



CINEMA  
THEATRE  
ASSOCIATION

[www.cta-uk.org](http://www.cta-uk.org)

# BULLETIN

Vol 49 No 6

November / December 2015



The interior of the **Picture House** at Hebden Bridge (West Yorkshire) – see Newsreel p16



The former **Odeon** at Yeovil (Somerset), which has been turned into a home store – see Newsreel p22



## FROM YOUR EDITOR

Recently I had a letter from a member, disappointed that he had not had a reply to an email offering to organise a visit, despite a request for such help in every issue of the Bulletin. I thought this was unusual so I did a bit of research and here is the story.

Ray, our visits co-ordinator, had been using his work email address for convenience. A few months ago his company had a major computer upgrade and it is since then that things have been going wrong. It seems that their spam filter was too enthusiastic and rejected much more than it should have. Consequently, he never got the email in question and, of course, never knew it had even been sent. When he realised there was a source of potential problems, he contacted me to change his email address in the Bulletin – but I never received that message either! It was only when he saw that I hadn't corrected it that alarm bells rang; it's right in this issue.

I have come across this problem of over-keen spam filters before. I once sent an email to another member, who then worked for a government department, about the **Paramount** cinema in **Penistone** (Yorkshire). I wonder if you can see why it got rejected? Of course, I never knew and it was only in a conversation a few months later that I found out the message hadn't been received and we put two and two together. It's a bit like in the old days when a letter got lost in the post.

Another example – at the moment I cannot receive messages from the firm I used to work for before I retired. They emailed me asking for advice and thought I was simply ignoring them. A phone call clarified the issue and they are temporarily using my Bulletin address, until their IT consultants can sort things out.

Can I make a suggestion? If you email a committee member [or anyone] and are expecting a reply but don't get one, please try another method of contact. Email another committee member or try the postal address given opposite. Things can – and do – go wrong, so please don't give up at the first attempt.

As a slight rider, as I have said before, I get so many emails sending me stuff as Bulletin Editor that I cannot reply to every one. If you need a receipt, please ask for one and I'll acknowledge. If you then don't get one, proceed as above as something will have gone wrong.

### ERRATA

Finally, thanks to Rachel Woodforde for pointing out my typing error on p13 of the last Bulletin. I said that the **Plaza** Dorchester had benefitted from £1 investment over the last seven years. That should, of course, have been £1m! It's amazing how the omission of a single letter can change the entire story. I have written to operator Adam Cunard to apologise. £1 doesn't even cover the cost of a new toilet roll every year.

*Harry Rigby, CTA Bulletin Editor*

## INTERNET CORNER

- ★ [youtu.be/dSxaz9H3nTc] a 6½ minute mini documentary covering an open day at the former **Regal/ABC** Halifax – see p24 last Bulletin. *Sent in by Peter Berry & Richard Lyons*
- ★ [youtu.be/fQ-hyG2nU3c] a very enthusiastic personal review of the **IMAX** laser projection system from a US reviewer.
- ★ [youtu.be/UB4hQuAhBxc] a 40 minute documentary on the last days of film at the **IMAX** Melbourne.
- ★ [www.toriicinemas.com] a UK company that installs custom-built outdoor home cinemas in garden sheds. Prices start at £9,500. Website has some interesting pictures. *Sent in by Carl Chesworth*
- ★ [www.empiresandwich.co.uk] On the opening page you will find a 3½ minute promotional video. *Sent in by Martin Tapsell*
- ★ [longfordcinema.co.uk] The website of the campaign group to save the **Longford/Essoldo** Stretford, Manchester. Next year it will be 80 years old. *Sent in by Nick Taylor*

## DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE SUNDAY 20 DECEMBER

## CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

promoting serious interest in all aspects of cinema buildings

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**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 enclose SAE and state if you require items to be returned, 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.

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

# VISITS & EVENTS

## Christmas in the West End at PictureHouse Central

Thursday 17 December; Organised by Richard Gray

We are delighted to announce that we have secured a prestigious location for the CTA's Christmas celebration, this year at the new **PictureHouse Central** cinemas on the corner of Shaftesbury Avenue and Great Windmill Street, by kind permission of the management.



A screen at the **PictureHouse Central**

The **PictureHouse Central**, opening in 1991 as the West End's first multiplex and originally the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Cinemas, formed part of the **Trocadero** 'fun palace' created out of various buildings facing Coventry Street, Great Windmill Street and Shaftesbury Avenue. The name **Trocadero** originates from a music hall facing Great Windmill Street, which was transferred to a successor restaurant, opening in 1896, built for the restaurateurs J Lyons & Co, while the Coventry Street entrance to the complex was formed out of Lyons' even more famous Corner House restaurant. The principal historic surviving elements from the Trocadero restaurant are panels in paint and metal leaf representing Arthurian scenes by Gerald Moira now to be seen on the walls as one ascends the escalators from the foyers.

The multiplex changed hands several times until most recently operated by **Cineworld** but when their tenancy came to an end with a revamp of the whole complex **PictureHouse** cinemas seized the chance to have an outlet in the heart of the West End, opening during this last summer. The multiplex has been given a street presence rather than access being through a glorified shopping mall.

PictureHouse have also maximised the site, accommodating a spacious ground floor foyer, a large bar and restaurant on the first floor and a bar for PictureHouse club cardholders on the upper levels – areas which Cineworld left disused. There are seven 'screens' and we hope to include a visit to the largest of them, accommodating an audience of some 500.

We hope to precede the event with a visit to a nearby West End theatre or cinema, unconfirmed at the time of writing but details and timings will be advised to those booking tickets for the **PictureHouse Central** event.

The **PictureHouse Central** event will commence at 5:45pm, with the party starting at 6:30pm; CTA Christmas parties are always enjoyable, as last year at the **Dominion**, Tottenham Court Road and in 2013 at Elephant and Castle. Wine or soft drinks and special 'nibbles' will be served. Tickets, at £15.00 each, are obtainable, in advance please, from Richard Gray, 45 Arnold Road, London, E3 4NU. Please enclose SAE and with cheques made out to the Cinema Theatre Association.

**Getting There:** the entrance to **PictureHouse Central** is on the corner of Shaftesbury Avenue and Great Windmill Street, behind the London Pavilion building and therefore very close to Piccadilly Circus tube station.

## Members' Slide Show and Social

Saturday 16 January at The Gallery, 5:30pm  
(doors open 5pm); organised by Richard Norman

The past few years of Members' Slide Shows has produced a wide variety of interesting and engaging topics. The forthcoming event builds on the past and introduces new subjects from our members. We have been promised even more intriguing presentations and "here at enormous expense" we present the CTA's very own 'Stars on Parade' who will have about 10 minutes each to do their turn. There will be an Intermission, when wine and light refreshments will be served. The CTA Bookstall will be available

**Please come along for this special Saturday evening event and support members who will enjoy showing you their cinema treasures.**

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

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

**Admission on the door:** Members and Guests: £8 each; (Members presenting a show: no charge). Admission includes entry to a raffle.

If you wish to participate please contact the Organiser: Richard Norman, tel: 020 8668 6077; e-mail: [RichardNormanCTA@aol.com]

Below is the varied programme of subjects we have been promised:

### PROGRAMME

#### **Kinema Obscura II**

Deep discoveries from the Archive.

#### **I Can't Get No Satisfaction**

A CTA Nomad exposes his insecurity.

#### **The Last Granada Letter**

Will it become a 'Carry On'?

#### **The Cinema's NOT the Subject**

Tantalising photographs.

#### **Two Astorias in 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

A 'snapping' trip around south London.

#### **Fancy A Cuppa?**

Enterprising surprises of tea-leaf reading??

#### **British Cinema Music**

Popular Light and Film Music:

#### **Seven Wonders of the World**

No! Not the Ancient Ones.

#### **A Surprise Hides in Porto**

Discovering an interesting 1947 design.

#### **Cinemas to Cereals**

What! – Cornflakes in the stalls.

#### **Singing Audiences**

How cinema audiences rocked along.

— with —

#### **Meyrick's Musical Melodies**

Live accompaniment.

### FINALE

#### **The Magic of Film Musicals**

Flashback to a popular Musical.

*The management reserve the right to change the programme according to unforeseen circumstances.*



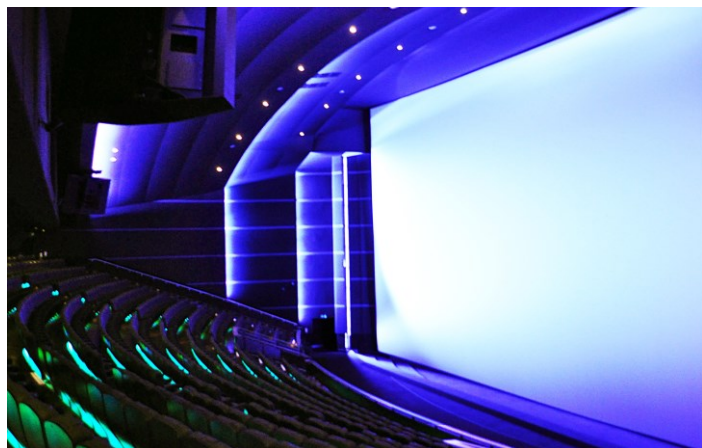
# Empire, Leicester Square and Regent Street Cinema

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 **Empire** is one of the most important theatre and cinema sites in the West End, opening as the **Empire Theatre of Varieties** in 1887, although entertainments of various types had taken place on the site from the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Victorian theatre was largely redeveloped by the Hollywood studio Metro-Goldwyn Mayer in 1927-8 to be their London showcase; it was also the largest ever to have been built in the West End. It had a magnificent and ornate interior but this was lost in 1962 when a reduced cinema was created with a ballroom (now a casino) in the semi-basement. Since then screens were created in subordinate spaces and a connection made to the **Ritz** cinema next door, thereby creating something of a multiplex but until 2013-2014 George Coles' main auditorium remained intact. However, filling the 1,300 seats regularly became a problem and it was decided by the **Empire's** operators, Ward Anderson of Ireland, to subdivide it for an **IMAX** screen and an **IMPACT** auditorium with a Dolby Atmos sound system.



The new **IMAX** screen at the **Empire** – photo by Ken Roe

The Lumière brothers made their pioneering 'Cinématographe' presentation at the **Regent Street Polytechnic** in February 1896 but what is now the **Regent Street Cinema** started full-time film-life there in 1912, with the auditorium being reconstructed in 1927. After closure in 1980 it became a lecture hall for the University of Westminster, as the Polytechnic had by then been rechristened. Recently the University decided to again use the space for films and instituted a remodelling whereby the balcony seating has been extended towards the stage and the cinema reopened during this summer. [See p7 Bulletin 49/4.] The CTA casework function had a substantial hand here in which we were determined that the 1927 interior should as far as possible be retained rather than carelessly swept away. The Compton organ has survived and is now playing, with the console repositioned on the stage.

At the time of writing the **Empire** visit has to be finalised but the tour of the **Regent Street Cinema** will commence at 12:45pm with a talk about the cinema's history, followed by recital on the organ and then an opportunity to see the afternoon's film at very minimal cost.

Further details in the January/February Bulletin.

## Help Wanted

The CTA events committee would love to hear from members of any ideas for visits or events they may have. We can offer support and guidance for anyone who would like to organise a visit or event.

Please send your thoughts to the CTA events committee, c/o Ray Ritmeester, 66 Woodside Road, High Wycombe, HP13 7JB or drop me an email to [r.ritmeester@sky.com].

## CTA Film Nites

If you haven't already done so, do join the mailing list for future CTA Film Nites. It's a way to link up with other members to visit a traditional cinema and watch a film together – and, of course, there's an opportunity to socialise over a drink or a meal afterwards. We're fixing up dates about once a month, so far just in London, to see interesting films at a cinema that's just the kind of venue CTA members should be supporting.

All you have to do to find out what's coming up and when is to join the email list. Send an email (headed CTA FILM NITES) to David Vinnels at [deco77@btinternet.com] and your name will be added to the mailing list. About a week before each Film Nite, an email will be sent out to everyone on the list with all the details: selected film, venue and how to get there. We look forward to lots more members coming along to the shows – and, of course, do bring a friend if you wish.

## 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 CINEMA MUSEUM, LONDON

**Saturday 28 November** Terry Thomas *Too Many Crooks* (1959) 17:00

**Saturday 12 December** Cinema Museum Bookstall 14:00-17:00

**Wednesday 30 December** *Cabaret* (1972) and party 18:00

See the website [www.cinemamuseum.org.uk] for full details of their programme of events. Tel: 020 7840 2200.

The Master's House, 2 Duggard Way, London, SE11 4TH

### THE PLAZA, STOCKPORT

**Friday 27 November** Alistair Sim in *Scrooge* (1951) [U]

All at 2:30pm & 7:30pm; all seats £6.50, concessions £5.50.

Organ introductions commence 30 minutes before most films.

Box Office: 0161 477 7779; website [www.stockportplaza.co.uk].

### COS MUSIC & PICTURE EVENINGS [www.cinema-organs.org.uk]

**Friday 20 November** David Gray

**Friday 4 December** Christmas DIY

**Friday 8 January** TBA

At 6:45pm. Admission £4. Further info 07855 546823; refreshments available from 6:15pm and at the interval.

**Venue:** The Gallery at Alan Baxter's, 75 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6EL. See p3 for directions.

### THE FECKENODEON (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].

**Saturday 28 November** *The Imitation Game* (2014) [12A]

**Sunday 27 December** *Funny Face* (1957) [U]

**Saturday 30 January** *The Hundred Foot Journey* (2014) [PG]

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

A **MUST** for your collection

## CINEMAS IN BRITAIN

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.

Special price for CTA members

£29.50 + £6.00 postage from

Jeremy Buck, CTA Sales Officer

34 Pelham Road, Wood Green, London, N22 6LN

(Publisher's price £45)



# PUBLICATIONS

## Recently Published (Reviewed in previous issues)

**From Pictures to Pints – Cinemas that Became Pubs** by Gavin McGrath. A4 paperback, 30 pages, fully illustrated. £4.00 plus postage.

In this well-researched book, the author describes over 100 cinemas that have now become pubs – many of them in the Wetherspoons chain but many others too. Most are illustrated and there are potted histories of each building and its cinematic highlights. There is an appendix of proposed sites. Gavin has set certain criteria for the selection, so a few notable properties – such as the **Regal** Cambridge (which claims to be Britain's largest pub) and the **Forum** Hexham – are not included. Gavin is now working on a sister publication *From Celluloid to Cereal* for which suggestions are invited.

(Copies of the author's earlier book *Cinemas and Theatres of Tower Hamlets* are still available, price £6.99 plus postage)

**Editor's Note:** Gavin's book got a useful plug over several pages in the autumn edition of *Wetherspoon News*. It should be available to view on Wetherspoon's website but at the time of writing the summer edition was still there. Each edition also usually has photos of some of their pubs in former cinemas.

Sent in by Martin Tapsell

**The Magic Screen – a history of Regent Street Cinema.** Various authors. Large format paperback, 178 pages, fully illustrated. £20.00 plus postage.

To celebrate the renovation and re-opening of the **Regent Street Cinema** London, its long and fascinating history has been told for the first time. Built in 1848 for showcasing 'optical exhibitions', in 1896 the theatre was the site of the first UK public performance of the Lumière's Cinématographe. It evolved into a cinema specialising in travelogues and nature films in the 1920s, becoming the **Cameo-Poly** after the Second World War. Regularly hosting premières of continental films, the cinema achieved another first with its screening of *La Vie Commence Demain* in 1951, the first [X]-certificate film in the UK. After mixed fortunes in the 1970s, the cinema closed to the public in 1980. The cinema's recent renovation and re-birth is also featured. This multi-authored volume tells the cinema's history from architectural, educational, legal and cinematic perspectives and is richly illustrated throughout with images from the University of Westminster Archive.

## Back Numbers Available

### BULLETINS

We can supply back numbers of most Bulletins from Volume 21 (1987) to date. Prices for issues from 1987 to 2013 are £4.00 per year (6 issues); individual issues are £1.00 each. Prices for issues in 2014 and 2015 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 opposite 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, 22, 23 & 24, priced £5.00 each, plus postage. We also have just 1 or 2 copies of the extremely rare issues 2, 4, 5, 7, 11, 12 and 13 at £5.00 each plus postage. (If there is more demand than supply, a ballot will be held.)

### 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.



No 6	£1.50	Television in the Cinema; <b>Atherley</b> Southampton; <b>Hippodrome</b> , Blackpool.
No 8	£1.50	Sol Levy; Reginald Cooper; <b>ABC</b> in NW London.
No 17	£3.00	<b>Special Issue</b> featuring the Cinemas of George Coles with 26 original photographs reproduced in sepia.
No 18	£3.00	Sydney Colwyn Foulkes; United Picture Theatres; <b>Tivoli</b> Wimborne.
No 19	£3.50	Co-operative Cinemas; <b>Ideal</b> Lambeth; Dursley; Alistair Macdonald; <b>Granada</b> Tooting.
No 21	£3.50	100 Years On; Travelling Shows; Reggie Rea; <b>Albert Hall</b> Sheffield; <b>Regal</b> 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; <b>Carlton</b> Swansea; Committee's Choice.
No 26	£4.50	<b>Paramount</b> Newcastle; Edward Stone; Granada Men; E de Wilde Holding; <b>Electric</b> Portobello Road.
No 27	£4.50	New <b>Victoria/Apollo</b> ; <b>Whiteladies</b> Bristol; Clark & Fenn; Compton Organs; Tim Foster Associates.
No 28	£4.50	James McKissack; WJ King; <b>Torbay Cinema</b> ; 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; <b>Apollo</b> Hammersmith Organ; Norwich Roadshows.
No 31	£7.50	Special 84-page edition: <b>Essoldo</b> – A Family Business: Sol Sheckman and the <b>Essoldo</b> 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 <b>New Victoria</b> Bradford.
No 34	£5.00	<b>Beaufort</b> Birmingham; <b>Granada</b> Tooting in 1934
No 35	£5.00	Holophane lighting; Imitations of <b>Odeon</b> ; Cradley Records; 1909 Cinematograph Act; Kingston Showmanship.
No 36	£6.00	Leslie Kemp; The <b>Clifton</b> Circuit; Jeremy Perkins on Brighton; Circuit Releases of 1960.
No 37	£8.50	Special 92-page issue; saving the <b>Electric Palace</b> Harwich.
No 38	£6.00	Northern Morris Associated; <b>Palace</b> Conwy; Cinema Murders; <b>Point</b> Milton Keynes; <b>Carlton</b> Haymarket; Military Cinemas.
No 39	£6.00	WWI and the Film Trade; Tale of Two <b>Regals</b> ; <b>Odeon</b> North Finchley; <b>Majestic</b> Oxford; Films at the <b>Royal Albert Hall</b> .

## 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.

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 or 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.

## Also Available (but not from the Sales Officer)

**A Tour of The Indies – a creative quest for the UK's best cinema... and cake** by Paul Forrester.

152 pages paperback, no illustrations.

Available through Amazon, ISBN 9781503365168. £4.99

An amusing account of a tour of some of the UK's independent cinemas, including the **Regal** Evesham, **Lexi** London, **Electric** Birmingham, etc. The author describes each one and gives his views on the films he saw – and the cakes he ate! Published in November 2014 but un-noticed until now.

**The Diamond before Seven** by David Tollable.

Available from Amazon Kindle. ASIN B0153RU131.

222 pages/2396kb £2.63

A murder mystery set in the **Falkland**, a small cinema in the fictitious market town of Hollingford in the 1990s.

Thanks to Dougal Dixon of the **Rex Wareham** for sending this in.



# CAMPAIGNING TO SAVE YOUR HISTORIC CINEMAS

By Tim Hatcher

## Grade II\* Listed

Further plans relating to the proposed external extension to the **Avenue** in Ealing's Northfields district have been submitted to the local Council. A meeting is to be held with the architect in an attempt to ameliorate the potential detrimental visual impact of such a development on the integrity of the building's composition. See p6 Bulletin 49/4. {11190}

An appeal has been lodged against the decision by Hammersmith and Fulham Council to refuse consent to the application for new illuminated advertising displays on the façade of the **Gaumont Palace** in Hammersmith, which proposal was previously reported here. The Association's objections will be reiterated in a letter to the Planning Inspectorate. {3774}

Planning consent has also been sought for replacement signage on the frontage of the **Dreamland Cinema** in Margate. The scheme is highly respectful of the original in character, although a slight discrepancy with the original wording is somewhat puzzling. {15123}



The CTA has commented upon a listed building consent application relating to the **Odeon** at Muswell Hill advanced by Everyman Cinemas, now operators of the facility. Previous exchanges with the company concerning sympathetic treatment of the venue have proven positive; currently no alteration to the extant subdivision is anticipated. See Newsreel p17. { 13783} *Photo above taken April 2006*

## Unlisted

In several instances the promised relocation of reclaimed architectural elements from demolished cinemas has not come to pass; it is thus pleasing to report that the sculptural female embellishments from the façade of the **Gaumont Palace** in Cheltenham have been re-sited on the exterior of the Brewery Centre in the town. It would be greatly appreciated if a local member could forward a photograph of the figures in their new locale for the Committee's records. {17447}

Enquiries have been made of the Association by a local group intent upon returning the **Empire** at Crook, an ex-**Essoldo** property, to film exhibition. Relevant information has been forwarded. See p20 Bulletin 49/3. {43148}

Following the previous report concerning the **Elite** in Middlesbrough, which referred to a lack of interior images, the Committee was delighted and grateful to receive relevant photographs from two members. Sadly, Historic England has rejected the application for listed status for the cinema. See p20 Bulletin 49/2. {18510}

The Beamish Open Air Museum is fulfilling a long-held aspiration to add a cinema to its exhibits by moving the **Grand** in Ryhope to its grounds. See p18 last Bulletin. {49699}

A query has been received apropos the **Regent** in Deal which, although having been sold in April 2011 by Dover City Council to Silverscreen Cinemas, has not yet reopened. The structure lies within a Conservation Area and is thus afforded a degree of protection. A watching brief will be maintained. See Newsreel p14. {32928}



The case for retention of the **Futurist** in Liverpool is being championed by Save Britain's Heritage (SAVE), which may seek a judicial review, arguing that Liverpool City Council has ignored its own policies by granting planning permission for development of the site. SAVE has requested supporting argument from the CTA, which has been composed and forwarded; several representatives of the Association have also been vociferous in support of the structure's retention in various media interviews. {6508} *Photo above taken July 2007*

SAVE has also become involved in the long-running campaign to retain the **Odeon** in Kensington and is demanding a public enquiry. Lady Borwick, the local MP, has expressed her support for the campaign; she has been requested by the Association to investigate if Historic England executed a thorough inspection of the property at the time of the rejected listing application and to request spot listing if any peccancy in the process is detected. See Newsreel p17.



The supermarket chain Lidl has purchased the **Towers** in Hornchurch and publicised plans locally to demolish and replace it with one of its stores. However, Havering Council has issued an Article 4 direction notifying Lidl that permitted development rights have now been removed. This will remain in force for six months, during which period a listing application, fortuitously previously prepared and submitted by the Association, will be adjudged by Historic England. {13777}

*Photo above taken July 2006*

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# JUST THE TICKET

By Chris Oxley

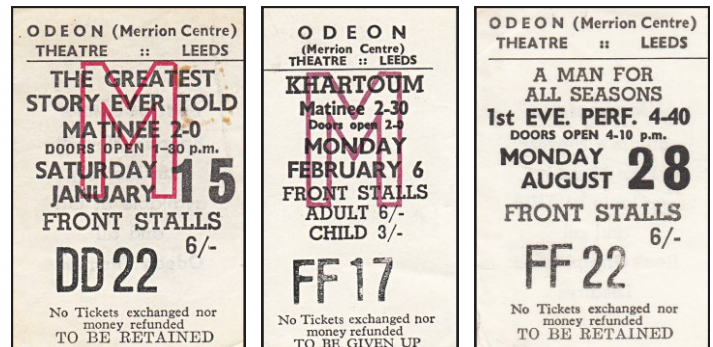
Having seen last year how well my tickets from the Leeds **Majestic** featured in the Bulletin, I thought readers might be interested in these from Rank's other road show house in the City. A site in Mer-rion Street had been purchased in 1937 and a large **Odeon** cinema, shops and café were planned. However, the outbreak of war stopped any progress. With the takeover of **Odeon** by Arthur Rank and the purchase of the **Paramount** chain, there was now a prime City centre house on an important cross-roads, renamed **Odeon**. Plans for Mer-rion Street did not proceed until a large urban clearance at the end of the fifties allowed for a large retail and leisure development to be planned, which was to be called the Mer-rion Centre. Within this scheme there was to be a 900-seat stadium cinema, which Rank were to operate. Opening in August 1964 and billed as 'the cinema of the seventies' the new **Odeon** was designed as a roadshow house with full 70mm facilities and this could have heralded a possible demise of the City's **Majestic**. The **Odeon**'s first film was *The Fall of the Roman Empire*, which ran through to mid-October. This film was part of an arrangement between Rank and independent producer Samuel Bronston, who also had *The Magnificent Showman* showing at the **Majestic**.



The next road show at the **Odeon Mer-rion Centre** was *It's a Mad Mad Mad Mad World* in November. The announcement of this film made some wonder if the **Odeon** had been equipped with Cinerama as the film was shown in that process in Cities with a suitable venue. Although the large U-shaped auditorium looked as though such a screen could have been installed, it was in fact a standard slightly curved 70mm screen. Cinerama was blanked out on posters and no souvenir program was on sale; this referred to 'single lens Cinerama' quite prominently so I have always thought that this might be why it wasn't sold in Leeds. It is also interesting to see that at this time the cinema was being called 'New Odeon Theatre' whereas by December and *Becket* it was now the 'Odeon Mer-rion Centre'.

The **Majestic** was chosen to show *The Sound of Music* from May 1965 (not 1967 as some published sources claim) so the **Odeon** showed Rank's other roadshow films at this time. Interestingly *The Great Race* in 1966 was actually a Warner Brothers release and so would have been expected to play at the **ABC**. Two further films intended to be presented in Cinerama and shown at the **Odeon** were *The Greatest Story Ever Told* in 1966 and *Khartoum* in 1967.

When Rank closed the central **Odeon** in 1968 for twin cinema conversion the **Odeon Mer-rion Centre** took general release films such as *The Graduate* but also showed *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* as the 1968 Christmas attraction. The twin cinema opened in May 1969 with 70mm in both screens and it was announced at that time that the **Odeon Mer-rion Centre** would close temporarily for a Cinerama con-



version. Reopening in July with *Ice Station Zebra* there was some disappointment that the triple projector system had not been put in place but then it had not been used for new film production since *How the West Was Won*, which was released in 1962. *The Wonderful World of the Brothers Grimm* (also in Cinerama) was released a short while later but had actually been filmed earlier.

When the **Odeon Mer-rion Centre** reopened this meant the end of the **Majestic**, which closed on 10 July. Only two true Cinerama releases were shown for *Ice Station Zebra* was followed by *Krakatoa East of Java*. Again some published sources get it wrong by stating that *Grand Prix* and *2001* were shown here but by 1969 those two films had already been shown as regular 70mm events at the **ABC** in 1967 and 1968. If they were ever shown at the **Odeon Mer-rion Centre** then it would have been as re-runs. If you have stayed with me this far you will have possibly observed that more new Cinerama releases were shown before the conversion than after it.



A change of ticket style can be seen in 1970 with *Song Of Norway*, which had the Cinerama logo in advertising but was only promoted this way in the UK. Occasional new films kept coming to the **Odeon Mer-rion Centre** but as the central Headrow **Odeon** twins now had the pick of all new product, a gradual policy of more obscure new product and 70mm re-runs crept in. *Doctor Zhivago* and *Ben Hur* seemed to become regular events in the early seventies. As even re-runs began to dry up the writing was on the wall. The **Odeon Mer-rion Centre** finally closed in October 1977 after a showing of the 70mm version of *Gone With the Wind*. A sad end to the most modern purpose-built cinema in Leeds City centre. Its location within a shopping mall couldn't have helped; either people didn't know it was there or were vaguely aware of a cinema but didn't realise it was an **Odeon**. Now sadly all Rank cinemas in Leeds have gone, the Headrow **Odeon** closing in the early 2000s to become, for a while, a Primark store, today Sports Direct.

**Editor's Note:** Just look at those ticket prices!





# EVEN MORE WANDERINGS

By Hugh Sykes

... continued from Bulletin 49/4

**8 November 2014.** A visit to my wife's family in Llay, Wrexham. Llay had a small cinema next door to the Parish Church but it was demolished c1987 for newer buildings. The parish church of St Martin la Tours does have a pipe organ to which, on a rebuild some years ago, was added the relays and chimes etc from the Hilsdon organ from the **Picture House** Paisley. Nearby in Llay is the wonderful **Miners' Institute**, which remains fully open; I'm not sure on film showings but well worth a look.



The remains of the **Wedgewood/Focus** in Denbigh

Up the road to Denbigh, where the sad remains of the partly demolished **Wedgewood/Focus** are still in situ. I believe films were once screened in the **Town Hall**, situated above the Market Hall but it looks sadly out of use. However, there is a local Film Society with screenings held in the **Theatr Twm o'r Nant**; both cinema and theatre are presented at this venue.



The **Theatr Twm o'r Nant** in Denbigh

Down to Ruthin where the **Picture House** was found in commercial use as an antiques centre. It had 400 seats c1950, a proscenium width of 18ft and prices 9d to 2/3. It uses the original entrance, now reopened; it had previously been altered as a shop. Nothing of the cinema foyer survives but in the auditorium the barrelled ceiling is still there, as is also a tiny sloping walkway, which has levelled display areas to either side. No proscenium remains but French doors with windows are now in the rear wall and let in a lot of light.



The **Picture House** Ruthin

**22 November 2014.** A visit to Long Eaton (Derbys) for a Fairground Model Show – two buildings noted:

The former **Galaxy** cinema opened in August 1907 as the **St James Theatre**. After various name changes it suffered serious fire damage in December 1934. It was rebuilt and modernised and reopened in July 1935 with 850 seats as the **Scala**. Films ceased in July 1964 and bingo took over. In 1991 a false ceiling was installed, cutting off the circle. Bingo continued until 1993, when there was another fire. The derelict building was bought in 2004 and the ground floor converted into a three-screen cinema; the CTA visited in May 2008. This latest enterprise closed about April 2012 and the building is now very derelict.



The **Galaxy** Long Eaton



The rear of the **Galaxy** Long Eaton – the stage area is roofless



The former **Palace/Ritz/Screen** cinema in Long Eaton

The former **Screen** cinema in Market Place opened in July 1912 as the **Palace Theatre** with 687 seats. It was modernised in 1936 and taken over by Star in 1965 and renamed the **Ritz**. It closed in February 1983 with *ET* playing to a packed house. The stalls area was converted to a supermarket and the circle opened as a 250-seat cinema; this closed in October 1996 on the death of the owner. In 2003 the building became The Litten Tree pub, which closed in March 2008. Another bar/nightclub took over but we found it closed and the building empty and To Let.

**6 December 2014.** Christmas shopping in Coventry. Managed a quick visit away from the shops to find the site of the **Alexandra Theatre / Theatre One (two & three)**. Now fully demolished with the site cleared and security fencing around.





The former **Rosum** at Leamore

28 December 2014. A visit to the Chasewater Railway at Brownhills, sadly not running but their shop was open – I bought some ‘loco’ photos. With a little extra time I drove down to Bloxwich and the former **Grosvenor/Odeon**, now a Wetherspoons pub. Onto Leamore and the **Rosum** cinema / bingo club – what a change; the original walls are virtually intact but very extensive cladding has been added to the frontage. At ground level the foyer has been completely rebuilt into a William Hill betting shop with some white large tile cladding up to up to the projection room roof with a ‘Farmfoods’ large sign in the centre. There is now a car park to the right of the foyer and this is where customers for Farmfoods park, then enter the store through a new side entrance. From a brief look inside, nothing of cinema exists, although we may never know what is above the false ceiling. Just a flat-floor box-like unit with a warehouse at the stage end. The 1,200-seat **Rosum** was once part of the Clifton circuit. It later went over to bingo and became part of the Jarglen circuit (based at the **Dale Willenhall**), which had 11 or 12 clubs; it was then sold to Gala Bingo, who closed it.



The former **Gaumont** Stroud, photographed in February 2010

2 January 2015. Short visit to Stroud. I parked near The Warehouse nightclub, which is housed in the former **Gaumont/Odeon/Classic/Mecca** – all clean and tidy outside, complete with canopy and signage on the tower. I noted the six-screen **Vue** cinema in the Merryweather Centre. But Ann and I were in town to visit a bookshop that has a good cinema shelf, at Inprint [www.inprint.co.uk] 31 High Street. Amongst the film titles was a selection of cinema miscellany; unfortunately this time there was nothing we did not already have at home.



The **Roses Theatre** Tewkesbury, photographed in June 2010

31 January 2015. A return visit to Hinckley. The remains of the **Regent** seem to be used for storage. The steelwork for the new shopping mall and cinema was going up fast.

7 February 2015. Banbury. The town’s **Odeon** (ex **Essoldo**) as always in the local paper.

14 February 2015. Tewkesbury. Noted the **Roses** theatre and cinema fully open.



The former **Palace** Wellingborough

15 February 2015. Into Northamptonshire for Rushden and Wellingborough. After visiting the restored station at Rushden, a quick look at Flutters Bingo Club in the former **Ritz**, fully open for bingo. Then onto Wellingborough, where the town’s last original cinema, the **Palace**, is now a pub with the name ‘Cutters’ over the front entrance and signage ‘The Cutting Room’ over the side windows; it appears in good condition.

In Silver Street I found the frontage of the former **Silver** cinema in use as an ‘Authentic South Indian Restaurant, Café and Takeaway’ still complete with upstairs front windows. The auditorium was demolished a few years ago. Part of the left-hand wall survives and can be seen from a pathway into Morrisons at the rear.



The **Silver** Wellingborough

In Midland Road, some years ago now, stood the **Lyric/ABC** cinema, demolished for the Swangate Shopping Centre and new roadway. The centre had a bingo club built in – this in turn, after several changes of ownership, including Gala, closed and has become a church. Films and theatre are on screen and stage at **The Castle**, a modern venue in Castle Road, off London Road. Purchasing the *Wellingborough Extra* local newspaper, it seems the town could have a cinema again, on the roof of a car park.

17 February 2015. Not far from us is Bromsgrove, very much without a cinema. We found the former **Regal** in Worcester Street as ‘Love2Love’ nitespot; the proprietors c1950 were SM Associated Cinemas. There were at least two others in the town. The **Plaza** in Church Street closed as **Essoldo** Bingo and was demolished for the Asda site. Then out on the Stourbridge Road stood the **Catshill Cinema**; the 1950 KYB shows it closed. The former Market Hall area is fenced off and no development yet of the promised cinema.



The former **Regal** Bromsgrove

*All photos by the author on day of visit, unless otherwise stated.*



# THE RITZ TUNBRIDGE WELLS

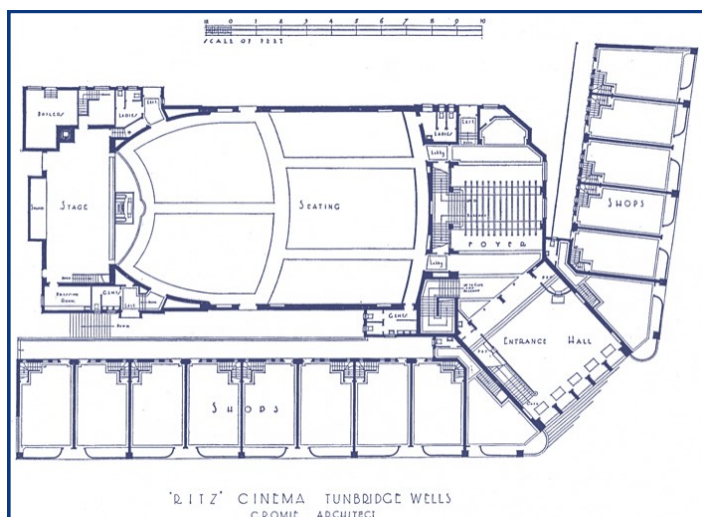
## From birth to dying 1934-2014

By Alan Scott



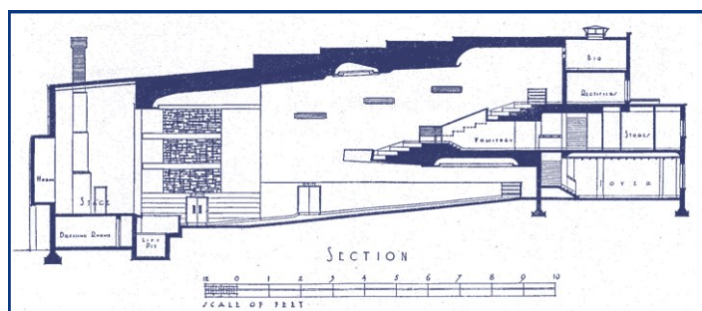
The Ritz in February 2008

In August 2014 a major town centre icon was about to disappear forever. It stood in a prime position at a busy road junction, entertaining the people of Tunbridge Wells for 66 years, closing on 29 October 2000. Then, after standing forlorn and dejected, it was gone; it would have had its 80<sup>th</sup> birthday on 3 December 2014. I have hundreds of photos of cinemas all across the country and I know of no other corner site with such a wonderful frontage, be it quite modest against some of the 2,000-3,000 seat 'supers' of the 1930s.



Architect's plan of the Ritz

It was flanked around both sides with 15 shops on Church Road and Mount Pleasant, all in perfect proportion. The cinema was, at the time of opening, the most luxurious cinema in Kent. It had modest seating in stalls and circle for 1,600, which was about the size of most mid-range cinemas of the time. The building was different in many ways. The auditorium was set well back from the corner entrance with a large foyer and waiting area at the foot of the circle stairs. It also used the slope of the hill to give the auditorium a natural fall with excellent views of the screen from every seat.



A cross section of the Ritz



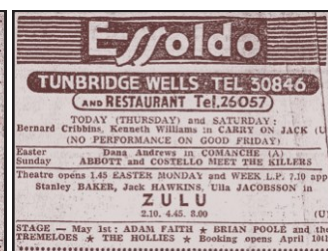
The Ritz at opening in December 1934

It also had a restaurant called "Florida" with views across to the junction from its five large windows across the frontage. Another unusual feature was a flat roof, which had five large bays stepping down from the projection room to above the stage. One had a door in it so access could be made to the ceiling void for lighting maintenance etc. The only downfall with the corner entrance/frontage on the hill was the steps up. On each side of the entrance were two large curved bay windows. The left one was the manager's office, the other formed part of the frontage of the shop around the corner. The problem was that the shop side of the foyer was level with the pavement but the other side had five steps up, which made it awkward for patrons. The cinema at opening had a Compton organ costing £2,000 and was described in the press as unique in construction and very decorative colour schemes.



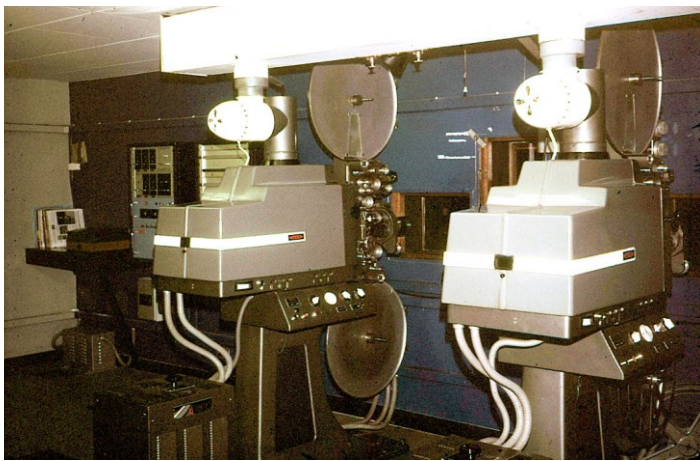
Two views of the original interior of the Ritz

The cinema was the brainchild of a Mr Fairbrother and it was the first cinema to be called **Ritz**. A large doctor's house had stood on the corner site and it was taken down brick by brick and moved to and rebuilt in Forest Road, where it still stands. Demolition took three weeks and the same local firm of T Bates and Sons erected the cinema in 20 weeks – can you imagine that today? It was a joint venture with Union Cinemas and the architect was Robert Cromie, responsible for many cinema buildings. The frontage did have a large glass tower, illuminated by night, which was removed in the 1950s. Union Cinemas would later become part of the huge ABC circuit, who with Rank Organisation would be the two largest cinema circuits in the UK. The **Ritz** became part of the **Essoldo** circuit in 1954 along with the other town cinemas, the **Great Hall / Roxy**, **Kosmos** and **Opera House**, all under the Tunbridge Wells Entertainments banner.



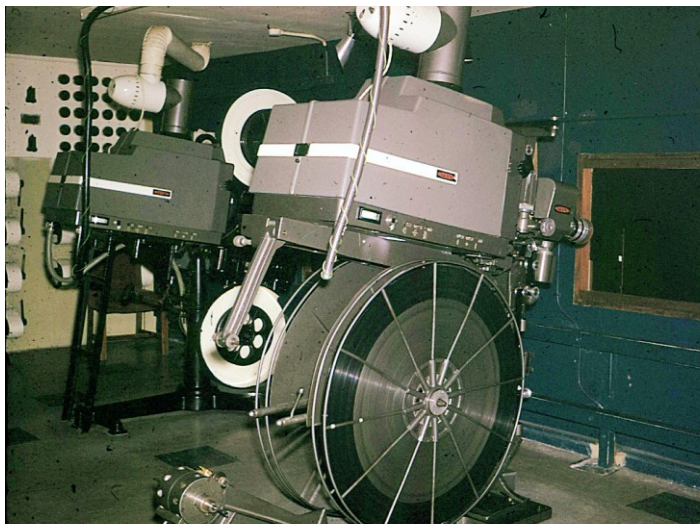
It was announced that the **Essoldo** would close after the last showing of *Midnight Cowboy* on Saturday 24 January 1970 for 16 weeks to have twins! This was their first venture to this new idea and it took nearly as long to adapt the building as it did to build it from the





No① box with Fedi 70mm/35mm projectors

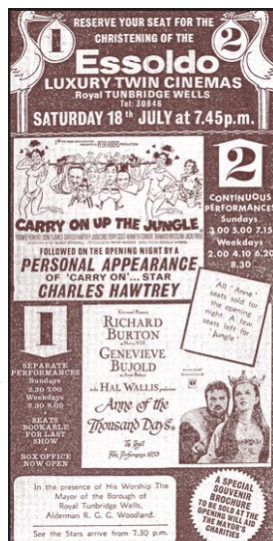
ground up. The stalls became No① with 450 luxury Pullman seats. The circle was extended to the stage area and became No② with 366 seats. The organ had been removed and found a new home at the **Regal** Henley-on-Thames. A new projection room was constructed at the rear of No① with a pair of Fedi 70mm/35mm projectors. No② used the old box at the top of the building for a unique Fedi Solo projector, which had a capacity of 3½ hours of film on one spool.



No② box with the Fedi Solo

This machine was one of only four purchased by Essoldo, with serial number 2; the other three would find homes at Lenton Abbey (Nottingham), Maida Vale (North London) and Stockport, when they were refurbished. It was removed in January 1988 and now resides at the Projected Picture Trust and still runs with a loop of film to show the original idea. We used a Simplex machine to show the ads and trailers, while the Solo rewind. If we had two films (eg a *James Bond* double feature) we would have to use two spools, changing them over. It gave thousands of hours of trouble-free running. It even had a remote control in the stairway to the auditorium for altering the racking and focus (not sound) but we never used it.

The new twins opened on Saturday 18 July 1970 with *Anne of the Thousand Days* in No① and *Carry On Up The Jungle* in No②. It did terrific business from then on. **Essoldo** sold out to **Classic** in April 1972. They put a 126-seat cinema in the Florida restaurant. This operated as a Classic Key cinema, where films would be put to test the water. The opening programme for No③ was *The Last Picture Show* (not very apt) and *Five Easy Pieces* on Friday 25 August 1972. From then on more name changes would follow; **Cannon**, **MGM**, **Virgin** and finally back to **ABC**, which it was on closing on 29 October 2000. The ironic thing about

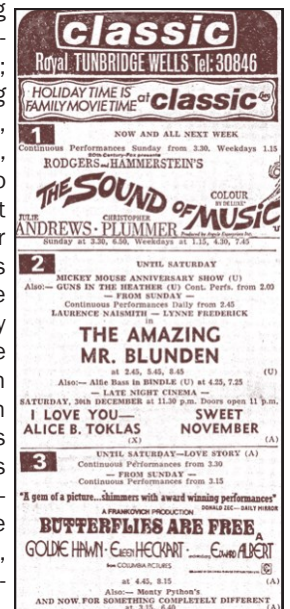


Staff at the Ritz/Essoldo/Classic in 1986  
[L-R] Colin, Bob, Sebastian and the author

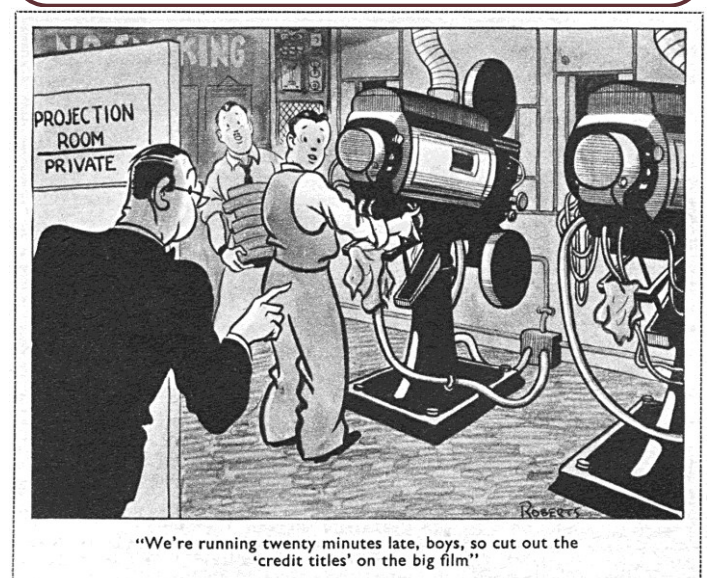
this journey is that if an **Odeon** multiplex hadn't opened out of town, the town centre would still have a mainstream cinema today. It was also unfortunate that the sale of ABC to Odeon meant that there were 12 situations across the country where Odeon had two cinemas in one town so one had to go; Tunbridge Wells was one.

I spent about 20 years there with a wonderful team of mates in the box, two on and two off on a seven day fortnight shift pattern, which meant a lot of time off with my growing family, who are now 38 and 41. Throughout the 70s we had wonderful films; *Close Encounters*, *Star Wars*, *Towering Inferno* (in the hot summer of 1976), *Grease*, *Saturday Night Fever*, *Superman*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* to name just a few. And we mustn't forget *Jaws* but that will make another story for Christmas 2015, when it will be 40 years old. I wouldn't have missed any of it. We have a record of every film shown. Only one thing you will never hear again is the rumble of trains in the tunnel underneath the cinema during quiet parts of the film in No①; the Hastings to Charing Cross main line. I did write to Wetherspoons when they were asking for ideas for another outlet in the town, along with the **Opera House** but they declined. It's a pity, as they have done some very good make-overs of cinemas.

**Editor's Note:** We hope to be able to publish Alan's article on *Jaws* 40th anniversary in the next Bulletin.



## CARTOON CORNER



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



# 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 supplied 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]*

## ABERDEEN

The Bon Accord and St Nicholas Shopping Centre has permission to add a seven-screen cinema with a capacity for 800 people. No operator has been named.

*Press & Journal – 19 August*

## ABINGDON (Oxon)

Work is under way to renovate the **Guildhall** but plans for a cinema screen are still being costed. The Council rejected bids for a two-screen cinema last July.

*Oxford Mail – 2 September*

## ACCRINGTON (Lancs)

A planning application has been submitted to replace the roof and build shop fronts at the former **Ritz**. The building was badly damaged by a major fire in October 2011. The building was auctioned last February for just £25,000. It opened in January 1922 as the **Picturedrome** and was remodelled as the **Ritz** in 1934. Films ceased in August 1958 and the building was converted into a furniture store, which closed in 2005. See p7 Bulletin 48/3. {44964}

*Lancashire Telegraph – 29 October; sent in by Philip Crompton*

## AYR

A seven-screen cinema is part of redevelopment plans for the Kyle Centre but developers have admitted they are struggling to find an operator. Planning permission was granted five months ago. **Cineworld** has already turned down the offer.

*Ayrshire Post – 4 September*

## BALA (Gwynedd)

The Council has decided to go ahead with plans to build a super school in Bala, incorporating a community cinema. No time scale has been given. The **Neuadd Buddug** is not showing films as it has not upgraded its 35mm to digital, although other events take place at the venue. {26558}

*Corwen, Bala Free Press – 16 September*

## BARROW-IN-FURNESS (Cumbria)



Plans have been approved to convert the former **Salthouse Pavilion** into a church. The Spring Mount Christian Fellowship bought the building in March for £97,000. It opened in January 1920 with 940 seats in stalls and circle. It closed in October 1959 and was last used for bingo, which closed in January 2012. The CTA visited in June 2008, when the above photo was taken. {44119}

*North West Evening Mail – 13 August*

## BEVERLEY (East Yorks)

Work has begun on fitting out the new six-screen **Parkway** at the Flemgate Centre. The Centre was due to open at the end of October, with the cinema opening a few weeks later. One auditorium will have a stage for live events.

*Beverley Advertiser – 16 September; Beverley Guardian – 17 September; Hull Daily Mail – 6 October; sent in by Carl Chesworth*

## BEXHILL (East Sussex)

The new Wetherspoons will be called The Picture Playhouse after the former cinema it has taken over. The cinema was opened by the Duchess of Norfolk in 1921 with 800 seats. In 1974 the stalls was turned into a bingo club and a 300-seat cinema created in the circle. Final closure came in November 2008. A number of other names associated with the building's history were also considered. No opening date has been given. {27997}

*Bexhill on Sea Observer – 9 October*

## BIRMINGHAM (King's Heath)

The burnt-out remains of the former **Kingsway/Essoldo** have been put up for sale for £600,000. Films ceased in May 1980 and bingo took over; that closed in 2007. The empty building was badly damaged by fire in September 2011. Last year planning permission was given for it to be converted into a shop with apartments above but nothing happened. The frontage is locally listed. See p14 Bulletin 49/2.

*Birmingham Mail – 7 October*

## BIRMINGHAM (NEC)

The new eleven-screen **Cineworld** was scheduled to open at the NEC's Resort World in October. It will have 1,782 seats, including a 282-seat **IMAX** screen. Four screens will have fewer than 100 seats, four will have more than 200 with the rest in between.

*Birmingham Mail – 25 September; sent in by Carl Chesworth*

## BOURNEMOUTH



A train driver paid £2,000 to hire the **ABC** for his 51<sup>st</sup> birthday. He held a private screening of Monty Python's *Life of Brian*; it was the first time it had been screened publicly in the town since it was banned by the Council 35 years ago. *Photo taken May 2006.*

*Daily Telegraph – 28 September; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Martin Tapsell*

## BRADFORD (West Yorks)

Permission has been granted for a six-screen cinema in the Broadway. A "high quality operator" will be announced shortly.

*Telegraph & Argus (Bradford) – 5 September*

The **IMAX** cinema at the **National Media Museum** has reopened. The new 60ft by 48ft screen was lowered into place by a crane. It has a new digital projection system and improved seating, with more leg-room. {3672}

*Telegraph & Argus (Bradford) – 7, 8 September*

**Reel Cinemas** are said to have signed up to operate a five-screen multiplex at the former Royal Mail sorting office in Forster Court. A public consultation was held and a planning application was due to be submitted in October. If approved, work could start next summer with completion in spring 2018.

*Telegraph & Argus (Bradford) – 8, 12 September*



## BRIGHTON

The **Komedia** arts venue had to close for a week in August due to flooding caused by heavy rainfall. {40210}

*The Argus (Brighton) – 21 August; sent in by Barry Quinton*

The **Duke of York's Picturehouse** closed for a few days in September to enable the projection and sound system to be upgraded. They still retain a 35mm projector. The 279-seat venue celebrated its 105<sup>th</sup> birthday on 22 September. {2433}

*The Argus (Brighton) – 11 September; sent in by Barry Quinton*

The grade II\* listed **Hippodrome** remains on top of the Theatres Trust 'Buildings at Risk' register. Former leaseholders Academy Music Group bought the freehold of the building in June. {36884}

*The Argus (Brighton) – 19 September; sent in by Barry Quinton*

Police are hunting a man who carried out an "indecent act" in front of a group of 15-year-old girls watching *Maze Runner* at the **Odeon**. When he realised the girls were about to report him, he ran out of the fire exit. {20676}

*The Argus (Brighton) – 28 September; sent in by Barry Quinton*

## BRISTOL



Nearly two years after the successful planning appeal, work has finally started on **Everyman's** latest venture to bring three screens back to the grade II listed **Whiteladies** cinema. Possibly a spring opening but I wouldn't count on it! {849}

*Sent in by Graham Staples; photo taken March 2006*

## BURGESS HILL (West Sussex)

Councillors have approved a £65m redevelopment of the town centre, to include a ten-screen **Cineworld**. The Heights commercial building will be demolished to make way for the cinema. There is already a two-screen **Orion** in the town.

*Mid Sussex Times – 3 September, 25 October*

## BURY ST EDMUNDS (Suffolk)

Plans have been submitted to add a third screen to the **Abbeygate Picture House**. It will have 180 seats and be in the former bingo area downstairs, which closed in September 2014. The two upstairs screens will remain, seating 196 and 117. The cinema was bought by Tony Jones in June 2014. Manager and CTA member Pat Church will have been at the cinema for 50 years next February.

*Bury Free Press – 16 October; sent in by Pat Church*

## CARDIFF

The Wetherspoons Pub in the **Prince of Wales** was evacuated on 23 June after smoke was seen coming from the basement. The fire brigade were called and dealt with the incident, which was caused by contractors working on ducting. The pub reopened later.

*South Wales Echo – 24 June; sent in by Jon Williams*

## CASTLETOWN (Isle of Man)

A group is investigating reopening the former **Royal British Legion Hall**. It was built in 1944 as a gymnasium and cinema for use of naval personnel living in the surrounding Nissen Huts, known as HMS Urley. The original entrance, dance floor, stage and projection room survive. The Admiralty has given permission for the hall to be called HMS Urley. Funding is to be sought for the restoration, which is estimated to take ten years to complete.

*Isle of Man Examiner – 1 September*

## CATTERICK GARRISON (North Yorks)

A new seven-screen **Empire** cinema was due to open on the army base on 23 October. It will be open to the general public.

*Northern Echo – 15 August*

## CHELTENHAM (Glos)



Ace bingo in the former **Ritz/Essoldo** seems to have closed, although we can find no exact date. Planning permission for apartments has been granted and it is likely that the building will be demolished. It opened in September 1937 and films ceased in April 1964. {35653}

*Gloucestershire Echo – 21 March, 16 August; sent in by John Elliott;*

*photo taken April 2008*

## CHORLEY (Lancs)

Building work could start "within months" on a £12.9m extension to the Market Walk shopping centre. The Council pledged that work would not start until 75% of the units have been signed up. The project includes a six-screen **Reel** cinema, due to open by Easter 2017.

*Chorley Guardian – 6 October*

## CLEVEDON (North Somerset)



A new café/bar opened at the grade II listed **Curzon** on 21 October. The development is at the rear of the building and includes a large ground-floor space, a second-storey extension and a new roof terrace. A £160,000 loan from an ethical bank funded the scheme. The cinema opened in April 1912 and claims to be the oldest continuously operated cinema in the world.

*North Somerset Times – 14 October*

**AE writes:** Its claims to be the oldest continuously operated cinema in the world are frankly ridiculous and should be discontinued immediately. The **Duke of York's** Brighton opened on 22 December 1910 and is still going strong.

## COLCHESTER (Essex)

A twelve-screen **Cineworld** with an **IMAX** screen is proposed for the Northern Gateway development. Colchester already has an eight-screen **Odeon** in the town centre and **Curzon** is proposing to build a three-screen cinema in Queen Street.

*Essex County Standard – 18, 25 September*

## CORBY (Northants)

Following the opening of the **Savoy** (see p13 last Bulletin) the proposed **Vue** will clearly now not be built. They stepped in with a plan to build a new cinema while what became the **Savoy** project was in abeyance a couple of years ago. Notices had appeared on hoardings around the old bus station and Crown House site to say that **Vue** was coming but, unsurprisingly, these have disappeared.

*Sent in by Chris Godbold & Trevor Haynes*



## CUMBERNAULD (North Lanark)

Plans for a multiplex as part of the Cumbernauld centre look likely not to happen as there appears to be little interest from potential operators.

*Cumbernauld News – 22 July*

## DEAL (Kent)



New plans for the **Regent** have been unveiled by owner James Wallace. These include three cinema screens, one of which would be multipurpose use with a balcony. There will be a bistro in the foyer and an 80-seat restaurant upstairs along with four to six high-end residential flats. The plans will be submitted for approval within the next two months.

*East Kent Mercury – 10 September; sent in & view from beach by Martin Tapsell*

## DERBY



The **Hippodrome** has a new owner. The grade II listed building is now in the hands of Blake Finance, a London-based bank that gave previous owner Christopher Anthony a mortgage for the property. He caused severe damage to the building in 2008 and there have been several fires since. The new owners say the building is so severely damaged that it may have to be demolished. A campaign to save it continues. It was built in 1914 as a 2,300-seat variety theatre but became a 1,800-seat cinema from 1930 until October 1950. After a brief period as a theatre, it became bingo in 1962; this ceased in 2007. {14683}

*Derby Telegraph – 28 September; sent in by Peter Good & Christopher Smith; photo of damage taken May 2008*

## DORCHESTER (Dorset)

The refurbishment of the **Plaza**, as mentioned in the last Bulletin, is complete. As reported, tabs have been reinstalled in screen ① (the former circle) and work perfectly! The newly-designed foyer retains its art deco heritage with appropriate light fittings and vintage, reproduced posters, including *African Queen* and the original *King Kong*, lining the walls. A Westar projector currently takes pride of place in the centre of the foyer. {15143}

*Sent in by Terry Hanstock & Mike Whitcombe*

**AE writes:** This refurbishment, which includes an additional fourth screen in the front stalls, was in response to the unwelcome arrival of a new three-screen **Odeon**, which has been forced to compete with the **Plaza**'s low prices.

## DOWNHAM MARKET (Norfolk)

Permission has been granted to convert the former **Regent** into a three-screen cinema and wine bar. The building was constructed in 1928 and films ceased in October 1976. It became a cycle museum and was last used as an antiques emporium. Planning permission for demolition and replacement with flats was granted in 2004 but nothing happened. {28650}

*Lynn News – 21 August; photo taken May 2004*



## DRIFFIELD (East Yorks)

The **Market House** on Exchange Street could become a part-time cinema if Councillors grant approval. It could be open up to four nights a week. Driffield used to have two cinemas; the **Victoria** closed in 1962 and the **Majestic** in 1979. The nearest cinemas are now in Hull.

*Driffield Times & Post – 20, 27 August*

## DUBLIN (Ireland)

A new nine-screen **Odeon**-branded cinema with 1,535 seats was scheduled to open on 16 October at Charlestown shopping mall in the Dublin suburb of Finglas.

*Sent in by Bob Bradshaw*

## DUDLEY

Campaigners wanting to save the **Hippodrome** were allowed inside for what could be a final inspection, unless a rescue plan is agreed. The Council has set a deadline of the end of the year for the future of the building to be decided. After the visit, the group revealed ambitious plans for a rescue package. {41631}

*Express & Star – 8, 13 October; sent in by Ivan Harris*

The **Showcase** has installed a 47ft XPlus screen. The auditorium also has a Dolby Atmos sound system. {24671}

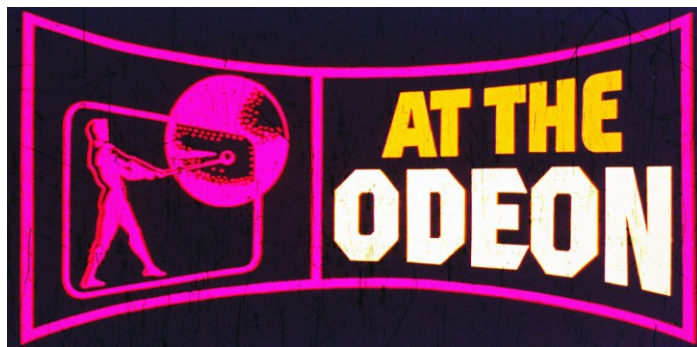
*Express & Star – 12 October; sent in by Ivan Harris*

## DUMFRIES



Planning permission to revamp the entrance to the **Odeon** has been refused. Instead, the Council is demanding that the original façade, still underneath the current sheeting, should be restored. The building originally opened as the **Regal** in December 1931 with 1,699 seats in stalls and circle. The auditorium was reached by a long corridor from the entrance. It was split horizontally in March 1972 with a 532-seat cinema upstairs and bingo downstairs. It became an **Odeon** in 2001. {27022}

*Dumfries & Galloway Standard – 9 September; photo taken August 2009*





## DURHAM

Plans have been approved for the £30m development of The Gates shopping centre. The project includes a six-screen **Odeon**. There is also a rival scheme for an **Everyman** cinema as part of the redevelopment of Milburngate House, just yards away. The last cinema in the City, the **Robins**, closed in 2003.

*Northern Echo* – 1, 5, 7 October; *The Journal (Newcastle)* – 7 October; *Durham Advertiser* – 8 October

## EASTBOURNE (East Sussex)

Eastbourne Borough Council has submitted a planning application to improve the Devonshire Park area. The application covers the restoration and enhancement of the **Devonshire Park Theatre**, the **Congress Theatre** and the **Winter Gardens**, all listed grade II. If successful, work could start in 2016 and be completed in 2020. {46242}

*The Argus (Brighton)* – 14 September; sent in by Barry Quinton

## EASTWOOD (Notts)

A multiplex could be built on the Giltbrook Retail Park and **Savoy** cinemas have been consulted. No final details have been given. Eastwood used to have three cinemas; the **Rex** closed in 1966 and a supermarket now occupies the site. The **Empire** closed in 1956 and became a Woolworth's store; it is now a supermarket.

*Nottingham Post* – 8 October

## EDINBURGH



Stefan King, millionaire founder of the G1 group, has bought the A-listed **Odeon** Clerk Street. Films ceased in August 2003 and various attempts to reopen it have since been made. The G1 group operates the **Grosvenor** cinema in Edinburgh and the **Playhouse** in Perth. Plans for the building remain under wraps but an assurance was made that earlier proposals to create a superpub would not be revived. {22117} *Photo taken March 2004.*

*Herald Scotland* – 31 October; sent in by Richard Findlay & Rachel Woodforde

## ELGIN (Moray)

A third screen is being added to the **Moray Playhouse** – anyone know where? Staff and workers have reported they feel they are being watched and have heard voices, even when there is nobody else in the building. Bosses are considering hiring professionals to prove the cinema, which opened in 1932, is haunted. {26391}

*Press & Journal (Aberdeen)* – 24 August; *Evening Express (Aberdeen)* – 25 August; photo taken September 2008



## ELLON (Aberdeen)

After successful fundraising, a cinema quality projector and server system has been installed at the **Victoria Hall**. The first film was *Minions* on 20 August. The next project is to carpet all the upstairs area and install cinema seating in the balcony. The venue previously hosted a mobile cinema, dating as far back as 1939 – see letter p31 Bulletin 48/3.

*Ellon Advertiser* – 14 August

## ENNISKILLEN (County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland)

The former **Ritz** and adjacent Railway Hotel have been sold to a property developer, David Mahon. He says that at present he does not know what he is going to do with the two properties. See p14 last Bulletin. {26719}

*Fermanagh Herald* – 26 August

## GATLEY (Stockport)



Plans have been unveiled to build a small supermarket with flats above on the site of the former **Tatton**. The façade will be retained. The cinema closed 15 years ago and the auditorium was demolished. The Council has issued a Compulsory Purchase Order for the site, saying they are anxious to keep their options open, should the deal fall through. Previous schemes have come to naught, even though permission had been granted. {2536}

*Manchester Weekly News* – 2, 10 September; *Stockport Express* – 14 October; *Manchester Evening News* – 22 October; photo taken June 2006 sent in by Carl Chesworth, Nick Taylor & John S Wilkinson

## GLOUCESTER



The Wetherspoons pub in the former **Regal** has been refurbished. It still retains the balcony with display figures and the outside has been repainted and the façade sandblasted. A display of minis, reminiscent of *The Italian Job* was held outside as part of the Gloucester Retro Weekend. {34998}

*Gloucester Citizen* – 29 August; sent in & photo by Ross Campbell

## GRAYS (Essex)

JD Wetherspoon has acquired the grade II\* listed **State** and will invest £3m in turning it into a pub. There will be space for exhibitions and live performances. The plans include keeping the auditorium unaltered and they will utilise the existing very large ground floor and circle bars. {1837}

*Thurrock Gazette* – 14, 17 September; sent in by Margaret Burgoine, Carl Chesworth & Gavin McGrath

## GUILDFORD (Surrey)

A local study says that Guildford could support an additional six cinema screens. There is already a nine-screen **Odeon** although the study also says this is on a “peripheral and poorly connected site” by the river.

*Surrey Advertiser* – 11 September



## HAMILTON (South Lanark)



An evening walk to a restaurant in Hamilton on Wednesday 16 September took me past the very sad façade of the former **La Scala/Gaumont** in Keith Street. It would appear that what remained of the auditorium and foyer have now been demolished and what is left is in very poor condition. There is a serious pigeon guano problem on the steps and upper cornices as well as vegetation growth, which is allowing ingress of water. The structure retains its B listing and so I will speak to Historic Scotland with a view to their contacting the owner (possibly still South Lanarkshire Council). Probably a very good example of the worst consequences of façadeism. {23277} [www.scottishcinemas.org.uk/scotland/hamilton/lascala]

*Sent in & photo by Stewart Kidd*

## HARLOW (Essex)

Construction has started on the six-screen **Cineworld** at the Harvey Centre. It will have a 259-seat **IMAX** screen with the five other auditoria ranging in size from 205 to 104 seats. Handover is on schedule for August 2016 with an opening expected before the end of that year.

*Harlow Star – 8 October*

**AE writes:** This **Cineworld** will presumably replace the existing **Cineworld** in the Queensgate Centre, one in the early style of multiplexes without raked seating.

## HAVERHILL (Suffolk)

The number of people using the cinema facilities at the 210-seat **Haverhill Arts Centre** is at an all-time five-year high. However the main house lighting is more than 20 years old and the two sound systems are in need of improvement. It is anticipated that the necessary improvements will be carried out whilst the grade II listed Victorian building is closed in early 2016. [www.haverhillartscentre.co.uk]

*Haverhill Echo – 17 September*

## HEATON MOOR (Stockport)

The recreated **Savoy** was due to open on 23 October. A new 4k digital projector and larger screen have been installed. The auditorium has been re-stepped and a new canopy erected, supported by new stone pillars. It will be run by the Mundin family, who operate the **Ritz** in Belper and the **Regal** at Melton Mowbray. Their blog has some photos [www.savoycinemaheaton.com/blog] of the transformation as does the *Manchester Evening News* website at [tinyurl.com/nsbb9j4] {24761}

*Stockport Express – 2, 9 September; Manchester Evening News – 20, 22 October; sent in by Carl Chesworth, Richard Lysons, Nick Taylor & John S Wilkinson*

## HEBDEN BRIDGE (West Yorks)

Poet Simon Armitage was interviewed in the stalls of the **Picture House** in a television documentary on the former Poet Laureate, Ted Hughes (*Ted Hughes: stronger than death* – broadcast on BBC2, 10 October 2015). Armitage recalled seeing Hughes give a reading there when he was a schoolboy. As well as the stalls, a fair bit of the balcony was visible during the interview. There were also brief shots of the exterior and entrance lobby.

*Sent in by Terry Hanstock; see photo on front cover, taken September 2010*



## HEMEL HEMPSTEAD (Herts)

Phase one of the refurbishment of the **Empire** (ex **Odeon**) reopened on 9 October. The full relaunch was due to open on 26 October, with 2,266 seats and 17 screens, including a 281-seat **IMAX** auditorium. {24766}

*Hemel Hempstead Gazette – 19 August*

## HEREFORD

Planning permission has been granted for the Freedom Church to turn the former **Ritz/ABC/Odeon** (etc) into a place of Worship. It is expected the subdivision will be removed. Films ceased here in May 2014 when a new **Odeon** multiplex opened. See p20 Bulletin 49/4. {24769}

*Hereford Times – 20 August; sent in by Jon Williams*

## HINCKLEY (Leics)

The new five-screen **Cineworld** is scheduled to open on 4 December. An open day for staff recruitment has been held. The former **Danilo** closed as the **Cannon** in 1993; it became a sports bar but is now disused.

*Hinckley Times – 7 October*

## HULL (East Yorks)

Work has started on converting the Swan Inn into an Indian restaurant. The pub, which has been empty for years, is next to the grade II listed bombed-out ruins of the former **National** cinema. Both buildings are owned by the same person, Saleem Hakim and have been at the centre of a long-running dispute with campaigners who want to turn the former cinema into a memorial site. {40893}

*Hull Daily Mail – 25 October; sent in by David Alexander*

## KINGS LYNN (Norfolk)

Plans for a new cinema to be built on the Morston Point site have been dropped due to a planning refusal. These plans are thought to have had an influence on a scheme to add three extra screens at the **Majestic** although permission for these may have lapsed.

*Lynn News – 2 October*

## KIRKCALDY (Fife)

Plans have been unveiled to convert the former **Kings/ABC** into a 2,000-seat concert theatre. A crowdfunding campaign has been launched to raise the £30,000 required to take the project to the next level. See p15 last Bulletin. {23081}

*Dundee Courier – 13, 15 October*

## LEWES (East Sussex)

Work is underway to transform the former Harvey's Depot into a three-screen cinema. It will trade under the name **Depot Cinema** and be run by Lewes Community Screen, a charity established in 2012. No opening date has been given. [www.lewesdepot.org]

*Sussex Express – 2 October*

## LIVERPOOL (Garston)



The Theatres Trust is appealing for a community group to take over the **Empire**. It was built in 1915 with 1,050 seats and only used as a theatre for three years before becoming a cinema. Films ceased in 1962 with *Jailhouse Rock*. It then became a bingo hall, which closed in 2009. If a new occupier is not found soon, the building could be demolished. It has been on the 'at risk' register for six years. {32688}

*Liverpool Echo – 24 September; photo taken July 2007*



## LONDON (Barking)

A three-screen arthouse cinema is being planned for a development in Axe Street. No operator has been named.

*Barking & Dagenham Post – 7 October*

## LONDON (Ealing)



The Secretary of State has approved Ealing Council's application for a Compulsory Purchase Order for the site of the **Forum**. It first opened in 1934 with 2,175 seats and became an **ABC** in 1961. It was tripled in 1975 and had various name changes before coming under the ownership of **Empire** Cinemas in December 2006. They closed it in September 2008 and in 2009 demolished the auditorium with plans to build a sixteen-screen cinema behind the retained façade. Despite numerous promises by **Empire** Cinemas that construction would begin, nothing happened. Plans have been approved for an eight-screen cinema but it is not known who will operate it. Ealing is a booming area thanks to the forthcoming Crossrail link and it is possible that **Empire** could sell the site for more than they paid for it. It is thought they may appeal. The façade still stands, propped up by scaffolding. {3772}

*MovieScope – 10 October; Ealing Today – 14 October; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Robert Gurd; photo courtesy Sinister Dexter*

## LONDON (Eltham)

Planning permission has been granted for a six-screen cinema on the former Poundland site. The old building will be demolished and a new 900-seat cinema erected, with three screens in the basement and three on the first floor with two restaurants at ground level. No operator or opening date have been given.

*Greenwich Time – 8, 22 September; News Shopper (Greenwich & Charlton), Mercury (Lewisham) – 23 September*

## LONDON (Hornchurch)

The former **Towers/Odeon** has been sold to supermarket chain Lidl. It opened in August 1935 as an independent and was taken over by Odeon in 1943; it was renamed **Odeon** in June 1950. Films ceased in October 1973 with *Live and Let Die* and bingo took over. It was renovated in 2010 and the original **TOWERS** sign uncovered. Bingo players held a protest outside the building. See Casework p6 for full story and also pages 9-10 in the article on its architect Leslie Kemp in *Picture House* 36, 2011.

*Hornchurch Life – September; Romford & Havering Post – 23 September, 7 October; Yellow Advertiser – 5 October; East London Enquirer – 8 October; Romford Recorder – 9 October; sent in by Margaret Burgoine & Brian Luck*

## LONDON (Kensington)

Film producer Lord [David] Puttnam has warned that demolition of the Kensington **Odeon** will make the area "the dullest point in London." It closed on 31 August after developers Minerva obtained planning permission to demolish most of the 1926 building and replace it with apartments and a seven-screen basement cinema. Work was set to begin in late September with asbestos removal. The scheme would retain the two historic lanterns on the forecourt and the two plane trees in front of the cinema. Campaigners entered through a window and occupied the building on 3 September to protest against the closure but were evicted about 12 hours later. {13801}

*Evening Standard – 24, 8 September; sent in by Keith Bye & Carl Chesworth*

## LONDON (Kentish Town)

The former North London Polytechnic building has changed hands again but the latest owners have said that a 70-seat cinema will still open on the site. An operator is being sought. See p24 Bulletin 48/5.

*Camden New Journal – 1 October*

## LONDON (Kings Cross)

**Everyman** has signed up to operate a three-screen cinema in the R7 office building in Handyside Street. It should be open by March 2017.

*Ham & High – 1 October*

## LONDON (Muswell Hill)

The Grade II\* listed **Odeon** has been re-branded as the **Everyman**. There have been a few minor changes inside including repainting of the foyers, installation of a temporary bar and the uncovering of the original flooring to the outer foyer. This has revealed an art deco design in the terrazzo. A planning application has been submitted for further alterations, including a permanent bar, restoration of access to the disused front stalls area and a reduced seating capacity in the two mini-screens. See Casework p6. {13783}

*Sent in by Jeremy Buck*

## LONDON (Stepney)



The Wurlitzer organ that has been installed in the **Troxy** had its inaugural concert on 22 August. It was removed in 1960 from the **Trocadero** Elephant and Castle. Further concerts and film accompaniments are planned. It featured in an edition of the *BBC Travel Show* in October, with organist Richard Hills. {3775}

*Independent on Sunday – 23 August; photo taken September 2004*

## LONDON (Walthamstow)

The grade II\* listed former **Granada/EMD** has been placed on the 'at risk' register by the Theatres Trust amid fears that the auditorium may not be brought back into use. The cinema closed in 2003 and was bought by the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God. They failed in their bid to use it as a place of worship and sold the building to a pub chain in November 2014. The pub company has said it will restore the building. {9397}

*Waltham Forest Guardian – 24 September, 2 October*

## LONDON (Wanstead)

The former **Kinema** has been demolished; planning permission was obtained in September. Flats and a restaurant will be built on the site. It first opened in 1913 as the **Empire**, an adaptation of an existing building. It became the **Kinema** in October 1930, when sound was installed. Films ceased in November 1956 and the building became a bowling alley, then a nightclub, then bingo and finally snooker. {32693}

*Wanstead & Woodford Guardian – 8 October; photo [top next page] July 2006*

## LONDON (West End)

Stephen Fry made a surprise appearance at a public meeting where he made an impassioned plea to save the **Curzon Soho** (ex **Columbia**) from demolition for the Crossrail project. The campaign has the support of several other leading figures, including Benedict Cumberbatch and former **National Film Theatre** and **MoMI** chief Leslie Hardcastle.

*West End Extra – 26 September; sent in by Keith Bye*





The former **Kinema** in Wanstead, London [see previous page]

The **Regent Street Cinema** has just begun screening Wednesday matinées of Classic Hollywood films, on 35mm where possible, with a 20 minute concert on the Compton organ prior to the film starting. Ticket prices for over-55s are a bargain at £1.75! The current line-up can be found at: [www.theatreorganclub.co.uk/page2.htm]

Sent in by **Jeremy Buck & Ken Roe**



The sad sight of the **Odeon West End** [ex **Leicester Square Theatre**] being demolished in early September. It is a pretty big operation with several surrounding streets closed, including the exit from Leicester Square into Panton Street. The demolition presumably includes the **Odeon** administrative offices at 54 Whitcomb Street, located in a bottom corner of the complex.

Sent in & photo by **Jeremy Perkins**

**LONDON** (Woolwich)



I was passing through Woolwich on Tuesday 13 October and noticed that the **ABC/Regal** has now got scaffolding up around it. This is the end of this cinema. I contacted the local Council who stated that it was to be demolished and that flats and commercial premises were to be built in its place.

Sent in & photo [c1978] by **Martin Humm**

**MANCHESTER** (Central)

The 594-year-old Manchester Cathedral was transformed into a 300-seat cinema for three days for the Manchester Science Festival. Films such as *The Matrix*, *Back to the Future* and *ET* were shown.

Manchester Evening News – 23 October; sent in by **Nick Taylor**

**MARGATE** (Kent)

Thanet Council has approved plans to refurbish the grade II\* listed **Dreamland Cinema**. The plans include work on the metal lettering, new neon lighting, windows, shop front and restorations to the façade. The **Sunshine Café** will also be restored. {15123}

Isle of Thanet Gazette – 28 August; sent in by **Margaret Burgoine**

**MEXBOROUGH** (South Yorks)



The former **Majestic** is For Sale with a guide price of £175,000+. It opened in January 1929 and closed in January 1972. It reopened in November 1972 but closed again in June 1983. It was last used for snooker in the circle and a banqueting suite below. {25488}

Estate Agent's particulars; sent in by **David Alexander**; photo taken July 2004

**MIDSOMER NORTON** (NE Somerset)

Plans to turn the former **Palladium** into a Wetherspoon's pub are continuing, despite delays caused by bats and access problems. Revised plans have been submitted, showing how deliveries will be made to the building. {28883}

Somerset Guardian – 17 September

**MOSSLEY** (Tameside, Greater Manchester)

A 60-seat cinema called **The Vale** has opened in a former cotton mill off Micklehurst Road. The seats have come from the Municipal Hall in Colne and have been restored.

Manchester Evening News – 2 September; sent in by **Richard Lysons**

**MUMBLES/MWMBWLS** (Swansea)



The former **Tivoli Cinema** on the seafront at Mumbles has been stripped down to the bare walls inside and the asbestos roof has been removed. The building will form part of a new development of an upmarket shopping mall called 'Oyster Square' and the façade facing Mumbles Road will also be retained. It closed as a cinema on 9 December 1964 with *Paris When It Sizzles* and *Shadow of Treason*. The building briefly became bingo then was used as an amusement arcade for many years. The cinema opened in 1939 as the **Tivoli** but the building was erected in 1906 and originally had the name **Kursaal**. Mumbles had another cinema called the **Regent** (see p3 Bulletin 49/3) that also opened in 1927 but was an earlier closure than the **Tivoli**. Although I cannot be specific about the date of closure, I believe if it was in the mid to late fifties as I remember visiting in the mid-sixties when it was a dance hall. It does not appear in the Kine Year Book of 1951. Does anyone know the exact date? {22955}

Sent in by **Elliot Griffiths & John Skinner** [photo]



## NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE

The **Star and Shadow** cinema is to move into the former ScS store in Heaton. The volunteer-run cinema was established in 2006 in Stepney Bank.

*Newcastle Chronicle – 5 October*

## NEWMARKET (Suffolk)

The Council has dropped its support for flats on the site of the former **Doric** – see p17 last Bulletin. Two local residents have put forward plans that could see the building reopened as a community entertainment venue, including a cinema. The Council has named it as An Asset of Community Value. {24935}

*Newmarket Journal – 20, 26, 27 August, 24 September*

## NEWPORT (South Wales)

The new eight-screen **Cineworld** at the Friars Walk shopping centre is scheduled to open on 12 November. There is already a thirteen-screen **Cineworld** (ex **Virgin/UGC**) on the outskirts.

*Newport Matters – September; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Elliot Griffiths*

## PENZANCE (Cornwall)



Plans (announced on p28 of Bulletin 49/1) to expand the **Savoy** have been submitted to the Council. A block of flats will be built on land next to the cinema, which will be sold to finance two extra screens. The new screens will be completely soundproof; this has been an issue in the past. {25235}

*The Cornishman – 27 August; photo taken on CTA visit June 2013*

## PETERBOROUGH (Cams)

**Odeon** has been named as the operator of an eleven-screen cinema to be built in the Queensgate Shopping Centre. **Odeon** used to run a three-screen cinema in what is now the **Broadway Theatre** until November 1991.

*Evening Telegraph (Peterborough) – 20 August*

Developers of the North Westgate shopping centre have warned that the project is at risk if it does not include a cinema. **Light Cinemas** is understood to be interested in operating it. They have objected to rival proposals (above) for a multiplex **Odeon** at Queensgate. There is already an out-of-town thirteen-screen **Showcase**.

*Evening Telegraph (Peterborough) – 10, 17 September*

## PICKERING (North Yorks)

A scheme to set up a drive-in cinema at The Showground in Malton Road has been scuppered – by newts. Planners are recommending refusal of the application because of the threat to wildlife and the impact on neighbours. They say that no ecological survey has been carried out.

*Malton & Pickering Mercury – 14 October*

## PONTEFRAC (West Yorks)

A campaign has been launched to see if the disused 412-seat circle cinema in the former **Crescent** could be reopened for films and other uses. It has not been used since it closed in 1993. The building opened in November 1926 with 1,190 seats in stalls and circle and a fully equipped stage. It was subdivided in 1971 with bingo underneath; that later became snooker, which continues today. A school of dance occupies the former ballroom. There are some excellent pictures on an urban explorer website at [tinyurl.com/oxzx6qv] showing



the projector and screen still in situ. The campaign website is at [www.the-crescent.org.uk]. People are being invited to submit their ideas for the future use of the building. {3786}

*Pontefract & Castleford Express – 3 September, 15 October;*

*Yorkshire Evening Post – 5 September; photo taken August 2005*

## PORT TALBOT

Plans to restore and reopen the **Plaza** could affect the nearby **Princess Royal Theatre**. It is part of the Civic Centre but has never shown films.

*South Wales Evening Post – 6 October; sent in by Elliot Griffiths*

## PORTHMADOG (Gwynedd)



Planning permission has been granted to demolish the former **Coliseum**. It opened in July 1931 with 630 seats in stalls and circle. It has had various closures and reopenings since the 1970s, often run by volunteers. It finally closed in 2011 and a campaign to save it was unsuccessful.

*Daily Post (Wales) – 29 August, 8, 9 September; Western Mail – 2 September;*

*BBC News website – 8 September; Cambrian News – 10 September;*

*sent in by Elliot Griffiths; photo taken June 2011*

## PORTSMOUTH

The **New Theatre Royal** reopened on 15 October after being closed for four years for a £4.5m refurbishment. The theatre can now hold 700 and the stage, fly-tower and backstage areas have been improved. {27719}

*Daily Echo – 11 August; sent in by Ian Patterson*

The retail store, along with its accompanying car park, on the site of the former **Gaumont** in London Road, North End, has closed. Speculation surrounds the future of this huge area, which the **Gaumont** formally occupied. Designed by London architect S Clough, the **Gaumont** opened in March 1923 as the **Regent** with a 2,000 seating capacity and was taken over by Gaumont in 1931. Finally renamed **Gaumont** in March 1953, it shut in September 1973 when Rank, who then owned it, decided to close it but keep the **Odeon** (1936 Andrew Mather) opposite open. (The **Odeon** finally closed in January 2008 and a Sainsbury's Local now occupies the long, main foyer.) The **Gaumont** was demolished in April 1974 with a single-storey brick-faced retail store operated by Presto opening on the site. Sainsbury's eventually took this store over and, on closure, it was run by the Cooperative. {22289}

*Sent in by Mike Whitcombe*



## PRESTON (Lancs)

Redevelopment of the Fishergate Centre will include a new **Vue** cinema; a planning application is about to be submitted. The lease of the seven-screen **Vue** (ex **Warner Village**) at nearby Walton-le-Dale expires soon.

*Lancashire Evening Post – 10 September*

## RETFORD (Notts)

The Screen, a film club based at the 159-seat **Retford Little Theatre** opened on 5 June. The original plan was to finish its first season before purchasing a new screen but attendances have been so good they have gone four months ahead of schedule. [www.rlt.org.uk]

*Retford Times – 4 September; sent in by Terry Hanstock*

## RHOSLLANERCHRUGOG (Wrexham)



The grade II listed **Stiwit Theatre** will celebrate its 90<sup>th</sup> birthday next year. It was constructed as a Miners' Institute in 1926 but closed in 1972. It was abandoned for many years but restored in the mid-1990s and now hosts stage and cinema shows. A crowd funding appeal has been launched to raise cash to secure its future. It missed out on a funding bid to the Arts Council of Wales. {38905}

*Daily Post (Wales) – 3 September; The Stage – 10 September; Wrexham Leader – 12 September, 3 October; sent in by Peter Good, Hugh Sykes & Nina Williams; photo taken April 2010*

## RINGWOOD (Hants)

Despite calls from the public to support sprucing up the former **Regal**, a Councillor is urging people to back a rival theatre plan.

*New Milton Advertiser – 15 August*

## ROCHDALE (Greater Manchester)

Former employees and customers of Wetherspoon's pub in the former **Regal** are invited to a reunion on Friday 20 November. The date also marks the pub's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. There will be tours of the building, starting at 4pm; contact [p182@jdwetherspoon.co.uk]. There is a gallery of photos on the MEN website at [tinyurl.com/qxh4bd2]. {3340}

*Manchester Evening News – 1 September; sent in by Richard Lysons*

## RUSHDEN (Northants)

Plans have been unveiled for a twelve-screen cinema and bowling alley at Rushden Lakes. Construction could begin in summer 2017 and, if permission is granted, **Cineworld** is likely to be the operator.

*Northamptonshire Telegraph – 1 October; Corby Evening Telegraph – 15 October; sent in by Trevor Haynes & Chris Godbold*

## SANDOWN (Isle of Wight)

Councillors have granted planning permission to demolish the former **Rivoli**. It was a conversion of an Oddfellows Hall, opening in March 1921. Films ceased in 1965 and bingo took over, closing in 1993. The building was last used as a warehouse for theatrical costumes. {40200}

*On the Wight – 25 October*

## SCARBOROUGH (North Yorks)

A study has shown that demolition of the **Futurist** could cause the banked area behind it to collapse. The theatre closed in January 2014 and the Council seem intent on demolishing it. {1842}

*Yorkshire Post – 18 September*

After a no-start in August [see p18 last Bulletin] the **Movielight Drive-In Cinema** [the largest in the UK!] is up and running. It was showing *The Transporter Refuelled* last night when I passed, with the bright beam of the projector showing. I had noticed last weekend a massive haystack with a white tarpaulin over it [for the screen!] and wondered whether anything was going to happen this time. Well it has. So Yorkshire [and especially Scarborough] is the beneficiary of this new phenomenon, usually associated with the USA. No advertising outside only to say "Movielight Cinema". But the website is fully of films and glory! It seems a Scarborough entrepreneur has put his money down to create it.

*Sent in by Terry Ladlow*

Plans for a multiplex at North Bay have been approved by the Council, following a refusal earlier this year. The outline plans must still be signed off by the government and the building design must be agreed before any work can be carried out.

*Scarborough News – 15 October; sent in by Derrick Armstrong*

## SEAFORD (East Sussex)

The 130-seat Community Cinema in the **Barn Theatre** started its fourth year on 18 September with *Firelight*, introduced by its director, Sussex-based William Nicholson. [www.seafordcinema.org]

*Sussex Express – 18 September*

## SHEFFIELD

The **Abbeylea** was due to show the silent film *Nosferatu* with piano accompaniment on 31 October (Halloween). It is the highest quality 35mm print, recently restored by Munich Film Museum and La Cineteca de Bologna, complete with original colour tinting and title design. The film will be handled and projected by The Projected Picture Trust. {22681}

*Sent in by Mike Wood*



The **Cineworld** at Valley Centertainment installed **IMAX** laser projectors in time for the new James Bond film *Spectre* on 26 October. They were lifted into place by a crane as they were too big to go up the stairs. The new auditorium will have 548 seats for 2D screenings and 460 seats for 3D screenings plus a curved screen that is higher than two double-decker buses. The cinema is also about to open a 140-seat 4DX screen with motion seats and special effects such as fog, wind, bubbles and rain. The above photo (by Carl Chesworth) shows the two old **IMAX** projectors, only three years old, in the foyer, waiting to go back to Canada for refurbishment.

*Sheffield Star – 2, 7 October; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Stuart Smith*

## SITTINGBOURNE (Kent)

Almost six months after plans were passed, work is yet to start on work to regenerate the town centre. The project includes a seven-screen cinema. An operator is said to have been signed up but the developer will not release the name. The local authority will not release land until the cinema is firmed up.

*Sittingbourne News Extra, Sittingbourne Times – 2, 16 September*

## SOUTHAMPTON

The thirteen-screen **Odeon** at Leisure World was evacuated on 16 September due to a leak in the roof. A patron said that the film froze, the lights came on and those inside were escorted out through the fire exits; refunds were issued. {25376}

*Daily Echo (Southampton) – 17 September; sent in by Carl Chesworth*





Another year has passed and no progress can be reported regarding the **Woolston Picture House**. Opened in 1912 (the date is shown on the outside) it was closed for films in 1977 and closed for bingo in 2007. Although there were signs on the outside that it was up for sale by auction and a later sign that it had been sold for partial redevelopment, nothing has happened and the signs have since been removed. Articles in the local press said the same thing. The building is still intact although with some front steps broken and looking very grimy. The **Woolston Picture House** is one of the oldest cinema buildings in the country and it would be good to see something done with it. It is a "Waiting for Godot" situation – nothing happens, nobody comes. {21359}

*Sent in & 2007 photo by Ian Patterson*

#### **SOUTHEND-ON-SEA (Essex)**

**Cineworld** has unveiled plans for a twelve-screen cinema at Fossets Farm as part of £25m plans for Southend Football Club's new ground. It will include an **IMAX** screen.

*Southend Echo – 25 September; sent in by Carl Chesworth*

#### **STAFFORD**

Plans for a town-centre multiplex have been increased from a five-screen 700-seat complex to a six-screen 800-seat one. An operator has been chosen but remains unknown. The venue in Bridge Street could be open by the end of 2016.

*Express & Star – 5 October*

#### **STALYBRIDGE (Tameside, Greater Manchester)**

Films returned to Stalybridge in July when *Brassed Off* was shown at Judges Bar. The venue will now open on Tuesday nights exclusively to show movies. The organisers are looking for anyone with an original usher's tray from the **Palace** or the **Metro** in Ashton to donate. They also need an original rope hook barrier and stands for the door.

*Manchester Evening News – 2 July; sent in by Nick Taylor*

#### **SWANSEA**

Four young entrepreneurs are constructing a 50-seat cinema in a former Army Recruitment Office on Castle Street. **Cinema & Co** was due to open on 16 October. The seats will be on wheels so they can be moved to create a flexible space.

*South Wales Evening Post – 15 September*

Planners are being recommended to refuse an application to demolish the majority of the grade II listed former **Castle** cinema. Planning officers said the application could benefit from a heritage assessment. See p7 Bulletin 48/3. {17668}

*South Wales Evening Post – 10 October*

#### **TELFORD (Shropshire)**

Reclining red leather seats have been installed in the ten-screen **Odeon** and were tested by the Lord Mayor at a special preview. There are still plans to build a nine-screen **Odeon** elsewhere in the town; it is unclear whether this would be an addition or a replacement.

*Shropshire Star – 3 October*

#### **TENBY / DINBYCH-Y-PYSGOD (Pembroke)**

The historic fort on St Catherine's Island hosted two screenings of Clint Eastwood's 1979 film *Escape from Alcatraz* in early September. Access to the island is by steep steps only and limited to 3 hours after high tide for a period of approximately 6 hours.

*Western Telegraph – 2 September*

#### **THURSO (Highland)**

HM Revenue and Customs served notice of the winding up of the **Thurso Cinema Co Ltd** in August. The cinema closed suddenly, with the loss of 24 jobs. The receivers have confirmed that efforts are being made to save the two-screen cinema as a going concern. The impresario behind the firm, Rob Arthur, is also a director of Aurora Leisure, the company now running the **Scala** in Prestatyn and involved with the refurbishment of the **Picture House** in Campbelltown; these ventures are not affected by the liquidation.

*John-O'Groats Journal & Caithness Courier – 14 August, 4, 9, 18, 23, 25 September, 2 October; Daily Post (North Wales) – 17 September; Press & Journal (Aberdeen) – 7, 24 September*

#### **TUNBRIDGE WELLS (Kent)**

Planning permission has been granted for a three-screen **Curzon** cinema in the former Corn Exchange. The building was last used as the 'Day at the Wells' tourist attraction.

*Douglas Moat Architects press release*

#### **WALSALL**

The new eight-screen **Light** cinema at The Waterfront was due to be handed over for fitting out in October. It will feature an eXtreme screen. It was originally due to open this summer but delays have put this back to early 2016. A rival campaign for a nine-screen **Vue** cinema at Littleton Street West has been scrapped.

*Express & Star – 11 September, 25 October;*

*Walsall Advertiser – 24 September; sent in by Carl Chesworth*

#### **WARRINGTON**

**Odeon** has said it is committed to keeping open its ten-screen cinema in Westbrook (ex **UCI**). This is despite permission being given for a thirteen-screen **Cineworld** with an **IMAX** screen in the town centre, which is scheduled to open in 2019.

*Warrington Guardian – 17, 24 September;*

*sent in by Carl Chesworth & John Forster*

#### **WHITELEY (Hants)**

The new nine-screen **Cineworld** is due to open on 19 November. An open day for staff recruitment was held.

*Southern Daily Echo – 8, 10 September, 8 October; sent in by Ian Patterson*

#### **WINCHESTER (Hants)**

The **Everyman** (formerly **Screen**) has reopened after being closed for six weeks for an extensive £500,000 refurbishment. Both screens are now 20% bigger with a new surround sound system. Sofas and rest chairs have been installed. The CTA visited in June – see p7 last Bulletin. {25850}

*Winchester News Extra & Advertiser – 17 September*

#### **WOLVERHAMPTON**

The **Light House Media Centre** in the Chubb Building will have its £73,000 subsidy from the Council scrapped next year. Since learning of the cuts, the cinema has been inundated with offers of support. A funding initiative called 'Grow Your Tenner' has been started in which people donate £10, which can be match funded. {25862}

*Express & Star – 9 October; sent in by Ivan Harris*

## Join the **CINEMA ORGAN SOCIETY**

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or email [membership@cinema-organs.org.uk](mailto:membership@cinema-organs.org.uk)

[www.cinema-organs.org.uk](http://www.cinema-organs.org.uk)



## YEOVIL (Somerset)

The former **Odeon**, which opened in May 1937, designed by architect Harry Weedon, was taken over by St Margaret's hospice as retail showrooms in August; it is now called The Old Cinema Home Store. There have been so many takeovers since **Odeon** sold in 1972 it's hard to keep up with them all. There is still an old name on the side wall reading The Bed Centre.

The former **Odeon** is now so isolated with a large derelict site to the left and, like most of Yeovil, where roads are everywhere, making it difficult to go anywhere on foot. Also being on a slope it is now very difficult to see the building at all. As it was around 9:30 am on a Saturday morning, I managed to cross the four-lane road to approach the building, which is now open again.

The exterior, with its decorative tiles and brickwork is remarkably intact, the only visible change since the 1937 opening is the entrance being repainted and the missing brick top of the fin, which accommodated the **ODEON** sign. The flower beds that originally enhanced the front went with one of the many road alterations when it was still a cinema.

Inside, the showrooms are on two levels; the ground floor, once the stalls and the first floor, which is the front of the old circle. The rear circle is cordoned off but you can still see the original projection box complete with all its original projector and viewing windows. The first floor still has all the original Holophane lighting, which was actually working and changing colour. The other notable observation was the intact plaster chevron skirting running either side of the old circle stairs. The interior, although altered, was also in a remarkably good and clean condition. {34413}

*Sent in & photo on front cover by Ron Knee*

**Editor's Note:** There is a page on the former **Odeon** on the Yeovil History website at [www.yeovilhistory.info/odeoncinema.htm]. It has lots of photos, in b/w and colour.

## Late News

### NORTHAMPTON

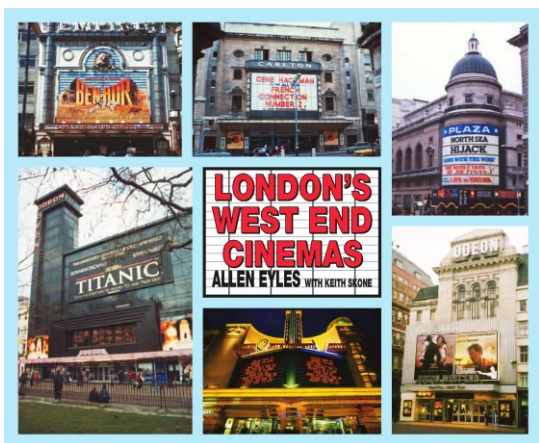
Plans, announced on p17 of the last Bulletin, for a second screen at the **Errol Flynn Filmhouse** have been approved by the Council. Work is expected to start later this year with an opening by summer 2016.

*Northants Herald & Post—28 October*

## 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. Special price to members – £20.00 + £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.

## THE DOME CINEMA, WORTHING

By David Trevor-Jones, CTA Chairman

*A number of members have asked about the current position of the **Dome** in view of recent newspaper reports. The background, as we understand it, is as follows:*

Throughout the late 1980s and 1990s a long struggle was fought to 'Save the **Dome**'. The freehold of this exquisite, Grade II\* listed cinema was owned by Worthing Council, which showed no sign of understanding the significance of their asset and attempted in 1996 to sell it to a night-club operator. Meanwhile the **Dome**, exposed to all the weather that its sea-front location can throw at it, was itself showing worrying signs of a lack of investment in maintenance.

The breakthrough came in 1999 when the Council, finally convinced by the arguments of campaigners, not least the CTA, sold the freehold to the Worthing Dome and Regeneration Trust for a nominal £10. However, the trials and tribulations were not over. As a registered charity the Trust was able to apply for grant aid and the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage together made £1.9million available for comprehensive restoration. But the grant was conditional on the Trust raising a quantum of matching funds itself and that proved difficult. The money was finally released and the cinema closed at the end of 2005 for more than eighteen months for work on the building to be completed. When at last the **Dome** re-opened the Trust decided to lease the cinema operation – but not the extensive ancillary spaces and catering – to Paul Jervis, an established exhibitor based at the listed **Majestic** in Kings Lynn. In September this year it emerged that the freehold of the building has been sold to Jervis's Company, PDJ cinemas, for £600,000. The vendor was the Architectural Heritage Fund, a charity that had lent the Trust £600,000 to provide working capital while the restoration work proceeded. The Trust had been unable to repay this loan and the AHF had exercised its charge over the freehold to possess the property and to sell it to pay off the debt. Local campaigners have complained that the sale was negotiated in secret and that no attempt was made to raise funds from the public to repay the AHF. The Charity Commission is investigating the transaction but its preliminary view is that the deal probably falls outside the ambit of charity law.

Whatever the legal position (on which the CTA is clearly neither equipped nor wishing to comment) the outcome for the moment places the **Dome**, in effect, back at some risk. In private ownership it no longer qualifies for grant aid. While it remains for the time being one of only five Grade II\* listed cinemas in England and Wales left in full-time cinema use† the threat of multiplex development has hovered over Worthing for decades. Would PDJ Cinemas be in a position to compete if that emerged or would the events/catering or even night club use quickly prevail for commercial survival? A Trust, as well as being in a different financial position, can afford to take a long term view. The experience in Blackpool, where it is the local authority that has taken the long term view and secured the future of the fabulously restored **Winter Gardens** and **Tower** complex, demonstrates clearly how important that can be for these precious entertainment buildings. The **Plaza** Stockport is an example of a well-managed charity, which has prospered since the HLF invested in its restoration.

The CTA wishes Mr Jervis and PDJ Cinemas well. It has no argument with him or with his company. It is quite understandable that he would take this opportunity to acquire a beautiful historic building in good structural order and that includes extensive and highly desirable ancillary spaces with a strong market for events such as wedding receptions. He has covenanted that the two auditoria will remain in cinema use for the 8 remaining years of his lease. It is, though, desperately sad and a betrayal of the efforts of a large and dedicated band of campaigners – many CTA members included – that the Trust should have taken the action that it has in the way that it has. 'Trust': it's in the name. An asset held in trust should be safe and secure in perpetuity. The outcome in Worthing is depressing and worrying.

† The other four are the **Scala** Ilkeston, the **Electric Palace** Harwich, the **Odeon/Everyman** Muswell Hill and the **Electric** Portobello Road (both Greater London). The **Plaza** Stockport regularly shows films but is not a full-time cinema. Two buildings listed Grade A under the separate Scottish system, the **Picture House** Campbeltown and the **Hippodrome** Bo'ness, are full-time cinemas.



# CINEMA BUSINESS

## SCREEN AWARDS 2015

This year's winners were announced at a sold-out ceremony at The Brewery in London on 22 October:

### Cinema Marketing Campaign of the Year

#### Picturehouse Cinemas

Shortlisted: **Showcase** Cinemas; **Vue** Entertainment.

**Cinema of the Year** (from a company with 25 screens or over)



Odeon Dorchester [photo above by Terry Hanstock]

Shortlisted: **Cineworld** Feltham; **Curzon** Victoria; **Picturehouse** Hackney; **Showcase Cinema de Lux** Bluewater; **Vue** Shepherds Bush.

**Cinema of the Year** (from a company with 24 screens or under)

#### Glasgow Film Theatre

Shortlisted: **Genesis** Mile End (Highly Commended); **BFI**; **Kinema in the Woods** Woodhall Spa; **Leiston Film Theatre**; **Saffron Screen**; **Showroom Cinema** Sheffield; **Ultimate Picture Palace** Oxford.

[www.screenawards.co.uk]

## LOYALTY CARDS

**Picturedrome Cinemas** has introduced a loyalty card scheme. You buy a card either online or at the cinema for £2.50, and for every £1 you spend you get 2.5 points! 1 point = 1p off anything you buy at the cinema (excluding alcohol). The points will only expire if the card is not used for 2 years or not renewed each year. It can be used at the **Picturedrome** Bognor Regis, the **Plaza** Dorchester, the **Carlton** Westgate-on-Sea, the **Maxime** Blackwood and the **Century** Clacton-on-Sea. [www.picturedromecinemas.co.uk]

*Isle of Thanet Gazette* – 11 September; sent in by Margaret Burgoine

## THEME PARK BOOST

A top Chinese investor has pledged £100m to the proposed London Paramount Entertainment Resort to be built in north Kent. The £3.2bn project will have a theme park, theatre, hotels and restaurants. It is due to open in 2021 but has yet to gain planning permission.

*Evening Standard* – 19 October; sent in by Reg Larkman

## CINEWORLD FIGURES

Box office hits such as *Fifty Shades of Grey* and *Jurassic World* helped **Cineworld** achieve “gratifying” results for the first half of 2015. UK revenue was up 8.4% to £219.3m and retail sales grew by 7%. Pre-tax profits more than tripled, up from £13.9m to £46.8m. A rise in ticket prices by 44p to an average of £6.02 also provided a boost. Analysts have suggested that the firm could enhance its future growth by buying cinema chains in Europe.

*Daily Telegraph* – 14 August; *The Guardian* – 6 October; sent in by Carl Chesworth

## GROSVENOR RAKES IN WINNINGS

Rank has nine Grosvenor Casinos in London, where their top 50 punters generated about £4.6m in extra takings compared to the average over the last four years. Operating profits were up 22% to £34m, accounting for more than half of the chain's overall profits.

*Evening Standard* – 20 August; sent in by Barry Quinton

## IRISH PROFITS

Pre-tax profits at Irish Multiplex Cinemas more than doubled to €850,379 last year. The firm is one of a number of Irish cinema firms owned by the Ward family.

*Irish Independent* – 27 August; sent in by Carl Chesworth

## VUE GOES DUTCH

**Vue** has acquired Dutch exhibitor JT Bioscopen in a deal valued at €8.5m. Holland's oldest cinema chain, JTB operates 21 multiplexes representing 111 screens across 20 locations in the Netherlands. This means that all Dutch cinemas are now in foreign hands. The takeover boosts **Vue**'s count to 209 cinemas with 1,895 screens in 10 countries in Europe. It makes it the fourth largest exhibitor in the world, also overtaking **Cineworld** as the second largest exhibitor in Europe (by site count).

*Sunday Times* – 23 August; *Celluloid Junkie* – 26 August; sent in by Keith Bye & Carl Chesworth

## ODEON FORTUNES

Justin King, former chief executive of Sainsbury's has joined private equity firm Terra Firma, whose portfolio included **Odeon/UCI** cinemas. He is expected to be involved in future fundraisings. Terra Firma has put into motion the estimated £1bn sale of **Odeon** cinemas, which was first touted earlier this year. Chinese firm Dalian Wanda, already the world's largest cinema operator, has become the first to register its interest in the sale.

*Daily Telegraph* – 8, 27 September; sent in by Carl Chesworth; *Citam.com* – 28 September; sent in by Keith Bye

According to its 2014 accounts, **Odeon**'s pre-tax losses widened by 22.5% to £119.5m, while turnover fell 7% to £657m. **Odeon** appointed a new chief executive, Paul Donovan, last February to turn around the business. He believes that his site refurbishment programme and better marketing, including the removal of booking fees, along with a strong line of blockbusters movies, will lead to improved results. A later report says that the trend has been reversed in the first six months of 2015. Paid attendances rose by 13.8% and revenues climbed to £348.7m from £317.1m. The half year showed a pre-tax profit of £14.5m.

*Sunday Express* – no date; *Evening Standard* – 27 August; *Daily Telegraph* – 28 August; sent in by Keith Bye, Carl Chesworth & Barry Quinton

For the last year, **Odeon** has been adding a routine £1 to ticket prices of blockbuster films, at least for the first few weeks of release. For the new James Bond film *Spectre* that premium has risen to £1.50. That makes the price of a ticket to see *Spectre* at the **Odeon** Dudley, for instance, £10.35 for a standard adult ticket and £11.35 in VIP seating. The best seat in the house at the **Odeon Leicester Square** will cost £25.

*Den of Geek website* – 15 September; sent in by Carl Chesworth

**Odeon**'s 'new look' programme leaflets for the **Odeon** Manchester seem to show that the “Fanatical About Film” tagline appears to have been quietly dropped.

Sent in by Carl Chesworth

## 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.ppttrust.org



## LETTERS

### SOME ECCLESIASTICAL PREMISES CONVERTED TO CINEMAS:

In my native **Bradford**: **Low Moor Picture House** on Huddersfield Road; a 1914 conversion of the Brotherhood Mission Hall. **Picturedrome/Astra** on Bridge Street; a 1910 conversion of Bridge Street Chapel. **Queen's Hall** at Laisterdyke; a 1911 conversion of St Paul's Church. **Sangeet & Naz** cinemas on Carlisle Road; a 1970 conversion of Manningham Methodist Church. Wyke **Hippodrome/Star**: a 1926 conversion of a Zion Chapel.



**Leeds:** Carr Croft Cinema, Armley; a 1912 conversion of the Providence Sunday School [pictured above in June 2015]. **East End Picture Hall** on Places Road; a 1911 conversion of the Congregational Mission Hall. **Pictureland** on Branch Road, Armley; a 1910 conversion of a Primitive Methodist Chapel.

Rotherham: **Electric/Electra Picture Palace** on Effingham Street; a 1911 conversion of a Zion Chapel.

Skipton: **Plaza** on Sackville Street; a 1911 conversion of a Temperance Hall. Does a Temperance Hall count? They were popular for conversion to picture halls and I'd suspect Temperance Hall conversions outnumber ecclesiastical premises. I have contributed images and text on Temperance Halls in Burnley and Huddersfield on [CinemaTreasures.com]. Then there are the many converted roller skating rinks; that craze faded as silent picture houses gained popularity. Oddly, when the **Nu Vic** here in Settle abandoned films it was converted to a roller skating rink. It didn't last. My neighbour (now in her 80s) says the noise was horrendous.

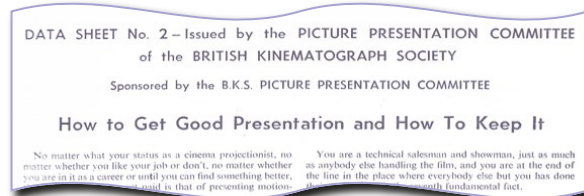
May I get creative and suggest ecclesial premises converted for making films? In the late 1940s Mancunian Films acquired and converted the Methodist Chapel on Dickenson Road in Manchester. The BBC acquired it in 1954 and it was the home of early editions of *Top of the Pops*, clips of which don't get aired for DJ reasons I'll not delve into!

*Hector Hill*

## PRESENTATION MATTERS

Two letters in the July/August Bulletin (which gets better every issue) caught my interest. The one from Edward Huggins — *Size is important* — who comments on the apparently increasing number of cinemas with small seating capacities. I agree entirely with his feelings on the subject. The costs of equipping such venues must be truly horrendous in relation the income achieved and I, personally, cannot understand the thinking behind such projects. Can you imagine watching a film like, say *ET — the Extra Terrestrial* in such a small venue, where the shared emotional involvement of a large audience would be completely lost in such surroundings! Not for me.

Now on to *Whatever happened to the Ice Cream Lady* from David A Ellis. He is absolutely correct in his statement that although picture quality is superb, the cinema experience of old is missing. The nearest cinema to where I live is a **Vue** seven-screen multiplex, which we only visit if our two granddaughters want to see a film. Here, as in all multiplexes I have ever visited (not many), there are no screen tabs (there are tabs installed but not used, the excuse was that they kept breaking down so are not used anymore!) so we are presented with



a bare visible screen, loud 'pop' type music, a screen almost constantly filled with adverts, warnings about using mobile phones, trailers of forthcoming movies etc, etc. The atmosphere of 'occasion' is non-existent! What a bore! I was brought up visiting cinemas from the 40s (the local 'bug hutch' Saturday afternoon kids matinées — *Flash Gordon* serials, *Batman* serials, cowboy films etc) and what a joy it was. Later I visited many cinemas in the Leeds area (where I was born and bred) and in every single one, be it City centre or suburbs, an effort was made to create atmosphere — tabs on the screen; a bare screen was never visible and its presence went unnoticed — gentle background music, coloured lighting on the curtains etc. Alas, virtually all of these cinemas have now gone. Modern cinema management have much to learn; they should all be compelled to read the *Motion Picture Presentation Manual* issued by The British Kinematograph Society in 1960/61 to all cinemas in the country. [sample above] Not a hope!

Keith Briggs

## MOBILE CINEMA



We visited the 100-seater **Picturehouse** mobile cinema, which was installed for a few weeks on Ealing Green, West London in September. The cinema is apparently the only one of its kind in this country and consists of a large lorry trailer, which seems to be semi-collapsible in order to take to the road. It employs digital projection and sound equipment. Seating was raked and surprisingly comfortable and snacks and drinks were available to purchase at the door. Sightlines were good and the sound was of high quality but, as is usual in all cinemas we visit, far too loud (we always take earplugs!).

Robert Gurd [photo]

## ALEXANDRA. BLACKBURN

The *Lancashire Evening Telegraph* website currently claims that construction of the cinema in Dock Street, Blackburn commenced in 1906, adding “But because it did not open until three years later, other purpose-built cinemas had also sprung up”. The website also mentions that the hall was initially called **Pendleton’s Picture Palace** after the brothers who built it: a title, which, allegedly, locals contracted to ‘**Penks**’. It is not listed in the 1914 *Kinematograph Year Book* [KYB]. So far, so familiar.

Around March 1917 James Ainsworth and his son-in-law John Hudson became the hall's new proprietors. Presumably it was they who re-named it the **Alexandra Picture Hall**, as that name was used on 25 May 1917 when the *Lancashire Evening Post* reported a coroner's inquest into the suicide of the 57 year-old Ainsworth. Using a ladder and rope, he had hanged himself from the hall's balcony supports early one morning when there to do his daily cleaning stint. He was said to have been "worried about the picture business", having been in it for only eight weeks. Tragically, business was described as "good". Prior to that, since the age of eight he had worked in cotton mills.



By KYB 1927 the hall is named **Alexandra Picture Theatre**. 'Ainsworth and Hudson' (a B Ainsworth with John Hudson) are listed as the proprietors until KYB 1954 when ownership passed to 'Alexandra (Blackburn) Ltd'; a change that is probably connected with the 1954 closure for renovation mentioned by Charles Morris. Also at that time Western Electric equipment replaced the original Gramo-Radio sound system.

In KYB 1937 there are only eight UK cinemas with Gramo-Radio sound systems: six in Lancashire; and two in Yorkshire. The KYB Trade Directory pages list Gramo-Radio Limited as supplying amplifiers, speakers and reproducing equipment from an address in the Lancashire village of Church, near Accrington. The company's final mention is in KYB 1944, when the number of cinemas with their system is down to two: Blackburn's **Alexandra Picture Theatre** and Leyburn's **Pavilion**. By KYB 1948 only the **Alexandra Picture Theatre** has a Gramo-Radio system, the **Pavilion** having installed AWH (Arthur William Harris) sound equipment.

Further information about Gramo-Radio Limited eludes me, save for two *Lancashire Evening Post* 'Wanted' adverts in 1933 seeking substantial heating system parts! There was a Gramo-Radio Amplifiers Limited for which winding up papers were filed in May 1931 and which was 'struck off' the Companies Act Register in March 1936 but that looks to have been a London-based company.

*Hector Hill*

During my 7 years' domicile and 18 years' working life in Blackburn, I never actually went into the **Alexandra**; can't remember viewing it from outside either. There were other former cinemas that I never explored too. One was the **Regent** in King Street, which had been turned into a furniture store and which I later discovered had still possessed its projectors while I was there.

*Charles Morris*

## OADBY CINEMA LEICESTER

I was interested to see the item about the **Oadby Cinema** in the last issue as I remember it from my schooldays in the City. It was one of 29 cinemas that advertised in the *Leicester Mercury* in 1955 before ITV came to the Midlands in 1956. Half of these cinemas had closed by 1961. Today not one of these 29 is still a cinema, although several have been put to other uses such as a mosque (**Melbourne**) and the **Odeon** (superbly restored as a conference centre). I seem to remember that the **Magna** at Wigston was one that did not advertise in the press but that needs to be checked with local members.

*Ian Patterson*

## GALWAY CINEMAS

I have been a member of the CTA (ex Mercia) for some time now. Perhaps members can help me with a query. Does anyone have any information on the history of cinema since the early 30s in Galway City in the Republic of Ireland? I lived there with my family from January 1936 to October 1940 aged 10-15 years. As there was no [U] or [A] certification in Eire at that time, I was able to see all the top films of the day without hindrance.

*David J Gammage*

## LEEDS MAJESTIC



Here is a photo, taken in September, of the exterior of the former **Majestic** being restored after the recent fire.

*John West [photo]*

## MISCELLANY

### FILM TRIBUTE

The University of Sussex paid tribute to the late Lord Richard Attenborough on the anniversary of his death by projecting images and sequences from his films on the newly-refurbished Attenborough Centre for Creative Arts on the campus. Lord Attenborough was a former Chancellor of the University.

*The Argus (Brighton) – 26 August; sent in by Barry Quinton*

### WE'RE EXPECTING YOU

Cinema staff will wear night vision goggles to catch pirates trying to record the new *James Bond* film. Scammers hoping to post *Spectre* on the Internet are expected to hide recording devices in popcorn cartons.

*Metro – 24 September; sent in by Carl Chesworth*

### THE SMALLEST SHOW ON EARTH

A musical based on the 1955 Peter Sellers movie *The Smallest Show on Earth* has been touring the UK. It stars Liza Goddard and Brian Capron and has music by Irving Berlin. The final two dates are 16-21 November at the **Grand Theatre** Swansea and 23-28 November at the **Malvern Theatres**.

*Daily Telegraph – 9 October; sent in by Jeremy Buck & Carl Chesworth*

### CHESHIRE COUNTS

Already recognised as the best place to live in the North West, film and TV companies have ploughed £25m into the Cheshire East economy. Production companies spent more than 182 days in the area last year, spending more than £2.5m in hotels, restaurants and shops. Popular locations include Tatton Park and Styal Mill.

*Independent Newspapers – September; sent in by Carl Chesworth*

### NEW THEATRE FOR LONDON

Sir Nicholas Hytner and Nick Starr, the duo who guided the **National Theatre** for more than a decade, are to open a new theatre. The venue, the first of several planned, will seat up to 1,000 and should open by spring 2017. It is part of the One Tower Bridge development, currently under construction between Tower Bridge and City Hall. The new theatre would issue a "significant number" of cheap tickets.

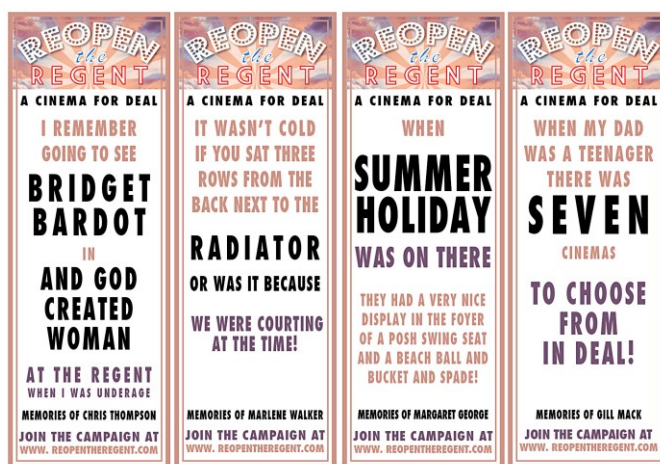
*Evening Standard – 20 August; sent in by Barry Quinton*

### FATHERS FOR JUSTICE

Activists from 'New Fathers 4 Justice' will be targeting cinemas showing the film *Suffragette* across Kent with demonstrations. A spokesperson for the group said: "The cast of *Suffragette* praised the recent protest at its premiere but none have spoken up for equal rights for fathers. We get criticised for climbing bridges over roads yet the Suffragettes now get praised despite the extreme violence they used to get the vote." The **Stag Theatre** (ex **Odeon**) in Sevenoaks could be one of the ones to be hit.

*Sevenoaks Chronicle – 11 October; sent in by Philip Stevens*

### A GOOD DEAL



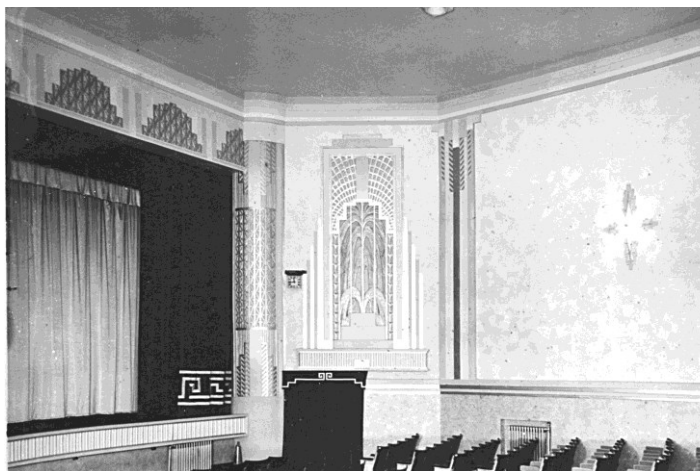
The campaign to reopen the **Regent** in Deal issued this A4 flyer, with the suggestion: "If you have time, a printer and a pair of scissors, please print these out and circulate to help our cause." Never mind the grammar, their heart is in the right place! See Newsreel p14.

*Sent in by Martin Tapsell*



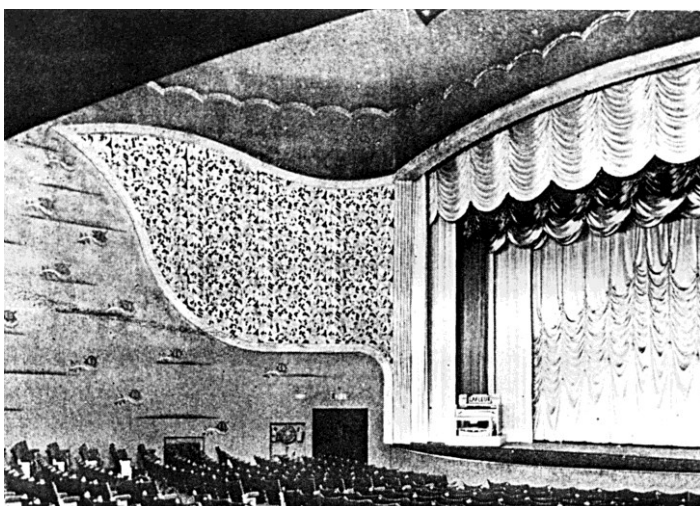
## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

### 80 Years



**Regal**, Priory Road, Wells, Somerset. Opened 12 November 1935.  
Architect Ernest S Roberts. Listed Grade II.

### 75 Years



**Ritz**, Quarry Hill, Grays, Essex. Opened 25 November 1940.  
Architect EH Parke. Listed Grade II.



**Green's Playhouse**, Kirk Road, Wishaw. Opened 19 December 1940.  
Architect John Fairweather. Listed Category C.

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## ARCHIVE

### Archive Status

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!

### 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 Ivychurch Gardens, Cliftonville, Margate, CT9 3YG. Small quantities of scanned material or digital photographs can be emailed to [cta-archive@hotmail.co.uk].

## 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

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**John Hammond**, 49 Beckingthorpe Drive, Bottesford, NOTTINGHAM, NG13 0DN.

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For a full list send a large SAE to:

**Maurice Brader**, 55 Parthian Avenue, Wyberton, PE21 7DH  
or email [lawncinema@hotmail.co.uk]

### 2016 CINEMA CALENDAR

With twelve different colour photos of British Cinemas old and new. Smethwick **Rink/Gaumont**; Cross Hands **Public Hall**; Dartford **State/Granada**; Govanhill **Picture House**; Holmfirth **Picturedrome**; Hull **UGC/Cineworld**; Heaton Moor **Savoy**; Penarth **Washington**; Rochdale **Regal/ABC/Cannon**; Southampton **Empire/Gaumont/Mayflower**; Todmorden **Olympia**; Wilmslow **Rex**. Still only £6, including postage.

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or email [harry.rigby@ntlworld.com] for details of how to pay by EFT and save yourself a stamp!





## MEMBERSHIP

### NEW MEMBERS

We have been delighted to send a warm welcome to the following new members of the CTA. In order of joining, they are Ibrahim Buhari, Clara Willett, Gary Davies, Raymond Palmer and Ismar Badzic.

### IN MEMORIAM

Sadly the deaths of three senior CTA members have been notified to us recently. Malcolm Gerard of Hampton, Middlesex, died on 7 August aged 78; he joined in June 2010. Robert Stoker of Twickenham died in hospital on 24 September of myelo-fibrosis. Robert joined the CTA in 1988 and became a Life Member in 2000. John Stoker, Robert's brother, nominated the Association as the charity to receive donations in lieu of flowers at the funeral and we have gratefully acknowledged the receipt of a total amount of £420, to some of which GiftAid can be added. Dr Clifford Shaw of Sheffield died on 10 October at the age of 96. He joined the CTA in April 1995 and was often to be seen on our visits to various parts of the UK. Although infrequently joining us in the last few years, Clifford did make the journey to London to attend the AGM in 2014.

### DONATIONS

Sincere thanks are extended to the following members who kindly added a donation when renewing their CTA subscriptions: CJ Barber, MA Bentley, CJ Bird, MS Crowle, SJ Cusack, RD Dakin, DM Daniels, RG Dolling, JS Downs, MF Dunkin, GB Fenwick, M Gambles, HW Gibbs, P Hake, P Hayward, RE Heaven, DM Howarth, FG Jenkins, JT Lewis, JB Lindsay, PJ Littler, EL Marriage, MS Marsh, KC McFarlane, T McNamara, N Mirza, IP Nash, AJ North, PR Phillips, MS Plews, G Reywer, JE Roberts, NS Robins, DW Rogerson, RA Sands, R Smith, TJ Smith, FD Snart, G Snowden-Davies, JE Thornley, GJ Waglan and JP Walrond. Our special thanks are also sent to John Vaux who has for many years sent a most generous donation and has done so once again. Additional donations were received in lieu of presents from friends to celebrate the birthday of CTA member, Stuart Hall. Our thanks go to them and, of course, to Stuart for the suggestion.

*Neville C Taylor, Membership Secretary*

## OBITUARIES

### CLIFFORD SHAW

Clifford moved to Sheffield in 1956 and became the Chief Medical Officer until he retired in 1984. He maintained the newsletter for the Sheffield Cinema Society and wrote *Sheffield Cinemas* in 2001. He was meticulous in his research. He sometimes attended four or five film showings a day and was often seen at the Bradford Wide-screen Weekend. He came on the CTA trip to Morecambe in June 2008 – and many others.



### ERIC NORGATE

Eric Norgate, chief projectionist and engineer, passed away in April after a short illness. He was born on 26 April 1937 and his entire career was devoted to the cinema, working first for ABC then Classic then Cannon. He was consultant to Light Cinemas. The entrance theme at his funeral was Pearl & Dean's *Asteroid*.

*Mike Taylor, PPT*





## KIA-ORA

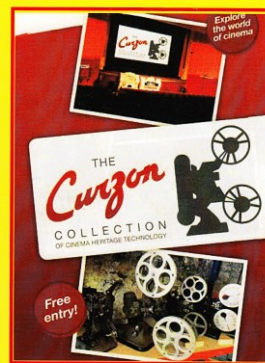
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Maurice Thornton

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# HOLIDAY SNAPS

## Ciné 'Diana' – Poros Island, Greece

By Martin Humm

Visiting Poros Island a few times in the past, mainly twice a year over the last twenty years or so, I spent most days passing this open-air cinema without much of a thought, as it always seemed to be closed. Set on top of what is an arcade on the ground floor, a café on the first floor and the cinema on the roof, it can easily be passed by.



After a bit of digging into its history I found that it was opened in 1954 with two Bauer projectors by a Mr George Duzinas and a Mr Apostolis Tsakiris. When mentioning it to a couple of the locals one day on passing I was directly introduced to the owner, who was loitering by the street-level paybox. A conversation started and I was taken straight away up to the cinema.

He had been spending most of the morning repairing the chairs that were scattered around the rooftop, this being the auditorium. The place was closed at this point because it was just too light in the evenings to show a film (early June). The screen at the far end was a large fixed affair with no tabs or masking. Passing the clutter of chairs we went into the projection box. Bijou was the word. Two old brown Bauers were squeezed next to each other, so close that only one could be used. The second looked like it was being kept for spares. He explained that films were run with an intermission so that the 6000ft reel could be changed and he often ran with nearly 7000ft on a reel.



Ventilation was interesting. Two air conditioning units were in place, one for the box and the second directly feeding into the Xenon lamp house on the projector! Also interesting was that there was no glass in the portholes. On a second visit a couple of years ago, the two old brown Bauers had gone and two new silver ones added. Both had the same ventilation. Passing by this September, I met the new owner, who has just installed a Barco Digital projector but has kept back one of the 35mm projectors – “just in case”.

Walking into town in the evening, a kids' film could just be seen. It was to be followed by the latest *Mission Impossible*.

## Some cinemas in Ireland

By Maurice Brader



Killorglin (Co Kerry) The former Oisín cinema in 2001



Milton (Co Clare) Osborn Cinema [1941-1960] in 2001



Kilkenny Cineplex in 2001 – 3 screens



Westport (Co Mayo) Cineplex in 2006 – 3 screens  
Editor's note: When I visited Westport in 2014 it was closed