



The Teatro Comunale Bologna, seen on the CTA visit to Italy – see visit report p8



The National Film Theatre in September 2006



The Regent Street Cinema in April 2016

The CTA will be 50 years old on 30 January 2017!

The inaugural meeting was held at the National Film Theatre on 30 January 1967.

A full day's programme of events has been arranged for the anniversary – see page 3.

We will be visiting the BFI Southbank (was NFT) and also the Regent Street Cinema, the birthplace of cinema.

Further celebrations are planned throughout the year; watch the Bulletin for details.

FROM YOUR EDITOR

I recently visited Leyburn in North Yorkshire. Here the **Elite** cinema opened in 1928 but sadly closed in May 2007. An attempt by volunteers to reopen it was short-lived. However I noticed films were being shown at the **Old School Arts Centre** in the town, usually twice daily every Friday [oldschoolhouseleyburn.co.uk]. Now obviously I don't know the full facts but, since the Old School building had to be converted, why could the former **Elite** not have been used? I have also come across similar examples in other towns where an Arts Centre has sprung up after the cinema has closed.

I was extremely short of space for this edition so I had no room for holiday snaps. I have also held over several items until next time.

Nothing to do with cinemas but on my last trip to London, to attend a CTA Committee meeting in August, I travelled on the Emirates Air Line, a cable-car over the River Thames from The Dome to the ExCel Centre. Highly recommended; the views are spectacular, it's not expensive, you can use your Oyster Card – and they take bikes!

Finally, although it's a little early, I and all the Committee would like to wish you the compliments of the season, using the card below, sent in by Alan Scott.

Harry Rigby, CTA Bulletin Editor



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

**DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE
TUESDAY 20 DECEMBER**

CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

(founded 1967)

promoting serious interest in all aspects of cinema buildings

Company limited by guarantee. Reg. No. 04428776.

Registered address: 59 Harrowdene Gardens, Teddington, TW11 0DJ.

Registered Charity No. 1100702. Directors are marked ‡ in list below.

PATRONS: Carol Gibbons; Sir Gerald Kaufman PC MP; Lucinda Lambton

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Full Membership (UK).....£29
Full Membership (UK under 25s).....£15
Overseas (Europe Standard & World Economy).....£37
Overseas (World Standard).....£49
Associate Membership (UK & Worldwide).....£10
Life Membership (UK only).....£450; aged 65 & over £350
Life Membership for Overseas members will be more than this;
please contact the membership secretary for details.

All membership and subscription enquiries should be sent to
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Neville C Taylor [subs@cta-uk.org]

Flat One, 128 Gloucester Terrace, London, W2 6HP

Items for possible inclusion in the bulletin should be sent to

BULLETIN EDITOR: Harry Rigby [bulletin@cta-uk.org]

65 Tennyson Avenue, Harrogate, North Yorks, HG1 3LE

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN: David Trevor-Jones ‡ [chair@cta-uk.org]
47 The Street, Old Basing, Basingstoke, RG24 7BX

VICE-CHAIRMAN: Ian Meyrick ‡
11 Tarrant Avenue, Witney, OX28 1EE

SECRETARY: Adam Unger ‡ [honsec@cta-uk.org]
59 Harrowdene Gardens, Teddington, TW11 0DJ

TREASURER: Neville C Taylor ‡ (details as membership secretary above)

CASEWORK COMMITTEE – Chairman: Richard Gray ‡
45 Arnold Road, Bow, London, E3 4NU [casework@cta-uk.org]

Members: as main committee plus Tim Hatcher,
Jane Jephcote, Mark Price, Vicky Simon & Peter Wyld

ARCHIVIST: Clive Polden [archive@cta-uk.org]
14 Ivychurch Gardens, Cliftonville, Margate, CT9 3YG

ASSISTANT ARCHIVIST: Rachel Marks
73 Cressy House, Hannibal Road, London, E1 3JF

PUBLIC RELATIONS: Gerald Glover [publicity@cta-uk.org]
228 Malpas Road, Brockley, London, SE4 1DH

PUBLICATIONS & SALES OFFICER: Jeremy Buck ‡
34 Pelham Road, London, N22 6LN [sales@cta-uk.org]

BOOK PUBLISHING MANAGER: Giles Woodforde ‡
69A Mill Street, Kidlington, Oxford, OX5 2EE

WEBMASTER: Rachel Woodforde
69A Mill Street, Kidlington, Oxford, OX5 2EE [web@cta-uk.org]

VISITS CO-ORDINATOR: Ray Ritmeester [visits@cta-uk.org]
66 Woodside Road, High Wycombe, HP13 7JB

PICTURE HOUSE EDITOR: Allen Eyles [picture.house@cta-uk.org]
13 Tennyson Court, Paddockhall Road, Haywards Heath, RH16 1EZ

CTA NORTH: David Eve, Gary Trinder [north@cta-uk.org]
7 Shoreswood, Sharples, Bolton, BL1 7DD

CTA SCOTLAND: Gordon Barr, Gary Painter [scotland@cta-uk.org]
87 Clerwood Park, Edinburgh, EH12 8PS

CTA CYMRU/WALES: John Skinner, Jon Williams [wales@cta-uk.org]
3 Swan Lane, Ystalyfera, Swansea, SA9 2JB

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Emma Beeston, Kevin Gooding, Lynda Hillman,
Tim McCullen, Sally McGrath, Ken Roe, David Simpson

Please use [info@cta-uk.org] if uncertain to whom to address an e-mail
enquiry; this address will be monitored and e-mail redirected if necessary.

© CTA BULLETIN [ISSN 1479-0882] – published six times yearly by the
CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

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

It is assumed that submissions are for publication, unless stated otherwise;
items may be shortened or edited at the discretion of the Editor.

Please 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.

Typeset in Franklin Gothic Book by Harry Rigby
Printed by The Ludo Press Ltd, 18 Wimbledon Stadium Business Centre,
Riverside Road, London, SW17 0BA [www.ludo.co.uk]

CTA 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

CTA 50th Anniversary Day Monday 30 January 2017

Organised by Allen Eyles

Join us to celebrate fifty years of the Cinema Theatre Association on the same day of the year that the inaugural meeting was held at the **National Film Theatre** (now **BFI Southbank**) in 1967.

50 Years of the Cinema Theatre Association

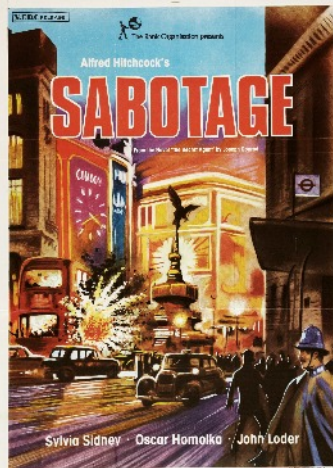
BFI Southbank, NFT2, Waterloo, London SE1, 11am

Fifty years on from the inaugural meeting of the CTA in the very same building, we will look back at the situation in 1967 that prompted its formation, highlight what the CTA has achieved over the five decades and ask what the future holds for our organisation. This richly illustrated joint presentation will feature some of the CTA's leading officers – Chairman David Trevor-Jones, Casework Chair Richard Gray and founder member / magazine editor Allen Eyles – along with comments from the audience.

Sabotage (1936)

BFI Southbank, NFT1, Waterloo, London SE1, 2pm

A loose adaptation of Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent*, this British classic from Alfred Hitchcock uses an independent cinema as its central setting – unknown to the audience, its proprietor, M Verloc, is plotting acts of terrorism with his gang. Located in Camberwell, to judge by a letterhead seen in the film, the cinema was entirely a studio recreation. Typically, Hitchcock makes use of the cinema setting to further his aims, with a film can being used to carry a bomb on a crowded bus and a Disney cartoon on screen that reflects events off. Hollywood actress Sylvia Sidney co-stars as the wife of Oscar Homolka's anarchist with John Loder as the lurking detective.



Evening Double Bill:

The Birth of the Cinema + The Birth of the CTA

**Regent Street Cinema, 309 Regent Street
(north of Oxford Circus), 6:30pm**

Where better to celebrate the birth of the CTA than at the birthplace of film exhibition in this country? We will start with a very short introduction to the **Regent Street Cinema** (previously the **Cameo-Poly** art house) and hope to screen some of the Lumière shorts from that first film show in 1896 in the very same space (since modernised in 1927 and again in 2015). After some brief reflections on the first 50 years of the CTA and the introduction of some special guests we will also show extracts from some memorable short films about our cinema heritage: hopefully, *Odeon Cavalcade* and *An Acre of Seats in a Garden of Dreams* (both 1973). (The cinema's organ is currently awaiting repairs but may be playing again before the start of the performance.)



You are invited to toast the future of the CTA with a glass of wine or other light refreshment and enjoy a piece of celebratory cake, both free of charge, in the cinema's bar during the break between shows.

The Final Reel (2016)

**Regent Street Cinema, 309 Regent Street
(north of Oxford Circus), 8:45pm**

We are delighted to host the London première of this brand-new feature-length documentary narrated by the actor Sir John Hurt, which tells the story of how cinemas and cinema-going developed and flourished over the years in Norfolk as a microcosm of what has happened throughout the country. We meet some of the colourful entrepreneurs that are a key part of this narrative and hear the tales of how they kept cinemas going. And we hear from the projectionists, as well as audience members – for many of whom their local cinema was their favourite place in the world. *The Final Reel* offers a rich mix of interviews, photographs and an astonishing amount of archive film material in a most entertaining way, accurately covering in 94 minutes the story of exhibition from the beginning to the multiplex and IMAX. The screening will be attended by producer/director Jonathan Blagrove.



Important Booking Information:

Tickets must be booked through the appropriate venues:
BFI Southbank or Regent Street Cinema.

Tickets for the two **BFI Southbank** daytime events can be booked from early December and are free for Seniors (over 60), normal prices otherwise. Go to [bfi.org.uk/whatson] or telephone 020 7928 3232 (11:30 to 20:30 daily) or in person (11:00 to 20:30 daily).

Tickets for the evening shows at the **Regent Street Cinema** can be obtained from early December online at [regentstreetcinema.com] or telephone 020 7911 5050 or in person. The double-bill of both evening programmes costs £16 (over 55s pay £14) or, for one show only, £12 (£11).

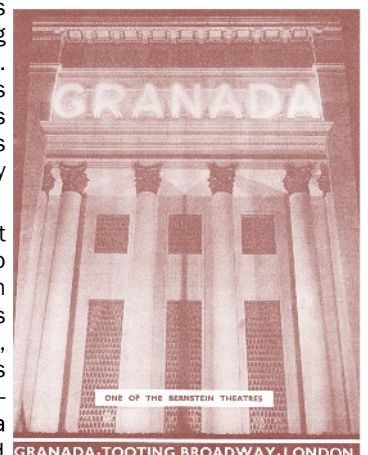
A CTA 50th Anniversary Visit – Return to Tooting Granada (Gala Bingo)

Sunday 26 February 2017; organised by Ken Roe

To continue our 50th Anniversary celebrations, members and associate members are invited to join us at the **Granada Theatre, Tooting** (now **Gala Bingo & Grade I Listed**). The reason we choose Tooting is that 'day & date' it also celebrates the first ever CTA visit, which was to the **Granada Tooting** on Sunday 26 February 1967.

Membership was small in that first year and 15 members attended to see the building, which was then still operating as a cinema. Films were supplemented by concerts, stage shows, pantomimes, circus (with live animals) and even wrestling, which kept the **Granada** open until it was suddenly closed as a cinema on 10 November 1973 (it had been Grade II* Listed in June 1972). The building lay unused until 14 October 1976 when it re-opened as a Bingo Club. It was given Grade I Listed status on 28 September 2000, the only 1930s cinema to be given this honour.

Time and meeting details to be confirmed in the next Bulletin.



The opening programme for
the Granada Tooting

Coming Soon

A Trip Down Memory Lane

To mark the CTA's 50th Anniversary

Organised by Richard Norman

Our next Members' Slide Show and Social event will be a 'special' as we are aiming



to include a collection of member's movies taken by them during past CTA visits and tours. If you would like to share any movie footage or still slides / photos / digital images (in any format), we will help with any editing and technical preparation, if required.

Although the date has yet to be finalised, it is likely to take place during March 2017. If you are able to provide any material please contact me as soon as possible:

Email: [RichardNormanCTA@aol.com]

or tel: 0208 668 6077 or letter:

4 Oakhill Lodge, Reedham Drive, Purley, CR8 4DT.



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

Cinema Museum Bookstall – 10 December, 2-5pm; admission free

The full programme of events can be found on their website at:

[www.cinemamuseum.org.uk]

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

THE REGAL EXPERIENCE, WYMONDHAM

Sunday 20 November *Charade* (1963) [PG]

+ A tribute to Cary Grant & Audrey Hepburn

Sunday 4 December *Young at Heart* (1954) [U]

with Doris Day & Frank Sinatra + Walt Disney's *The Small One*

Shows at 2:30pm at the Wyndham Ex-Service's Club (former Regal cinema) NR18 0AT [tinyurl.com/zddvkq4]. Presented in 35mm.

Further information from Michael Armstrong [01953 603246].

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].

26 November *The BFG* (2016) [PG] at 2:30pm+
Bridge of Spies (2015) [12A] at 7:30pm

27 December *Harvey* (1950) [PG] + *Sailor Beware* (1956) [U]

28 January *Florence Foster Jenkins* (2016) [PG]

Saturdays at 7:30pm (except †). Licensed bar at all performances.

THE ORGANIST ENTERTAINS AT THE TROXY

RCO Organ Forum with the COS at The Troxy
490 Commercial Road, Stepney, London E1 0HX.

Saturday 7 January from 10:00 to 17:00.

This Royal College of Organists Forum turns its attention to the fascinating and diverse world of light organ music. In partnership with the Cinema Organ Society and its recently restored Wurlitzer organ, the largest in Europe, an exploration of musical styles and playing techniques ranging from the likes of Percy Whitlock and Albert Coates, to the American Songbook and, of course, improvised music for silent film. Includes a lunchtime recital by Richard Hills. Details: [www.rco.org.uk/events.php?eventid=467]. There is a separate evening concert on the Wurlitzer by Simon Gledhill at 7:30pm. Tickets for that event may be purchased from the Troxy: [www.troxy.co.uk]

RENOWN'S THIRD FESTIVAL OF FILM

Sunday 12 February Watersmeet Theatre, High Street,
Rickmansworth WD3 1EH; 09:30 to 18:00. Tickets £10.00.

Organised by the people behind the TV Channel *Talking Pictures*, introduced by Brian Murphy and featuring guest appearances from several stars and the showing of rare films. Lots of stalls with films, posters, books, movie memorabilia, etc and the CTA Sales Stall will be present. Details: [www.renownfilms.co.uk]

MISCELLANY

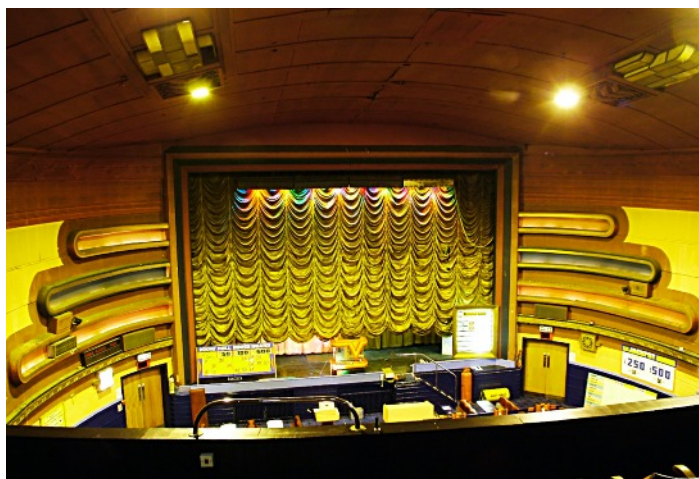
A CINEMA THAT NEVER WAS

Plans for *La Scala* cinema at the corner of Irvine Place and Princes Street have been found in the Stirling archives. The plans were submitted on 1 September 1932 and are marked "withdrawn" so obviously the art deco cinema was never built. The architect was Hamilton Neil.

Stirling Observer – 12 October

EBAY

Several cinema-related items have appeared on eBay recently: 35mm film frames from *Back to the Future* @ £10; Various 35mm film trailers @ £10-20; Cinemeccanica projector sprockets @ £25-30; 35mm 12-reel film storage cabinet @ £145; 35mm 2,000ft metal film transit case @ £50; Super 8 film *Hammer House of Horror* @ £100. This is just a sample; there are many others.



Two cinema clocks from the former Regal in Lanark [above] appeared on eBay for £350. The listing was subsequently removed by the seller. The Regal is a grade C(s) listed building. [24306]

Sent in by Carl Chesworth & Tim Addyman

FINAL CURTAIN FOR LADIES' QUEUES

Long queues for the ladies' lavatories in theatres could be banished after £125,000 was donated by a couple. Ten theatres will share the money to improve their facilities. Theatres have been invited to apply to the Theatres Trust; the recipients will be announced in December.

Evening Standard – 17 August; sent in by Barry Quinton

MUSICAL BIRTHDAYS

The *Phantom of the Opera*'s 30th anniversary was marked by a special performance at Her Majesty's Theatre on 10 October with original cast members joining the current cast. The gala was held in aid of the charity Music in Secondary Schools Trust. Meanwhile the musical *Wicked* marked its 10th anniversary in London.

The Stage – 29 September; sent in by Barry Quinton

CINEMA BUM

American actress Lena Dunham has revealed she has the Odeon sign tattooed on her bum. The 30-year-old is probably best known as the creator, writer and star of the HBO series *Girls*.

Metro – 18 October; sent in by Alan Body

LASSIE COLLIES PET AWARD

He's long gone to the Hollywood kennel in the skies... but Lassie remains the big screen pet most people would love to adopt. The long-haired collie – star of 11 movies and 6 television series – finished ahead of animated stars Nemo and Top Cat in a poll of 1,000 people commissioned by Odeon cinemas for World Animal Day. He is one of only three animals with a star on Hollywood's Walk of Fame.

Metro – 4 October;
sent in by Carl Chesworth

CINEMA CAT SAYS:



That's all well and good but he didn't get my vote!



CAMPAIGNING TO SAVE YOUR HISTORIC CINEMAS

By Tim Hatcher

Grade II* Listed

A briefing has been given by the project architect representing JD Wetherspoon Ltd on the proposed conversion of the **State** at Grays into one of its hostels. It is encouraging to note that retention of the stage and proscenium and maintenance of the separation of foyers from the auditorium are intended; however, some foyer space is currently designated for conversion to lavatories. The understage organ chambers complicate adaptation and location of the kitchens is proving somewhat problematical.

The application to build the controversial 'pods' in the circle of the ex-Odeon at Muswell Hill was recently approved by the local Council under delegated powers, not by its planning committee. As this appears to be in breach of its own published procedures, consideration is being given to initiating a formal complaint. See p5 last Bulletin.



Considerable damage was caused to the **Palace** in Southall when it was converted to an indoor market; this included removal of the stage and mutilation of the proscenium. It is clear that this work was executed without listed building consent; therefore Ealing Council is to be requested to instigate an enforcement case for reinstatement of the affected areas. *Photo taken April 2006.*

Donations are currently being sought to finance emergency repairs to the **Picture House** at Paignton; the Association has been asked if it can contribute. See Newsreel p24.

Grade II Listed



A constructive meeting has been held with Avery Architects, the practice currently overseeing the renovation of the **Regal** in Camberwell. The scheme includes as an objective the re-establishment of double-height space in the foyer, for which the Association has expressed its support. *Photo taken September 2004.*

It is reported that the basement of the **Rio** in Dalston is to be sub-divided; hitherto no application or pre-application has been lodged with Hackney Council.

Plans have been unveiled for regeneration of the **Forum** in Liverpool, which exhibit extreme disrespect for the distinguished interior. The developer, Neptune, is directed by a City Council, which has recently shown complete disdain for its cinema heritage. See Newsreel p22.

In conjunction with The Twentieth Century Society, the CTA is requesting that the **Palm Court**, which survived the major fire at the **Majestic** in Leeds, be retained and incorporated in any development. Concurrently, attempts are being made to establish if other significant features resisted the flames. See p22 Bulletin 48/6.

Further investigation is underway following an assertion that the **Grand** in Southport is threatened with demolition. Previously Southport College had expressed interest in operating a teaching facility within the structure. See p19 Bulletin 50/4.

Unlisted

A further planning application for retirement housing to replace the **Odeon** in Aylesbury is in preparation. It is to be requested that retention of the foyer's terrazzo flooring be made a condition of planning permission.

Following August's major fire at the **Luxor** in Lancing, the building has been designated an Asset of Community Value [ACV].

Despite strong pressure from the CTA and local campaign groups, permission has been granted to demolish the **Towers** in Hornchurch. It is suspected that the local Council may have been fearful of refusing the application, noting the possible expenditure that it would incur were it to lose the inevitable appeal. See Newsreel p22.



Newham Council, which owns the **Picturehouse** in Stratford (East London), wishes to demolish the cinema and replace it with a block of residences. The building is relatively new, opening in 1997.

Photo taken April 2006.

Despite its designation as an Asset of Community Value, permission has been granted for the conversion of the **Doric** in Newmarket to offices and dwellings. It is intended, however, to retain the impressive neo-Georgian façade. See p25 Bulletin 48/6.

The **Odeon** in Peterborough was converted into the **Broadway Theatre** in 2001, although its staging facilities remained somewhat limited with no flying height. It is now proposed to convert the building to residential accommodation. The Theatres Trust is opposing this outcome and the CTA is also to object. See p24 last Bulletin.

Scarborough Council has applied for a 'Certificate of Immunity from Listing' which would prevent the **Futurist** from being so designated for the following five years. The Association has objected to its issuance.

The **Savoy** at Burnt Oak is currently being advertised for sale at a price of five million pounds, with a church group purportedly expressing interest in its purchase. An unsuccessful approach was made to Historic England to include the property on its 'Heritage at Risk' register. See p20 Bulletin 50/4.



PUBLICATIONS

Back Numbers Available

BULLETINS

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

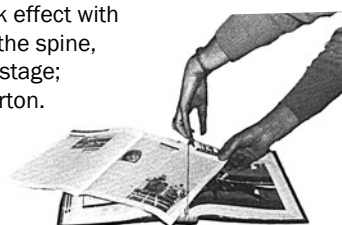
PICTURE HOUSE MAGAZINE

Listed below are the back numbers of Picture House that are still available, along with the main articles the particular issue contains. There are also available a few second-hand copies of out-of-print issues 9, 10, 14/15, 16, 20, 22, 23 & 24, priced £5.00 each, plus postage.

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

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.

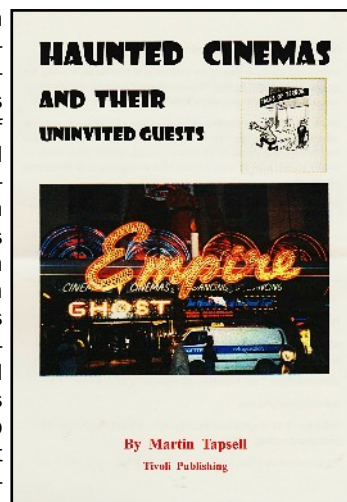


New Publication

Haunted Cinemas and their Uninvited Guests

by Martin Tapsell. 84 pages, A5, laminated card covers. Illustrated in black and white and colour throughout. Special price to CTA members £7.50 plus £3.00 postage; (normal RRP £8.95).

Well-known CTA member Martin Tapsell, who has previously written volumes about Buckinghamshire and Kent Cinemas, turns his attention to an unusual aspect of cinema history – the reported sightings of ghosts and other supernatural apparitions. As Martin says, nearly every old theatre has a ghost story, usually published in books, so do cinemas have them as well? He has answered his question by trawling through history books and the CTA archive and other sources and, after 25 years of collecting stories, has come up with over 85 locations throughout England, Scotland and Wales, arranged by regions, where such happenings have been reported. There are plenty of photographs of the buildings. An unusual and novel side of our interest!



Still Available (reviewed in previous issues)

The Golden Age of Folkestone's Cinemas

by Ricky Hart – Special price £12.50 plus postage.

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)

After The Final Curtain:

The Fall of the American Movie Theater

By Matt Lambros; 240 pages hardback, lavishly illustrated in colour. ISBN: 2361951649; available from Amazon at £29.99 but follow the links on the page for cheaper sources.

When the great American movie palaces opened in the early 20th Century, they were some of the most lavish, stunning buildings anyone had ever seen. With the advent of television, theater companies found it harder and harder to keep them open. Some were demolished, some were converted and some remain derelict to this day. This book will take you through 24 of these magnificent buildings showing what beauty remains years after the last ticket was sold. See p28 Bulletin 49/2. [afterthefinalcurtain.net]



Editor's Note: It is hoped to arrange for the author to speak to the CTA, possibly next April.



MUSEUM AT THE REGENT CHRISTCHURCH

By Kevin Wheelan

The tours of the Regent Christchurch [Dorset] projection room and museum on Saturday 8 October, mentioned in the Newsreel section of the last Bulletin, were a great success. All five tours were sold out and more than three times as many people are on the waiting list for future tours.



The projection room at the Regent with the Barco digital projector [L] and the Simplex E7 with Bob Dobson working on the sound system

The museum is in the projection room and, despite the limited space, has a comprehensive collection of vintage cinema artefacts, amongst which are two fully working 35mm projectors, one an exhibit, the other in use alongside the Barco digital projector, a slide lantern, an Automatic ticket machine, rewinders, seats, speakers, a cabinet containing a wide range of smaller exhibits and a selection of posters and photographs of local cinemas that have long since succumbed to the wrecker's ball.

The visitors were a mixture of old and young, former projectionists and those just curious to see behind the scenes. Amongst them was local resident Lisi Russell, widow of the late film director Ken Russell.

On hand to guide them through the exhibits and explain their purpose and workings were CTA member John Thornley and Bob Dobson, formerly an engineer with Westrex and Odeon, who between them restored the museum's two 35mm projectors. Also on hand were CTA members and Regent volunteers Philip Stevens and Barry Sinclair and the Regent's technical manager Sean Luckly, who is responsible for digital film presentations and live transmissions via satellite as well as lighting for the numerous live shows presented on the Regent stage. All three have spent many hours setting up the various artefacts on display.



Lisi Russell with Bob Dobson [L] & John Thornley [R]

CIRCUIT HISTORIES AVAILABLE

by Allen Eyles – all fully illustrated with gazetteers
ODEON 1 – Oscar Deutsch Entertains Our Nation – £19.99
ODEON 2 – From J Arthur Rank to the Multiplex – £19.99
THE GRANADA THEATRES – £18.99

All available from the Sales Officer – address on p2.
please add £3.00 for postage.

For those of you more technically minded the 35mm projectors are: a Kalee 12 projector head on a Western Electric Type 3a soundhead with a Kalee Vulcan arc lamp; this is a working exhibit and stands at the back of the box. A Simplex E7 projector head on an RCA Type 1041 soundhead with illumination from an AEI xenon lamp house; this is a fully operational machine and stands next to the digital projector.

To see the numerous restorations carried out by John, visit his Primolux Projector Restoration website at: [\[www.primolux.co.uk/index.htm\]](http://www.primolux.co.uk/index.htm)

All photos by the author



The Kalee 12 working exhibit



John Thornley explains the workings of the Kalee 12



Back row [L-R]: Philip Stevens, Sean Luckly, Bob Dobson;
Front row [L-R]: John Thornley, Lisi Russell, Barry Sinclair;

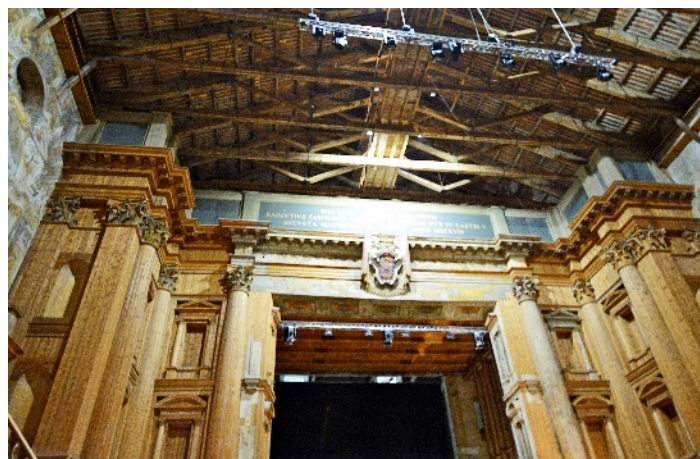
THEATRES AND CINEMAS OF BOLOGNA

A report of the CTA visit to Bologna, Italy, 19-25 September 2016; by Elaine Harwood

The clue lies in the title of this fascinating trip, devised by Richard Gray with notes beautifully produced with the aid of Richard Norman and enjoyed by a nearly-full coachload of 44 members. For this was indeed a tale of two building types, the first being the oldest and finest live theatres in some of Italy's most beautiful historic centres and the second a surprisingly large number of mainly post-war single-screen cinemas surviving close to them and in the suburbs.

The longest visits and those that dominated the 'official' programme, were to theatres. Italy became a centre of theatrical innovation with the decline of religious drama and the growing secular power of royal families and oligarchies; local rulers began to revive Roman drama and to commission new plays on their lines from around 1485 and the sixteenth Century saw the beginnings of opera. These yearnings found an architectural structure in major books by Leon Battista Alberti, who wrote *De re aedificatoria* in 1452 (printed in 1485) and Sebastiano Serlio, who published his *Trattato de architectura* from 1537 onwards. Both these architects encouraged explorations of the classical stage as the basis for banks of seating and perspective sets, in buildings that celebrated the cultural magnificence of a ruler or of a group of learned antiquarians. The Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza, built in 1580-4 by Andrea Palladio and the oldest surviving indoor theatre in the world, was just too far away to visit but we saw its less well-known little sister, the Teatro all'Antica in Sabbionetta built in 1588-90 by Palladio's successor, Vincenzo Scamozzi. This tall, narrow building was one of a series of improvements by Duke Vespasiano I Gonzaga, who sought to turn Sabbionetta into a perfect piece of Renaissance town planning and it survived as a barracks and warehouse before in the 1950s becoming a cinema. It was restored in the 1980s and 1990s when the fixed street set on the stage was recreated.

We had only the briefest glimpse of what came next. Having assembled at 6:30am (so early on a CTA tour led by Richard Gray could only mean something truly outstanding) to get to the Teatro Farnese in Parma, we duly penetrated the cordon of museum staff collecting tickets and tripods – only to be evicted by the workmen building a set for the imminent Verdi festival. Words would not do justice to our frustration. Commissioned by Ranucci I Farnese, Duke of Parma, in 1617 from the architect Giovanni Battista Aleotti, this is a large horseshoe-shaped theatre in a royal palace, with banks of seats forward of two arcades that define the space. Already at Ferrara, in 1606, Aleotti had shown that scenery could be changed by means of sliding panels into the wings and this he repeated here. His angled wings were soon superseded elsewhere by flat ones, easier to change but the monumental proscenium arch at the Teatro Farnese heralded the picture frame stage. What we should have seen, however, is



The Teatro Farnese Parma

largely a reconstruction of 1966 following an air raid. We also failed to see more than the foyer of Parma's Teatro Regio of 1821 (rededicated in 1853), again thanks to rehearsals for the Verdi festival.



The Teatro Regio Parma

Opera as we know it took shape in Mantua under Monteverdi, maestro di cappella in the 1600s to the Gonzaga family, whose Palazzo del Te or weekend palace we saw. Operatic staging was developed further by the Bibiena family of artists and architects, who served as ducal architects in Mantua in the late seventeenth Century and specialised in the building of opera houses across Europe, capable of elaborate scene changes. However, Antonio Galli Bibiena (1700-74) designed Mantua's Teatro Scientifico with a fixed backdrop and no flytower for scientific discourses and conferences of the Accademia Virgiliana, a larger complex also by him with Giuseppe Piermarini (1738-1808). The theatre opened in late 1769 and on 16 January 1770 the thirteen-year-old Amadeus Mozart played here at the command of Maria Theresa, the Hapsburg empress. Mantua also has the Teatro Sociale of 1817-22 by Luigi Canonica, which we did not see.



The Teatro all'Antica Sabbionetta



The Teatro Scientifico Bibiena Mantua

Other theatre managers and curators were far more welcoming. Each of the major cities and towns that form a line along the old Emilia Way, the Roman road running along the south side of the Po Valley, has at least one great traditional opera house among a collection of buildings for theatre and the performing arts. The earliest and the largest we saw was the Teatro Comunale in Bologna [see photo on front cover], built in 1763 as the Nuovo Teatro after an earlier building burned down. Here was the classic form of the opera house: a bell-shaped auditorium



The Teatro Comunale Ferrara



The Teatro Valli Reggio nell'Emilia



The Teatro Pavarotti Modena

with four tiers of boxes either side of a central royal box facing the deep, raked stage. A flattish stalls area leads out to an elaborate double-height foyer, over which is an attractive 'sala' or room for recitals and similarly intimate events. It did not take CTA members long to work this plan out and for its photographers to rapidly disperse themselves around any building opened to us. Bologna was the grandest, followed in age by the Teatro Communale in Ferrara by Antonio Fuschini of 1771-3, kindly shown to a small group of us by a friendly director.

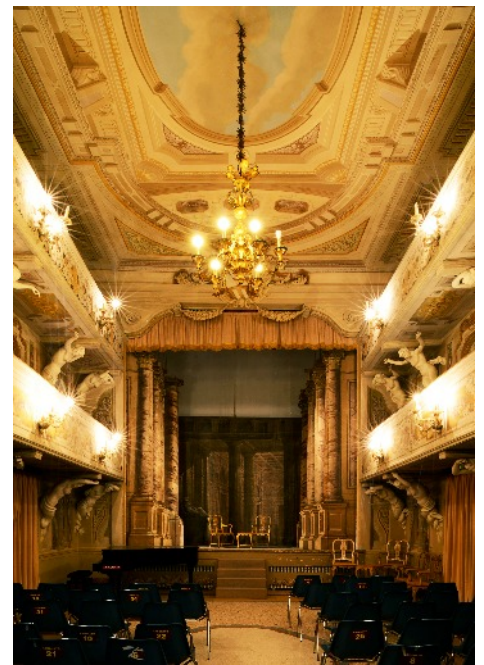
The genre continued little altered into the late nineteenth Century. The frequently-used name **Teatro Communale** reflects the public sponsorship of the buildings, beginning in republican Venice, although major local families were encouraged to make endowments and elsewhere the local Duke paid for the royal box. Beautiful examples include the imposing, free-standing Teatro Valli in Reggio nell'Emilia of 1852-7 by Cesare Costa, with two orders of columns externally and four tiers of boxes plus a gallery inside. It replaced the Teatro Cittadella of 1741, which burned down in 1851 and the sense of continuity is reflected in the architecture. It now concentrates on opera while the smaller Teatro Ariosto of 1878 by Achille Grimaldi, replacing the earlier Teatro Arso



The Giralmo Magnani Theatre Fidenza



The Teatro Nuovo Ferrara



The Villa Adrovandi Mazzacorati, Bologna

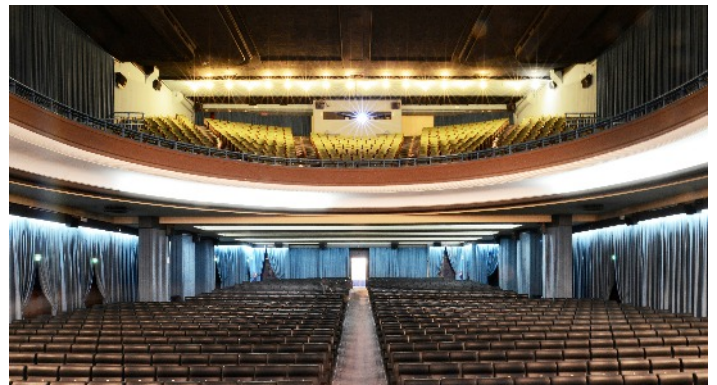
and to which we had no access, concentrates on theatre. A neo-classical variant was the imposing Teatro Comunale di Modena, renamed in 2007 in honour of the town's native son Luciano Pavarotti (1935-2007). It was built in 1838-41 to designs by Francesco Vandelli, although some of the decoration is later, including ceiling paintings by Ferdinando Manzini and a chandelier installed when electricity was first supplied in 1887. This pattern of adding appropriate decoration to earlier structures is common and again indicates the continuity of architectural and operatic traditions in these buildings.

A particularly lovely little theatre is the Giralmo Magnani Theatre at Fidenza, begun by Nicola Bettoli in 1813 but not completed until 1861. In 1889 it was named after the set designer and muralist Giralmo Magnani, a friend of Verdi's, who decorated the theatre with gilded stucco, allegorical scenes and dancing angels. Added to the programme after we could not gain access to the Parma theatres, it was many people's favourite of the whole trip. It survived as a musical theatre school until it was restored in 2004-9. The idiom of the horse-shoe opera house continued into the twentieth Century, with the near-round Teatro Nuovo at Ferrara of 1925-6. In Bologna, the open-air Teatro Arena del Sole of 1810 was first roofed over in 1916 and became a full-time cinema in 1949. It was remodelled as a theatre with a lower studio auditorium in 1986-95.



The Teatro Arena del Sole Bologna

Also charming but very different, was the private theatre in the Villa Adrovandi Mazzacorati, which survives as a health centre on the outskirts of Bologna. The grounds survive but little inside the main house, built from 1690 onwards. The theatre built in one wing in 1761-3, however, is a gem. The long, beautiful and intimate 'U'-shaped auditorium has two tiny balconies supported by the outstretched arms of buxom caryatids. The closest comparison is perhaps with the little theatre of similar date in the Neue Palace at Potsdam, built for Frederick the Great.



The Cinema Medico Palace Bologna

Bologna is a charming university town, most of its streets lined with arcades of peach-coloured stone and render that gives an extraordinary homogeneity to the city. All the streets look much the same and it is easy to get lost. Whereas Modena has two multiplexes and most of its cinemas have closed, including the Olimpia cinema of 1954 and the similar Principe cinema with a fine external relief, in Bologna there are a large number of post-war single-screen cinemas still open. The remarkable Cinema Medico Palace was built in the courtyard of the 1792 Palazzo Gessi by Giovanni Bassani in 1935, with a foyer remodelled in the 1950s or early 1960s. It has some 900 seats, although fire restrictions preclude the use of the balcony at present. The same company also runs the little Jolly cinema, a stadium set in the ground floor and basement of a late 1960s office block, poised between two main streets. The nearby Arlecchino cinema was similar – a wide auditorium with a large screen. The large Manzoni cinema of 1933 was remodelled with new panelling and balcony fronts in 2003 as a



The Jolly cinema in Bologna



The Arlecchino cinema in Bologna



The Manzoni cinema in Bologna



The gallery in Sabioneta



The Cineteca cinema in Bologna

music venue. Other curious survivals included the early Eden Theatre, now a restaurant and the post-war Capitol cinema, now with additional screens in the basement added c2004. David Simpson found many more cinemas around Bologna, which he studiously photographed; [cinematreasures.org/theaters/italy/bologna].

The CTA was particularly privileged to visit the Fondazione Cineteca, built in a former abattoir with alterations and additions by one of Italy's leading post-war architects, Aldo Rossi. The director Anna Ficiaccarini showed precious treasures from the Charlie Chaplin archive held there, including the storyboard and set designs from *The Great Dictator*.

In all, this was an unusual event for the Cinema Theatre Association, in that it concentrated on early theatres, a richly architectural and highly educational confection juxtaposed with more surviving cinemas than was first apparent. There is clearly far more to see in Italy than cinema historians have hitherto been aware and there is the potential for more exciting trips there.

All photos by the author



The CTA group at Reggio nell'Emilia

MORE WANDERINGS

By Hugh Sykes

12 SEPTEMBER 2015



The author with the 3-8 Compton from the Beaufort Birmingham

I journeyed a long distance to Tibenham, on the Norfolk/Suffolk border, to catch up with, see and hear two preserved theatre organs. In a restored barn at White House Farm are the 2-5 Wurlitzer, ex Decca Studios and the 3-8 Compton, ex Beaufort Birmingham (1929-37) and rebuilt for EMI Studios (1937-62) then owned privately in St Austell, Cornwall, until acquired and restored by Grant Pilcher. I believe two concerts are held each year and I was made very welcome.



The former Picturedrome Sleaford

3 OCTOBER 2015

A late season visit to Skegness, viewing the Tower; fully open with the two screens on latest releases and queues for matinées. The bingo club on Roman Bank [ex Central] and the much-rebuilt Plaza (on amusements) both open for business. We called in at Sleaford on our return to photograph the former Picturedrome, open as the Reel Club.



The Majestic Cradley Heath



The former Plaza Old Hill

17 OCTOBER 2015

Visiting a model rail show in Cradley Heath gave me a chance to see the closed Majestic. Oh dear! A hole in the roof, very tatty outside and Buddleia growing everywhere. I believe the 3-10 Christie organ is still in-situ? It also has some fine stained glass windows therein, particularly up the staircase. Nearby, in Old Hill, is the Platinum (ex Plaza), a very much rebuilt property. When on bingo in the 1970s it needed a new roof after a bad fire. Cinema / Ballroom / Bingo x2 / Club use.



The COS (Midlands) 3-11 Compton, ex Tower, West Bromwich

6 DECEMBER 2015

I was invited by the Cinema Organ Society (Midlands) to present a photo display about the Tower West Bromwich, in the Fentham Hall, Hampton-in-Arden, for their monthly Compton Organ concert. We were entertained by Donald MacKenzie from the Odeon Leicester Square in London. Being the 80th anniversary of the opening of the Tower, with Leslie Taff playing *Tea for Two*. This was repeated by Donald with us singing along.

22 DECEMBER 2015

Ann and I went to Hinckley for some last few Christmas items and a view of the new five-screen Cineworld; very bland outside but modern inside. The auditorium of the former Regent has been demolished and the site is now a car park for Iceland – a very sad situation and a great loss to the town.

30 JANUARY 2016

We tried a return visit to Ely – successful this time for car parking. The first venue to find, the former Majestic cinema has had a few changes since closing on film in April 1959. It became the Stamford Supply



The Cineworld Hinckley



The former Majestic [top] and the Maltings [bottom] in Ely

Stores then onto bingo, was converted for snooker in 1984 and is currently 'Bar 62'. New shops cover the location of the Exchange cinema, which closed in 1963 and was demolished in 1964. In Market Street until February 1981 stood the Rex, which opened in 1931 with 800 seats. Boots The Chemist now occupies the site. The last venue, the Maltings in Ship Lane, is where today film can be screened. This multi-purpose building has a flat floor and a stage with red tabs; a 'real ale' event was being hosted and they let me have a view.

18/19 FEBRUARY 2016

A short visit to Cardiff for a stay with Fr Andy in Canton. Whilst Fr Andy was on Church duties, Ann and I went for a walk down the Cowbridge Road. Our first call was the site of the Coliseum. The 'Collar' was opened in January 1913 and closed in 1959. It was later demolished and a new bingo club built on the same site. Sadly in December 2015 a fire broke out but it was being restored as we passed by. Then quite a way down the former Canton, which continues within as a frozen food store with upstairs on martial arts. Later, with Fr Andy driving, we passed the former Avenue cinema, which was only open for films 1940-1960, having been in commercial use ever since. Lots of aerials on the roof and the building has a lot of cladding.



The former Ninian Cardiff

Whilst out in his car, we ventured past the former Ninian cinema at the Clare Road / Corporation Road junction; unfortunately it was closed and shuttered. It was latterly open for Asian clothing but I'm not sure of its current use. It has a sharply curved roof – I went round the back to have a look. I believe a little gem inside?



Screen 2 at the Market Hall Cinema in Brynmawr

Returning home on the 20th via the 'Heads of the Valleys' Ann and I briefly called at Brynmawr for the Market Hall cinema. A market stall was across the frontage but a side view photo was taken for screen 2.

31 MARCH 2016



The Town Hall Cinema Downham Market

A day trip to the west Norfolk coast at Hunstanton to "recharge our batteries". A good walk around, the sun shone, people about. The Princess Theatre is open – mostly one-night shows and occasional film screenings. We came back via Downham Market; the Regent is still 'For Sale' but the Town Hall has started showing films on a monthly basis. *The Lady in the Van* was the next to be shown.

28/29 MAY 2016

The Neuadd Buddug in Bala [Gwynedd] reopened on 27 May with the Welsh film *Yr Ymadawiad* [The Passing] at 7:30pm. On 28 May there was *Zootropolis* at 7:30pm. Whilst a digital projector has been installed, 35mm projection has been retained as some Welsh movies are on film stock.

This reopening is most refreshing to see. In Blaenau Ffestiniog no cinema was found*. The former Empire is still there but I'm not sure whether it is in use.

To the Fairbourne Railway for the 1916-2016 Steam Gala. There is a small digital screening area in the Railway Museum but the Village Hall does have a film club for monthly showings. In nearby Porthmadog: Oh dear, what a loss. The Coliseum site is cleared, barrier fenced and 'For Sale' for commercial or leisure purposes.

Editor's Note: *A new cinema has opened in Blaenau Ffestiniog since Hugh wrote this article – see p19 last Bulletin.



The former Regent Downham Market

All photos by the author

THINGS THAT CHANGEOVER IN THE NIGHT

By Ben Doman

Cinemas, as with theatres, are rife with stories of ghostly goings-on. This could have to do with the age of the buildings combined with long-serving staff who consider the buildings they worked in as a second home and can take the form of a feeling or a sound right through to sightings. Working in the cinema industry for thirty years, I have come across my fair share of odd goings-on, which I recount for you below.

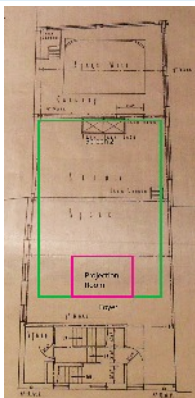


Above: Screen ② at the Little Theatre Bath, scene of the ghostly door closings; showing how tight the space was between the left wall of the projection room and the projector port (the right one of the two visible) – barely the width of a seat. [4]

Below: The first floor showing approximately how the second screen and projection room were fitted into the original fly space. [2]

My first experience was at a twin-screen West Country town centre cinema. Screen ② was built in the fly tower of the original theatre's stage. The projection room was quite small and the projector was on a high concrete plinth accessed by three steps, with the door in the back corner. Whilst stood in the narrow space at the projector waiting for the sales trailers to end, I heard the door open and close, the distinctive sound of the catch click and someone start talking. With the sound of the projector running, and the noise from a heating duct above your head it was difficult to hear the conversation. Turning round to see who had entered the box I was surprised to see the room empty. I shrugged this incident off as noises travelling from other parts of the building and didn't hear anything more for a few weeks. Then, the same thing happened again and would happen at random times, sometime nothing for a week or two, then three times in one day. I could not find an explanation for this. Still convinced that there was a rational explanation for this, I didn't mention the odd occurrences to anyone else, I didn't feel threatened or un-nerved so just accepted it as 'one of those things'. One afternoon, the on-duty staff were enjoying a tea break in the foyer when the cashier (who also took turns running films) asked if anyone had heard anything in box two. Chief asked, "Like what?" "It sounds like the door opening and then clicking shut and someone starts talking to you. When you turn around to ask them to repeat themselves, there's no-one there". "Don't be so daft." Chief replied. At that point I decided to keep what I had heard to myself to save ridicule! I continued to hear the mysterious visitor, until the day I left the cinema.

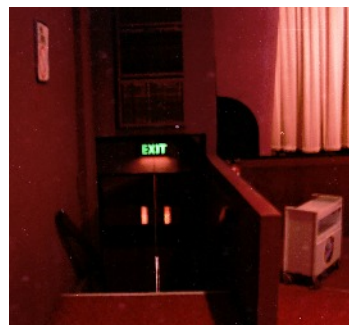
Moving 'up the ranks' in the projection room I spent a year working at a 1930s-built triple Wiltshire town-centre cinema. One of my colleagues was lamping-up alone one Sunday morning, which involved touring all parts of the cinema with a box of new light bulbs to replace blown ones. He came out of the left-hand fire exit by the stage in screen ①, the former circle. On entering the auditorium he was shocked to see someone propped up on the barrier behind the back row of seats. The auditorium was well-lit by sunlight coming through a window near the person that was in the back corner of the auditorium, being covered by shutters during performances. So convinced that there was someone else in the building, the box of lamps was dropped and the projectionist



Above: Savoy/ABC/Cannon triple, Swindon. The projectionist's nightly trip to turn off the secondary lighting involved coming out of the single door on the left and walking across to the double exit doors on the right. To the right of the double doors are the shutters covering the window, in front of which appeared the Sunday morning phantom, leaning on the barrier behind the back row of seats. [3]

Below: Exit from screen ① at Swindon. This is to the right of the above view to the rear of the auditorium and is from where the projectionist saw the figure leaning on the barrier behind the seats. [1]

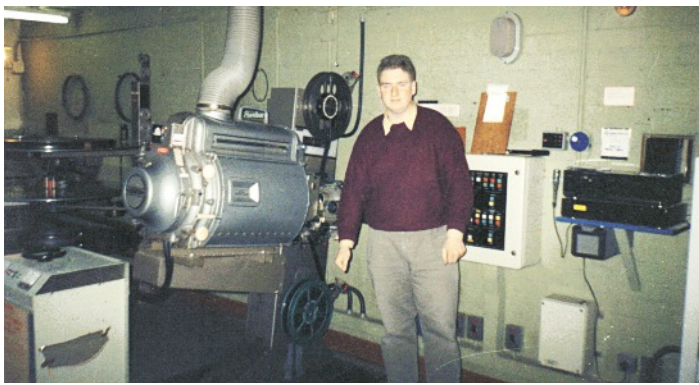
fled out of the fire exit. When the duty manager arrived, he found the projectionist at the front doors refusing to enter, convinced there had been a break-in. Although the building was searched no-one was found and the early morning visitor never made another appearance.



At the same cinema, there was another experience that happened over many years, to multiple people. At the end of the night, after locking up the old projection room that now serviced screen ①, the duty projectionist would make their way down to the rear of the auditorium (the former circle), along the back crossover gangway and into the rear circle exit where the gent's toilet was located. In the lobby of the toilets there was a passageway leading off to the side with a door to the secondary lighting battery room at the end. The main switch for the secondary lighting would need to be turned off here at the end of the night. On going down the passageway from the toilets, it was not uncommon to hear a noise that sounded very much like the 'clunk, clunk, clunk' of a film being rewound using a worn spool or packing plate that was loose on the shaft of the rewinder. The passageway was directly below the former rewind room, which had been stripped of film handling equipment when long-running platters were installed. Strangely, you would only ever hear the noise going into the battery room, not on your return visit. Was this the last reel of some long past feature being rewound? This had been going on for years and was just accepted by all the staff.



Original projection room at the Savoy/ABC/Cannon triple, Swindon. The rewind room, where phantom films were rewound at night, is behind the window under the fluorescent tube in the picture. [1]



The wide projection room at the Forum/ABC/Cannon/Robins Newbury. The apparition walking through the projection room started on the right of this photograph and crossed the full width of the room. The small 'non-sync' port is on the right, just above a CD player and tape deck. [1]

On to a single-screen Berkshire cinema, the screen being in the former circle area. Myself and the doorman had been painting the auditorium overnight. We were on a scaffolding tower painting the ceiling about two thirds of the way back, near the centre with our sightline level with the projection ports. My colleague had just climbed down for a break whilst I finished off the area we could reach, when I saw a person walk past the small porthole originally by the turntable for the non-sync music at one end of the box. I then looked to the next viewing port to see if they would appear there, which they did. They then carried on past the remaining three projector and viewing ports, the large sales spot port and finally the small port that was by what had been the dimmer board. Although a little shocked, I quite clearly saw that they were wearing what looked like a dark trench style coat and trilby hat. I called out that there was someone in the building and quickly recounted what I had seen as I climbed down the scaffold. As there was an entrance to the projection suite at both sides of the auditorium, I called to my colleague to run up to the entrance in the rear exit whilst I went in the other end and searched for the intruder. Quickly checking the staff, battery and store rooms at circle level, I hurried up to the next floor to check the projection suite. Confident that we would catch the intruder, I raced through the rewind and projection rooms, quickly checking the door to the roof was secure. Finding them clear, I made my way past the workshop and resistance room (which had housed the dimmers for the auditorium lighting behind the dimmer panel in the projection room), down the stairs at the far end of the box and into the circle exit to meet my colleague, who must have caught up with the intruder by now. I found him standing there, alone. Asking if anyone had passed, my colleague replied that they had not; neither had he heard the exit doors at ground level slam shut. We continued to search the building but found no-one. The hat and coat of the person I had seen did look a little old-fashioned. A previous Chief, with a tendency to spy on couples in the rear circle through the downlights in the ceiling, did have somewhat of a breakdown many years before. Finding jobs outside of the box for the rest of the projection team one evening, he had locked himself in the projection room and had to be talked down. Was he paying us a visit? Whatever the cause, no-one had any knowledge of any similar incidents, nor did I ever see our nocturnal guest again.



Auditorium at Newbury during redecoration. The scaffold from which the projection room visitor was viewed was in the seating area beyond the entrance steps on the right. Holes in the wall at the top of the stairs can just be seen where the former usherette's seat was once fixed. [1]

Still painting the auditorium, some weeks after the visitor in the box, we had moved onto the auditorium walls. Painting the splay walls at low level to the left of the stage, I thought I caught movement out of the corner of my eye in the entrance to the screen, a staircase rising up into the centre of the auditorium. Looking round and not seeing anyone I carried on. This happened again a few minutes later, and I started to notice my colleague looking round as well. Asking what he was looking at, he replied that he thought he had seen an older woman come up the stairs, pull down the usherette's seat and sit down – exactly what I had thought I had seen. Strangely, the usherette's seat was not on the side of the stairs where the lady appeared to sit, but on the opposite side. Neither of us felt uneasy, in fact we felt a sense of approval that we were smartening up the cinema. Throughout the rest of the night we both experienced the lady and in fact took to saying "good evening" to her. Recounting the story to my Chief the next day, he said that there had been an usherette's seat on the side that the lady had seemed to sit; it had been removed some years back. After this, second, night-time visitor, we decided to finish the decorating during daylight hours!



Forum/ABC/Cannon/Robins Newbury. The ghostly cleaner was seen in the exit that ran from the top of the **CANNON** sign to just under the large poster on the left of the building. [1]

The Chief, who had worked at the cinema for nearly forty years almost continually, starting as a trainee, said he had never had any odd experiences in the building himself, apart from one that had happened to someone else whilst he was in the building. A new cleaner had started and was mopping the long circle exit with a colleague showing her the ropes. The rear circle exit ran from the top of the building to the ground floor and, being double-width, took some time to clean. On reaching the circle foyer level and satisfied that 'the new girl' was capable of finishing off the rest of the stairs on her own, she was left to finish off the exit. It was customary after the end of the morning's cleaning for the cleaning staff to meet back in the staff room, off the circle foyer, for a cup of tea, sometimes being joined by whoever else happened to be working in the building at the time. After some general chit chat, the new starter enquired as to who had helped her finish off the exit stairs, as she had expected to see her back in the staff room. Puzzled looks were exchanged and she was asked to describe the lady. Not long after she had been left alone at the circle foyer level, another cleaner had joined her. The lady had not said anything but smiled and was humming random tunes as she worked. After going through the exit doors out into the car park the lady was not seen again but a description of her left the rest of the assembled cleaners rather quiet and visibly disturbed. The lady described was a former cleaner who had passed away mid-shift just over a week before and in fact the new cleaner had taken her place. Visibly shaken, she was sent home and unsurprisingly didn't come back to the cinema. She had got the job by answering an ad in the paper and had no connection to anyone in the cinema, nor had there been any mention of the reason for the vacancy opening. Had the lady returned to finish her shift?

Over the years I worked at many cinemas that purported to have ghostly goings-on. Usually when questioned the details would be quite vague, the stories having been passed down through generations of staff without anyone being found who had actually experienced it. The people involved in the above incidents genuinely believed what they experienced happened. Was this the eyes and ears playing tricks, or was this just things changing over in the night?

Photos: [1] author's collection; [2] Museum of Bath at Work; [3] CTA Archive

NEW USES FOR OLD CINEMAS

By Gavin McGrath

Whether it's trailers to treadmills or tip-ups to tumble dryers, cinemas have been transformed into an endless stream of uses since closing the door on films. In this feature I would like to take you through some interesting functions for our beloved buildings. It all started with bingo halls and throughout the course of time some of these treasured attractions have suddenly become more interesting than their predecessors. As with my previous projects they need not have been purpose-built as cinema, nor gone straight from film to the current function but they do need to be open so that you enjoy the transformation.



The Brighton Cinema on Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne opened in 1911 as the Brighton Electric Theatre. It was designed by Marshall & Tweedy and was part of a complex that also included an assembly hall and billiard hall. The manager revealed there were plans to enlarge the facility but this never happened. The Brighton was the first cinema in the City to be equipped for CinemaScope in 1954. It closed in 1963 and was converted to a bowling alley, which is now run by 1st Bowl.



The Empire on Leeds Road, Outwood, near Wakefield, opened in 1921 and was run by the Rothwell Empire Company. It closed in 1964 and was later a bingo hall and in the 1980s a children's nursery and a carpet store. In 1995 the idea to have a fish and chip shop with drive-in was born and the rest is history. The auditorium is decorated with movie memorabilia. The CTA visited for a meal in 2011 – see p8 Bulletin 45/6.

The Danilo on Bristol Road South in the Longbridge area of Birmingham was designed by Ernest S Roberts. It opened in 1938 and was the fourth in Mortimer Dent's chain of cinemas. It later became an SM Super Cinemas house and then an Essoldo house and was renamed so in 1954. It closed in 1968 and was turned into a bingo hall, latterly operating as Gala. It then became an LA Fitness but is now a Sports Direct Fitness Centre. The facilities include a gym with cardio machines, a pool and sauna and the exterior still looks a well-presented building.

The New Salters Cinema in Victoria Square, Droitwich opened in 1934 on the site of a previous one and was designed in a Tudor revival style. It closed in 1963 and was eventually acquired by the local authority and turned into a library in 1983. The gallery and proscenium from its cinema days have been retained and regular films are shown in the building by the Salters Film Club.



The Grosvenor Picture House on Stanley Road in the Kirkdale area of Liverpool opened in 1922 with a raised section at the back rather than a conventional balcony. It had a string of different operators including the W Gordon circuit, ABC's Regent circuit and the Essoldo circuit. It closed in 1963 and like many others went over to bingo. It has been occupied by a funeral director, Peter Coyne, since the mid-1990s, with the Grosvenor name still at the top of the frontage.



The Plaza in Peel House Lane, Widnes was designed by W & S Owen for Cheshire County Cinemas and opened in 1937. It closed in the late-1960s and went over to bingo, which ended in 1998. It is now a health centre called the Peel House Medical Plaza and has a surgery, pharmacy and physio sports injury clinic in-house.



The ABC in Bridge Street, Newport [South Wales] was built on the site of the Lyceum Theatre and was very much a latecomer, opening in 1968. Designed by C Foster and A Morgan it was tripled in the 1970s and renamed Cannon in the 1980s, returning to the ABC after the management buyout. Although it closed in 1999 it was taken on by an independent operator and named the City Cinema, which kept it alive until 2008. It has been converted to a hotel and is now a Travelodge.

The **Castle Cinema** in Worcester Place, Swansea is built on a hill and situated adjacent to the castle remains. It opened in 1913 and survived the war despite many buildings in the vicinity being destroyed. In the 1960s a foyer was created at the rear of the stalls, meaning the loss of many seats but it did have a number double seats for lovers. It was screening soft porn films in the 1970s and was run by Circle Cinemas as the **Filmcenta** from 1982. It closed in 1991, unable to compete with the UCI across the road and is now a laser centre called **Laserzone**. You will not be surprised to hear that nothing much is left of the interior, which now features a three-level playing field. It has been under threat from developers for a number of years, saved only by the fact that it is a Grade II-listed building.



The **Rex** in the **Gilesgate Moor** area of **Durham** was a single-floor cinema that opened as the **Crescent** in 1928 and was renamed in 1941. It closed in 1958 and was later a bingo hall. More recently it was a tool hire shop but today the building operates as a launderette and café known as the **Old Cinema Launderette**. There are vintage parties and gigs in the evenings.

The **Coliseum** on **Terrace Road**, **Aberystwyth** opened in 1905 on the site of an earlier theatre and was designed by **Arthur Jones**. It had two horseshoe-shaped balconies in the auditorium extending to the proscenium. It was adapted into a cinema in 1932 and closed in 1976. It was then converted into the **Ceredigion Museum** in 1983, specialising in local history. It recently installed a new screen for occasional films to be shown and a **Charlie Chaplin** silent comedy was screened in April 2016. The building is Grade II-listed.



The **Don** on **West Bar** in **Sheffield** was designed by **Henry Patterson** and opened in 1912. The frontage was in **French Renaissance** style faced with brick and terracotta and had a novelty neon sign featuring two clowns throwing a ball at each other. Originally it was a one-floor cinema but had a balcony added two years later. It closed in 1958 and was later occupied by **Bradford Woollens** who went out of business in 1977. Today it is in use as a self-storage facility. An extension has been added to the building and the frontage has been partially cladded.

The **Futurist** in **Sileby**, **Leicestershire** was opened by **Gilbert Baum** in 1920 with stalls and balcony. The building doubled as a dance-hall and lasted until 1965. It has been a pharmacy for a number of years under different guises but today is a branch of **Boots**.



The **Grand Cinema** in **Marsh Lane**, **Preston** opened in 1921 and was renamed the **Regal** in the 1930s and then the **Lido** in the 1950s. It was showing [X]-certificate films in its last years and closed in 1959. It has been a **National Tyre and Autocare** centre for a number of years with the side wall having been opened up.



The **Savoy** on **Hayling Island** in **Hampshire** was built in 1928 and survived until the late 1950s. It has been a **Royal Mail** sorting office for over 40 years.



The **Majestic** in **Castle Street**, **Tyldesley** opened in 1923 and was originally run by **Union Playhouses** of **Wigan**. It survived for 40 years on celluloid but was purchased by the local authority and converted into a swimming pool. It was previously known as the **Tyldesley Pool** but has been rebranded the **Pelican Centre** and now incorporates a gym within the premises. This is not the only example of a conversion to a pool, with other sites in **Chatteris** and **Sale**.

Photos courtesy of: Jaggery (ABC); Martin Tapsell (Rex); Gavin McGrath (Brighton) & Harry Rigby (remainder); used in accordance with the Creative Commons Licence - see [\[creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/\]](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/) More information on the functions of former cinemas can be found at [\[www.cinematreasures.org/functions\]](http://www.cinematreasures.org/functions)

NEWSREEL

The items in this section are taken mainly from press cuttings from local newspapers. Although their factual accuracy has been checked by Allen Eyles, there may be minor errors in reporting dates or other detail. Allen has also provided additional comments, where indicated. Photos by Harry Rigby within entry, except where stated. A number in curly brackets {nnnnn} is the reference for the Cinema Treasures website. Go to: [\[cinematreasures.org/theaters/nnnnn\]](http://cinematreasures.org/theaters/nnnnn)

ABERDEEN

A planning body has claimed that a proposed 850-seat cinema is "not needed" for the Blackdog area to the north east of the City. See p18 last Bulletin.

Evening Express (Aberdeen) – 8 September

ASHFORD (Kent)

Plans to upgrade the Cineworld at Eureka Leisure Park to include three new screens and an IMAX screen were expected to go before planners in September. The extension would stand twice as tall as the existing building.

Construction work on the new PictureHouse cinema in the Town Centre is expected to begin before Christmas.

Kentish Express – 8, 29 September

AYR

Plans for an eleven-screen cinema in the Kyle Centre have stalled. Planning consent was granted in March 2015.

Ayrshire Post – 30 September

BARNESLEY (South Yorks)

The two-screen Parkway (ex Odeon) may be forced to close unless menacing anti-social behaviour near the bus station opposite is brought under control. Manager Rob Younger said a 'drugged-up' man, who was later seen trying to start a fire outside, had managed to sneak into the cinema between films.

Barnsley Chronicle – date unknown; sent in by Carl Chesworth

BATH

The eight-screen Odeon has abandoned plans for late-night screenings until 3am every day of the week. It was a condition of the original 1999 planning consent that opening hours should be restricted to prevent noise. This has been relaxed and now the cinema can keep one of its screens going until 3am at weekends. The decision has been welcomed by a local councillor.

Bath Chronicle – 11 September; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Malcolm Crowle

A long-lost BBC travelogue *Bath, Queen of the West* has been discovered in the projection room at *The Little*. It was made in 1952 and presented by Richard Dimpleby. The cinema held a screening of it on 25 September, when the special guest was Jonathan Dimpleby.

The Little Press Release; sent in by Michael Crowle

BELFAST



The former Majestic on Lisburn Road is being refurbished to become home to the Windsor Baptist Church. The venue opened in May 1936 with 1,369 seats in stalls and circle. It closed in October 1975 and became a furniture store; this closed a few years ago and the building has been empty since. {23087}

Belfast Telegraph – 1 September; County Down Spectator – 8 September; photo taken September 2014

BEXHILL-ON-SEA (East Sussex)

JD Wetherspoon has confirmed that it will not be opening in 2016 in the former Picture Playhouse. Planning permission was granted in early 2015. Metal hoardings have been erected around the site. No actual date has been given. {27997}

Bexhill on Sea Observer – 23 September

BIRMINGHAM (Central)



The twelve-screen Cineworld in Broad Street is to get a 4DX auditorium in screen ③, due to open on 21 October. The system incorporates 156 motion seats and special effects such as rain, fog, wind and scents. The screen measures 42ft by 23ft. The installation follows refurbishment of the cinema's IMAX screen in June; the rest of the cinema is being refurbished in stages. {24153}

Birmingham Post – 22 September; photo taken May 2006

BIRMINGHAM (Harborne)

Plans have been unveiled by a "national cinema operator" to convert the grade II listed former *Royalty* into a three-screen cinema with one large and two smaller auditoria. It opened in October 1930 and films ceased in November 1963. It became a bingo club but that closed around 2012. See p15/16 last Bulletin. {33866}

Birmingham Post – 13 October; Birmingham Mail – 14 October

BLACKBURN (Lancs)

The grade II listed former Cotton Exchange is to have a £5m revamp to become a centre for arts, culture and business. It was built in 1865 and became a full-time cinema in 1918. The cinema closed as a five-screen *Apollo* in December 2005 and the building has been empty since. See [\[www.resourceblackburn.org.uk\]](http://www.resourceblackburn.org.uk) {24035}

Lancashire Telegraph – 22 September; sent in by Philip Crompton

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

BOGNOR REGIS (West Sussex)

Deputy manager Tracey Girdler has left the Picturedrome after 26 years of loyal service. 49-year-old Tracey has returned to Nottingham for family reasons. Tracey began working at the Picturedrome as an usher. She subsequently tackled most rôles, including projectionist, before becoming one of two deputy managers among ten staff. During her time at the Picturedrome, the three-screen venue has been owned by MGM, ABC, Cannon, Virgin and Reeltime. For the past ten years it has been run by Adam Cunard's Electric Theatre Company. Tracey admitted to feeling very sad about leaving and said: "I have enjoyed it. It has been good working here. This cinema is at the heart of the community and has a lot of support from local people." {14782}

Bognor Regis Post – 30 September; sent in by Mike Whitcombe

BOLTON (Lancs)



The new nine-screen 1,200-seat Light cinema opened on 5 October in the Market Place shopping centre. An official opening VIP night was held on 20 October. Local comedian Peter Kay dropped in to see a film and met some of the staff. The cinema invited fans to win a pair of free tickets by guessing which film Peter Kay watched.

Bolton News – 27 September, 12 October; photo by David Simpson

BOURNE (Lincs)

Plans have been put forward for the future use of Bourne Town Hall; the building has been empty since 2014. The first floor courtroom could become a theatre and cinema and the ground floor returned to its original 1821 configuration of a large open 'shambles' providing a flexible space for markets and events. If approved, the plan is to set up a charitable trust to run the venue.

Rutland & Stamford Mercury – 23 September

BOURNEMOUTH

The local Civic Society has launched a bid to protect the Odeon (ex Regent) in Westover Road and has applied for the building to be designated as an Asset of Community Value [ACV]. It would give the Society a six month moratorium to raise funds to buy the building. The building and the neighbouring ABC were sold to a developer last year for £6.15m. The Council declined to bid for the buildings but has expressed a wish that the art deco frontages be retained. Recently released plans show this, with a nine-storey apartment block and a restaurant at first floor level, behind the existing arches. Odeon placed a covenant on the sale, requiring that it not be used for cinema purposes. The cinema operations are due to move to a new multiplex currently being built. See cover photo Bulletin 50/1 and Letters p29.

Daily Echo (Bournemouth) – 7, 25 October; sent in by Philip Stevens

CTA member David Cox organised a private screening of the 1980 Todd-AO35 film *Flash Gordon* in ABC screen ① on 13 October. See Letters p28.

Daily Echo (Bournemouth) – 13 October; sent in by Philip Stevens

A fire broke out in the basement boiler room of the ABC at around 4:30pm on 3 October. Seven fire engines were dispatched; an aerial platform was also sent but not required. The cinema was evacuated and roads closed for about an hour and a half as crews brought the fire under control. There were no injuries.

Daily Echo (Bournemouth) – 4 October;
sent in by John R Forster & Philip Stevens, who adds:

Cinema is OK; it does this every year at the start of winter when the boilers are switched on. I am told it's the old oil in the pipes burning off.

BRECON (Powys)

The 380-seat Theatr Brycheiniog is to start showing films and is to apply for grants towards the equipment. It says the Coliseum cinema in the town has nothing to fear from the move.

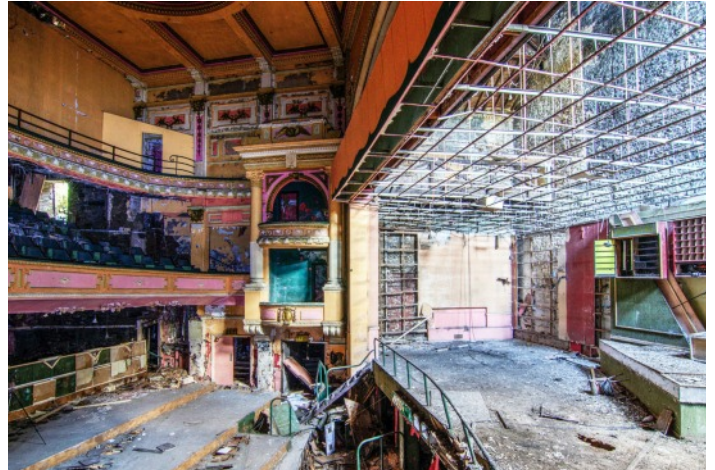
Brecon & Radnor Express – 11 August; sent in by Hugh Sykes

BRIGHTON

Councillors have been recommended to drop their reasons for refusal of plans to demolish the former Astoria. The move could spare taxpayers a large legal bill should developers win an appeal at a planning inquiry scheduled for December. The grade II listed building opened in December 1933 with 1,823 seats. Films ceased in May 1977 and bingo took over until 1996; the building has been empty since. {1844}

Argus (Brighton) – 8 September; sent in by Carl Chesworth, Ray Dolling & Barry Quinton

BURNLEY (Lancs)



The run-down grade II listed Empire Theatre was to be sold at auction in October but was removed from the lists at the last minute. The group campaigning to restore the theatre welcomed the move and will now carry on with its fundraising events. It was last used for bingo in 1995 and has stood empty since. It defaulted to the care of the Duchy of Lancaster as an "owner of last resort" after ownership could not be established. A spokesman said the theatre had been offered to both Burnley Council and the Trust at no charge. It opened in October 1894 and the auditorium was reconstructed in 1911 with 1,808 seats on three levels. It became a cinema in May 1930 and, after a couple of short closures, films finally ceased in July 1970 and bingo took over. See Letters p29. {36755}

BBC Lancashire News website – 4 October;

Lancashire Evening Telegraph – 20 September, 15 October;

The Stage – 6, 19 October; sent in by Barry Quinton, Joseph Roberts & R David Simpson

CHESTER

Picturehouse is to be the operator of a new six-screen 715-seat cinema in the Northgate development. The City has not had a cinema since the Odeon closed in 2007; that is now being converted into the Storyhouse, comprising an 850-seat theatre, library and 100-seat arthouse cinema.

Chester & District Standard – 8 September; sent in by Carl Chesworth

CHORLEY (Lancs)

Plans for a six-screen Reel cinema at the Market Walk centre have been approved by planners. Work is expected to start in early 2017 and it could be open by summer 2018.

Chorley Guardian – 23 August, 27 September

CIRENCESTER (Glos)

Work has not yet started on the promised four-screen Everyman in Brewery Court. The £48m development was due to be completed in summer 2017 but some are doubting that it will ever happen.

Wilts & Glos Standard – 18 August

COLCHESTER (Essex)

The Council has finalised the sale of Roman House on Queen Street, formerly Keddies department store. Work was expected to start in October to demolish the building for a development incorporating a three-screen Curzon cinema. Opening is scheduled for late 2017.

East Anglian Daily Times, Daily Gazette – 6 October



COVENTRY



The former Standard/Godiva is to become a church. It opened in July 1938 as the Standard, named after the nearby car factory. It closed in September 1965 for internal reconstruction with shops and a bank downstairs and a 500-seat cinema in the former circle; this reopened as the Godiva in March 1967 – your editor saw many a 70mm roadshow there on a large curved screen. The cinema closed in September 1976 and became a bingo club, which closed in 1981. It was latterly used as a casino. {37905}

Coventry Telegraph – 22 April; sent in by Gavin McGrath; photo taken March 2006

DAVENTRY (Northants)

Northampton's Errol Flynn Filmhouse, run by the Royal & Derngate Theatre, has announced it is working on proposals for a three-screen cinema in Daventry. The cinema would be part of the planned development on the car park immediately north of the High Street.

Northampton Herald & Post, Daventry Express – 13 October

DEAL (Kent)

The Council is considering enforcement action if the owners of the Regent do not submit an outline planning application within three months, followed by a full application three months later. It was sold five years ago on the understanding it would be used again as a cinema but the Council believe the owners are breaking the covenant by running their heating, ventilation and plumbing business from there. The *Reopen the Regent* campaign group presented a petition to the Council with more than 2,500 signatures at a public meeting.

East Kent Mercury – 23 September

DERBY

The project manager at the site has warned that the derelict Hippodrome could stay in its current state for years unless somebody makes a realistic offer to buy it. It was part demolished by a previous owner in 2009. The Hippodrome Restoration Trust wants to bid for Lottery funding to restore the building. {14683}

Derby Telegraph – 4 October; sent in by Peter Good, Chris Smith & Peter Wood

DUNDEE



The former Tivoli on Bonnybank Road has been put up for sale by the owner; offers over £300,000 are invited for the property. It was built on its present site in 1924, taking its name from a former venue in

Brown Street, which had been destroyed by fire. Films ceased in 1977 and snooker took over, which still continues. Planning permission for demolition and the construction of eight houses was granted in January 2009 but nothing was done. This permission was renewed in 2014 and is still valid until March 2017. {48334}

Evening Telegraph (Dundee) – 22 August; photo taken September 2006

DURHAM

The former Passport Office is being demolished to make way for a three-screen 384-seat Everyman cinema. Opening is scheduled for 2019.

Northern Echo – 5 October

FORT WILLIAM (Highland)

The group campaigning to reopen the former Studio twin cinemas gained charity status earlier this year. However it has discovered that the conversion of the old building to comply with modern health and safety standards would be too expensive. Instead it has decided to buy Units 5 & 6 at Airds Crossing (about 300m NE of the old cinema) for £180,000. Building work and fitting it out as a two-screen cinema will cost an additional £100,000. They have six months to raise the money.

Press & Journal (Highlands & Islands) – 3 October

FROME (Somerset)

The Westway has been successfully let to Pat & Beryl Scott, who operate the Ritz in Burnham-on-Sea. Renovation work is already in progress ahead of a grand reopening early in 2017; the work will subdivide the auditorium into three screens. The cinema has been closed since the previous operator vacated in March. {24700}

Frome Standard – 22, 29 September; Frome Times – 6 October; Somerset Live – 22, 23 September; sent in by Ray Dolling

Late News: Police believe that a fire at the cinema on 23 October was started deliberately. Three fire engines were sent but more help was requested when they arrived, Nobody was hurt. The new operators have said they will continue to develop the venue, despite the fire.

Somerset Live – 23 October

GREENOCK (Inverclyde)



The Council has agreed to give to owners of the former BB Cinema £30,000 towards knocking it down. Planning permission exists for the construction of flats on the site. It first opened in 1914 but was rebuilt in 1935. It is not known when films ceased but it was later used for bingo and latterly as the Babylon nightclub. The building has been empty for several years. {50366}

Inverclyde Now – 10 September; photo taken September 2008

GUERNSEY (Channel Islands)

A six-screen 440-seat cinema could still be built at Admiral Park. Initial planning consent has been given and an open meeting is to be held to decide the outcome.

Guernsey Press & Star – 18 August

HALIFAX (West Yorks)

The Council Chamber in the Town Hall was transformed into a cinema in September for a special screening of the 1957 classic *12 Angry Men* as part of programme of films in alternative venues across the town.

Huddersfield Daily Examiner – 17 September



HARROGATE (North Yorks)



The Odeon was 80 years old on 28 September. To celebrate, the cinema held a 'family fun day' on 1 October with face painting, tombola, cake stall and all 2D screenings at £5. All profits went to the MIND charity. A display of memorabilia [above] was organised by manager Kevin Langford, who has been at the cinema for 29 years. The grade II listed building currently has five screens. {1834}

Odeon Press Release – 16 September

HAVERFORDWEST (Pembroke)

There are plans for a five-screen cinema on the former Wilko site. The developer is seeking views from the public. A statement from the nearby Torch Theatre in Milford Haven says they are not worried by the prospect.

Western Telegraph – 12 October; Milford & West Wales Mercury – 13 October

HEXHAM (Northumberland)



I have a belated birthday and several landmark dates to commemorate for the former Queen's Hall Cinema in Hexham. The building was opened 150 years ago on 13 September 1866 at a total cost of £8,000. The South Wing contained the Town Hall with Italianate plasterwork, which particularly featured a magnificent ceiling. This was converted into the 650-seat Queen's Hall Cinema by the addition of a stage house, balcony and raked floor, which opened on 14 March 1921 – 95 years ago. Ten years later in February 1931 a serious fire gutted the cinema and destroyed the ceiling. It re-opened on 31 July 1931 with an art deco interior, of which only the ceiling remains – 85th anniversary. The auditorium now operates as the 350-seat Queen's Hall theatre, which still hosts a monthly film club. The CTA visited in 2011. {36896}

Sent in by David Williams; photo taken August 2007

HULL (East Yorks)

Plans have been unveiled for a drive-in cinema and a suitable location is being sought. The Moonlight Cinema was first proposed in Scarborough but planning permission was refused. Since then drive-ins have opened in Kent and York. It is hoped to be open by 2017 to coincide with Hull's year as UK City of Culture.

Hull Daily Mail – 26 August

INVERNESS (Highland)

The eight-screen cinema has been quietly dropped from revised plans for the expansion of the Eastgate Centre. The scheme was granted planning permission in spring 2014. Inverness already has an out-of-town seven-screen Vue, which has just cancelled its Senior Screen performances.

Press & Journal (Aberdeen) – 13 August; Inverness Courier – 27 September

IPSWICH (Suffolk)

The new twelve-screen Empire multiplex at the Buttermarket Centre is expected to open during the run-up to the Christmas season. It will have two IMPACT screens.

Ipswich Star – 23 August

KINGSBRIDGE (Devon)



The resident of an adjacent flat has complained about the noise level from the Kings Cinema since Merlin Cinemas took it over. He says it is worse than The Falklands war. Merlin says the matter is "in hand" and was investigating which of the three cinemas was causing the problem. They added that a new air conditioning system was due to be installed in September and that might create an opportunity to add new acoustic panels.

South Hams Gazette – 24 August; photo [as Reel] taken June 2008

KIRKCALDY (Fife)

The Kings Theatre Kirkcaldy group has secured ownership of the grade B listed former ABC, thanks to a deal between the group and the building's previous owners and also with assistance from Thailand-based philanthropist John Sim OBE. The group wants to turn the building into a "world class" 2,000-seat concert hall and corporate events space. Scaffolding has already been erected to repair the roof in time for the winter. The venue opened in November 1904 and was converted into the Regal cinema in 1937. It was tripled in 1977/8 and films ceased in December 2000. It has remained empty and deteriorating since and is on the Theatres Trust *Buildings at Risk* register. {23081}

Fife Free Press – 1 September, 6 October; Dundee Telegraph – 2 September; Dundee Courier – 13 September

LEEDS (West Yorkshire)

A building attached to rear of the former Palace in Armley suffered a serious fire on 18 October; no-one was hurt. It is thought that the ex-cinema, currently used for bingo, was unaffected. {22380}

West Leeds Dispatch, Yorkshire Post – 18 October

LINCOLN

A cinema is to be incorporated into a new restaurant called Wildwood, which was due to open in late August. A three-course meal and cinema ticket will cost less than £20.

Lincolnshire Echo – 18 August

LINLITHGOW (West Lothian)

Historic Linlithgow Palace – birthplace of Mary, Queen of Scots – was turned into a cinema for a free screening of the 1982 movie *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* in September. The event was held to celebrate the town's links to "Scotty" – he was born in the town in the year 2222.

The National (Scotland) – 23 August

LIVERPOOL (Central)



The grade II listed Forum/ABC is to undergo an £11m revamp to create a new music venue for up to 1,500 people. Following the “work” in Lime Street [including the demolition of the Futurist and Scala cinemas] developers say they are now ready to proceed with the Forum planning application, details of which were revealed over a year ago – see p22 Bulletin 49/3. {6521}

Liverpool Echo – 24 August; sent in by Chris Lyons; photo from CTA Archive

LIVERPOOL (Sefton Park)



The hardware store that has occupied the former Sefton Picture-drome for the last 54 years is closing. The building will become a micro-brewery. It was originally a horse stables for the tramway, hence the horse's head on the façade. It was converted to a 300-seat cinema in 1911. It closed as a silent cinema in 1929 and was converted into a penny bazaar. {40959}

Liverpool Echo – date unknown; sent in by Mike Taylor; photo taken July 2007

LIVERPOOL (Speke)

Work is expected to begin later this year on a new eleven-screen Cineworld at the New Mersey retail Park.

Liverpool Echo – 3 September

LLANDUDNO (Conwy)

Restaurant chain Wildwood has opened in Mostyn Street but without the usual small cinema it has at other venues. It says it was forced to drop the cinema part of the plan because there was not enough space on the site.

North Wales Pioneer – 5 October; North Wales Weekly News – 12 October

LONDON (Bethnal Green)

A planning application has been submitted to demolish the former Odeon Hackney Road and build a “5 to 11 storey building comprising flats and offices”. See p5 last Bulletin. Planning application at [tinyurl.com/gt9qfaz]. {13886}

Hackney Today – 17 October; sent in by Gavin McGrath

LONDON (Ealing)

Work is finally due to start in December on Ealing's new eight-screen Picturehouse, although there have been many false dawns over the last eight years. The former Empire (ex Forum) was demolished in 2009, except for the façade, which is supported by scaffolding [see p17 Bulletin 49/6]. The site was recently sold to a new developer.

Ealing Today – 6 October; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Robert Gurd

LONDON (Elephant & Castle)

The Coronet (ex ABC) has had a stay of execution as regeneration plans for the area have been held up. It was due to close early in 2017 but now it will continue for the whole year. The venue is now a nightclub; regular films ceased in September 1999. {27019}

South London Press – 30 September

LONDON (Eltham)

Vue is to be the operator of a new six-screen cinema in Eltham High Street; a party was held to celebrate the news. The cinema is due to be completed in 2018. Planning permission was granted last year.

South London Press – 12 August

LONDON (Holloway)



The former Coronet has been declared an Asset of Community Value [ACV]. It opened as the Savoy in February 1940 and was renamed ABC in 1962. It became the Coronet in 1979 and closed in June 1983. In 1984 the stalls was used for snooker but this only lasted a few years. In March 1996 it reopened as a Wetherspoons pub called The Coronet. {4301}

Islington Tribune – 19 August; photo taken September 2004

LONDON (Homerton)

667 people responded to a crowdfunding appeal and raised £57,000 to relaunch the Castle in Brooksby's Walk. A 60-seat upstairs cinema is scheduled to open in November. The building opened in September 1913 and films ceased in May 1958. It had various uses since and in April 2006 was reconstructed internally and became a snooker club on two levels. Today the downstairs is a convenience store. {16613}

Hackney Citizen – 1 October

LONDON (Hornchurch)

Permission has been granted to demolish the former Towers/Odeon and build a Lidl supermarket, despite many protests. The building may have gone by the time you read this. Lidl says it will retain the **TOWERS** lettering and create a public art installation. Meanwhile, they have submitted a fresh planning application for a supermarket on the site.

Evening Standard – 30 August; Romford & Havering Post – 31 August;

Romford Recorder – 2, 9, 12, 16, 29 September;

sent in by Margaret Burgoine, Ryan Jeffries, Oscar Jefferies & R David Simpson

LONDON (Kensington)

Campaigners to save the Odeon resubmitted their plan to have the building listed as an Asset of Community Value [ACV] after a secret benefactor said he was prepared to buy the entire site for £120m. A letter from the Council said that such an application had been received but reminded readers that the site is owned by a company and they have no obligation to sell; the application was subsequently declined. Alfred Hitchcock's daughter has joined the campaign to save it. Planning permission exists for demolition and building of flats with a cinema in the basement. Preparations for demolition started on 5 September; the latest news we have is that nothing had happened by 12 October. {13801}

Kensington & Chelsea News – 16, 30 August, 6 September;

Evening Standard – 19 August, 7 September; sent in by R David Simpson & Adam Unger

LONDON (Kentish Town)

Developers building 12 new flats and a cinema on the corner of Prince of Wales Road and Kentish Town Road say they have shown plans to various operators but no deal has been signed yet. They believe potential tenants are waiting for the building to be finished before they enter negotiations. Some operators have said that the site is too small to be economically viable. Neighbours fear that the cinema plan could be mothballed if no one steps forward.

Camden New Journal – 8 September

LONDON (Marble Arch)



Demolition of the Odeon has started. It opened in February 1967 with a massive curved screen (75ft wide by 30ft high). It was subdivided in 1996 into five screens and closed in May 2016 – see p28. Future plans for the site include a six-screen cinema in the basement.

Evening Standard – 15 September; sent in by Barry Quinton & R David Simpson; photo courtesy Ian Grundy

LONDON (Mayfair)



A petition has been launched to save the 1966 Curzon. Luxury flats are being built above it and it is feared that the noise will bother tenants and cause the cinema to close. Curzon says that to soundproof the cinema would entail building “a box inside a box”, which wouldn’t be acceptable to English Heritage as the cinema is listed grade II. A Council spokesman said that in granting planning permission for the flats a condition was imposed to make the developer responsible for soundproofing but it seems they are trying to make the cinema pay. {7507}

Evening Standard – 15 September; Time Out – 20 September; Cityam – 16, 21 September; West End Extra – 23 September; sent in by Keith Bye, Gavin McGrath & R David Simpson

LONDON (Shepherd's Bush)

Dorsett, the firm that turned the former Pavilion/Odeon into a hotel wants to extend its restaurant and have submitted revised plans for Pyke’s Cinematograph Theatre next door. Plans for a 16-storey tower block were rejected but now an 8-storey development is proposed, incorporating a small cinema in the basement. The cinema, which opened in March 1910 would be demolished. Films ceased in 1981; the building was last used as a Walkabout pub, which closed in October 2013. {3776}

Fulham Chronicle – 4 October

LYME REGIS (Dorset)

The Town Council has been given an update on the progress at the Regent. The grade II listed building suffered a serious fire in March, caused by an electrical fault – see back page Bulletin 50/3. After the clearance of the site in May, owner Scott Cinemas has been focusing on reaching a settlement with the insurers, which is expected to be finalised shortly. There will subsequently be a period of consultation before planning permission for the rebuild can be submitted. It is too early to give a date for this. {22441}

View from Lyme Regis – 21 September

MACCLESFIELD (Cheshire)

Developers Ask Real Estates are to drill bore holes and pits at the Churchill Way Car Park. This is in preparation for planning application for a six-screen cinema, restaurants and shops. The current cinema is the one-screen Cinemac, inserted into the Heritage Centre at second floor level.

Macclesfield Express – 19 October; sent in by Martin Tapsell

MANCHESTER (Hulme)

Campaigners hoping to bring the grade II listed Hippodrome back to life have been disappointed that their request for ACV status has been refused. It opened in October 1901 as a three-tier theatre and eventually went over to bingo. That ceased in 1988 and the building lay empty. Since 1999 the building has been owned by a Church and they have spent £200,000 on general renovations. It would cost millions to restore the building as a theatre. See Letters p29.

Manchester Evening News – 5 August; sent in by Carl Chesworth

MARGATE (Kent)

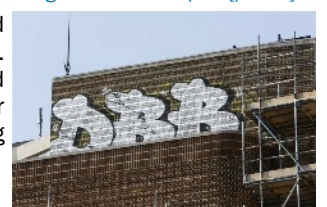


Work has started on the £1.8m phase 2 of the grade II* listed Dreamland restoration project. This involves restoration of the Sunshine Café and the cinema foyer. The foyer is being returned to its original 1930s design with new brass hand rails, metal entrance doors, Venetian plasterwork to the ceiling and bespoke lighting and signage. The café was last used as a Chinese restaurant. Externally Dreamland’s brick and fin fascia and windows are to be restored, with neon signage and a new lift. The Council hopes this will pave the way for further development of the cinema.

KM Extra – 24 August; Isle of Thanet Gazette – 26 August; Kent on Sunday – 28 August; sent in by Margaret Burgoine & Martin Tapsell [photos]

On 22 September vandals sprayed graffiti onto the Dreamland cinema fin. The site was secure and they gained entry by damaging the perimeter fence. The contractors are working with police to identify the culprits.

Kent Live – 22 September



MURTON (Co Durham)



Since the new seven-screen Cineworld opened at Dalton Park on 9 September over 16,000 people have been through the doors. This resulted in a number of 'full house' screenings during the opening month. There have been over 800 screenings of 31 different films. Patrons have consumed more than 7,000 drinks and 190,000 kernels of popcorn. {53349}

Northern Echo – 12 October; photo taken October 2016 by David Sompson

NEWCASTLE (Co Down, Northern Ireland)

The Newcastle Community Cinema was one of several premises in Main Street that were targeted in a graffiti attack. Volunteers spent several hours cleaning the building.

Mourm Observer & County Down News – 7 September

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE

The former Paramount/Odeon does not feature in the Council's plans for the regeneration of Pilgrim Street and will be demolished starting this month (November). It opened in September 1931 [so it was recently 85 years old] and was tripled in 1975 with a fourth screen added later. It was listed grade II in 1999 but was controversially de-listed in 2001. Attempts were made to have this decision reversed but in the meantime many fittings were removed and the interior damaged. {3307}

The Journal (Newcastle) – 16, 19 September, 12, 14 October;
The Chronicle (Newcastle) – 7 September; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Neil Thompson

NORTHAMPTON

An eight-screen cinema is included in plans for a new development on the site of the former Greyfriars Bus Station. No operator has been named.

Northampton Herald & Post – 1, 15 September

NORTHWICH (Cheshire)



The grade II listed former Plaza was opened as part of the Heritage Open Days in September. It opened in December 1929 with 1,263 seats and films ceased in the early 1960s. It was converted into a bingo club, which closed in March 2011. The building has been empty since although there is a campaign to reopen it. {22410}

Northwich Guardian – 17 August; photo taken August 2007

Odeon has applied for a licence to operate a new six-screen cinema at the Barons Quay development. One of the screens will be an iSense screen. No time schedule has been given.

Northwich Guardian – 5 October

NOTTINGHAM



The four-screen Savoy has had a £125,000 refurbishment. New seating with more legroom has been installed in screen ①, reducing the capacity from 375 to 300. It has recently been granted a wedding licence. The modernisation follows an increase in admissions, from 161,000 in 2014 to 170,000 last year. The building opened in November 1935 with 1,242 seats in stalls and circle; it was tripled in 1972 and a small fourth screen added later. {17336}

Nottingham Post – 31 August, 27 September; sent in by Terry Hanstock; photo taken May 2006

A nine-screen cinema is to be built as part of the redevelopment of the Broadmarsh Centre. Details of the operator are not being released until the deal has been finalised. Work is expected to start in the first half of 2017.

Nottingham Post – 6 October; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Terry Hanstock

OLDHAM (Greater Manchester)

The new seven-screen 789-seat Odeon opened on 21 October in the former Town Hall. It includes an iSense screen with Dolby ATMOS sound. The screens range in size from 60 to over 200 seats. Many original features of the grade II listed building have been retained; one cinema is in the former courtroom and still has the balcony where judges used to sit. The town has not had a cinema since the old ABC closed in June 1986.

Oldham Evening Chronicle – 19 September, 7 October; sent in by Carl Chesworth

PAIGNTON (Devon)

The closed Torbay Picture House held free tours for Heritage Open Days. A trust now owns the building and has carried out emergency repairs to avoid further deterioration; full restoration will cost £2m. {22124}

Herald Express (Torquay) – 24 August

PLYMOUTH



The Reel (ex ABC) could be demolished to make way for student flats. A public exhibition of the plans was held in October. It opened in July 1938 as the 1,074-seat Royal and was renamed ABC in April 1958. In 1977 it was converted into a three-screen cinema upstairs and a bingo club downstairs; the bingo closed in early 2006. {24749}

The Herald (Plymouth) – 12 October; *Western Morning News* – 13 October; photo taken June 2008

RINGWOOD (Hants)

The owners of the former Regal have now said they would be prepared to sell the building to the campaign group that is trying to save it. A starting figure of £2m has been proposed and the group is hoping for a benefactor. They are now seeking funding for a feasibility study and getting professional advice to ensure the building would be a sound investment. Various proposals for its reuse have been put forward, ranging from conversion into a theatre to demolishing the auditorium and building a new auditorium, retaining the façade.

New Milton Advertiser – 17 September;

Daily Echo (Bournemouth) – 19 September; sent in by John R Forster

ROMSEY (Hants)



The Plaza is hoping to apply for £300,000 grants to carry out improvements. The auditorium is to be repainted, the roof altered and improvements made to the stage. A survey has been sent to all patrons requesting public support for the grant application. A grant of £25,000 has already been received from the County Council. The venue opened in 1933 and closed as a cinema in the 1960s. It had a spell on bingo before becoming an amateur theatre in 1982. {41645}

Daily Echo (Southampton) – 14 October; sent in by Ian Patterson & John Skinner; photo taken June 2015 on CTA visit

RUSHDEN (Northants)

The proposed Cineworld has revised its number of screens upwards by two to 14. An IMAX screen will also be a new feature. The new plans have been submitted to the Council. Work has already started at the site with some steelwork erected.

Corby Evening Telegraph – 1 September

SCARBOROUGH (North Yorks)

Plans have been approved for a seven-screen 1,060-seat cinema at the North Bay development. A number of operators have expressed interest. It is hoped it could be open by the end of 2017.

Scarborough News – 6, 13 October; sent in by Carl Chesworth

SEDGLEY (Dudley)



The wallpaper shop that has occupied the former Picture House for the last 55 years is closing down due to the retirement of the owner. The premises will be taken over by a furniture store. The building started life as a Drill Hall in the 1880s and was converted into a cinema around 1912. In 1936 a balcony was added, increasing the seating capacity to 631. It closed in January 1960. {43195}

Express & Star (Wolverhampton) – 24 September; sent in by Ivan Harris; photo taken May 2006

SHEFFIELD

The nine-screen Light cinema being built at The Moor is expected to open in May 2017.

Sheffield Telegraph – 13 October; sent in by Stuart Smith

SOUTHAMPTON

The Mayflower Theatre (ex Gaumont) was open for the Heritage Open Days in September. It is also launching a new project called My Story to create a "living story" which will culminate in a new interactive digitised archive in the theatre itself. They are asking for stories from anyone connected with the theatre in its 89-year history. {6296}

Daily Echo (Southampton) – 30 August, 17 September; sent in by Ian Patterson

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA (Essex)

Developers are proceeding with plans for a cinema on the Seaway car park, despite a rival project due to open just two miles away. The operator is due to be revealed before Christmas. The scheme is set to be in competition with that at Southend United's new stadium, which incorporates a Cineworld cinema. See p23 last Bulletin.

Basildon Echo – 17 August; Southend Standard – 26 August

SYDNEY (Australia)



The 520-seat IMAX at Darling Harbour closed in September; it will be demolished and replaced with a smaller screen in a new 430-seat building. It opened in September 1996 and had the biggest IMAX screen in the world at 35.7m wide and 29.7m tall; the new screen will still be the world's largest. {32262}

Gizmodo – 25 August; sent in by Carl Chesworth; photo taken March 2007

TAUNTON (Somerset)

Plans for a new cinema at the Firepool development have been refused. The town already has an out-of-town eight-screen Odeon.

Somerset County Gazette – 25 August, 8 September.

TEIGNMOUTH (Devon)



The Mars Hill Church has taken over the grade II listed former Riviera. Plans to bring the cinema back into use, restore the building and open a café have been approved by the Council. The venue was built as the Assembly Rooms in 1825 and was altered in 1933-34 for the Riviera with 586 seats in the stalls and 315 in the circle. In 1970 the circle was extended forward to make a 520-seat cinema and an amusement arcade occupied the ground floor. The cinema closed in March 2000; various plans have been put forward previously but have come to naught. {22755}

Herald Express (Torquay) – 31 August, 12, 19 October; Western Morning News – 10 October; photo taken August 2003

TUNBRIDGE WELLS (Kent)

New plans have been unveiled for the site of the former ABC [etc]. A boutique cinema is included in the plans but it won't be on the same footprint due to a restrictive covenant. Several previous plans have come to naught. The cinema closed in October 2000 and was demolished in 2014. {25782}

Kent & Sussex Courier – 7 October

UTTOXETER (Staffs)



The three-screen Cinebowl celebrated its 10th birthday in September. Seating capacities are 215, 155 and 156 and, as the name suggests, the complex incorporates an 8-lane bowling alley. Four years ago an ice rink was added to the venue. To celebrate, prices were rolled back to their 2006 levels for one day. {25792}

Nottinghamshire in Focus – 27 September; photo taken May 2008

WAKEFIELD (West Yorks)

A deal has been agreed with Light Cinemas to operate a new nine-screen cinema at the indoor market site. The £3m market, which only opened in 2008, will close in November and traders will have to move out. A public exhibition of the plans was held in October. Completion is scheduled for 2018.

Yorkshire Post – 8 October; sent in by Carl Chesworth

WARBOYS (Cams)

Permission is being sought for a drive-in cinema in Fenside Road. It will have a capacity for 70 cars.

Hunts Post – 24 August

WOLVERHAMPTON

A number of cinema chains have expressed interest in operating a cinema at the Westside development. Demolition of buildings around the old covered market has begun but construction work is not expected to start until early 2018 and take about 20 months.

Wolverhampton Chronicle – 6 October

WOODBIDGE (Suffolk)



The 288-seat Riverside Theatre has unveiled plans for a second screen. A 50-seat auditorium would be built on pillars over the car park at the rear of the building. No time scale has been given. The venue opened in September 1915 with 650-seats. In the late 1950s a stage was installed in the front stalls area and it had a total refit in 1985. {22411}

East Anglian Daily Times – 29 August; photo taken April 2016

WORTHING (West Sussex)

The former Plaza, now a Gala Bingo hall, has undergone a £250,000 refit. Worthing Mayor Sean McDonald, accompanied by Mayoress Vicky Vaughan and Town Crier Bob Smytherman, officially relaunched the venue when he cut a red ribbon. General Manager Mark Watts said new carpet, chairs and ceiling had been installed, the café/bar had been enlarged and the toilets refurbished. 2,000 customers a week visit the site and permission was recently given for the building to remain open until midnight. The former Plaza, designed by Harry Weston, originally opened in December 1933 with 2,005 seats in circle and stalls. Lou Morris owned it at opening but in 1934 he sold it to Odeon. As they were already opening a purpose-built Odeon nearby, they then leased it to ABC in 1936. ABC ran the Plaza until December 1968 when it closed as a cinema, opening the following month as bingo. {23445}

Worthing Journal – August 2016; sent in by Mike Whitcombe

Worthing's theatres [including the Connaught] could be taken over by a charitable trust in an attempt to cut costs. Their operation was subsidised by taxpayers to the tune of £2m last year. Having the services run by a trust would still require public investment but yearly savings of £188,000 could be around ten times the level if they continued to be run in-house.

Worthing Herald – 8 September; sent in by Barry Quinton

YNYSHIR (Rhondda Cynon Taff)

Paul Kirner's Music Palace opened on 19 August in a former chapel. The building houses the Christie organ from the Regal Edmonton, which later spent some years at Barry Memorial Hall. The opening artistes were John Mann, President of the COS and Paul Kirner, the owner of the Music Palace. Both gentlemen are, incidentally, CTA members as well! The centre will eventually house three other cinema organs – the Wurlitzer from the Ritz Hereford, a Wurlitzer from Mike Candy's residence in Hertfordshire and a large Compton formed from several organs including the Dominion Tottenham Court Road. A large screen and proscenium have been installed, so hopefully films will be shown in the future.

Sent in by Jeremy Buck



Complete All – In One Contractor

Plans & Schemes Prepared

Auditorium Services Ltd

Specialist Contractors

Electrical Installation & Testing

Emergency Lighting, Fire Alarms

Restoration – Repair – Maintenance of Indirect Lighting

Conversion of Incandescent Lighting to LED

Seating Supply & Refurbishment

Projection & Sound Equipment

Decoration – Fibrous Plaster Repairs

Call Today for a Free Consultation & Quotation

01455 293530

Email : Auditoriumservices@btinternet.com

11a West End, Barlestone,
Nuneaton, Warwickshire. CV13 0EJ



CINEMA BUSINESS

EVERYMAN EXPANDS

Upmarket cinema chain Everyman aims to increase cinema numbers from 20 to 40 over the next five years, which would see job numbers rise from 520 to over 1,000. The chain recorded a pre-tax loss of £295,000 for the first half of the year, due to "heavy investment" in its estate and planning openings. Revenue rose 49% to £21.1m. See p27 last Bulletin.

The Guardian – 5 August; *Financial Times* – 30 August; *The I, Eastern Daily Press, The Journal (Newcastle)* – 15 September; sent in by Carl Chesworth & John R Forster

CINEWORLD

Cineworld posted an 8.4% rise in revenues to £356.7m for the first six months to 30 June.

Daily Telegraph – 12 August; sent in by Carl Chesworth

UK BOX OFFICE

The UK Box Office has raced to £1 billion faster than ever before. According to comScore, the figure was reached on the night of 8 October after just 281 days, 17 days faster than in 2015. In 2009 it took almost a full year [352 days] to hit the same amount. In 2015 the UK Box Office took £1.2bn in ticket sales with around 170 million cinema-goers. In comparison, streaming service Netflix's revenue last year was £4.4bn, dwarfing Cineworld's £466m and Odeon's £403m.

Sky News – 24 September; *Hollywood Reporter* – 10 October; sent in by Carl Chesworth

AP BUYS MOVIEZONE



The Associated Press has purchased the film archive of British Movietone. It includes the first recorded speeches of personalities such as Ghandi and George Bernard Shaw as well as the footage of Charles and Diana's wedding, filmed in high definition on 35mm film. Much of the archive has been digitised and is available but about 15% of the library has never been seen before; this footage includes material that was barred by the censors in WWII. Previews at: [www.aparchive.com/partner/British%20Movietone].

AP Press Release – 27 September; sent in by Carl Chesworth

PART OF THE UNION

Trade Union BECTU is to merge with a larger union, Prospect after its 27,000 members voted in favour of the move. The new sector is expected to keep the BECTU name and will retain its autonomy.

The Stage – 8 September; sent in by Barry Quinton

HOUSE

Mecca Bingo operator Rank Group has seen its annual pre-tax profits rise 15% to £88.5m. Annual revenues rose 1% up to £708.5m while Mecca sales were up 2%.

Metro – 24 August; sent in by Barry Quinton

TWEET TWEET

Disney has become the latest big name to be linked to the possible takeover of Twitter. The social media website has struggled to turn a profit since it was launched ten years ago.

Daily Mail – 27 September; sent in by Barry Quinton

COMPETITION PROBE

Cineworld's acquisition of five cinemas from Empire [see p27 last Bulletin] is being investigated by the Competition and Markets Authority. The £9.4m deal includes the flagship Empire Leicester Square.

Daily Mail – 3 September; sent in by Barry Quinton

MADE IN DAGENHAM

Dagenham has set its sights on becoming the Capital's Hollywood. A site for what would be the biggest film studios in the City has been identified close to the abandoned Ford car plant, for which the area was most famous.

Evening Standard – 6 October; sent in by Barry Quinton

RITZY WORKERS TO STRIKE AGAIN



Staff at the Ritzy in Brixton [London] are to revive a campaign of strikes to press their demand to be paid the London Living Wage. Members of the entertainment union BECTU at the cinema voted by 93% in favour of the action. In 2014 Ritzy staff staged 13 strikes. The employers had agreed at ACAS to start this year's pay negotiations in June but when talks were convened the company refused to negotiate or attend ACAS. The campaign is being backed by workers at the Picturehouse in Hackney; both cinemas are run by Cineworld.

Brixton Blog – 23 September; sent in by Carl Chesworth; photo taken May 2013

SOHO HOUSE

According to new financial reports, Soho House UK Limited racked up losses of £7.5 million over 53 weeks up to January 3 this year and credit agencies are now warning that the group's financing is "unsustainable". Soho House was founded and is run by Nick Jones, husband of Selina Scott. Its portfolio of 16 members' clubs and restaurants also includes two London cinemas – the Electric Portobello Road and the Electric Shoreditch.

Daily Mail – 15 October; sent in by Ray Dolling

PRICE CUT

The three-screen Odeon (ex ABC) in Darlington has slashed its prices to just £3, it could now be the cheapest cinema in the country.

Northern Echo – 8 October

OVERSEAS BUSINESS

India's Carnival Cinemas has acquired Bombay Talkies cinema in Singapore. This is half of the refurbished cinema in the Golden Mile Tower, whose balcony section had previously been turned into The Projector, Singapore's first art-house cinema.

The number of cinemas in Spain fell to 3,588 last year, down by 112. Audience numbers were up 9.2%. There were 96.1m visitors, marking two consecutive years of growth with €575.2m box office. In 2005 there were 4,401 screens.

Half year numbers in Germany were down 9.3m compared to the same period last year. Just 57.5 million tickets were sold and box office went down by €62m to €482.7m.

Internet source unknown; sent in by Carl Chesworth

AWARDS

The 2016 Screen Awards ceremony was held in London on 20 October. The Cinema of the Year Award (24 screens and under) went to the Genesis in Whitechapel, London; that for a company with 25 screens or over went to the Picturehouse Central in Piccadilly Circus, London. The Exhibition Achievement Award went to Geoff Greaves, director of Merlin Cinemas. The full list of nominations can be seen at: [www.screenawards.co.uk/shortlist]

The Giant Screen Cinema Association has announced the recipient of its inaugural Outstanding Achievement Award. It goes to Graeme Ferguson, co-inventor and co-founder of IMAX, the 15 perf / 70mm projection system. It first appeared at Expo70 in Osaka, Japan. See [www.giantscreencinema.com]

GSCA Press Release – date unknown; sent in by Carl Chesworth

LETTERS

MILITARY CINEMAS



This is a photo of the Mercury Cinema, which was at the Army Apprentice College near Harrogate. It was taken by myself in 1996. As far as I know, it was officially known as the **Globe**; Mercury was accepted as the name to suit the Royal Corps of Signals, which has the winged messenger on its badge. The cinema was equipped with two BTH SUPA projectors and the roll-up screen was about 40ft wide and perforated. Jack Cowan ran the cinema, booking films etc; sadly he is no longer with us. The cinema was closed at the same time as the closure of the College in 1996. The site was then rebuilt as the Army Foundation College, which it remains today.

David Daykin [photo]

ERRATA

On p28 of the last Bulletin, Tim McCullen says the Odeon Marble Arch closed on 23 April. In fact it was 8 May and here is my ticket. This 6:20pm screening was the last show. See Newsreel p23.

Stuart Jarvis



The Cinema in East Kilbride is mentioned on p13 of the last Bulletin by Ross Campbell, where he says that it was the first purpose-built cinema in Britain since the (Second World) war. I think he might have forgotten the Cecil in Hull, which opened in 1955! Although, this did replace one – on a slightly different site – bombed in the war.

Richard Gray

I expect there will be shoals of letters challenging Ross Campbell's claim that the Cinema East Kilbride, as late as 1968 was the first purpose-built cinema in Britain since the war. Even discounting the numerous rebuilds of cinemas destroyed in the war, there were several others on totally new sites. One that immediately springs to my mind is the Albany Maghull (North Liverpool) which opened in 1955.

Charles Morris

KUNG FU FIGHTING

I was fascinated by Ross Campbell's fond memories of the *Kung Fu* movies of the 1970s in the last Bulletin. I particularly remember how successful was *Enter the Dragon*, which I think had quite good reviews but the only one I ever sampled was *Hap Ki Do*, of which I'm afraid I walked out halfway through! I was in my 20s; perhaps as a teenager I would have found it more entertaining.

Charles Morris

MISCELLANEOUS FOLLOW-UPS

I have now obtained a copy of the DVD *No Love for Johnnie* [see Letters p27 Bulletin 49/2 & p29 Bulletin 49/3]. Strangely it is classified under a [12] certificate. *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* is classified under a [PG] certificate. Both films have themes of sexual misconduct; there is an inconsistency here. The new project at the Mayflower Southampton sounds interesting; let's hope the CTA can arrange the AGM there one year – see Newsreel p25. The *Odyssey* at St Albans is superb. I was in Leicester again recently. No change on the old Gaumont site – still unoccupied. The building that occupies the old Picturehouse site in Granby Street is now unoccupied as both the businesses have closed.

Ian Patterson

THANKS

Can I please ask through the pages of Bulletin to accord my sincere thanks to Adrian and David Cox for arranging the screening of *Flash Gordon* at the ABC Screen ① in Bournemouth on Thursday 13 October. It was an absolute pleasure to be able to attend and see the tabs and tab lighting in operation in that lovely auditorium dating from the 1970 conversion, which is a great place to see a film and still in good condition. I have seen a number of great films at the ABC from *Half a Sixpence*, when it was still a single screen, to *Paint Your Wagon* just after the conversion to special anniversary runs of *The Longest Day* and *My Fair Lady* in relatively more recent years – all in 70mm! The cinema holds a special place in my cinema-going experiences and will be sorely missed. See Newsreel p19.

Frank Snart

BOLOGNA – WITH WHEELS

We attended the recent trip to Bologna with an equal mixture of excitement and trepidation. It was our first overseas trip since being affected by John's stroke earlier in the year. Although the physio is going well, it has left us with the need to use a wheelchair for any longer distances. We would therefore like record our thanks to all members of the group who kindly offered a helping hand; controlling a wheelchair on some of the pavements, cobbled areas and roads in Bologna and the other cities visited was truly a challenge. It appears that cobbles, poorly laid and in need of repair in many places, gravel and pavers seem to be the favoured surface treatment materials; lovely to look at maybe but tricky to walk on, let alone negotiate with a wheelchair. (Not to mention the lack of correctly installed, dropped kerbs). Still it was an experience we wouldn't have missed. It was lovely to catch up with many of our CTA friends and we saw some wonderful scenery, theatres, opera houses and cinemas. A great trip, with lots to see and do, thanks to Richard Gray. If our situation caused any frustration or hold-ups for other members of the party, please accept our apologies. Once again, our heartfelt thanks to everyone who offered help and encouragement, it was truly, very much appreciated.

John and Joy Surtees

PRESERVED PROJECTOR

This is a preserved BTH Model A that has pride of place outside the little auditorium in the National Library of Wales [NLW]. The NLW building also houses the National Screen and Sound Archive of Wales and S4C output. I'm pleased to be involved professionally in protecting the library's heritage and contents.

Stewart Kidd



GRANADA PATHWAY OF FAME

The new library/museum/theatre *The Curve* opened in Slough on 2 September. The museum's entertainment pod has some pictures of cinema buildings but there is nothing on the *Granada*, exterior or interior. A paving stone signed by Valerie Hobson arrived a month late; it is now barely legible. A further three paving stones from the *Granada's* Pathway of Fame are listed as being in the *Curve* garden but so far have not appeared. I am told the museum wanted to put a transparent cover over them but there is a problem with condensation.

R David Simpson

I found myself in Slough Town centre this morning with an hour to spare so went in search of the *Granada* Pathway of Fame at the new *Curve* building. There are several 'museum pods' dotted around the library, one of which on the first floor is dedicated to Slough cinemas. A nice display, although much reduced from those at the museum's previous premises at the old library. There are some nice reproductions of exterior and interior shots of the *Slough Picture Hall* (Crown), *Empire Chalvey* and *Commodore Cippenham*. There is one of the (very badly worn) slabs on display there, with a reference to four more in the garden area in a replica of the walk of fame. I couldn't see any evidence of this and the staff didn't think they had been set out. The building was very late in completion so it could be they will be added later, or they may have been cut altogether due to a budget overspend.

Ben Doman

BINGO BEACON



I thought you might like this picture I took of the **Streatham Hill Theatre** at night, nicely floodlit in changing colours. Now operated by Beacon Bingo, it's certainly a bright beacon at night!

Darron Keeling

HELP WANTED

I am compiling a comprehensive history of the **Mayflower** Southampton to mark its 90th anniversary in 2018. I have full details of the 2,500+ live shows/performance staged in the venue but have very little in respect of the films shown, when as the **Empire** it was managed by Gaumont-British and later when acquired by Rank as the **Gaumont**. I can get this information from viewing 50 years of the daily paper on microfilm (1933 to 1986) – but I'm not sure I will live that long. Does anyone know if the booking records for the circuit(s) under their various guises exist and if so where the archives might be accessed? Any help will be gratefully acknowledged and I will be eternally thankful.

Patrick Hayward [patrick.hayward@btinternet.com]

THEATRES AT RISK

The Theatres Trust 2016 'Theatres at Risk' Register was announced on Monday 12 September. The top ten in England are:

1. Brighton Hippodrome
2. Plymouth Palace Theatre
3. Stoke on Trent Victoria Theatre
4. London (Notting Hill) Coronet Cinema
5. Burnley Empire (new entry) [see p19]
6. Hulme Hippodrome [see p23]
7. Tameside Hippodrome
8. Morecambe Winter Gardens / Victoria Pavilion
9. Derby Hippodrome [see p20]
10. Scarborough Futurist

Anthony Willis

PYRAMID/ODEON/TATTON CINEMA SALE

Charles Morris's affectionate article in the last Bulletin on this cinema brought back a few memories for me. When I was appointed to Manchester Odeon / New Oxford, the Odeon Sale was a possible relief site, along with the Odeons at Ashton, Bury, Oldham, Rochdale, Southport and Preston. A relief projectionist was based at Manchester and during the holiday season he would be required to cover for as many shifts at these cinemas as he could, so I was always looking for 'volunteers' to work additional shifts on their days off. I managed to keep all the cinemas serviced, in addition to the hefty workload of shifts at the Manchester cinemas but on one occasion I nearly had to admit defeat. I'd just not enough 'bodies' to cover all the extra shifts required on one week and initially had to decline Sale Odeon's request. Odeon weren't particularly bothered and said they'd close for that night (one showing of *The Towering Inferno*). As I was on holiday that week, I offered to go and run the cinema, rather than allow it to be closed. Odeon at first wouldn't permit this but I won them over by saying it was a rare opportunity for me to reacquire myself with a full GK21 outfit and I duly went along late afternoon to see what was involved. What a lovely, well-kept projection room this was and just to 'get the feel' of the projectors again, I ran the supporting *Tom and Jerry* cartoon to myself. What a joy it was to operate these projectors again and on 20-minute reels; the evening passed in no time at all. Amazingly, despite closure was looming, the business that evening was very good indeed... which all added to the nostalgia trip for me.

Carl Chesworth

SOUND ON DISC

Following on from my previous articles regarding music used in ABC cinemas, a few more items have turned up. During the 60s all the ABCs would be sent the same music to be played during the intervals and this was usually LPs by Pepe Jaramillo and Manuel, The Music Of The Mountains (Geoff Love), all provided by EMI. Promotion 45rpm singles were also sent out to publicise the latest film releases and were also played during the breaks. At the end of each day a 45rpm playout disc would be played and included on the label would be the date of play and title of the music, which had titles such as *Curtains and Lights*, *ABC Parade*, *Sunnyhurst*, *Celebration*, *Newrad* etc. All of these were composed by Joseph Seal. Some of these discs also had the National Anthem on the start, although I doubt if many patrons would have remained in the building at that time of day. On Saturday mornings the Minors were treated to a sing-a-long plus the *ABC Minors' Song*, which was also played on a 45rpm disc. The A side of this record had the *Happy Birthday To You* track and, together with showing slides, it could be a bit hectic for a few minutes up in the projection box. One more piece of intermission trailer music comes again from the KPM library and is titled *Good Times*, composed by Keith Mansfield and heard during the late 60s.

John R Forster

MULTIPLEX RISING



The new ten-screen, 2,000 seat capacity Odeon at Bournemouth should be open in 2017. Construction work is well advanced as this photo, taken in mid-September, shows. The artist impression of the new building was in an exterior quad frame at the ABC, which along with the nearby Odeon, will sadly close when the multiplex opens. See Newsreel p19.

Mike Whitcombe [photo]

NORWICH NEWS

We visited Cinema City on Heritage Open Days for the opening of the John Hurt Centre [cinemacityeducation.org.uk/the-john-hurt-centre]. There was an exhibition 'Norfolk at the Pictures'. On sale were booklets of walks around cinema sites in Norwich and Great Yarmouth.

Janet Digby

REGAL REVIVED



The former Regal Barnstaple photographed in July pending its reopening as 'North Devon's newest bar and luxury club'. The Regal originally opened in 1937 and closed in 1982; it has since served time as a snooker club. {34934}

Chris Snowden

HAPPY BIRTHDAY – 80 YEARS

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



Odeon Baxtergate Loughborough. Opened 21 November 1936.
Architect: Arthur J Price (Harry Weedon Partnership). Grade II listed.



Grosvenor (Gaumont/Odeon/Ace) 440 Alexandria Ave,
Rayners Lane, Harrow. Opened 12 November 1936.
Architect: Frank E Bromige. Grade II* listed.

CARTOON CORNER



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

ARCHIVE

ARCHIVE ENQUIRIES

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 [archive@cta-uk.org] and we will do our best to deal with these as soon as we can.

To arrange to visit the Archive, first complete the enquiry form detailing your interest and why you would like to visit. If the material you want to see is accessible we will then book you a visit and help you find your way to us in Bow, East London. You will need to have a mobile phone to contact us on arrival, to be let into the building or agree a set time of arrival to then be collected from the reception area.

ARCHIVE OPPORTUNITIES

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

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

HELP THE ARCHIVE IDENTIFY CINEMAS

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 [archive@cta-uk.org].

Clive Polden, CTA Archivist

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.

NECROLOGY

BRIAN RIX, 92

Perhaps best known as actor-manager of the Whitehall Theatre, he was a regular performer in its farces, which usually required him to lose his trousers. He turned his back on acting and became a disability campaigner, joining Mencap in 1980. He was made a life peer in 1992.



SYLVIA PETERS, 90

Sylvia presented the BBC's live coverage of the Queen's Coronation in 1953 and went on to become the host of *Come Dancing*. She recorded a training film to help the Queen prepare for her first Christmas broadcast in 1957 and retired from the BBC in 1958.



GENE WILDER, 83

The frizzy-haired actor studied at the Old Vic in Bristol before returning to America. He was famous for his frequent collaborations with Mel Brooks, for example in *Blazing Saddles*, *The Producers* and *Young Frankenstein*. He also starred in *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory*.



CHARMAIN CARR, 73

The American accretes was best known for playing Liesl, the eldest of seven von Trapp children in *The Sound of Music*. She wrote two books inspired by her rôle in the film and received many love letters from teenage boys around the world. She was later the interior designer for singer Michael Jackson.



ANNIE MISKIMMIN, 97

One of the last cinema-goers who escaped the 1941 bombing of the National Picture Theatre in Hull. She pulled out her sister, who is still alive today. The local newspaper article is at tinyurl.com/j2dvn3w.

JOHN AVERY, 89

John started as a projectionist at the Majestic in Swadlincote [Derbys] and went on to run the Winter Gardens circus in Skegness. He was general manager of the London Palladium for 20 years until he retired in 1992. He was also at one time the director of all 12 Stoll Moss theatres in London.

LES CASTREE, 86

Les was an engineer who worked on the development of an automation unit for Essoldo, later to become Projectomatic. He was also in the 2011 film *The Last Projectionist*.

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.

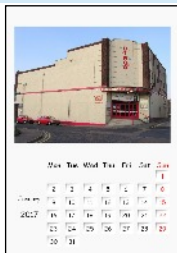
Please send cheque or postal order (payable to the Cinema Theatre Association) to the Bulletin Editor, address on p2. Please quote membership number.

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

2017 CINEMA CALENDAR

With twelve different colour photos of British Cinemas old and new: Biggleswade Regal; Boldon Colliery Cineworld; Creswell Regors; Dunstable Union; Hull Tower; Lichfield Regal; Manchester Ardwick Apollo; Newtown [Powys] Regent; Nottingham [Basford] Futurist; Redhill Odeon; Smethwick [Birmingham] Grove; Taunton Odeon multiplex.



Still only £6, including postage. Please make cheque payable to Harry Rigby or simply send £5 note plus two loose first-class stamps to: Harry Rigby, 65 Tennyson Avenue, Harrogate, HG1 3LE or email harry.rigby@ntlworld.com for details of how to pay by EFT and save yourself a stamp!

MEMBERSHIP

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome from the CTA to the following new members, who are listed in order of joining: Frank Fitzjohn, Hugh Patching, Susan Patching*, Amran Vance, Alexa Raisbeck, Michael F Jones and David A Jones. (*Associate member)

DONATIONS

Grateful and sincere thanks are extended to these members who added a donation to their subscription renewals:

CJ Barbier, MA Bentley, CJ Bird, E Christeler, SJ Cusack, RD Dakin, DM Daniels, PEW Day, RG Dolling, JS Downs, MF Dunkin, GB Fenwick, MA Gambles, HW Gibbs, RE Heaven, DM Howarth, JL Howarth, S Klabish, PJ Littler, A Lundgren, EL Marriage, MS Marsh, JJ McKillop, N Mirza, AJ North, I Patterson, PR Phillips, NA Pithouse, MS Plews, WR Pratt, D Prosser, G Reywer, JE Roberts, RA Sands, WA Simmons, TJ Smith, FD Snart, JE Thornley, DG Towers, JP Vaux and JP Walrond.

IN MEMORIAM

With sincere condolences to their families and friends, we record the passing of two of our members. Alan F Moore of Gloucester who had been a member of the CTA since 1977, has died aged 72. He was the author in 1989 of *Picture Palaces of Gloucester and Cheltenham*. Steve Tovey of Cannock, who was a CTA member for just a year from April 2015, died aged 68 on 26 September.

Neville C Taylor, Membership Secretary

OBITUARIES

STEVE TOVEY, 68

Steve Tovey, until earlier this year a CTA member, was a prominent figure in the theatre organ world and died in September after a long illness. He was for many years the house organist at the Odeon, New Street, Birmingham where he presided over its Compton organ. The Odeon was then still a large single-screen auditorium and often hosted live shows. Steve was proud to have appeared alongside many famous stars such as Judy Garland, Cary Grant and Cliff Richard, before the organ was removed in 1988 and the cinema was subdivided. The organ is now installed in the Paramount, Penistone. Steve became Wolverhampton City Organist in 1993 and performed at the large Compton organ installed in the Civic Hall. Unfortunately it was announced recently that this organ would have to be removed to allow for alterations and enlargements at the Hall and Steve had been appointed to oversee its removal and hopefully it's re-installation in another venue. Steve was also much involved in the Blackpool organ scene and with his colleagues in the Cannock Chase Organ Club, successfully re-vitalised the Wurlitzer in the Opera House (Britain's last Wurlitzer installation, in 1939), arranging regular concerts there and managed to get an organ re-installed into the Empress Ballroom after a gap of over 50 years. He was recently made a trustee of the Blackpool Winter Gardens Trust.



I have a fond memory of a CTA visit to the Odeon, New Street in around 1982 – my first visit outside London after joining the CTA. The spectacle of Steve Tovey rising on the Compton organ from the orchestra pit and the console then revolving 45 degrees – my first experience of an organ in a cinema – is an image that has stayed with me since then and is probably responsible for my continuing interest in cinema organs!

Jeremy Buck

ALAN MOORE, 72

Alan had worked at Sainsbury's in Gloucester for 30 years when he retired in 2009. I initially contacted him back in March 2015 in connection with his book on Gloucester and Cheltenham cinemas. Alan was a methodical man and wrote down exactly what would go where. Many fellow bus enthusiasts attended his funeral as well as myself representing the CTA.



Ross Campbell

WILF GOES IN SEARCH OF A FILM

By Wilf Watters

Imagine the story – a pimply youth whose parents both worked in the ABC Forum in Kentish Town, London (it's still there!) and was very much a film-struck cinema-goer – chose to see a British film on its Odeon release at the Plaza in Camden Town. He was so impressed with the film that he waited for the return of it several weeks later in a second-run house. This turned out to be a local fleapit where even the fleas had fleas!



It was the Gaisford in Kentish Town [above], which was so run-down that it wasn't a pleasant experience; also the screen was over the front entrance with the problems of light creeping in. It hadn't been painted for many years. It was closed in June 1960. And the film? It was *Prelude To Fame*, a Rank film from 1950. His interest? It had lots of classical music and concerned a boy conductor who was exploited by Kathleen Byron, playing one of her usual bitchy parts. The rest of the cast were Guy Rolfe, Kathleen Ryan [R], Rosalie Crutchley – and the young Jeremy Spenser.



The film was unusual for the time as it featured a whole orchestral work, Weber's *Oberon Overture* (usually these works are greatly edited down) and ended with the *Polovtsian Dances* to provide a lively end piece as the boy returns to a vineyard in Italy.

The film impressed the youth so much that he watched the film every day for three days that week! As you might have guessed, that young man was me. So having never seen the film since that week in 1950 I would very much like to see it again. Has anyone got a copy of it or information where I might find it? Please contact me, Thanks.

Email [ernestclements1936@gmail.com]

Thanks are due to AE's second volume of the Odeon story. Gaisford photo from the Allen Eyles collection, courtesy of Derek Knights.

Join the CINEMA ORGAN SOCIETY

For the best news and views about
the wonderful world of the theatre organ

🎵 Bi-monthly newsletter 🎵 Quarterly glossy magazine 🎵

Full membership only £24 a year

Concert news	Conventions	Private practice
Record reviews	Social events	Open console meetings
Organised visits	Workshops	Recorded music evenings

For membership details and sample publications contact

David Shepherd, COS Membership Secretary
Dolby House, Barrington Gate, Holbeach, Spalding, PE12 7DA
or email membership@cinema-organs.org.uk

www.cinema-organs.org.uk

CINEMA IN THE MALVERN HILLS

By Peter Lea

On the evening of 2 September a special open-air Cinema was constructed for a charity fundraising event organised by the Colwall Rotary Club on behalf of Macmillan Cancer research. The location was at the stunning Quarry Garden of Rotarians Chris and Sara Mill, set in the Malvern hillside. Auditorium Services Ltd provided digital projection, sound and screen for this event and provided a 6 metre picture with Dolby stereo sound. The projector and sound equipment was mounted in a stout old tree, which gave the perfect projection angle.



The evening was well attended; food and drink sales were also provided with the local pub The Brewers Arms donating a barrel of beer and hot food provided by local volunteers. With an attendance of around 110 with an age range of between 16 and 80, who all brought their own seating, the open-air auditorium was soon full. There was a great atmosphere and with the anticipation as to what the film presentation for the evening would be the conversation among the crowd was focused on this. At 10pm prompt Mr Chris Mill thanked everyone for coming and cued the start of the film. The opening titles flickered onto the screen and a round of applause took place when the crowd realised that the film was the 1986 film *Critters* starring Billy Green Bush and Dee Wallace.



The movie was about alien furry critters landing on the farm of Helen and Jay Brown (Wallace and Bush). This film blended in perfectly with the setting of our open-air auditorium. As the closing titles appeared on the screen some 82 minutes later, the audience once again gave a round of applause, they then began to fold up their seats and make their way back down through the Malvern woodland home. The event was deemed a success and a similar event is planned for next year. The total raised at this year's event was in the region of £1,200.

