswehr, who abandoned it in 1991. Now the 404-seat cinema/theatre is being restored and is expected to reopen in autumn 2021. It will cost about €1.5m.

[www.globe-oldenburg.de/English.html]

Express & Star – 18 October; sent in by Ivan Harris

CINEMA BUSINESS

COHEN MEDIA BUYS CURZON

Arthouse cinema chain Curzon has been bought by Cohen Media Group, which is based in New York. The purchase adds 20 cinemas and 46 screens to the stable of Cohen Media, which almost exactly a year ago acquired Landmark Theatres in the USA.

Variety – 23 December; sent in by Terry Hanstock

STREET FIGHTS

Several venues showing *Blue Story* reported fights outside the cinema. Vue reported 25 incidents outside 16 cinema. At the Vue in Star City, Birmingham, the police reported people were armed with machetes and several arrests were made for assaulting officers. Vue and Showcase withdrew the film from their cinemas but later reinstated showings with increased security. The film has now been nominated for a BAFTA award.

BBC News website – 23 November; Metro, Evening Standard – 25, 26, 28 November; Daily Mail – 10 December; sent in by Margaret Burgoine, John R Forster, Tom Laughlan & Barry Quinton

TAUNTON TAKEOVER



The eight-screen Odeon on Heron's Gate retail park outside Taunton [Somerset] has been bought in a £10.45m deal by a local investor. The cinema is leased to Odeon with 18 years remaining; it is thought that the operation of the cinema will be unaffected. {13954}

Insider Media – 17 December; photo taken August 2003

CINEWORLD TAKEOVER

Cineworld has agreed to buy Canadian operator Cineplex for \$2.1bn [£1.57bn]. The deal, which will add 165 cinemas and 1,695 screens to Cineworld's 786 sites, is subject to shareholder approval. The chain's largest shareholder, Global City Theatres, which owns a 28% stake, has agreed to vote in favour of the acquisition. The move comes a year after Cineworld bought Regal Cinemas in the USA, making it the second largest cinema group in the world, behind AMC theatres, which is owned by China's Dalian Wanda and includes UK chain Odeon.

Financial Times, CityAM, Metro – 16, 17 December; sent in by Tom Laughlan

CINEWORLD PROFIT WARNING

Cineworld blamed a weaker box-office as it said it expected trading for the full year to be below expectations. Total group revenue fell 9.7% with revenue loss in the UK and US divisions at 10.9% and 9.7% respectively. Box-office takings fell 12.8% overall. Sales of popcorn, snacks and drinks fell 7.4%

Daily Mail, Metro – 4 December;

sent in by Margaret Burgoine, Tom Laughlan & Barry Quinton

ADVERTISING SPEND GROWS

Business spending on advertising in the streaming and cinema sectors hit £12bn in the six months up to July 2019. On-demand video posted a 20% increase in ad spend whilst cinema surged just under 50%, thanks to a string of new advertisers.

City Am – 29 October; sent in by Tom Laughlan

CARRY ON STREAMING

Cinema chains have boycotted Martin Scorsese's new film *The Irishman*. They were put off by Netflix's decision to offer cinemas just 19 days of exclusivity in the UK before beaming the film to its 158m subscribers. The industry convention is about 110 days. Meanwhile, Netflix has launched new age-rating symbols, which match the ones currently in use in cinemas.

CityAM – 29 October; Sunday Times – 24 November; sent in by Tom Laughlan & Barry Quinton

TWO LIVERPOOL CINEMAS

Tatler News Theatre Liverpool

By David A Ellis

The **Tatler** Church Street Liverpool was the first news and cartoon cinema in the City. It opened on Monday 19 February 1934 and was run by Edwin Haigh and his son John. In 1946 a second news theatre, the **Liverpool News Theatre** opened in Clayton Square, run by Jacey cinemas. The **Tatler** had seating for 600, 200 of them in the balcony.

The cinema was designed from an existing construction fronting Church Street and Williamson Street. It is said that great ingenuity had to be exercised in order to comply with all the regulations of the public authorities. The contractors were John Rimmer and Son, who were congratulated for their work.

The entrance in Church Street was lined with marble and brilliantly lit by means of neon display signs and tubular lights in tiers. The result making a striking design in metal and marble. The entrance foyer was floored with rubber. The wall decorations were finished with brightly coloured panelling dusted with gold. Illumination in the hall was by means of paylights fixed in the ceiling at various levels.

Opening time was 11:30am and the programme was continuous from noon until 10:30pm. At the time of opening it is stated that admission prices were 7d and a shilling. A photograph showing a new canopy states it was 6d and a shilling. Each show lasted ninety minutes and the programme was changed twice a week.

The first manager was a Mr Hawkins, who had previously managed the **Woolton Picture House**. The cinema provided tea, coffee and biscuits

throughout the day. There was also a telephone kiosk installed on the mezzanine floor. A report in the *Liverpool Echo* dated 13 October 1939 says, "Following the approval of the very substantial basement of the **Tatler** cinema Liverpool as an air raid shelter, the manager, Mr K Hann has obtained the necessary certificate for training personnel in ARP." The **Classic Chester** was also an air raid shelter. Can anyone name other cinemas that had this role? Also in April 1939 George Formby and his wife Beryl appeared at the cinema, opening the committee room of the newly-formed Merseyside branch of the **Classic Cinema Club**. Formby said he was a big film fan and Mickey Rooney his favourite star.

The projection room housed two Ross projectors with Kalee Vulcan arcs. The Sound system was the RCA Photophone type. After the closure of the **Classic Chester** in 1970, the Simplex projectors from there were stored in the **Tatler**. The chief operator was Jim Teesdale.

On 27 August 1941 the cinema closed due to an explosion, which caused damage to the stage end. After a refit costing £25,000 it reopened. The new look included a new colour scheme of cream and maroon with speckles of gold. On each side of the stage there were flowers to add to the decorative effect. On 25 September 1968 the cinema closed and reopened as the **Classic** cinema on 4 October 1968, with a new bigger screen. The first feature was *War and Peace*. It was short lived, the cinema closing again in 1969 with *Dr Dolittle*.

Later in 1969 it opened as the **Tatler** cinema club, screening uncensored films. This lasted three years. Uncensored films were also shown at the **Curzon Cinema Club**, which had been the **Essoldo** on London Road. This cinema became the **Tatler** after the Church Street cinema stopped showing uncensored films. The former **Essoldo** went on to become the **Eros** cinema, also screening uncensored movies and presenting striptease before closing. The **Tatler** was given a new lease of life when it reopened as the **Classic Cartoon Cinema** on 23 December 1972. Unfortunately, this only lasted three months and the building was never used as a cinema again, becoming a fashion store.



Jacey Film Theatre Liverpool

By David A Ellis

Jacey cinemas ran a number of news theatres before switching to features, usually of the continental variety. Some of their halls were named **Tatler**. The first was in London, followed by Birmingham. They expanded and had news theatres in Manchester and Liverpool. Managing director was a Joseph C Cohen, who was known as JC and that's how the Jacey name came about.



The Liverpool building, designed by George L Alexander for Provincial Cinematograph Theatres (PCT) was converted from the **Prince of Wales Theatre**, which opened in December 1861 with *The Maid with the Milking Pail*. Ownership and renovation of the theatre took place several times and in 1870 it was run by Eldred and Fairlie. Mitchell and Kenyon screened *The Arrest of Goudie* in 1901.

The theatre, which was known as **The Little House in the Square** closed in 1905 and was offered for sale or rental. The PCT cinema called **The Liverpool Picture House** opened on 25 November 1912, situated in Clayton Square. It is not clear what it was between 1905 and 1912, can anyone enlighten us? In April 1914 PCT renamed it **The Prince of Wales Cinema**. They operated it until 1923. New owners Savoy cinemas, a subsidiary of ABC, then took over. Talkies arrived at the cinema on 30 September 1929 with the film *The Trial of Mary Duggan*. In 1933 it was run by a subsidiary company of ABC called the **Regent Circuit**. Stanley Grimshaw cinemas took over in 1936. Later, Philip Hanmer from **Regent Enterprises** (not to be confused with the **Regent Circuit**) was involved.

It is stated in the press that the cinema was sold to Jacey by the Hanmer brothers but I have only heard of Philip Hanmer. The theatre underwent alteration and seating capacity was reduced. It opened on 17 December 1946 as the **Liverpool News Theatre**. Seating was for 561, originally being 700. Screenings were continuous from 10am to 10:30pm, the programme lasting 75 minutes. The opening was conducted by the Mayor, WG Gregson.

The proceeds from the first performance went to the Child Welfare Clothing Fund. At the time of opening it was the largest news theatre in the country. There were now two news theatres in Liverpool, the other being the **Tatler** in Church Street, which opened on 19 February 1934 and housed Ross Projectors and Kalee Vulcan arcs.

On 20 September 1962 it became the **Gala International Film Theatre**. This was short-lived and it went back to Jacey in September 1963, becoming the **Jacey Film Theatre**. They mainly screened continental films. They sold the magazine *Continental Film Review* in the foyer. There was a small area where you could purchase tea and coffee. There was a juke box in this area that ran 16mm film, so you could view the singer. The cinema, which had the BTH SUPA projection system, closed on 7 July 1972. The building became a Catholic church and was demolished in 1986.

NEWSREEL

The items in this section are taken mainly from press cuttings from local newspapers. Although their factual accuracy has been checked by Allen Eyles, there may be minor errors in reporting dates or other detail. Allen has also added comments, where indicated.

Photos by Harry Rigby within entry, except where stated.

A number in curly brackets {nnnnn} is the reference for the Cinema Treasures website. Go to: cinematreasures.org/theaters/nnnnn

ASHFORD (Kent)

English Heritage has confirmed that the former Odeon will not be listed. Despite a number of criteria being met, including its importance to the area's history and people, it was found not to meet the necessary requirement for architectural importance. The cinema opened in August 1936 and closed in August 1975. It became a bingo hall in 1976, which closed in July 2018. It is likely that the building will be partially demolished and replaced with an outdoor screen, food and retail units and 61 homes. See Casework p5. {14785}

Kent Online – 1, 5 November; sent in by Philip Stevens

ASHINGTON (Northumberland)



The bingo operation in the former Pavilion closed on 11 November. Previously run by Gala, it had for the last 14 months been operated by Hay Bingo. The cinema opened in 1919 with about 1,000 seats in stalls and circle. There was a large stage and fly tower. It began part-time bingo in 1961 but went full-time around 1967. {44171}

Sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken October 2006

AYLSHAM (Norfolk)



The former County has become a gymnasium. The **COUNTY** name has been restored to the building. It opened in September 1937 and films ceased in September 1960. It became a youth centre, which had closed by 2000. {50410}

Sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken July 2007

BASILDON (Essex)

Clearance work has re-started on the site for a ten-screen Empire cinema after the previous construction company went into administration in October. The Council is working to procure a new main contractor.

Basildon Echo – 5, 12 November

BEESTON (Notts)

A contractor has been appointed for the new eight-screen Arc cinema. Work was due to start on 25 November; completion is expected by the end of 2020.

Nottingham Post – 2, 22 November; sent in by Terry Hanstock

BIDEFORD (Devon)

Further to the announcement on p18 of the last Bulletin that a four-screen cinema is planned for the Affinity shopping centre, the operator is to be Scott Cinemas.

Sent in by Tim McCullen

BIRMINGHAM (Five Ways)

The twelve-screen Odeon Luxe at Broadway Plaza has opened a Dolby Cinema in screen ③.

Birmingham Live – 9 November; sent in by Terry Hanstock

BO'NESS (Falkirk)



The Hippodrome is to receive a grant of more than £60,000 from Screen Scotland for technical improvements. The projector and audio equipment will be upgraded and equipment installed for audio described screenings.

Falkirk Herald – 15 December; photo taken September 2008

BOURNEMOUTH

The ten-screen Odeon in the Bh2 leisure complex was forced to close for two days in early November due to an electrical fault. {55149}

Daily Echo, Bournemouth – 4 November; sent in by John R Forster & Philip Stevens

Permission to convert the Grade II listed former Grand in Westbourne into a gym and flats has been rejected. The cinema opened in December 1922 and films finally ceased in October 1977. It was last used as a bingo club. See Casework p5. {22430}

Daily Echo, Bournemouth – 24 October, 2 December; sent in by John R Forster & Sally McGrath

BRIGHTON

The Grade II listed Duke of York's is currently undergoing a restoration. However, just two days after scaffolding came down, a newly-painted wall was daubed with graffiti. {2433}

The Argus, Brighton – 6, 9 November; sent in by Barry Quinton

BRISTOL

A three-screen cinema will be part of the redevelopment of the St Catherine's Place shopping centre in Bedminster. The operator will be Scott cinemas, who run the three-screen Orpheus cinema in Henleaze.

Bristol Property Live – 7 November

BROMBOROUGH (Wirral)



The eleven-screen Odeon is to become an Odeon Luxe. It will have a 12m wide iSense screen. {24286} photo taken July 2007

Wirral Globe – 23 October; Chester & District Standard – 28 November

CHORLEY (Lancs)

The new six-screen Reel opened on 20 December to coincide with the new *Star Wars* film. Housed in an extension to the Market Walk shopping centre, this has five 'Première' screens (with 164, 139, 99, 78 & 64 seats) and a 39-seat 'VIP Lounge', which offers food and drink in an all-inclusive ticket. This is the first commercial cinema in the town since the Plaza / Studios 1-4 closed way back in August 1986, although the Chorley Theatre (ex-Empire) includes films in its (mostly live) programme.

Chorley Citizen – 5 November; sent in and additional information by David Simpson

CLEVEDON (Somerset)

A £99,999 grant has been made available by the National Lottery to the Grade II listed Curzon Cinema, which aims to reach its £600,000 target so work can begin to restore its leaky roof at the end of February; it was £43,000 short at the time of this report. {846}

North Somerset Times – 19 December

CLITHEROE (Lancs)

A four-screen Everyman opened on 18 October in Holmes Mill. This late Victorian, Grade II listed former textile mill was already home to many attractions, including a food hall, boutique hotel and Bowland Brewery. The usual luxurious auditoria have 31, 31, 72 and 122 seats. {61173}

Sent in by David Simpson

COATBRIDGE (North Lanark)



Showcase launched its de Lux brand in Scotland in October at their fourteen-screen 3,950-seat multiplex near Glasgow, following a refurbishment. {27009}

Daily Record – 11 November; sent in by Tom Laughlan; photo taken July 2009

COLCHESTER (Essex)

After two failed attempts, plans have finally been approved for the Tollgate Village at Stanway. The project includes a multiplex cinema.

Essex Live – 5 November

CORK (Ireland)

The thirteen-screen Omniplex in the Mahon Point shopping centre has withdrawn an application for an alcohol licence due to concerns from local residents. This is the second time this has happened in four years. {53279}

Evening Echo (Cork) – 2 December

COVENTRY



A local graphic artist has been researching the history of the Standard/Godiva and produced some drawings of what it would have been like in its heyday: [tinyurl.com/w44uh4r]. It opened in July 1938 with 1,350 seats in stalls and a very steeply-raked circle.

In 1965 the 500-seat Godiva cinema was created in the circle while shops and a bank were created in the former stalls. The Godiva closed in September 1976 and then spent five years as a bingo club. It later became a casino and then a church. Alterations and mobile phone masts had made the original façade unrecognisable when the above photo was taken in March 2006. Your editor remembers seeing many a 70mm film on the Godiva's huge screen, with poor legroom in the steep steepings. {37905}

Coventry Live – 16 November

CRIEFF (Perth & Kinross)

A community group aiming to open a multi-screen cinema has launched a consultation. It will then approach backers to help finance the project.

Dundee Courier – 11 November

DUNFERMLINE (Fife)

A planning application for change of use of 25 New Row had been submitted. It was to be the venue for a new 66-seat Unicorn Cinema. However, "issues" with the premises scuppered the move. There are now plans to reopen the former Robins cinema.

Dunfermline Press & West of Fife Advertiser – 31 October, 12 December

DURHAM

Everyman is to increase the number of screens at its new cinema being built at Milburngate from three to four; the footprint will stay the same. No opening date has been given.

Northern Echo – 5 December

EASTBOURNE (East Sussex)

It has been confirmed that the three-screen Curzon will close at some point after this summer and is unlikely to make its 100th birthday in December, although it has pleaded for public support to reach this milestone. It says that business has been "killed" by the new multiplex at The Beacon. The house manager said, "Two weeks ago there was no one here one evening, three screens were empty. We closed at 8pm, which we never do. One Saturday night there were only four people in a 500-seat screen for a big film, *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*, It's very sad." The cinema first opened as the Picture-drome in December 1920; it had 1,100 seats. It has been put on the market for £2.25m. {24677} photo on front cover

Eastbourne Herald – 1, 2, 5, 18, 22 November; sent in by Geoff Gill & Bob Skinner

AE writes: Crispin Lilly, the head of Everyman, inspected the Curzon with his property adviser in late November and informs me that "the building would clearly make a beautiful Everyman venue. Unfortunately, however, the scale of the task is simply too large and would be prohibitively expensive".

ECCLES (Greater Manchester)



The Grade II listed Crown Theatre was destroyed by fire on 1 December. At its height, more than 35 firefighters tackled the blaze. It was too dangerous to go inside so water jets were used from above. All that remains is the brick outer shell; everything internal – flooring, staircases, balconies and even the roof – has gone. It opened in February 1899 and the first Bioscope films were screened the following month. It became a cinema in 1932, just in time for the 'talkies'. Films ceased in 1963 in favour of bingo, which closed in December 2003. The building had been empty since. Permission had been granted to convert it into 82 flats, retaining the façade. {2055}

Manchester Evening News, BBC News – 1 December; sent in by Terry Rourke; photo taken July 2005

EDINBURGH (Cameron Toll)

Plans have been unveiled for a ten-screen cinema in an extension to the Cameron Toll shopping centre. It would be operated by Empire and could be open by Christmas 2021. Construction is due to start this summer.

The Scotsman, Edinburgh News – 18 December; sent in by Scott Keir

FAREHAM (Hants)

The Council-owned Ferneham Hall was due to close in January for up to two years. It will be transformed into an 808-seat main auditorium with a secondary performance space. There will be a new foyer, a first-floor studio and community facilities. It opened in 1982.

Daily Echo, Southampton – 5 October; sent in by Ian Patterson

FORDINGBRIDGE (Hants)

Santa crash-landed on the roof of the Regal whilst on his way to a Community Centre. Firefighters got him down safely to meet the children who had come to see him at Santa's Grotto.

Daily Echo – 16 December; sent in by Philip Stevens

GILLINGHAM (Kent)

Last week I contacted the Salvation Army whose building is right next door to what was the Embassy/Odeon Cinema. Nothing has happened to the building and it still stands awaiting its fate. Very sad. It was last used for snooker, which closed a few years ago. {44509}

Sent in by Peter Cooper

GLASGOW (Govan)



The owner of the Grade B listed Lyceum has intimated an intention to improve the front of the building – mainly by repainting – and reopen a portion of the building as a cinema. However there is concern amongst the local community that this will not happen. Accordingly, alternative community proposals are being promoted by Govan Housing Association, which aim to bring the building into community ownership as a music events venue. It opened in December 1938 with 2,600 seats and a very wide proscenium. In November 1974 the former circle was converted into a 480-seat cinema and the stalls became a bingo club. The cinema closed in January 1981 but the bingo continued until October 2006. {15565}

Glasgow Evening Times – 18 November; photo taken July 2009

GREAT YARMOUTH (Norfolk)

After closing in February 2019, when the Hollywood circuit went into administration, the former Royalty/Hollywood cinema reopened as the Arc Cinema on 5 December. It opened in stages, with four of the five screens operational from 13 December. It has been refurbished with 566 luxury leather armchairs and 4K digital projection. Hundreds of responses were received after it advertised 15 jobs. {17924}

Great Yarmouth Mercury – 8, 22 November; sent in by David Simpson & Les Woods

GRIMSBY (Lincs)

It looks increasingly likely that the proposed nine-screen cinema at Riverhead will not happen. Cineworld was to have been the operator.

Grimsby Telegraph – 21 November

HARWICH (Essex)

The Grade II* listed Electric Palace has launched an appeal for £50,000 to help continue its renovation works. Removal of asbestos cost more than anticipated. A report with photographs of the work is at [tinyurl.com/wz3derb]. Reopening is expected this summer. You can donate to the project at: [www.chuffed.org/project/save-our-cinema].

East Anglian Daily Times – 11, 12 December; sent in by Terry Hanstock

HERTFORD

The cost of the refurbishment of the Hertford Theatre has risen by £6.4m to £19.9m. The existing building was found not to be strong enough for the proposed roof-top extension for three cinema screens.

BBC News website – 7 November

HOYLAKE (Wirral)

Work has started on the conversion of the Victorian Civic Building into a two-screen cinema and arts centre. Negotiations are in progress with a cinema operator. It is hoped to be open before the end of this year.

North West Place – 2 December

HULL (East Yorks)



Plans are being put forward to develop the former West Park Palace on Anlaby Road into a multi-use venue to include a cinema and café/bar. The cinema's name would be reused. It opened in November 1914 with 742 seats in stalls and circle. Films ceased in 1959; since then it has been used for bingo, snooker and as a pub. It has been empty for ten years. {6218}

Hull Daily Mail – 15 November; photo taken February 2008

The City Council is seeking a design team to conserve and restore the Grade II listed ruined National Picture Theatre. {40893}

Architects Journal – 17 December

LARGS (Ayrshire)

The former 400-seat Electric Picture Pavilion has been converted into a luxury private home and is on the market for £425,000. It was built in 1910 and it is believed it closed in the late-1940s. It then became a ballroom and later offices. {50817}

Largs & Millport Weekly News – 17 December

LEAMINGTON SPA (Warks)

A cinema on the upper floors could be included in the redevelopment of the Town Hall.

Leamington Spa Courier – 8, 15 November

LONDON (Eltham)

A gang of teenage boys let off fireworks inside the six-screen Vue on Halloween. The police and fire brigade attended but nobody was hurt. The CTA visited the cinema in October – see p7 last Bulletin. {59862}

News Shopper – 6 November; sent in by Ian Mitchell

LONDON (Fulham Road)

The former Cineworld (ex Forum/ABC) reopened on 8 December after a refurbishment. It has been renamed the Picture House Fulham Road. It still has six screens. See p20 last Bulletin. {17033}

Picture House advertisement; sent in by Gary Donaldson, Tom Laughlan & Gavin McGrath

LONDON (Islington)

Developers have withdrawn their appeal against the Council's rejection of plans to build a 400-seat underground theatre. The refusal was made on the grounds that there was not a clause guaranteeing that the Collins Theatre would open within five years. See p23 Bulletin 52/5.

Islington Tribune – 18 November; sent in by Tom Laughlan

The six-screen Odeon Luxe & Dine opened in Upper Street on 22 November. It has first-class reclining seats, freshly-prepared food, fine wines and cocktails, all served at seat by friendly cinema hosts. It has been designed exclusively for adults, only those over 13 will be admitted. Seating capacities are: screen ① 46; screens ② - ⑤ 30 each and screen ⑥ 28. It advertises 4K projection and Dolby Atmos. {61234}

A customer tweeted, "Nothing more annoying than having waitstaff [sic] interrupt the flow of a movie. One of the stupidest business concepts ever. I guess it appeals to people who like going to movies where others talk throughout the film or forget to silence their mobile phones."

Time Out – 17 December; sent in by Tom Laughlan, Gavin McGrath & David Simpson

LONDON (Kentish Town)

The former North London Polytechnic building, last used as a Pizza Express, has new owners. They have lodged fresh plans to tweak the layout of the proposed cinema on the site. Architects' images show a ground floor auditorium with six rows of seats catering for 80 customers. Earlier plans stalled as the previous owners went bankrupt.

Camden New Journal – 5 December; sent in by Tom Laughlan

LONDON (Lewisham)

The Council has confirmed that the Ladywell Playtower will be brought back into public use. "Investigations into the condition of the building revealed that the costs of restoring it were greater than anticipated. As solutions to raise the necessary funds were explored, the restoration works slowed." Plans have been revised so that a portion of the ground floor space can be used as affordable workspace. Curzon is due to open a three-screen cinema in the building.

News Shopper – 21, 27 November; sent in by Ian Mitchell

LONDON (Sidcup)



Plans have been submitted to demolish the former Odeon and build 27 new homes. It opened in October 1935 with 1,371 seats on a stadium plan. Films ceased in January 1961 and the building was converted into a swimming pool, named Lamborey Swim Centre. That closed in 2008 and the building has been empty since.

News Shopper – date unknown; sent in by Tom Laughlan; photo taken July 2006

Demolition of the former Blockbuster building has started. It will be replaced by a new library with a three-screen cinema above. Construction is due to start early this year with completion by the end of 2021. No operator has been named.

News Shopper – 5 November; *Bexley Times* – 7 November; sent in by Tom Laughlan, Ian Mitchell & Philip Stevens

LONDON (South Kensington)

The Ciné Lumière – one of the very few pure art house cinemas with a spacious if slightly plain main auditorium – has opened a small (30-35 seats) but luxurious second screen in the basement.

Sent in by Allen Eyles

The Projected Picture Trust

Dean Clough Mills, HALIFAX, HX3 5AX

The Projected Picture Trust exists to locate and preserve projectors and related film equipment, both professional and domestic. Since 1978 enthusiastic volunteers have been happy to help restore these items and so preserve THE MAGIC OF CINEMA.

The Trust provides help and assistance to non-commercial community cinemas and museums exhibiting film related artefacts.

The Museum of Cinema Technology has perhaps the largest collection of all types of film equipment in the UK. The Data Archive holds over 3,000 items including press cuttings, manuals and film related technical documents. We are presently looking to strengthen our management team...

PLEASE CONTACT US IF YOU ARE ABLE TO HELP
or if you would like to become a member only.

contact@ppttrust.org

www.projectedpicturetrust.org

LONDON (West End)

A localised water leak caused a ceiling collapse at the Piccadilly Theatre during a performance of *Death of a Salesman* on 6 November. More than 1,000 people were evacuated from the theatre. The building was inspected and deemed safe to reopen on 11 November.

BBC News website, Daily Mail – 7, 8 November; sent in by Margaret Burgoine & Tom Laughlan; *The Stage* – 14 November; sent in by Barry Quinton

A new 165-seat theatre has opened on the site of the former Raymond Revuebar in Soho. It is called the Boulevard Theatre. See p26 Bulletin 50/5. [boulevardtheatre.co.uk]

Evening Standard – 11 December; sent in by Tom Laughlan

LONDON (Wood Green)



One of the 'Hollywood Green' signs on the roof of the Vue caught fire on 30 November but there was only damage to two of the letters and the cinema reopened the same day.

Sent in by Jeremy Buck; photo taken March 2016

LONDON (Woolwich)

A new five-screen Picturehouse cinema is proposed for the area between Plumstead Road and Spray Street. No time scale has been given.

News Shopper, Bexleyheath & Welling – 20 November; sent in by Ian Mitchell

MACCLESFIELD (Cheshire)



The former Picturedrome has reopened as a food and dining hall. It has nine kitchens and two bars surrounding a communal seating area. The cinema opened in October 1911 and was converted into a bingo club in the 1970s. This closed in spring 1999 and the building was converted into offices. The CTA viewed the exterior in October 2007. {24462}

Manchester Evening News – 29 October; photo taken June 2006

MANCHESTER (Central)

Plans have been revealed for the refurbishment of the Printworks building to include work on the façade, the addition of digital signage and improved lighting. The building is home to a 23-screen Vue cinema [ex UCI/Odeon]. {25060}

North West Place – 20 December

MANCHESTER (Chorlton-cum-Hardy)



Fans of the Bee Gees have started a campaign to raise £250,000 to save the former Gaumont, where the young Gibb brothers made their live debut as The Rattlesnakes in 1957. The cinema opened in November 1920 and closed in January 1962. The building is now used as a funeral home and has been put up for sale. Music fans want to turn the building into a community resource with a market-style food hall and community space. Bee Gees fans travel from all over the world to have their photos taken next to the building. The Wikipedia entry for The Rattlesnakes has an early photo of the Bee Gees, see also [youtu.be/tqdfW4kpEQY]. {33843}

BBC News website – 6 November; Daily Mail – 8 November;
sent in by Tom Laughlan; photo taken August 2005

MATLOCK (Derbys)

A new cinema could be included in the redevelopment of the Market Hall.

Matlock Mercury – 21 November

MINEHEAD (Somerset)

Plans for the new three-screen Avenue cinema have been released. Work was scheduled to start in January and it could be open by Easter. There will be two screens with 112 seats each and one with 60 seats. Admission will be £4 and there will be usherettes showing people to their seats and selling ice cream.

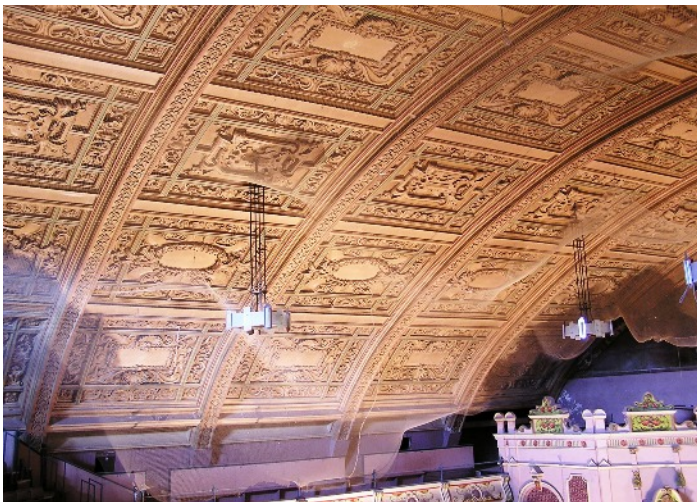
West Somerset Free Press – 29 November; sent in by Mike Collins

MONTROSE (Angus)

The volunteer-led project to turn a former swimming pool into a three-screen cinema has appointed a contractor. The charity has now secured a large portion of the funding for the project. Opening is scheduled for early 2021.

Dundee Courier – 11 December

MORECAMBE (Lancs)



The Grade II* listed Winter Gardens has received £123,312 from Historic England. The money will go towards repairing the plaster ceiling. It is hoped to restore the auditorium to its full capacity of 2,196. The work is due to be completed by 2021. {4537}

The Stage – 14 November; sent in by Barry Quinton; photo taken August 2003

NORTH WALSHAM (Norfolk)

There are plans for a cinema in the car park behind Cedar House, a former Council office building that had been earmarked for a Wether-spoons pub. If plans go ahead, it could be open by the end of this year.

North Norfolk News – 5 December

NORWICH

Plans, reported on p26 of Bulletin 53/5, to turn the former Regent/ABC into 49 flats are being opposed by locals. They say the scheme to add two floors to the building could reduce privacy in their gardens and block light. The cinema opened in December 1923 and was last used as a nightclub, which closed in March 2018. A video montage of the history of the building is on the *Eastern Daily Press* website at [tinyurl.com/yx2ln55t]. {6329}

Eastern Daily Press – 4 November

NOTTINGHAM

Having upgraded and revamped its cinema screens, attention is now being focused on improving the four-screen Broadway's bars and terrace, with a £500,000 makeover planned in this its 30th year. The cash is part of the Arts Council England's National Lottery funded Small Capital programme. {21755}

Nottinghamshire Live – 7 November; sent in by Terry Hanstock

PAISLEY (Renfrew)



The Paisley Shopping Centre was evacuated after the ceiling collapsed. Nobody was hurt. The façade is listed Grade B. {23265}

Daily Record – 8 November; sent in by Tom Laughlan, who writes:

The entrance to the shopping centre is the foyer area of the former Picture House, which originally had 2,281 seats and was operated by Green's West Regent Circuit. It was built like the London Finsbury Park Astoria with a long, spacious foyer, complete with fountain and gold-fish in the pool. The floor that collapsed is apparently the old restaurant and dance floor, unused for many years.

I was a trainee projectionist at the La Scala, also in the High Street, in 1958 when I was called to the office and told to stop what I was doing and go to the Picture House as the chief had not turned up and no one was available to run the show. I had only an hour to familiarise myself with their different equipment as it was BTH and the La Scala had Westar/Westrex. The film was *The Ten Commandments*, playing at inflated prices. I managed to complete the day's screenings (two shows) without any mishaps. It's something you don't forget – the day you were dropped in the deep end!

PETERHEAD (Aberdeen)

The opening of the new Arc cinema in the former Regal has been delayed until "early 2020". See p 22 last Bulletin. Photos are available on the *Press & Journal* website at [tinyurl.com/sgn2mz9]

Press & Journal, Aberdeen – 4 November, 11 December

PLYMOUTH

The new twelve-screen Cineworld opened at Bretonside on 21 October. It brought the first IMAX and 4DX screens to the West Country. The 435-seat Laser IMAX screen is the largest that Cineworld currently operates. There were reports of a leaking roof. {60950}

The Herald, Plymouth – 22, 27 November

POOLE (Dorset)

Construction of the new nine-screen Empire has not yet started. The former Argos store and adjoining units in the Dolphin shopping centre are due to be converted. Work was originally scheduled to begin in "late 2018" but there are still no firm plans in place. Empire Cinemas has signed a 25-year lease to operate the cinema.

Daily Echo, Bournemouth – 1 November; sent in by John R Forster & Philip Stevens

READING (Berks)

Plans have been submitted for a cinema in Broad Street Mall, where Argos used to be. No operator or time scale has been given.

Reading Chronicle – 23 November

RYDE (Isle of Wight)



Ryde Town Council has submitted an expression of interest for £6m of Lottery funding for the renovation of the 500-seat Ryde Theatre. Originally constructed as a Town Hall in 1830, the building was converted for theatre use in 1934. It has been dark since 2010. The funding would cover most of the £7.3m cost of purchasing the building from its private owner and renovating it.

The Stage – 24 October; sent in by Barry Quinton; photo taken May 2019

SCARBOROUGH (North Yorks)

The Council has approved revised plans for a six-screen cinema on the former Atlantis water park. It is the third time the scheme has been given planning permission but the Council was told it was now "ready to go". Previous schemes have fallen through.

Scarborough News – 8 November

SLEAFORD (Lincs)

A local contractor looks set to be appointed for a new three-screen cinema on redundant land behind buildings fronting the Market Place that used to be the old Corn Exchange and Buttermarket. The Council committed £4m to the project and has announced extra investment to increase the number of screens from two to three. A selection process will take place to find an operator. No opening date has been announced.

Sleaford Standard – 23 October

SOUTHAMPTON



A manhunt was launched for two thieves who robbed a bingo hall after locking-up the cleaner at about 8am on Sunday 24 November. They then waited for other staff to arrive before stealing £15,000 from the safe and making their getaway on a motorbike.

This is the former Atherley in Shirley, which opened in September 1912. Films ceased in November 1975 and the small balcony was converted into offices with bingo in the stalls. A history of the Atherley was given in *Picture House #6* in 1985. {21350}

Daily Echo, Southampton – 27 November; sent in by Ian Patterson; photo taken May 2006

STAFFORD

The Wetherspoons pub in the former Picture House was forced to close at the end of October after being flooded. Wetherspoons confirmed it will be closed until February at the earliest. A complete revamp will be carried out. See article in *Picture House #40*, 2015. {22692}

Stoke on Trent Live – 27 October, 28 November

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON (Warks)

The Art Deco Society has lent its support to a campaign to save the two-screen Picturehouse. The building dates from the 1930s and began life as a garage. It has been a cinema since 1997 and is due to be demolished. {21199}

Stratford-upon-Avon Observer – 25 October

SUNDERLAND



The CTA is campaigning against the Council's redevelopment plans, which threaten the former Regal. The cinema opened in March 1932 with 2,522 seats. It possesses the largest and best remaining 1930s cinema auditorium in the north-east. The interior especially is a splendid example of Art Deco by architects Frederick Evans and Edwin Gray. Apart from the large following for resident organist Arnold Eagle (Eagle of the Regal), the cinema presented extravagant stage shows until the onset of World War II. The organ was a 3 manual / 9 rank Compton.

In 1959 the Regal became part of the Rank Organisation and was renamed Odeon with seating capacity reduced by 300 and the front stalls entrance in Park Lane closed. On 9 March 1975 the cinema reopened with three screens, eventually closing as a cinema in 1982 but continues to provide leisure as the Mecca Bingo Club. Mecca deserves credit for having helped preserve the Regal so successfully for many years. The CTA's case for listing was published in full with numerous illustrations in *Picture House #39*, 2014. {19911}

CTA Press Release – 12 November; photo from CTA Archive

TOTTEN (Southampton)

Plans have been approved to build a block of flats on derelict land behind the former Savoy. The cinema opened in January 1935 and closed in March 1961. After a time on bingo, it was converted into a factory in 1977 and has since been converted into flats. {50581}

Daily Echo, Southampton – 19 September; sent in by Ian Patterson

TUNBRIDGE WELLS (Kent)

Controversial plans for a £41m 1,200 seat theatre have been overturned after councillors voted against them.

The Stage – 17 October; sent in by Barry Quinton

The Opera House (now a Wetherspoons pub) held an evening of music on 8 December courtesy of the The Royal Tunbridge Wells Orpheus Male Voice Choir; tickets were £10. It also featured on *Who Do You Think You Are?* when Sharon Osbourne was the subject.

Wetherspoon News – Winter 2019/20; sent in by Gavin McGrath

WEDNESFIELD (Wolverhampton)

The fourteen-screen Cineworld is undergoing a "major transformation". The work, which started on 15 September, will include a 4DX screen. Completion is scheduled for later this year, with no date set. {25861}

Express & Star – 16 December

WEYMOUTH (Dorset)

Special showings were held at the nine-screen Cineworld on 21 December to celebrate its 20th birthday. Films were shown that were released in 1999, the year the cinema opened. Movie fans were encouraged to come dressed up as their favourite film character. A competition was held whereby the first local resident who could show an original ticket from Cineworld Weymouth in 1999 would win a year of free film-going. {25831}

Dorset Echo – 18, 25 December; sent in by Terry Hanstock

WOKINGHAM (Berkshire)

The rapid expansion of the Everyman circuit continued with the opening of their new cinema on Friday 13 December. It is part of the town's massive £117m regeneration project, and has three screens, seating 134, 72, and 83, and the usual bar/lounge.

Sent in by David Simpson

WOLVERHAMPTON

The project for a new multiplex at the Westside development, announced on p23 of the last Bulletin, has been delayed by red tape. A contract with an operator has not yet been signed. Construction was due to start this spring.

Express & Star – 16 October

WYMONDHAM (Norfolk)

Plans, reported on p23 of the last Bulletin, to convert a Grade II listed former railway warehouse into a two-screen cinema with 94 and 31 seats have been approved. Work is due to start in April with opening scheduled for November.

Evening News, Norwich – 22 November; sent in by Les Woods

YORK

The new thirteen-screen Cineworld in the leisure park adjacent to the yet-to-be-completed York City Stadium at Monk's Cross opened on Friday 13 December. Planning permission was originally granted for 12 screens and 2,000 seats; then the Council allowed the developer to add a further screen and up to 400 more seats. Vue, which runs a rival multiplex at Clifton Moor, took the case to a judicial review, stating that this was a breach of the original agreement; however, this was thrown out. As it turned out, the 13 screens have a total of 2,200 seats. It has a 398-seat IMAX screen and a 206-seat 270° ScreenX. Standard tickets were offered at just £3 for the first few days. {61394}

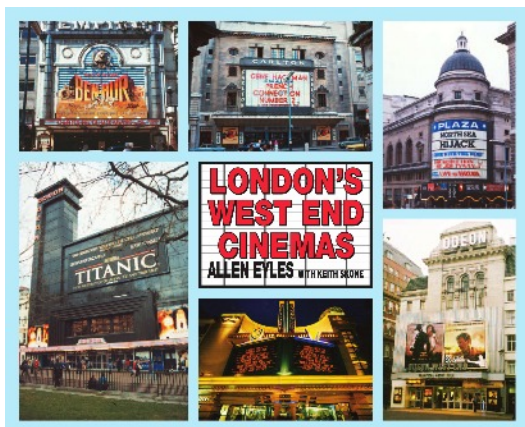
The Press, York – 23 October; sent in by David Simpson

London's West End Cinemas

by Allen Eyles with Keith Skone.

Large format paperback, 210 pages, fully illustrated with over 400 pictures, including 71 in colour.

Price – £25.00 + £3 postage.



This is a redesigned and much enlarged third edition of a book not available for more than 20 years, fully updated by its original author, Allen Eyles. It is a complete record of all the cinemas that have entertained picture-goers in the West End from 1906 to 2013. There are maps, appendices of club cinemas and theatres as temporary cinemas as well as a name index.

Published in collaboration with English Heritage.

LATE NEWS

BLACKBURN (Lancs)

Exterior works on the new eight-screen Reel cinema on the former Waves site are nearly complete. It is set to open this summer.

Lancashire Telegraph – 25 December

CAMBUSLANG (South Lanark)

The John Fairweather pub had a three-page feature in *Wetherspoon News* recently. The pub was previously the Savoy cinema, which opened in 1929 and Vogue bingo hall; it became a pub in 2015. The building is listed Grade C(s) and is possibly the only pub named after a cinema architect. It is named after its Glasgow-born architect, who designed a number of cinemas north of the border, including Green's Playhouses in Ayr, Dundee and Wishaw. He also designed Ritz cinemas in Burton upon Trent and Wigan and the ABC Colchester.

Wetherspoon News – Winter 2019/20; sent in by Gavin McGrath & Martin Tapsell

CHESTER

Planning permission has been granted for the first phase of the Northgate development. The scheme includes a six-screen Picturehouse cinema. Work is due to start this January.

Insider Media – 4 September; sent in by Terry Hanstock

Editor's Note: Not so much 'Late News' but an item I had misfiled!

GRAYS (Essex)



Work on the conversion of the Grade II* listed former State into a Wetherspoons pub has been halted due to "issues". A meeting with the Council is scheduled for January. A Council spokesperson said, "Due to alterations to the scheme previously permitted by the Council that the developer now wants to make, there is a need for them to seek a new permission and ensure the support of Historic England." {1837}

Thurrock Gazette – 24 December; sent in by Margaret Burgoine;

photo by Ruth Barnes on 4 November

LONDON (Hackney)

A new pop-up cinema opened in the run up to Christmas in the railway arches at Bohemia Place. It was comprised of just a few dozen seats and screened films like *Alien*, *Gremlins* and *The Nightmare Before Christmas*. There was a bar out front, which presumably helped pay for the venture.

Sent in by Gavin McGrath

SHEFFIELD

Three festive films were shown at the Grade II listed Abbeydale on 20 & 21 December. The cinema was dressed up with Christmas trees, fake snow, tinsel and candles. There's no heating, so customers were encouraged to bring their own blankets to keep warm. {22681}

Rotherham Advertiser – 24 December

WESTWOOD CROSS (Kent)

The ten-screen Vue suffered a water leak when closed on Christmas Day and remained closed until Sunday 29 December. Reports say that patrons with pre-booked tickets had experienced difficulties getting in touch to sort their refunds out. The cinema serves Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs. {25824}

Sent in by David Simpson & Martin Tapsell

WOLVERHAMPTON

Plans have been revealed for a 350-seat multi-screen cinema in the former Argos store in the Wulfrun Centre. Discussions are taking place with a number of independent operators.

Express & Star – 27 December; sent in by Ivan Harris

LETTERS

TAUTOLOGY

In the November Bulletin, I noticed some examples of tautology. 'Revert back': Revert does not need the addition of the word 'back'. 'Back' is in the meaning of the word 'revert'. Simply it should be 'reverted to'. (Gymbox/Odeon page 15). Similarly, 'Rewinding back' (page 16): 'Back' is in the meaning of the word 'rewind'.

Michael Jones

EVEN MORE OF A CARRY ON

While I agree with Michael Jones, who states in his letter (Bulletin 53/6 – 'More Carry On') that the *Carry On* films were never franchised according to the dictionary definition of the word, which is "the licence to make or sell a product or provide a service" he seems not to realise that for some reason the word 'franchise' is now being used increasingly often to describe a batch of films or television shows as in 'The Harry Potter franchise' instead of 'series' or even 'canon' as in 'The Sherlock Holmes canon'. Another word whose incorrect use irritates me is 'concessions' used to describe the confectionery, drinks and snacks available from what were traditionally termed 'sales kiosks' in cinemas. 'Concession', a noun, is actually "a discounted ticket price" or "the right to sell a product in a particular area" but even Allen Eyles misuses it as in "the concessions counter". Of course we are constantly assailed with Americanisms – films are now invariably 'movies', shown in 'movie houses'. "Hiya, y'all!"

PS: The producer of the *Carry On* series was Peter Rogers, not Gerald Thomas, who was the director the series. (For the very last – *Carry On Columbus* – Mr Rogers was the executive producer.)

Raymond Dolling

May I elaborate on Michael Jones' letter on page 26 of the last Bulletin? The *Carry On* films were most definitely a series and not a franchise. At the time that most were made, the word franchise was unknown for film use. The films were created by producer Peter Rogers and director Gerald Thomas, not just Gerald Thomas. The two men shared an office at Pinewood Studios and turned a one-off film made in 1958, *Carry On Sergeant*, into the massively successful series, rivalling the Bond films in number if not in budgets. They owned the rights to the films they made, nothing more. When Peter Rogers died, these rights passed to the Film & Television Charity, formerly the Cinema & Television Benevolent Fund.

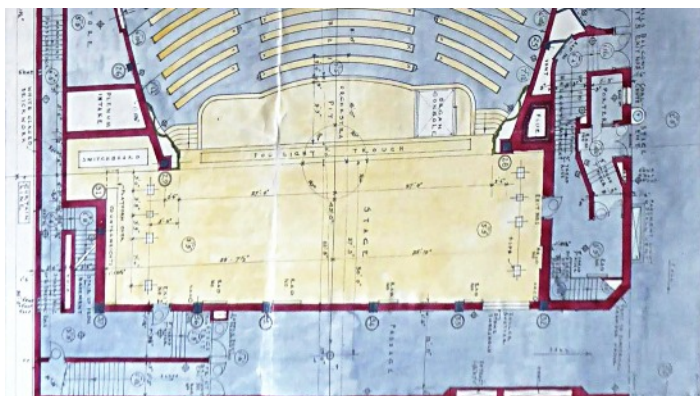
Tony Williams

Michael Jones' letter in the Nov/Dec issue, states that Gerald Thomas created and produced the *Carry Ons*. It was actually Peter Rogers who produced the series and held the rights – also very tight purse strings on the budget for these films. Gerald Thomas directed all 31 of the films made. On a personal note, I worked on the compilation series of *Carry Ons* for television and have happy memories of working with Gerald, who I found to be most charming.

Adam Unger

NEWCASTLE PARAMOUNT

I was pleased to read the article on the Newcastle Paramount by David A Ellis in the last but one Bulletin and the subsequent letter by Neil Thompson. One thing had me reaching for the plans though, the mention of the stage being thirty foot deep which sounded more than I remembered. (It wasn't, it was 22ft 3in from the proscenium line to the back wall, with 3ft forward of it to the orchestra pit but half of that was the footlight trough).



Here is a snip of the lodged plan [bottom previous column] a full set of which is available at the Discovery Museum archives. On re-reading the article, it actually refers to the proscenium depth as being 30', what many would interpret as height. It must have been cramped to stage ciné-variety with no scene dock and not too much wing space back in the 1930s, although a 60ft grid meant that flying of cloths was possible. I also imagine that the original screen assembly didn't take up quite as much stage depth as the one I was familiar with (from memory, six counterweight sets) even though it had Magnascope.

One other comment I would like to make is on the conversions. The initial 1975 tripling was a standard drop-wall job, which left the front stalls intact and usable for capacity crowds. The stage was also intact and sometimes used, however it rapidly fell out of favour for touring shows due to the reduced capacity and compromised acoustics. Screen ④ was eventually created from the front stalls and stage area in 1980, with the screen for the main house being located partially above and in front of the original proscenium on the roof of the new screen. The building has been gone since 2017 (and dark since 2002) but many happy memories remain. {3307}

Ian Grey

DANTE'S INFERNO?

Capitol Fire in *Rewinding Back* in the last Bulletin prompts me to alert readers to Dennis Sharp's error in *The Picture Palace and other buildings for the movies*. On page 170 he used an exterior shot of Didsbury's Capitol taken when showing *Dante's Inferno* and paired it with another shot showing the aftermath of the fire. He captioned them 'Before and after the Inferno'. Alas, the 'Before' shot is actually the rebuilt cinema, with the side wall of the auditorium



block now almost in line with the dressing-room block and with a canopy running the length. The wall was rebuilt further out. Above is an aerial view of the burnt-out auditorium, which shows the original side walls were stepped-in and much nearer the width of the fly tower; also here is a scan of the erroneous 'Before' image. {5831}

Hector Hill

Editor's Note: The photo on p16 of the last Bulletin is before the fire. Compare that with the photos above [during and after].

PEA SOUP

Photographs of the New Wimbledon Theatre (Vol 53 No 6 pages 8/9), stimulated my memory cells. As a student in Chelsea between 1956 and 1959, I frequently patronised Peter Haddon's weekly repertory company, which was advertised as offering "West End standards at suburban prices". I enjoyed seeing the same company members undertake different roles from one week to another as it presented a family atmosphere that is absent in today's repertory groups. This theatre is one of the few not to have balcony and box fronts covered in decorative plaster work. This was the time when theatres were facing severe competition from television and whilst audiences at Wimbledon were quite good (in my experience) it was a large building to fill and may not have been ideal for repertory. I recall a typical London November day when the outside fog had penetrated into the auditorium, giving an eerie atmosphere and another 'pea-souper' evening, which attracted only 27 brave souls into the theatre.

To promote the venue, Peter Haddon instigated a 'Friends of the Wimbledon Theatre' and during the pantomime season several members would arrive for the interval and go around the auditorium attempting to enrol new people. The one pantomime I helped with was *Cinderella*, starring Elsie and Doris Waters as the ugly sisters and after the last performance those who had helped enrol new customers were invited to the late night party on stage. I came across Peter Haddon when a 'squaddie' in basic training at Aldershot in 1954, for he ran the Hippodrome. It was then running twice-nightly variety but there were also seasons of repertory as the Royal had then closed. The 'Hip' was a number two house, where I saw people like Nat Gonella, Leon Cortez and Roy Rolland but never recall 'girlie shows' in my short time there and, after meeting Peter Haddon at Wimbledon, I cannot imagine he would ever book them. Happy days.

Ted Bottle

ACTON, YARMOUTH & SLOUGH

The former Granada Acton, just down the road from me, is now called ARCH and houses a climbing wall. A few months back I was shown around inside. It has had a full internal repaint in white. The circle has had the steps removed, to be level. It has a sprung floor just in case you fall off the climbing wall; it is the same in the stalls. A café is on the former stage and an extra level has been added halfway up. The stairs to the circle have been restored and a nice sign saying **CIRCLE** is in the circle entrance. The façade has also been restored and the old GALA sign has been removed, together with all the weeds that were in the brickwork. The church people who had it before didn't do much to it. Not the best of interiors but at least it is still standing and has a new lease of life. My wife is happy about it as she spent many hours at the bingo there. {13831}

I see the Regent Great Yarmouth was 85 years old on 26 December (Happy Birthday, last Bulletin). We were there for a week's holiday in July – the building is still shut and boarded-up. I can't see what the future holds for the building. The Empire on the front is still shut. The Hollywood Cinema was being worked on and should be reopening soon. Yarmouth needs a cinema. The circus is still going strong – about the only entertainment building that is. I have been going there since the 70s; what a change, very sad.

I had a phone call from R David Simpson. He said he went on the CTA visit to Buzz Bingo (ex Adelphi) in Slough and the Theatre Royal Windsor. It looks like the bingo hall could be the next to go. Why would the Council buy it – it's on a short lease?

Malcolm Gambles

METROPOLE VICTORIA PROJECTORS

A while back I wrote a piece on the Metropole Victoria stating that they used dual Philips DP70 machines. At the opening on the 27 December 1929 it was equipped with three Simplex projectors, Western Electric sound and Hall and Connolly High intensity arcs. In addition there were three Brenkert C14 super spot and flood lamps. Possibly there were other changes before the Philips machines arrived. If anyone knows, please let us know. {3770}

David A Ellis

IT'S AN ILL WIND...

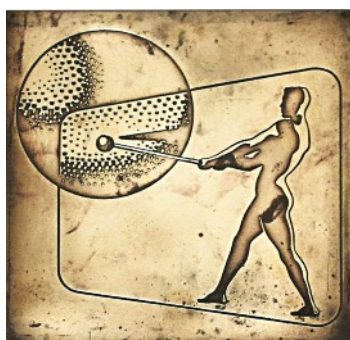
Just an observation about how things keep changing. Over the last few years any number of High Street shops have closed, often sizeable department stores. I've noticed in recent Bulletins regular reports both of new cinemas being created in such vacated retail units and of existing cinemas expanding into adjacent ones. This is presumably helped by the relatively small amount of space digital projection systems take up. While such a development is very unfortunate for hands-on shoppers it is good news for cinema-goers and means that these buildings are in busy use rather than standing sadly empty.

Jeremy Perkins

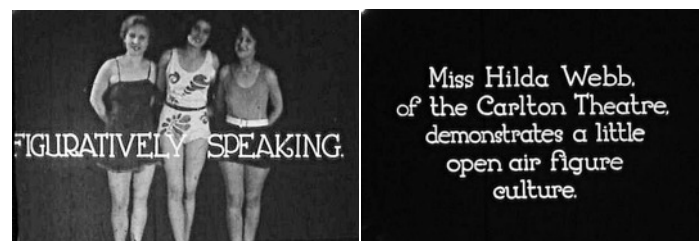
BRASS PLATE

Thanks very much for the excellent article in the July/August Bulletin. I attach a photo of a brass plate I have been given, which is very heavy and looks like a printer's block but I have been told it is not. It looks like the Rank logo in reverse. Would any of our readers be able to say what it is?

Michael Armstrong



SILENT FILM FROM THE CARLTON



Thank you for another fascinating Bulletin. On page 3, the item about a Christmas celebration in the West End is of particular interest to me. I am interested to see the reference to the Empire Haymarket and the fact that it originally opened as the Carlton in 1927. In 1948, I bought a Pathé 35mm projector picture head from a scrapyard in Shrewsbury. From the *Exchange and Mart* of the time, I purchased a lot of 35mm film (Nitrate!) and among the bits there was about 150 feet of Hilda Webb of the Carlton Theatre in a short entitled *Figuratively Speaking*. Sometime in the 1980s I had various cameras, including a 16mm Pathé Webó and a Bolex H16RX, with which I had copied most of the 35mm film. Attached are scans of two frames that you might find interesting. The names of the other two young ladies are not referred to. Presumably, this film dates to the late 1920s. Still unsure which of the three ladies in the opening title is Hilda but guess that she is central. Is there any information held by CTA on Hilda and/or her duties at the Carlton? As mentioned in the recent Bulletin, the theatre very quickly went over to films from live theatre.



All the films, about 3,000ft, have been kept in various 'unsafe' places until 1991 when the bungalow that I purchased had a garage with an inspection pit. The films resided in the pit until June 2018 when I decided that I should dispose of them. My son wanted to keep one of his classic cars in my garage and I was concerned about possible (likely) fire risk. After some research, I donated all the 35mm films to Amanda Huntley, who I'm sure you know and who appears to be the only place in UK handling such material. What, if anything, Amanda has considered to be worth digitising and keeping in her film store, I have no idea. Two other 35mm (silent) films were *Return of the Twins' Double* and one of *Comedie Française* plus a lot of scrap bits including a few feet of Fattie Arbuckle. Another reel of film was of motor racing at Brooklands in 1925 between an Aston Martin and a Talbot Daraque. The hero was in the Aston Martin. Unfortunately, that reel became sticky and the emulsion fell off so was dumped. A couple of frames were rescued but not good.

John Powell

COLLAPSE OF THOMAS COOK TRAVEL

The collapse of Thomas Cook reminded me of the former Essoldo Cinema in Granby Street, Leicester. This was a former Temperance Hall where Thomas Cook organised his first excursion. It was a day trip from Leicester to Loughborough, a distance of ten miles and cost one shilling (5p in today's money). I have seen the date given as 1841 but this needs to be confirmed. It had been in use since the 1920s. I remember it as the Princes in the mid-1950s but it changed its name to the Essoldo in 1956. It closed and was demolished in 1960. It was noted as a family house and was entered by the side of the screen, so the noise from the screen blasted you. {61427}

Ian Patterson

FINAL THOUGHTS ON BIOGRAPH VICTORIA

Thanks for the further information about the dates of the films being shown. It appears that the cinema was still showing the old pre-decimal coinage on the outside nearly a decade after decimal coinage was brought in. See p24 Bulletin 53/4. {13048}

Ian Patterson

MORE GYM CINEMAS

Further to the article about cinemas that have been turned into gyms, there are two more that need to be added to the list. The Woolston Picture House in Woolston Southampton was built in 1912 and opened the following year. The date is shown in stone on the outside of the building. It survived as a cinema through two world wars, finally closing for bingo in 1973. Last films were *The World's Greatest Athlete* and *Diamonds on Wheels*. Date of closure was Saturday 1 September 1973; the cinema closed at 5:30pm. The manager at the time Mr Fanstone said at the time that the cinema had always done well, even when other cinemas were in the doldrums. However the type of films that were coming out then were not what they should have been. Anybody can take off their clothes and swear. The days of good actors and films had gone.

Bingo survived at the Woolston until 2007, when it closed. It remained closed and unaltered until very recently, although there several notices in the local paper about possible conversions. However there has been considerable activity around the building. The latest proposal is to convert the building into a gym with flats being built at the back. The distinctive frontage with a number of interesting figures is protected under a local protection order and will be retained. When the work is completed it will well worthwhile to have a detour have look at the building. The nearby Itchen Bridge is also worth having a look. There is ample parking nearby.

The bingo operation suffered a burglary in February 1976. Thieves removed slates and dropped in through the roof. Their haul, worth £100, comprised coffee, sugar, milk and four giant teddy bears.

Cineworld Southampton. This cinema, which closed last year, is now being converted into a multi-experience activity all family centre with climbing walls, trampolines, virtual reality rooms and ninja courses. The ground floor has been flattened.

Ian Patterson

FOR OLD TIMES' SAKE

As I read the Bulletin articles on some of the older cinemas, I wondered if any of our members could recall the history and what eventually happened to them: *Foresters* Bethnal Green, *Museum* Bethnal Green, *Grange* Dagenham. In the sixties as a very junior Assistant Manager I used to relieve the Managers for their days off, whilst based at either the *Odeon* Forest Gate, the *Gaumont* Leyton or the *Odeon* Becontree. I finished up at the end of my 28 years with Rank as Multiple Unit Manager of the *Odeon* & *Gaumont* Portsmouth via the *Gaumont* Norwich and the *Odeon* Norwich. I followed this on a secondment for two years in Dubai, where Rank was building a Leisure Complex for a Dubai Sheik. I followed this with twelve years as a Leisure Officer in Local Government. I have now been happily retired for the past 25 years.

Gerry Crane (ex Odeon Portsmouth)

THE FILE MACHINE

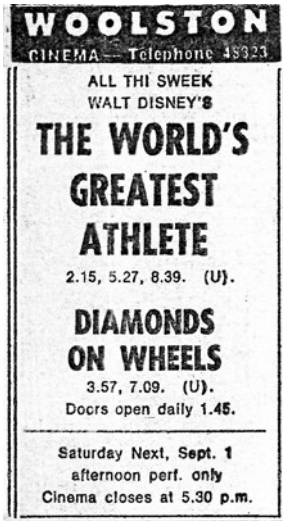
I thought you might like to consider something a bit different for your letter page. It is a short poem I wrote about the demise of film projectors in the cinema.

Goodbye old friends, I knew you well;
You both ran film, with its inviting smell;
Your sweet sound clattered through the air;
You really were a noisy pair.

Your sprockets took the film around;
Through the gate and down to the sound;
Through the rewinder, back to the start;
Now we all have to part.

Now that noise will be no more;
As digital takes to the floor;
No operator to be seen;
Only a fan and the file machine.

David A Ellis



MISSING DERBY SIGN

Re: page 19 Nov/Dec Bulletin. I can confirm that the BFI *Century of Cinema* plaque on the former *Gaumont* Derby is still very much in situ for all to see.

Paul Chadwick

ARCHIVE

ARCHIVE REOPENS

The Archive is now fully open in its new premises near Southend on Sea. It is recognised that many members will be keen to visit the Archive to see the new facilities and an open day will be arranged in 2020 with tours and exhibitions for this purpose, which promises to be very interesting. As we need to assist the many researchers who have been waiting for the reopening, we cannot therefore accept casual visitors at present and visiting is by appointment only.

If you wish to make an enquiry/request for material, please visit the CTA website and use the enquiry form on the Archive pages to tell us about your research request. We will only accept enquiries using the form; if you do not have access to the Internet please phone 07971 752807 to request the form by post. The Archive website pages at [cta-uk.org] are currently being redesigned and updated and will soon contain a great deal more information, including lists of some of the collections in the Archive.

We do not want to waste your time visiting the Archive when we may not have the material you seek. Therefore your enquiry/request will be assessed against our knowledge of the material in the Archive and if there is a substantial amount of material or your enquiry requires a lot of personal research time you will be invited to the Archive to undertake your own research on one of the Saturdays the Archive is open. So we can help those needing to undertake research, visiting the Archive is by appointment only for research purposes. In most cases we can deal with your enquiry without you having to visit in person; we will scan the material you need and provide this as a link via email where you can view and download the material you requested.

To help support the cost of maintaining the Archive some reasonable charges are levied:

- Making an enquiry – free
- Visiting the Archive – free
- Each image/A4 area scanned – £1.50
- Each Image provided on CD-ROM by post – £5.00
- Photocopying – b/w 25p or colour 50p each
- Using your camera/device – £5 per visit

For general enquiries (not formal enquiries/requests) please email Clive Polden [archive@cta-uk.org].

ARCHIVE OPPORTUNITIES

The CTA Archive can offer members an excellent opportunity to contribute towards preserving our cinema heritage. Whether it be putting your particular skills to good use or just giving some of your spare time, there are plenty of opportunities within our friendly environment and you might learn something new along the way!

Please email [archive@cta-uk.org].

HELP THE ARCHIVE IDENTIFY CINEMAS

Please note new information!

Brian Hall posts regular weekly sets of unidentified cinema photographs on the CTA-UK Google Group. Please consider joining this group [groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/cta-uk] and help us to identify cinemas. It's great fun! If you're having trouble signing in, email me at [archive@cta-uk.org].

SENDING DONATIONS BY POST OR EMAIL

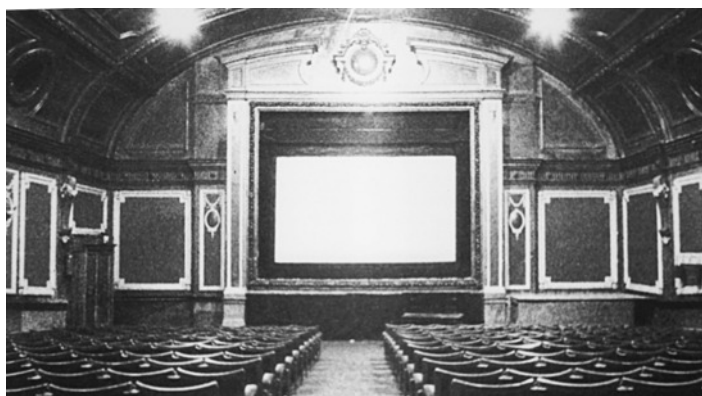
We are always keen to receive donated material and can accept this in different formats. Of course, we always prefer to have originals. If however you cannot part with the material, then we are happy to accept scanned material or copies of your digital photographs.

Please let me know before sending donations by post and do not send them directly to the archive as there is no facility to accept post securely. Please send items c/o 14 Iychurch Gardens, Cliftonville, Margate, CT9 3YG. Small quantities of scanned material or digital photographs can be emailed to [archive@cta-uk.org].

Clive Polden, CTA Archivist

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

A regular column celebrating our wonderful listed cinemas.
All images come from the CTA Archive.



110 years

Electric / Imperial Playhouse 191 Portobello Road, Notting Hill, London.
Opened 28 February 1910. Architect Gerald Seymour Valentin.
Grade II* listed.



105 years

Cinema De-Luxe / Plaza 140 High Street, Margate.
Opened 15 February 1915. Architect Peter Dulvey Stonham.
Grade II listed.

ERRATA

The 'Happy Birthday' section on page 24 of the last Bulletin says the architect of the Hyde Park cinema in Leeds is unknown, when, in fact, we do know it was designed by a firm called Thomas Winn and Sons (actually included on page 163 in the gazetteer section of *Cinemas in Britain*).

Spotted by Richard Gray

MEMBERSHIP

NEW MEMBERS

We are pleased to send greetings and a warm welcome to the following who have recently joined or re-joined the CTA: Jerry Murdoch, Chris Skinner, Trevor Hughes, Robert Mandry and Cezar Del Valle.

DONATIONS

Once more members have displayed their generosity by adding a donation with the renewal of their subscriptions. Our sincere thanks go to: T Adams, JCS Altman, M Armstrong, DC Bishop, EG Bottle, BC Brister, BF Collins, IC Cooper, NA Corbett, AT Davies, R Duerden, L Essex, DW Faircloth, H Fisher, DJ Gardiner, WG Gilbert, PJ Goff, VF Harvey, JL Howarth, AF Hughes, PD Jennings, J Kennett, P King, A Lazou, T Pate, JM Pritchard, MJ Roberts, FRA Rosen, RD Simpson, SD Simpson, RJ Stovell, KM Wakefield, W Watters, MW Weston and JWH White.

IN MEMORIAM

We are sorry to report that Stephen Grimes of St Helens, who joined the CTA in 1980, died earlier this year at the age of 74. Our sincere condolences are sent to his family and friends.

CTA MEMBERSHIP

The Association reached the end of 2019 with a total of 979 members, after excluding the few members whose renewals are still overdue from September or October. In the years since 1998, when I took on the job of Membership Secretary, the total number of members has declined by some 300. We have mourned the loss of familiar faces when they have left the auditorium for another place and a larger number have lost interest and resigned or just lapsed their memberships. Fortunately there have been almost as many new members to welcome in every issue of your CTA Bulletin or the Association would have ceased to exist.

There have been many changes in the cinema scene in that period. Buildings have been lost, altered or changed their use and many new multiplexes have appeared so, perhaps, cinema as we knew it is not yet dead despite the efforts of Amazon, Netflix etc to keep us all at home!

I have enjoyed doing this job but the time has now come for another hand to take it on. I will be keeping an eye on Ray Ritmeester as he now takes his first faltering steps into the dark recesses of membership management. Please be kind to him!

Neville C Taylor, Membership Secretary

SAD NEWS OF A CONTRIBUTOR TO THE BULLETIN

Gerry Crane (formerly at the Odeon Portsmouth) writes: "James Tilmouth, ex Odeon Southampton, a regular contributor to the Bulletin, has been struck down with the dreaded Alzheimer's disease and unable to communicate with anybody. James was renowned for an intimate knowledge of films, actors and directors. When he visited me at home once a month he used to put me to shame."

HOLIDAY SNAPS



My brother-in-law was in Australia recently visiting family and spotted this small cinema in Yamba, New South Wales. Yamba has a population of 6,135 but has two cinemas!

John Flanagan

HOLIDAY SNAPS



① & ② These two cinemas are in France, in the Burgundy area. **le tivoli** is in a small town called Charolles. From what I could see of the foyer the interior has been modernised and the entrance now has wheelchair provision, so thriving with a commercial programme. **La Palette** is in Tournus, a larger town in between Beaune and Mâcon. The cinema was created in what had been a passage between the main commercial road in the town centre and a road behind. This had specialised programming.

Tony Williams



⑤ This is the **Aurora Kino** in Kirkenes, Norway. It's not the best looking cinema I have ever seen but it does have the distinction of being the furthest north on the European mainland!

David Barker



③ & ④ In Athens in May, I visited the rooftop open air cinema **Ciné Paris**, which was built in the early 1920s. Attractively located, with a view of the Parthenon and also has a bar at the rear; very useful in the warm evenings! Saw the film *Anon* there, which was showing a week before it opened in the UK.

Doug Raynes