



CINEMA
THEATRE
ASSOCIATION

www.cta-uk.org

BULLETIN

Vol 50 No 1

January / February 2016



The Regent / Gaumont / Odeon Bournemouth, visited by the CTA last October – see report p8



An audience watching *Nosferatu* at the Abbeydale Sheffield – see Newsreel p28 – photo courtesy Scott Hukins

FROM YOUR EDITOR

You will have noticed that the Bulletin has reached volume 50. However, this doesn't mean that the CTA is 50 years old. We were founded in 1967 so our 50th birthday will be next year. Special events are planned to mark the occasion – watch this space!

A jigsaw we bought recently from a charity shop was entitled *Road Meets Rail*. It wasn't until I got it home that I realised it had the **Astoria/Odeon** Southend in the background. Davis Simpson tells me that the dome actually belonged to Luker's Brewery; the **Odeon** being built on part of the brewery site. There are two domes, marking the corners of the site and they are there to this day. The cinema entrance was flanked by shops and then the two towers. Those flanking shops are also still there: the **Odeon** was demolished about ten years ago and a University building constructed directly on the footprint of the cinema, although the entrance to the University was moved around the corner. The High Street cinema entrance is now occupied by Barclays. As to dating, the High Street was pedestrianised in the late 60s/early 70s, but the final steam trains on the Fenchurch Street line ran in 1963. So the picture is pre-1963, which is pretty obvious from the vehicles. Could it be mid/late 50s? (This, of course, assumes that 'artistic licence' hasn't led the artist to 'mix and match' periods to ensure an interesting picture!) {1841}



Some people describe our hobby as 'unusual'. Over the last few weeks, I have seen on TV or on the Internet some more examples of 'curious' interests. Did you know there are appreciation societies for post boxes, telegraph poles, manhole covers, water towers and roundabouts, to name just five? The latter two have issued calendars for 2016; in fact, a roundabout here in Harrogate features as 'Miss July' in one. I have come to the conclusion that if it exists, there is a Society for it and probably a magazine and a website too!

Thanks to Tim O'Sullivan for pointing out a discrepancy in the last Bulletin. The date of opening of the UK's oldest continuously-operating cinema, the **Duke of York's** in Brighton, was printed differently in two instances on p13. The entry under Brighton gives the correct date, 22 September 1910, whereas the date in Allen Eyles' addendum under Clevedon mistakenly gives 22 December 1910. I'm sorry this escaped my proof-reading. See *Picture House* No25.

Due to lack of space, the index to last year's Bulletins will appear in the next edition. Finally, I forgot to wish you all the compliments of the season in the last Bulletin, so here is a timely wish using a film frame sent in by Kevin Wheelan – Happy New Year!

Harry Rigby, CTA Bulletin Editor



DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE SATURDAY 20 FEBRUARY

CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

(founded 1967)

promoting serious interest in all aspects of cinema buildings

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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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Riverside Road, London, SW17 0BA [www.ludo.co.uk]

Empire, Leicester Square and Regent Street Cinema

Wednesday 24 February

Organised by Ken Roe and Richard Gray

Firstly, this will be an opportunity to see the new cinemas made out of the **Empire's** previously huge main auditorium, one specifically for an **IMAX** screen. It will be a morning visit, before the **Empire** opens to the public, while the afternoon's visit will be to the **Regent Street Cinema**, a revival of the Cameo-Poly cinema, which closed in 1980.



The **IMPACT** auditorium at the **Empire** – photo by Ken Roe

After the **Regent Street Cinema** visit, members may wish to attend their *Matinée Classics* programme, which screens a classic Hollywood film and features the Compton organ. This commences at 13:40 (film at 14:00) all for a very minimal cost.

CTA AGM

Saturday 7 May at 11:00

The 2016 AGM will be held at the **Odyssey** cinema in St Albans, Hertfordshire. The visit will start at 10:00 in order to see the recently refurbished building, which was originally opened as the **Capitol** in 1931, becoming the **Odeon** in 1945. The cinema closed in 1995 and following major investment reopened in 2014. An afternoon visit to the St Albans Organ Theatre is also planned.

Full details and information will be included in the next Bulletin.

Coming Soon

London Palladium Tour

We are planning to visit the world famous **London Palladium**. This will be an exclusive tour for the CTA and full details will appear in the March/April Bulletin.

Adam Unger

Bologna in September

Bologna is a historic but lively major city in northern Italy. In the well-preserved City centre is the Piazza Maggiore, surrounded by cafés and restaurants, while the streets have lengthy colonnades built as shade in the summer and shelter in the winter. The most famous features of Bologna are the medieval towers built by competing and feuding medieval families, the best known of which is the Asinelli Tower, which is open to visitors. Additional sites are the Neptune Fountain and the Basilica of San Petronio. Bologna also has the oldest university in the world, founded in 1088 and the thousands of students enrich the cultural life of the City.

Richard Gray

Most Visits are for members only.
Details appear in the full Bulletin.

By Tim Hatcher

Refusals for Listed Status

It is both disappointing and perturbing to report that three comprehensive listing applications submitted by the CTA to Historic England have been refused. In addition to the three cinemas concerned, which comprise the **Regal** at Bridlington, **Towers** at Hornchurch and **Carlton** in London's West End, the **Coronet** in London's Elephant and Castle district, proposed for listing by the Theatres Trust, has also been rejected. See Newsreel p24.

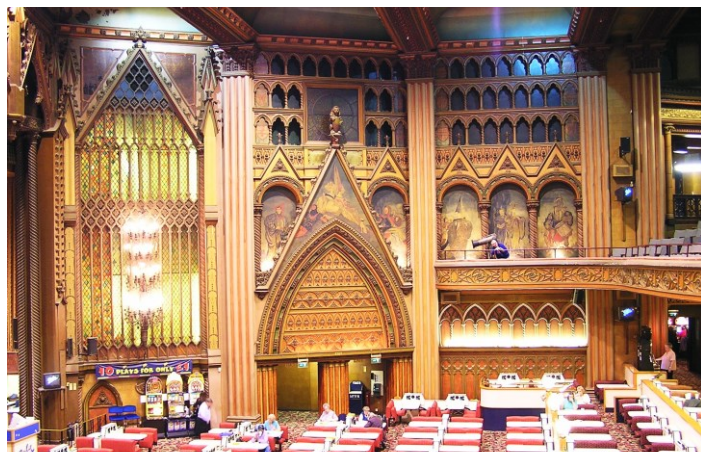


The interior of the **Regal/ABC** Bridlington

Both the **Regal** and the **Towers** survive with the majority of their impressive original features intact, as does the **Regal** in Sunderland, another recently rejected candidate for statutory protection. The subjective standard used to adjudge this building type appears both unclear and variable. Particularly concerning are factual errors in the written responses from Historic England's staff, which demonstrate either lack of attention to detail or of knowledge on the part of the assessor, neither of which is acceptable for such an office.

A meeting is due to be held with Historic England to discuss the issues involved.

Grade I Listed



The interior of the **Granada** Tooting in March 2004

On a more positive note, it is gratifying to report that the **Granada** in Tooting has been registered as an Asset of Community Value by Wandsworth Council; this is apparently the first arts-related building in the Borough to be so designated. Although it was a legal requirement for local residents to propose the application, the Association played a pivotal rôle in promoting and encouraging the scheme locally.

More Casework in the full Bulletin.

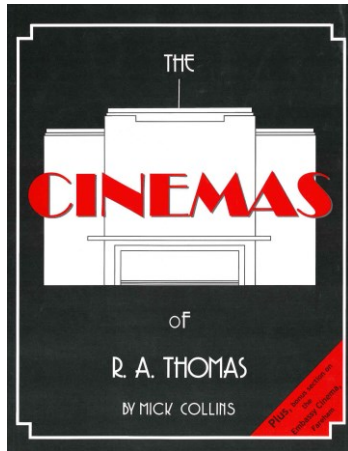
PUBLICATIONS

New Publication

The Cinemas of RA Thomas

by Mick Collins. 346 pages, large paperback, fully illustrated in b&w and colour, £24.99 plus postage.

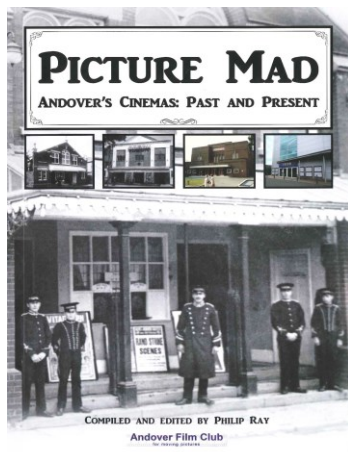
This handsome volume describes the cinema work of the architect Robin Audrey Thomas (1881-1956) of Cosham. Buildings included are the **Plazas** at Romsey and Dorchester; the **Savoy** at Fareham; the **Carlton** at Cosham; the **Regals** at Eastleigh and Parkstone; the **Empires** at Havant and Portsmouth; the **Ritz** Burnham on Sea; the **Apollo** Southsea and the **Palace** Alton. There is a bonus section about the **Embassy** Fareham, not a Thomas-designed building. There are over 450 illustrations of these cinemas, together with builder's plans, advertising and programmes. There are illustrations of Mr Thomas's non-cinema works. Of the cinemas described, happily Dorchester, Burnham-on-Sea and Alton are still showing films, whilst Romsey is a thriving amateur dramatic theatre, visited by the CTA – along with Alton – in Summer 2015. Well recommended.



Picture Mad – Andover's Cinemas Past & Present

by Philip Ray. A5 paperback, illustrated, £7.50 plus postage.

Andover Film Club have produced this well-researched book about the town's six cinemas – **Electric Picture Hall**, **New Theatre**, **Savoy**, **Rex**, **Palace/Odeon** and the 'new' **Odeon**, built as part of the Reel chain. There are plenty of illustrations, many from the local press, together with press advertisements and a short section about J Arthur Rank, who lived locally at Sutton Scotney. An interesting read; maybe other local film societies will be encouraged to produce histories of their area's cinemas too!



Recently Published (reviewed in previous editions)

From Pictures to Pints – Cinemas that Became Pubs

by Gavin McGrath. A4 paperback, 30 pages, fully illustrated. £4.00 plus postage.

The Magic Screen – a history of Regent Street Cinema

Various authors. Large format paperback, 178 pages, fully illustrated. £20.00 plus postage.

The Auditorium

A historical look at cinemas in and around old North Warwickshire by Peter Lea. A5 Paperback, 66 pages. £12.95 plus postage.

Back Numbers Available

BULLETINS

We can supply back numbers of most Bulletins from Volume 21 (1987) to date. Prices for issues from 1987 to 2014 are £4.00 per year (6 issues); individual issues are £1.00 each. Prices for issues in 2015 and 2016 are £4.00 per copy. All prices include postage. There are some issues available from earlier years, 1970 to 1986 – please send enquiries to the Sales Officer.

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. There are also available a few second-hand copies of out-of-print issues 9, 10, 14/15, 16, 20, 22, 23 & 24, priced £5.00 each, plus postage.

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; Gaumont Managers; Carlton Swansea; Committee's Choice.
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	Holophane lighting; Imitations of Odeon ; Cradley Records; 1909 Cinematograph Act; Kingston Showmanship.
No 36	£6.00	Leslie Kemp; The Clifton Circuit; Jeremy Perkins on Brighton; Circuit Releases of 1960.
No 37	£8.50	Special 92-page issue; saving the Electric Palace Harwich.
No 38	£6.00	Northern Morris Associated; Palace Conwy; Cinema Murders; Point Milton Keynes; Carlton Haymarket; Military Cinemas; Going to the Cinema in Birmingham; 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.

AND WHERE TO KEEP THOSE PICTURE HOUSE MAGAZINES?

'Cordex' binders, in red leather-look effect with the magazine name embossed on the spine, are available for £4.30 + £3.00 postage – they are sent in a special postal carton. Each binder holds twelve copies and will not harm or mark your magazines, which may be taken out later if desired.



Ordering

For books and other items except DVDs, please add £3.00 for post and packing for orders up to £20.00 in value, £6.00 for orders from £20.01 to £40.00 and £11.00 for orders above £40.01. For DVDs, please add £3.00 for up to 3 DVDs and £6.00 for more than 3 DVDs.

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UNION ENTERTAINMENT

*Here is an article from an old **Union Cinemas** programme. Reading this gives a good indication as to why the circuit went broke!*

To provide its patrons with all that is best, brightest and most original in modern entertainment – that is the policy of the Union Cinema Company, expressed in its simplest form. But to achieve such a policy is far from simple and to cope with the multifarious details which arise in the management of our 200 cinemas scattered throughout the length and breadth of Great Britain occupies the time and energy of some of the keenest brains in the world of entertainment, housed in a huge office in the West End of London. Long after most business houses have been deserted, the lights of Union House shine over Regent Street as a symbol of the company's efforts to achieve its policy.

Let's visit Harold Ramsay's office first. Mr Ramsay is Controller of Entertainment and in his office are planned the novel musical presentations which are such a popular feature of Union Programmes. Harold Ramsay has gathered round him a band of the greatest organ personalities of the day, whose broadcasting and recording activities have made their names household words: Sidney Torch, Cecil Chadwick, Robinson Cleaver, Joseph Seal, Alex Taylor, Andree Conti and Phil Park, to name but a few of them, all pool their talents in your service and the new shows they are planning will be a revelation. They are busy now on many novel productions, including 'cinematic' versions of the great operas, commencing with *Madame Butterfly* and *I Pagliacci*, in which screen, organ, orchestra and great vocalists will combine to present 'potted' grand opera in a form that will be absolutely universal in its appeal and at the same time entirely faithful to the composer's vision.

Next we visit Mr Montague Lyon, who is the brain behind the splendid variety presentations which, to judge by innumerable letters of appreciation, are the most popular feature of Union entertainment. Perhaps the most striking feature, of the office is the huge battery of telephones over which in a few staccato sentences Gracie Fields, appearing in Hull, agrees to visit the **Ritz** Belfast and Billy Cotton, in Penzance, contracts to perform at the **Ritz** Oxford.

Union spend £300,000 a year in artistes' salaries for ciné-variety shows and still the demand grows! In order to meet it we have been forced to organise a nation-wide talent hunt under the supervision of Tony Gerrard, 'The Star Finder,' who will visit every town on the circuit with a novel competition in which it is hoped to unearth talent of a high enough order to be given a contract to appear throughout the entire chain of Union Theatres. In addition valuable prizes will be awarded to the winners in every town.



The former **Union Dunstable** in April 2004 [22393]

From the Variety department we come to the biggest department of all – Film Bookings. Here negotiations have just been completed with all the biggest film studios, both British and American, to ensure that the pick of their productions shall be shown on Union's screens, in many cases long before they are generally released and often even before they have been shown in London itself. Films are and always will be the most important part in Union's scheme of better entertainment and no effort is being spared to ensure that we shall continue to offer you the cream of the world's pictures.

The only other department we shall have time to visit is Theatre Construction. When you realise that here are handled the problems arising from the simultaneous erection of the 75 super theatres that Union are building as part of their extension policy, some idea of the complexity of this office may be gathered. Every new theatre brings with it a train of fresh problems, for so quickly does cinema architecture advance that each one embodies some novel features in order that it may be the very last word in modern theatres. Each day the construction department is called upon to deal with a hundred and one legal, engineering, architectural and electrical problems in order that you may be provided with theatres that are second to none in the world.

And that is what Union Entertainment means!

Sent in by David Jones

HOLIDAY SNAPS



The former **Paradise Theatre**, a Shanghai suburban cinema dating from 1931. It is now the base for an all-girl group SNH48 and is named accordingly. Photo November 2015 by Bob Bradshaw.



Not exactly a holiday snap but a photo of the demolition of the **Regal/ABC Woolwich** looking toward the former circle. Photo November 2015 by Martin Humm.

ASSORTED BOURNEMOUTH CINEMAS

A report of the CTA Visit, October 2015
by Mike Wood

With the approach of autumn, those of us that spend too much time (?) in the twilight zone of cinema and theatre interiors around the world, needed a vitamin D top-up and where better than Bournemouth on the Dorset coast. CTA North, with their excellent track record of great trips, know this area well and had organised a similar tour a few years back, which garnered rave reviews, so it was no surprise that this one should be over subscribed.

Thus the lucky ones gathered on Wednesday lunchtime on the last day of September at our base hotel, which was situated on the West Cliff, above the wide sandy sweep of Bournemouth beach, with views to the East, Hengistbury Head with the Isle of Wight's Needles in sight and looking west towards Sandbanks and Old Harry Rocks. David Eve handed out the fifty-page book of visit notes along with a short briefing and then we departed for a walking tour of the town.

Some discussion took place about the precise location of the **Electric** (1910, rebuilt 1921 Frank Matcham, altered 1930 Cecil Massey) which was in the busy shopping street of Commercial Road; the cinema was demolished in 1966 for retail premises. It became clear that this side of the town was changing rapidly with several high-rise buildings recently completed and another big development underway in Exeter Road, where the latest multiplex plan was thought to have landed.



The interior of the **Theatre Royal Bournemouth**

We crossed the square to Albert Road for the handsome exterior of the **Theatre Royal / Curzon / Tatler** (1882 Kemp, Welsh & Pindar, listed grade II*). Several changes over the years have resulted in a casino downstairs, with its entrance at the stage end on Yelverton Road and a church in the original upper circle space, which had become the **Curzon/Tatler**, closing in 1982. The father of the church, which serves a mainly Portuguese congregation, kindly welcomed us with a few words about how they use this space for their ministry.

It was decided to forgo the membership registration required by the casino operator in the lower part of the Theatre Royal and instead, passing the shell of the **Bijou Cinema Deluxe / Premier** (1936 E De Wilde Holding) latterly a shop, we headed for Hinton Road and the **Palace Court Theatre / Playhouse / Galaxy** (1931 Seal & Hardy). For many years this was the Bournemouth home of drama and repertory theatre for which it was built. Latterly it converted to film, at first as the **Galaxy** in the Green Room basement space, then also in the theatre. Sold on to the



The **Theatre Royal** façade



The exterior and interior of the **Playhouse/Galaxy Bournemouth**

Wessex Christian Centre, who had been holding church services in the building on Sundays, its simple architectural features and theatrical elements remain and are enjoyed by the church as explained by our friendly host, the pastor.

That evening, back at the hotel and after dinner, we were treated to a couple of 16mm shorts

about Bournemouth's cinema heyday shown to a packed room by John Thornley and Phillip Stevens, local CTA members. Thursday dawned sunny and warm again so, after a jog along the beach (!) and a big breakfast, it was a walk back into the town centre and Westover Road, where the two most significant venues lie; their stature, historical significance and that they are still on movies, though not for much longer. At one time there were four in a row; the **Westover** originally the **Westover Palace** (Roller) Skating Rink and Tea Gardens of 1910, which was full-time cinema by 1919, along with dainty teas and dancing; the Brass House pub is located in part of the original structure.



The **Playhouse/Galaxy** in 1985

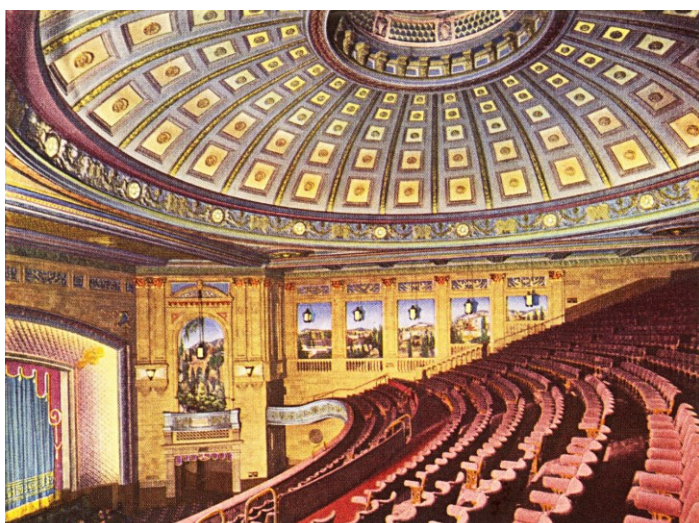




The façade and screen ① at the **ABC Bournemouth**

The **Westover** closed in 1937 and the next day the **Westover Super Cinema / Cannon / MGM / ABC** (WR Glen) opened with seating for approximately 2,500 in stalls and circle. At first it was operated by **ABC** who had taken over the earlier cinema next door. After it was tripled by **ABC**, other exhibitors moved in and finally it was taken over by **Odeon**, who restored the **ABC** branding, either as a nicely uncorporate gesture but more likely to differentiate it from the **Odeon** two doors away.

In 1930 the **Westover Ice Rink** had opened with the later addition of a proscenium stage and film projection room for the presentation of revues. This large hall had a few deco touches to the interior and the long five-bay façade makes a big statement in the streetscape. The building, not visited on this trip, now houses a gym.



The original interior of the **Regent Bournemouth**

Standing just apart from the ice rink is the striking arcaded Italian Renaissance style frontage of the **Regent / Gaumont / Odeon** (1929 WE Trent) [see photo front cover]. This impressive building was a Provincial Cinematograph Theatres (PCT) project and must have spared no expense with its use of marble and onyx interior finishes and painted scenes to the fire curtain and auditorium side walls, all under a large coffered dome atop the stalls and balcony that could hold an audience of 2,300.



Screen ① at the **Odeon Bournemouth**

The building is locally listed for its exterior. Nothing is thought to remain of the original interior following an ambitious remodelling for Cinerama in 1968, when the dome was dismantled and the roof lifted to accommodate a new Screen ① that would seat 757. The downstairs screen has since been split into four with another in the original restaurant space, bringing the total to six. The space for Cinerama is the last surviving intact in the UK and its deeply-curved screen is said to be the largest, excepting perhaps an **IMAX** here or there.

What happened to the Bournemouth **IMAX**? CTA members will know that this has gone, being maybe a good idea but very definitely in the wrong place. All that is left is the big concrete retaining wall holding back the hill, just begging for graffiti in 1.43:1. But watch out Bournemouth for **ISENSE** at the new ten screen **Odeon**, due to open in Exeter Road in 2017 and they had better get it right. The developer's impression of the new build fails to impress, with its incohesive exterior angles. Bournemouth's recent planning has been lamentable, the out of scale **IMAX**, loss of the **Winter Gardens** for a car park, the uninspiring **BIC** conference centre, at least four despairing attempts at getting a multiplex built, including a stupid proposal to build on the get-in yard of the Pavilion. It was good to see the **Odeon** and **ABC** before the cinema era comes to an end and now that the sale for redevelopment of these two cinemas in Westover Road has been announced, what next?



The exterior and interior of the **Pavilion Bournemouth**

The rest of this 5½ page report can be seen in the full Bulletin.

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 provided additional 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: [\[cinematreasures.org/theaters/nnnnn\]](http://cinematreasures.org/theaters/nnnnn)

ABERFELDY (Perth & Kinross)

Actor Alan Cumming, who is a patron of the **Birks** cinema, visited the venue with a TV crew from NBC. They were making a documentary about Scotland for the US market. The cinema reopened in April 2013 after a major refurbishment. {39010}

Perthshire Advertiser – 4 December

ALDERSHOT (Hants)



The **Palace** reopened on 18 December as a banqueting suite. It was last used as a music venue but that closed in 2013. The building is listed grade II. {4430}

Sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken April 2006

Permission has been granted to convert the former **Odeon** into a multi-purpose venue. It will revert back to the building's original name of **Empire**; it was due to open on 16 January. Films will be part of the programming. The building opened in August 1930 with 1,599 seats and became the **Odeon** in January 1964. Films ceased in October 1981 and it was then used as a church; that moved out in August 2015. See p12 Bulletin 49/5. {4428}

Aldershot News & Mail – 18 November

ALVA (Clackmannanshire)



A Community Plan has been published for the town. One of its recommendations is that the now-empty former 800-seat **Hillfoot Picture House** should be smartened up. We know very little about this former cinema, except that the Scottish Screen Archive holds proprietor's papers dated 1930-1977 so we assume the cinema ran between these dates. Does anyone know more?

Alloa & Hillfoots Advertiser – 4 September; photo taken February 2007

ASHFORD (Kent)

Plans for a six-screen 897-seat cinema in Eldwick Road have been approved by the Council. No operator has been named. There is already a twelve-screen **Cineworld** on the outskirts of the town.

Kentish Express – 10 December; Ashford Herald – 17 December

BANBURY (Oxon)



A group of former employees has called for the **Grand Theatre** to be bought by the townspeople and turned back into an arts venue. It first opened in 1911 and started screening films in 1929. It was modernised in an Egyptian/Deco style and reopened in 1935 with 950 seats. It closed in December 1968 and was then on bingo for 30 years. By 2004 it had been converted into a Chicago Rock café, which closed in 2010. Many original features survive. Planning permission was granted in 2014 to partially demolish it and build flats and shops but nothing happened. Now the building is up for sale for £800,000. {27592} *photo taken February 2004*

Banbury Guardian – 29 October; sent in by Hugh Sykes;

BANGOR (Gwynedd)

Plans have been unveiled to build a multi-screen cinema at Parc Bryn Cegin, an industrial site that has been unused for 15 years. The developers are those behind the **Cineworld** at Llandudno Junction.

Daily Post (Wales) – 16 December; North Wales Chronicle – 17 December

BELFAST

The **Strand** has celebrated 80 years in the cinema business. It opened in December 1935 with 1,141 seats and closed in 1983. It was converted into four screens and reopened in 1984. It underwent a restoration in 1999. The CTA visited in September 2014 – see p16 Bulletin 49/1. {24058}

Belfast Telegraph – 5 December

BEVERLEY (East Yorks)

The opening of the six-screen **Parkway** cinema was delayed from the proposed date given on p13 of the last Bulletin. It opened 18 December with 1,000 seats; 108, 109, 170, 170, 183 and 260 in an auditorium that can also be used for live theatre. {51125}

Beverley Advertiser – 11, 25 November

BIRMINGHAM (Central)

The twelve-screen **Cineworld** in Broad Street is to get a 4DX screen. No time scale has been given. A sign caught fire outside the cinema in early December, causing the building to be evacuated; nobody was hurt. {24153}

Birmingham Mail – 29 October, 6 December; sent in by Carl Chesworth

BLAENAU FFESTINIOG (Gwynedd)

The former Police Station has been converted into an arts centre and now a cinema is being added. Funding of £90,000 has been secured to install a state-of-the-art digital system. Workers have discovered blocked-up staircases and the original plans for the 1850s building. Work should be completed by Easter. [\[www.cellb.org\]](http://www.cellb.org)

Daily Post (Wales) – 15 December

BOGNOR REGIS (West Sussex)

A meeting was held to find out residents' views on adding a fourth 114-seat screen to the Council-owned **Picturedrome**. A vote took place and the results were given to the Town Council, who approved the £850,000 project for an extension to the grade II listed building. Fitting out costs will be paid by the operator. Work should start in early February and the new screen should be open in the autumn.

[Bognor Regis Town Council Press Release – 14 December;](#)
[West Sussex Gazette – 18 November, 9 December; sent in by Mike Whitcombe](#)

BOTLEY (Oxford)

Plans for a six-screen cinema at the West Way development have been ditched and the size of the overall scheme reduced. The revised plans were described as a “step in the right direction” by local residents. It is thought that **Cineworld** were interested in operating the scrapped cinema.

[Oxford Mail – 21 November; Oxford Times – 10 December](#)

BOURNEMOUTH

The sites of the **Odeon** and **ABC** in Westover Road have been sold to developers. **Odeon**, which owns both sites, intends to move in 2017 to a new multiplex in the West Central complex. The main screens at both cinemas are thought to be the largest surviving in the south of England outside London. The façades of both buildings are expected to be retained. Campaigners have voiced their disappointment. The CTA visited last October – see report p8. The new ten-screen multiplex will have an **ISENSE** screen 18m by 10m and a Dolby Atmos sound system.

[Daily Echo \(Bournemouth\) – 10, 13, 16, 20 November, 8 December;](#)
[sent in by Carl Chesworth, John R Forster, Philip Stevens & Nick Taylor](#)

BRADFORD (West Yorks)

As trailed on p12 of the last Bulletin, the “high quality operator” to run the six-screen 780-seat cinema to be built in the extension to the recently-opened Broadway shopping centre has been revealed as **Light Cinemas**. Construction work is scheduled to begin in early 2016.

[Telegraph & Argus \(Bradford\) – 14, 24 November; sent in by Carl Chesworth](#)

BRECHIN (Angus)

The future of the Community Cinema has been given a boost following funding from NHS Tayside. It has been operating since April 2015 in the City Hall on Swan Street. See p19 Bulletin 49/3.

[Brechin Advertiser – 19 November](#)

BRIDGWATER (Somerset)

A plan has been put forward to regenerate the Northgate site, including a four to six-screen cinema. No operator has been mentioned.

[Western Daily Press – 30 November](#)

BRIGHTON

A study has recommended that the grade II* listed **Hippodrome** should become a “Theatre of Varieties”. It has featured on the Buildings at Risk register since 2009 and plagued with uncertainties about its future since it closed as a bingo hall in 2007. A plan to turn it into a multi-screen cinema was rejected. After the venue's sale to the Academy Music Group last June, the study was commissioned by a stakeholder group of seven organisations, including the Council and the Theatres Trust. The Brighton Hippodrome Community Interest Company is trying to secure £8m funding and hopes to be in a position to buy the building later this year.

[The Argus \(Brighton\) – 28 November; sent in by Barry Quinton;](#)
[The Stage – 10 December; sent in by R David Simpson](#)

The Music Room in the **Royal Pavilion** became a 115-seat cinema in November. Six classic films were screened in the lavish surroundings as part of the Ciné City Film Festival.

[The Argus \(Brighton\) – 26 November; sent in by Barry Quinton](#)

BRYNMAWR (Blaenau Gwent)

The **Market Hall Cinema** has been given the go-ahead to add a second screen. The 130-seat auditorium will fill the room behind the current 220-seat cinema, a space formerly occupied by the town library, which has moved across the road. Construction work is expected to start in February and take three months.

[South Wales Argus – 9 December; Abergavenny Chronicle – 10 December](#)

BUCKIE (Moray)

Pupils from the local High School successfully fought to bring a visit from Film Mobile Scotland. The local MSP supported the campaign.

[Press & Journal \(Aberdeen\) – 14 November](#)

CAERNARFON (Gwynedd)



Galeri Caernarfon is hoping to open two new cinema spaces as part of a £260,000 investment. The current arrangements require theatre and cinema to share the same 394-seat space. The new screens will have 120 and 80 seats. Plans should be finalised by May; work is due to start in early 2017 and opening is scheduled for 2018. {31746}

[North Wales Chronicle – 19 November](#)

CANTERBURY (Kent)

An eight to ten-screen cinema is being proposed for the Kingsmead site, along with student flats and homes. No operator has been named.

[Canterbury Times – 21 October](#)

CHELMSFORD (Essex)

A consortium in the running to turn Shire Hall into a boutique cinema used a DeLorean car to promote its bid for the grade II listed building. It coincided with *Back to the Future* day – 21 October 2015 – the date that characters in the 1985 film reach by time travel.

[Essex Chronicle – 29 October](#)

CLEVEDON (North Somerset)

A second screen is again planned for the **Curzon**. This time it would have 40-50 seats and be in a free-standing pod, installed on the refurbished balcony. The work would involve removing the current 1972 false ceiling and restoring the tin-panelled ceiling, which was installed when the cinema was enlarged in the 1920s. The work is expected to cost £3m and funding will be applied for this summer. See p30 and also p13 last Bulletin. {846}

[Bristol Post – 9 December; North Somerset Times – 16 December](#)

COLCHESTER (Essex)

Plans for a twelve-screen multiplex at Stane Park have been rejected by the Council. The developer is to appeal. The operator was going to be **Cineworld**. Outline planning permission exists for a cinema at the Northern Gateway. Plans for another one at Tollgate Village were set to be debated by the Council in December.

[Essex County Standard – 4 December](#)

Curzon has signed a deal with the Council for a three-screen cinema in Roman House, the former Keddies department store. No time scale has been given.

[Essex County Standard – 4 December; East Anglian Daily Times – 7 December](#)

CRAWLEY (West Sussex)

The **Cineworld** opened a 4DX screen in November. A major refurbishment of the complex is scheduled to start in January. New seats and carpets will be installed in all fifteen auditoria and the foyer will get a renovation. The multiplex opened in 1998 as a **Virgin**. {24652}

[Crawley News – 25 November; West Sussex County Times – 26 November;](#)
[sent in by Norman Pemberton](#)

**Seven more pages of Newsreel
in the full Bulletin.**

CINEMAS FAIL TO BOND ON PRICING

Two of Britain's largest cinema chains have traded blows over the 'blockbuster premiums'. **Cineworld** criticised **Odeon** for charging a premium to see *Spectre*, *The Hunger Games* and *Star Wars*. **Odeon** defended the charge by saying it gave away vouchers for other screenings. **Cineworld's** revenue rose 12% for the 46 weeks to 19 November. **Odeon's** rose 13% in the third quarter.

The Times – 25 November; sent in by Mike Whitcombe

BLOCKBUSTERS

Odeon Cinemas screened the new James Bond movie *Spectre* into the night when it was released at the end of October. At the **Odeon** Leicester Square the last screening was at 3am and that at 9am the following day was sold out. It broke UK Box Office records by taking £6.3m on its opening day. **Odeon** recruited 500 extra staff and expected to sell 350 tons of popcorn in the 12 weeks following the Bond opening.

For the new *Star Wars* film, twelve **Odeons** opened on Christmas Day at Glasgow Quay, Greenwich, Leeds Bradford, Leicester, London Leicester Square, London Marble Arch, Manchester Printworks, Milton Keynes Stadium & Rochdale. It broke the UK Box Office record for advance sales seven weeks before it opened. Bookies are offering odds of 16-1 that it will challenge 2009's *Avatar* as the biggest grossing film of all time. The film was also screened two days in advance of opening on four Air France flights from the USA to Paris.

Metro – 22 October, 20 November; *Evening Standard* – 27 October; *Daily Mirror* – 31 October; *Daily Telegraph* – 1 November, 12 December; **Odeon** Press Release – 17 December; sent in by Keith Bye & Carl Chesworth

The live broadcast of Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* has become the highest grossing film in the UK on its night of screening. The three-hour long play, starring Dame Judi Dench and Sir Kenneth Branagh took £1.1m for its broadcast from London to 120 cinemas. The performance was also broadcast to over 100 cinemas across Europe and Canada but the box office from those is not known.

Daily Telegraph – 28 November; sent in by Carl Chesworth

DAFT ADA

Star Wars fans have been banned from wearing Darth Vader helmets during screening of the new film at **Odeon** cinemas. The chain has also asked fans to keep light sabres sheathed. The UK Cinema Association said, "It's not a great viewing experience if you're seated behind an eight-foot Chewbacca outfit." Other cinema chains have issued similar bans.

The Sun – 12 December; sent in by Barry Quinton

ADVERTISING SWITCH

Curzon cinemas has appointed Digital Cinema Media [DCM] to take over its advertising from incumbents Pearl & Dean from 1 January. DCM already oversees 80% of the UK's cinema advertising market with **Cineworld**, **Vue** and **Odeon** amongst its clients.

Screen Daily – 15 October; sent in by Carl Chesworth

FLOP

Momentum, a \$20m-budget thriller set in South Africa took just £46 from 10 sites in the UK, giving it a screen average of just £4.60 per cinema. It screened in regional locations, including Kidderminster, Hull and Morecambe and had a simultaneous digital release. Mark Kermode referred to it as "utter pants" in his one-star review and it only received a 27% rating on the *Rotten Tomatoes* website.

The Guardian – 24 November; sent in by Carl Chesworth

SPANISH FLEA

An investigation from Spain's culture ministry has accused film producers and cinema owners of faking the number of tickets sold so that films could reach the audience targets needed for Spanish government subsidies. When a film hits the 30,000 viewer mark, around €400,000 is automatically released to the producers; this figure can rise to €1.5m if the number reaches 60,000 and other conditions are satisfied. On inspector said he was the only person in the cinema when it was recorded that 150 people had watched the film. The ministry has identified a further 32 films it regards as suspicious.

Daily Telegraph – date unknown; sent in by Carl Chesworth

GALA BINGO SOLD



Gala Bingo at the former **Gaumont** Worcester in May 2006

The Gala Coral group has sold its UK bingo club network for £241m. Equity investment firm Caledonia Investments plc is now the owner of Gala Bingo, Britain's biggest bingo club operator with 38% of the commercial bingo land-based market. At its peak Gala had 174 clubs but has been steadily disposing of its properties in recent years and now operates on 130 sites. The majority of these are modern flat-floor premises but twelve are so called 'heritage clubs' – mostly in former cinemas. The group sold its casinos in 2013 and last July agreed to merge its betting shop business with that of Ladbrokes. It says it will now concentrate on its on-line gambling operation.

Daily Telegraph – 26 October; [cityam.com] – 27 October; sent in by Keith Bye & Ray Dolling

More Business, a miscellany and 3 pages of letters in the full Bulletin.

London's West End Cinemas

by Allen Eyles with Keith Skone.

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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.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

80 years



Globe (ABC) 101 High Street, Stockton-On-Tees. Opened January 1936. Architect Percy Lindsay Browne & Son. Listed Grade II. Does anyone know the exact date this cinema opened?



Palace High Street, Conwy.
Opened 6 January 1936.
Architect Sydney Colwyn Foulkes.
Listed Grade II. Above [L].

Vogue (Odeon) Main Street, Rutherglen, Glasgow.
Opened 29 January 1936.
Architect James McKissack. Listed Category B. Above [R].

INTERNET CORNER

- ★ [tinyurl.com/npkozya] A Facebook album from the *Lancaster Past and Present* page of photos of the conversion and ultimate demise of the **Odeon/Regal** cinema Lancaster. {6538}
- ★ [www.londonssilentcinemas.com] documents the early lives of over 700 cinemas in London and the suburbs. Includes interactive maps of the area and the West End. *Sent in by Mike Wood*
- ★ [tinyurl.com/j7xytgyt] A photo gallery on the *Hinckley Times* website taken inside the former **Danilo/Essoldo/Classic** in 2011.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/hl8fopn] *Men's Journal* [USA] list of top 20 movie theatres worldwide. Some nice photos. *Sent in by Nick Taylor*
- ★ [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-34733308] A BBC article on the films banned by local Councils. *Sent in by Richard Jones*

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The Archive is in temporary accommodation and this makes it hard to receive visitors and to deal with enquiries quickly. We cannot access all of the material as some remains boxed up. Please make enquiries in the normal way via the enquiry form on the website or by emailing [cta-archive@hotmail.co.uk] and we will do our best to deal with these as soon as we can.

Clive Polden, CTA Archivist



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 [cta-archive@hotmail.co.uk].

HELP THE ARCHIVE IDENTIFY CINEMAS

Brian Hall posts regular weekly sets of unidentified cinema photographs on the CTA-UK Yahoo! Group. Please consider joining this group [movies.groups.yahoo.com/group/cta-uk] and help us to identify cinemas. It's great fun!

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by Richard Gray

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JAWS AT 40

By Alan Scott

Christmas 2015 – 40 years since *Jaws*! Some members might remember it and we will have some new ones who never saw it and a lot of dear friends we have lost on the way.

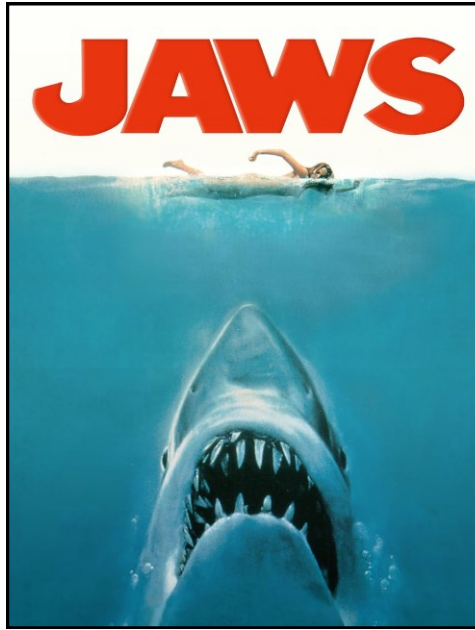
I will always remember that period in time and the joy and pleasure it gave me opening up on Boxing Day 1975 for a twelve-week run of such a special film and its impression for years to come. The summer of 1975 had seen its opening in the USA and would change film-making as we knew it. I can't remember any mention of its impact in the trade papers until it arrived in the UK at Christmas 1975. I was working as a full-time projectionist at the **Classic** Tunbridge Wells (ex **Ritz/Essoldo**). It had been twinned by **Essoldo** in 1970 [see p10 last Bulletin] and a third screen added in 1972 when it was taken over by **Classic**. It was a **Classic** 'Best Site' (key cinema) where product was put in to test the water, business-wise, with a massive catchment area.

The line-up for Christmas 1975 was *Earthquake* (70mm) in the 450-seat No① (the former stalls) booked in for four weeks, *Jaws* in the 366-seat No② (the former circle) and *All Creatures Great and Small* in the modest 120-seat No③ (the former restaurant area). The copy of *Jaws* arrived in good time. It was one of the prints that had been used in the USA and was in very good condition. I made it up just before Christmas Eve and the manager asked me to find a suitable place for an intermission. Running the print through, I found a couple of places I thought were OK but we settled on where they are leaving the harbour in their tiny boat, opening up again out at sea, looking for the 'great white'. With all our films with intermissions (not that many) we always left the auditorium in complete silence while they had their ice-creams etc so as not to break the spell. I often wondered what CIC/Universal would have thought of it? If they thought it needed one, they would have put one in – after all, the film was just over two hours long.

P.I.A. PROGRAMME						
THEATRE		Days				
2.		26-12-75/19				
CERT.	TITLE	TIME	SUNDAY	WEEKDAYS		
	INTERVAL-ADS-TRAILS	20		2.30	5.08	7.46
U	PRACTICAL YOKK	6		2.50	5.28	8.06
A	JAWS + INTERMISSION 2.02+10	2.12		2.56	5.34	8.12
	INTERVAL					
Remarks: C.I.C. Manager Queen 10.24						

So we were set up for the Boxing Day opening. You would find that people would go out to the cinema at Christmas but not venture out at any other time of the year. A bit like the old days of seaside holidays. Christmas Day passed and Boxing Day dawned. It was my day to work on our rota, two of us running three shows. I was a bit miffed that I had to leave my family behind and said to my wife, "Who wants to go to the cinema today when they can go any other day?" When I arrived at the cinema the whole place was heaving with people. The queues were right around the building. With under 1,000 seats there were going to be disappointed people. Business from that day forward was phenomenal; it was always good but not on that scale.

After two weeks *Earthquake* was dragging its heels. People would go to see something else if they couldn't see their first choice; this happened all the time with a triple unit. *Earthquake* held on for one more week in 70mm and then we had a 35mm copy sent down so we moved it to No③ to finish its four-week booking. *Jaws* moved into No① to cope with the constant masses.



Classic made a silly move. Prices at the time were £1 for adults and 60p for children. They made all seats £1 for everybody. This did not go down well with Joe Public. It killed the goodwill stone dead and it took over a year to win back the audiences after prices returned to normal again. The reason given for the increase was that CIC/Universal was taking 90% of the box-office, the highest percentage ever for a film, leaving **Classic** only 10%, hence the addition of the intermission for sales. It did drop back to 70%/75% after a month or so but even this was still high.

On Saturday 3 January 1976 I put on five shows; late morning, afternoon, over tea, evening and late-night. I was shattered – not physically but mentally, arriving home about 1:30am to return the next day for three more shows as well as manning the small screen.

My wife came with her mum to see *Jaws* on Saturday 24 January, after a few weeks of the run. I had to warn her of the head coming out

of the bottom of the boat as she was pregnant with our daughter, who arrived in March (she is now 39). Can you imagine her arriving in the cinema? Nowadays the media would have a field-day.

I often wonder and cringe at the thought if *Jaws* was made again today with CGI but let's not go down that road and spoil a great film. It was brilliant cinema for its time and still looks good today. It is among many films of my all-time favourites. It was a joy and privilege to be the man behind the show, working in the cinema business at the time – and the bonus was that I was getting paid for it!

Just for the record, I worked with a very good and reliable team of four, running the show. Nobody called in a 'sickie' – we were always there. Our rota was a seven-day fortnight; four days on one week and three days the next, which included Sat/Sun/Mon one week and those days off the next week. There were no half-days. I will always remember it was something I always wanted to do from a child at Saturday morning pictures, to be a projectionist – and I did!

JAWS

She was the first...

The most successful film in movie history is at OOG and selected cinemas in these towns from December 26th

<p>ROY SCHEIDER</p> <p>ROBERT SHAW</p> <p>RICHARD DREYFUSS</p> <p>JAWS</p> <p>Co-starring LOBBANE GARY - MURRAY HAMILTON - A ZANUCK/BROWN PRODUCTION Screenplay by PETER BENCHLEY and CARL GOTTLIEB Based on the novel by PETER BENCHLEY - Music by JOHN WILLIAMS - Directed by STEVEN SPIELBERG - Produced by RICHARD D. ZANUCK and DAVID BROWN A UNIVERSAL PICTURE - "DOLBY DIGITAL" (THANKS!) (ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK AVAILABLE ON NEW RECORDS & TAPES) May be particularly disturbing to younger unaccompanied children.</p>	<p>ROY SCHEIDER</p> <p>ROBERT SHAW</p> <p>RICHARD DREYFUSS</p> <p>JAWS</p> <p>Co-starring LOBBANE GARY - MURRAY HAMILTON - A ZANUCK/BROWN PRODUCTION Screenplay by PETER BENCHLEY and CARL GOTTLIEB Based on the novel by PETER BENCHLEY - Music by JOHN WILLIAMS - Directed by STEVEN SPIELBERG - Produced by RICHARD D. ZANUCK and DAVID BROWN A UNIVERSAL PICTURE - "DOLBY DIGITAL" (THANKS!) (ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK AVAILABLE ON NEW RECORDS & TAPES) May be particularly disturbing to younger unaccompanied children.</p>
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FROM DECEMBER 26

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Separate Performances. All seats bookable.

PLAZA 2

Holiday Matinee (incl. Sun.) not bookable 11.00-1.00
Daily 8.00-10.30 & 10.30-12.30, Late Night Show 12.30-2.00
Separate Performances. All seats bookable.

Fulham Road **ABC** Rayswater

See Page 130 & 131
See Page 130 & 131
See Page 130 & 131
See Page 130 & 131