

50
years

CINEMA
THEATRE
ASSOCIATION

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BULLETIN

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The Rio in Dalston [North London], which we shall be visiting in April – see p3 and also Newsreel p21; photo taken April 2006



The new four-screen Curzon in Aldgate [East London] which opened on 20 January – see Newsreel p21; photo taken February 2017

FROM YOUR EDITOR



We have had many letters and emails saying how much you enjoyed the anniversary day on 30 January and the celebratory editions of the *Bulletin* and *Picture House*. Thank you from myself, Allen, Ken and all the Committee – it's good to know the efforts are appreciated. I have printed a couple of letters on p28 and written a report on p12.

On p26 you will find a CTA visit photo from the USA in 2002. We have been able to identify all but four of the members present. Can you help identify the missing ones? We hope to feature some more similar photos during the year; there are also the ones in the current edition of *Picture House*. If you have any comments, anecdotes, observations, stories (I'm running out of synonyms) on any of the anniversary features in the *Bulletin* or *Picture House* please send them to me and I'll print them in these pages.

I've got a couple of long-ish articles I have been sent. I haven't forgotten about them and I'll put them in the next edition; I may have to split them over two issues. I also have had only room for one column of holiday snaps this time. I have a small backlog but please don't let that stop you sending more in.

Please don't miss the Annual General Meeting notice on p4. It's at the Memo in Newbridge, South Wales on 13 May. I'll be there and I look forward to meeting some of you again.

Harry Rigby, CTA Bulletin Editor



The former Savoy in Newcastle-under-Lyme. See Casework p6.

SMALL ADS

The rate for small ads from members is £3 for 25 words with name and address free, plus 15p for each extra word. Non-members rates: £5 & 25p respectively.

Please send cheque or postal order (payable to the Cinema Theatre Association) to the Bulletin Editor, address on p2. Please quote membership number. Advertisers are requested to reply to all respondents who supply SAE for that purpose.

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

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THURSDAY 20 APRIL

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(founded 1967)

promoting serious interest in all aspects of cinema buildings

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CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

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

Cinema Theatre Association, its Committee or its Bulletin Editor.

It is assumed that submissions are for publication, unless stated otherwise;

items may be shortened or edited at the discretion of the Editor.

Please 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

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VISITS AND EVENTS

Around Hackney Districts

Wednesday 19 April; Organised by Ken Roe

Using the London Overground (former Richmond – Stratford North London Line) to travel Homerton to Dalston Kingsland, we will visit three districts in the east London Borough of Hackney.

10:30AM CASTLE CINEMA,
64 BROOKSBY'S WALK, HOMERTON



Opened as the **Castle Electric Theatre** in September 1913, this local cinema originally had 619 seats in stalls and circle levels. It was last operated as the **Castle Cinema** by the **Essoldo** chain, who closed it in May 1958. It became a glass factory, which was still operating in 1973 and then became a bingo club until 1979. It was then used for storage until 1983 when it was converted into a snooker club, who divided the auditorium across at circle level, creating two floors, with bingo downstairs and snooker upstairs. In April 2006, the snooker club took over the entire building. In April 2014 the upstairs was converted into an upscale burger restaurant named **Eat 17** and the ground floor became a **Spar** convenience store. The burger restaurant closed and the space was taken over by two young cinema enthusiasts, who converted it into a boutique cinema and bar, which opened as the **Castle Cinema** on 3 February 2017. Now with 80 luxury armchairs, the original barrel ceiling and decorative proscenium have survived the building's many uses over the years. This will be the first ever visit to the **Castle Cinema** by the CTA. Above photo taken July 2006, when still in snooker use. See *Newsreel* p21.

12:00 NOON RIO CINEMA,
107 KINGSLAND HIGH STREET, DALSTON

Built on the site of the **Kingsland Palace of Animated Pictures**, the **Kingsland Empire** was opened in 1915 and was designed in a Neo-Classical style by architects **Percy C Adams & George Coles**. Taken over by the **Classic Cinemas** chain in 1936, they employed architect **Frank Ernest Bromige** to remodel the cinema in an Art Deco style and it reopened as the **Classic Cinema** in 1937, with 561 seats in stalls and circle levels. (Some decorative traces of the original **Kingsland Empire** survive above the current auditorium but are difficult to reach). **Classic** operated the cinema for many decades going through *newsreel* & *carton* programmes, classic films and as a **Tatler Cinema Club** screening uncensored adult films. It was taken over by a co-operative of local people and became the **Rio Cinema**. It was refurbished in 1996 with money from the **National Lottery**. There is a current fundraiser to convert the basement into a second screen and possibly subdivide the circle. The **Rio Cinema** remains one of London's best Independent Repertory Art House cinemas and is a grade II listed building. See *Newsreel* p21; photo on front cover. {10557}

Following a tour of the building, we will take a short walk to the district of **Stoke Newington** to view the exteriors of the former **Savoy/ABC/Ace** (WR Glen 1936-1984) (now in mixed use as a snooker club, function room and retail). We pass the sites of the now demolished **Electric Coliseum Cinema** (1913-1972) and the **Frank Matcham** designed **Alexandra Theatre** (1897-1950) and onto the **Apollo Picture House/Ambassador/Astra** (now a mosque). Time permitting we may walk further to see the exterior of the **Majestic/Vogue** (1919-1958) (now a restaurant).

We then return to the **Rio Cinema** to attend their 2:00pm 'Classic Film Matinée' (film title to be announced). Admission £2.00 including tea & biscuits.

Arrangements: Tube connections to this branch of the London Overground are: **Richmond/Kew Gardens & Gunnersbury** (District Line), **Willesden Junction** (Bakerloo Line), **West Hampstead** (Jubilee Line), **Highbury & Islington** (Victoria Line) and **Stratford** (Central Line/Jubilee Line/Docklands Light Railway).

From **Homerton Overground Station** (Zone 2): (Walking 3-4 minutes) turn left out of the station and immediately left under the railway bridge walking up **Barnabas Road** you see **St Barnabas Church** straight ahead on **Homerton High Street**. Cross over to the other side of **Homerton High Street** beside the church and walk to the right (keeping the church on your left). Turn left at the corner of **Homerton High Street** into **Brooksbys Walk**. The **Castle Cinema** is about 300 yards up on the right. Entrance to the **Castle Cinema** is via the (narrow) stairs to the former circle on the right of the building (light blue door on right of photo opposite).

Walk back to **Homerton Overground Station** and take a westbound train to **Dalston Kingsland Overground Station** (Zone 2): travel 2 stops. Turn left out of the station and the **Rio Cinema** is 100 yards on the left.

Booking: This is a free visit for members & associate members only (pay £2:00 at the **Rio** for the **Classic Film Matinée**). Please register your intention of attending by telephoning the Visit Registration number 0208 800 8393 leaving your name(s), membership / associate number(s) and contact phone number on the answering machine. Registration for the visit will close on 9 April.

North by North East, 26-29 April

Applications for the CTA North four-day event to Cinemas and Theatres in the North East and the Scottish Borders have now closed. We have used up our room allocations at the various hotels and it's not feasible to negotiate further rooms at our discounted price. If any member wants to place their names on a reserve list in case of a late cancellation of a pre-booked place, please leave your details by telephone on my home number 01204 598 608.

David Eve, CTA North

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.

CTA Annual General Meeting

Saturday 13 May at 12:30



The AGM this year will be held at the 'Memo' in Newbridge, Gwent, South Wales. It will include a tour of the building and light refreshments. The Memorial Hall dates from 1924 and functioned as a multi-purpose venue for this small mining town. Cinema was included from the start up until 1972. The 'Memo' as it is locally known continued to function until it finally closed in 2003. The campaign to save the 'Memo' was started and the building featured in the 2004 BBC2 programme *Restoration*. After many years of fundraising and hard work by local people the restoration of the 'Memo' was finally completed in 2014. The CTA visited the 'Memo' in our visit to the area in June 2004; this would be a great opportunity for members who came on the last event to see results of the restoration.

Getting there: Newbridge has a railway station, which is a short walk to the 'Memo'. The railway service serving Newbridge starts from Cardiff. Connections for anyone coming from London or the East are better served by a frequent bus service from Newport Station to Newbridge. For anyone only wishing to attend the AGM details can be obtained by sending a SAE to the address below.

Nominations: Nominations for committee members are invited and should be sent to the Secretary, Adam Unger (address on p2) to arrive seven days before the meeting.

South Wales Eastern Valleys Tour & AGM

Saturday 13 and Sunday 14 May

We shall be touring a variety of venues over this short weekend tour; including the AGM in Newbridge on the Saturday afternoon. Over the course of the weekend we hope to include the Maxime Cinema Blackwood, Market Hall Cinema, Brynmawr, Olympia Tredegar, Workman's Hall Blaenavon and others. We shall be based in Newport, with coaches on both days, departing from Newport on the Saturday morning at about 10:45am and finishing in Newport at about 6:00pm on the Sunday evening. Hotels will not be included as part of the tour; there is varied accommodation in Newport, including Travelodge and Premier Inn etc. The cost will include coaches and some meals and refreshments and any other incidental charges. For full details of itinerary and a booking form, please send SAE to Ray Ritmeester, 66 Woodside Road, High Wycombe, HP13 7JB. For any travel or hotel enquiries (including early booking of rail tickets) feel free to email me at [r.ritmeester@sky.com] or telephone on 07852 761842.

CTA Film Nites

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

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

Help Wanted

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

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

Other Events of Interest [not organised by the CTA]

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

THE PLAZA STOCKPORT

Friday 31 March *Goodfellas* (1990) [18]
Sunday 1 April *Jackie* (2016) [15] at 2:30pm & 7:30pm
Friday 28 April *The Birth of a Nation* (2016) [15]
Friday 19 May *Carol* (2015) [15]

Films at 11:00am and 7:30pm unless otherwise stated.

Behind the Scenes tours at 11am on Mondays 27 March, 24 April & 29 May; £6 – book or simply turn up.

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

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].

25 March *High Noon* (1952) [U]
29 April *A United Kingdom* (2016) [12A]

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

SHELLEY THEATRE BOURNEMOUTH, BH5 1LX

Sunday 26 March *All The Time In The World* 2:30pm

UK première of an award-winning documentary about a Canadian family that lives for nine months off the grid. Plus post show Q&A with the film's subjects.

Saturday 6 May *The Final Reel* 8pm

If you missed the CTA's 50th anniversary screening of this engaging contemporary documentary then now is your chance to see it! Post show Q&A with the director.

Tickets at [www.shelleytheatre.co.uk]

THE REGAL EXPERIENCE, WYMONDHAM

Sunday 9 April Alfred Hitchcock's *Notorious* (1946) [A]
+ *Alice in Movieland* (1940s short)

Sunday 7 May *Pillow Talk* (1959) [A] Rock Hudson & Doris Day
+ Edgar Lustgarten's *The Dark Stairway* (1954 short)

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

Further information from Michael Armstrong [01953 603246].

Editor's Note: The Regal celebrates its 80th birthday in March this year. Although regular films ceased in June 1993, the 35mm projectors are still there and in working order. Here is a photo of projectionist Michael Armstrong in the box with actress Virginia McKenna at a screening of *Born Free*. {30603}



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.
No 41	£6.00	CTA's 50th Anniversary; Plaza Stockport; Grosvenor Rayners Lane; Majestic Leeds; Pascal J Stienlet.

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.



Still Available (reviewed in previous issues)

Haunted Cinemas and their Uninvited Guests

by Martin Tapsell. £7.50 plus postage.

The Golden Age of Folkestone's Cinemas

by Ricky Hart. £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) (reviewed in last issue)

Will You Take Us In, Please?

100 years of the Alhambra Cinema in Keswick

by Ian Payne. 208 pages. A5 paperback, fully illustrated.

£10.00 from: Bookcase, 17-18 Castle Street, Carlisle, CA3 8SY or [www.bookscumbria.com]

Cinema Uniforms

Sartorial Elegance at the Picture Palace

by David Trigg. 200 pages, A4 paperback, fully illustrated.

£20.00. Available from the Cinema Museum, 2 Dugard Way, London, SE11 4TH.

CARTOON CORNER



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

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 above.
please add £3.00 for postage.

CAMPAIGNING TO SAVE YOUR HISTORIC CINEMAS

By Tim Hatcher

Grade II*

It appears likely that permission will be sought to convert space in the fly tower of the **Granada** in Woolwich into residential units. This would prove an extremely retrograde measure as it would preclude any possible future return of the building to entertainment usage. See 'Happy Birthday' p31. {15665}

Grade II

Liverpool Council's Cabinet has agreed to transfer control of the **Forum** to its regeneration company. Externally, the proposed enlargement of fenestration constitutes detrimental intervention and representations are to be made to the local conservation officer. {6521}

Avery Associates Architects have reported that their scheme for the **Regal** at Camberwell has received conditional approval from the local Council. {18111}

The operator of the **Rio** in Dalston has formulated a proposition that would entail subdivision of the balcony. Contact is to be made with the relevant planning department. See Newsreel p21. {10557}

Recently a profusion of applications to discharge conditions has been made relating to the **Regal** at Kingston-upon-Thames. These principally appertain to technical details; however, the Association's desideratum for retention of historic detail and appropriate usage of the upper auditorium is to be reiterated to the local Council. See Letters p29. {20490}

The **Ritz** at Nuneaton is falling into an increasing state of dilapidation whilst it remains in desuetude, although funding for roof repair has now been made available by the local authority. The locale in which the building is situated has been designated a regeneration area. {25909}

Unlisted

The **Regent** at Bournemouth has been rejected for listing due to the extent of internal alteration; it has also been denied Asset of Community Value status. Objections are to be made to the redevelopment plans on the grounds that they affect adversely the setting of the Conservation Area in general and the **Pavilion**, situated opposite, in particular. See Newsreel p18. {20081}



Smart's Picture Palace [Essoldo] in Bethnal Green in April 2015

The current scheme for **Smart's Picture Palace** [Essoldo] in Bethnal Green would involve the loss of the current auditorium and the construction of a new cinema beneath it. Donald Insall Architects are involved in the design process. {16512}

Objection has been made to demolition of the **Odeon** in South Hackney. The aid of the CTA has been sought by elderly local residents who wish the building to be retained and bingo operation reinstated; the venue had become a major social centre for them. {13886}

Confirmation has been received from the Museum of London Archaeology that a mandatory photographic record of the **Kensington Cinema** [Odeon Kensington] has been completed prior to its feared imminent demolition, although it is unclear if this survey has been carried out in sufficient detail. {13801}

Scarborough Council has voted to approve demolition of the **Futurist** by a majority of only one; the closeness of this ballot result may be construed as a setback to the credibility of the 'Flamingoland' scheme advanced for the site. A demolition consultant's report costing £400,000 is being commissioned: the destruction of the building may prove problematic as it serves as a buttress to retain the cliff! See Newsreel p24. {1842}

The Association has also objected to an application to demolish the **Odeon/Broadway** in Peterborough to permit erection of dwellings. Encouragingly, it appears that the local Council may also support its retention. See p28 last Bulletin & Letters p29. {19950}



The Corn Exchange Wallingford in March 2006

The amateur dramatic society that uses the **Corn Exchange** at Wallingford to stage its productions is applying for a grant to convert it fully for theatrical use. It has been advised of various restoration and conversion projects that it may find profitable to study. {42974}

A developer has promoted an exhibition illustrating its intentions for the site of the **ABC/Reel** in Plymouth, although no formal application has yet been presented. A local campaigner is fighting valiantly to safeguard the cinema's future. See p28 last Bulletin. {24749}

And in brief:

- Once again the future of the **Coronet** at London's Elephant and Castle is threatened, as an application for demolition has been made. See Newsreel p21. {27019}



The Grand West Melton in September 2003

- Permission to raze the **Grand** at West Melton [Wath upon Dearne, South Yorkshire] has been solicited; regrettably the building is not of sufficient quality to merit a listing application. {25795}
- In similar vein, a request for approval to demolish the **King's Hall/Savoy** in Newcastle-under-Lyme has been tabled. {38923}

Photo on p2, taken July 2005

SCOTTISH CASEWORK

By Gary Painter

COUNTY/GEORGE PORTOBELLO (1939) C-LISTED ARCHITECT: T BOWHILL GIBSON

As reported in our last case-work submission (Bulletin 50/5), the City of Edinburgh Council turned down a planning application and listed building consent for the complete demolition of this cinema for flats. Subsequently, the building has undergone a curious change of ownership and a fresh application has now been submitted by two local businessmen. It is now proposed to retain the façade and restore the central tower feature (lost some years ago) but to impose new window openings more suited to residential use.



The original façade



The new proposals for the County/George

We have objected to these plans on the grounds that, despite the retention of at least part of the building, they still fail to meet any of the criteria applied by Historic Environment Scotland when considering such extensive demolition of a listed building. A new planning statement, accompanying the application, attempts to convince otherwise but is not backed up by the evidence. Furthermore, the group who expressed interest in the cinema as an arts venue during the last planning application process have submitted a fully costed and realistic vision document for the conversion, which can be downloaded from their website: [www.thegeorge.org.uk].

Updates can also be found on their Facebook page: enter 'Our George' into the search box on the main page. The developers have set up their own Facebook page, Support Redeveloping 'The George' Portobello, which many users claim is duping people into signing a petition in the belief that they are saving the cinema, rather than supporting its conversion into flats.

BROADWAY PRESTWICK (1935) C-LISTED ARCHITECT: ALISTER G MACDONALD

Derelict for some years now, this prominent landmark in the Ayrshire town of Prestwick was the work of Alister G MacDonal, perhaps more famous for his Prime Minister father, Ramsay and his newsreel cinemas in Victoria and Waterloo Stations. We've surveyed the building on a number of occasions and seen several applications for reuse come and go over the last twelve years or so. The building's last use was as a leisure centre, with an amusement arcade in the foyer and squash courts built into the stalls. Despite the intrusions of the latter, the upper half of the auditorium, balcony foyer, projection box and café areas were all in timewarp condition, abandoned to public use at



The Broadway Prestwick in July 2009

some point in the 70s. Following a refused application for hotel and nightclub use in 2006, involving partial demolition, the original features in those areas that scuppered that application were found to have been vandalised when we next gained entry in 2011. That visit was to accompany a 'Friends of the Broadway' group who had formed with the hope of saving the building but it was disbanded shortly afterwards.

To our surprise, it reappeared recently, partly thanks to a planning charrette in the town, the outcome of which included a strong desire to see the building rehabilitated in some form. The group were subsequently awarded £15,000 from the Scottish Government's Activating Ideas fund, which has allowed them to commission Glasgow-based architects Page\Park to look into the condition and possible future uses for the cinema. The group have posted photos from a recent visit, which show that the wooden balcony steppings and some side-wall panelling appear to have been removed since our last visit. We await the results of the study with interest. Updates and progress can be found on the group's Facebook page: find it by entering 'Friends of the Broadway Prestwick' into the search box.



The Broadway café in December 2005 [top] & February 2011 [bottom]

CINEMA NEWS – 50 YEARS AGO

When the CTA was founded in 1967...

Compiled by Harry Rigby & Ken Roe

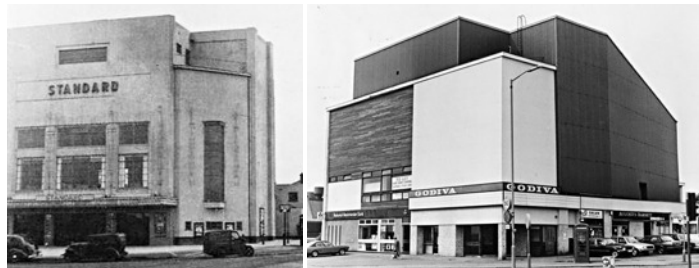
March

- 1st The 900-seat Queen Elizabeth Hall and the 360-seat Purcell Room open on London's South Bank.



The ABC Grimsby in January 2003, by then an Odeon

- 18th The ABC Regal in Grimsby was modernised with a 1,231-seat cinema upstairs and a supermarket downstairs {13955}
 18th The 705-seat Gala in Hendon [North London] closes and is soon demolished. It had been playing 'continental' films. {18101}
 18th The 1,600-seat Cinema Royal in Blackburn closed to be demolished for a town centre redevelopment. {35008}



The Standard/Godiva Coventry before and after 'modernisation'

- 18th The 1,350-seat former Standard in Coventry reopens with a 500-seat cinema called the Godiva in the former circle and shops below. It was equipped with 70mm and a large curved screen. It closed in 1976 and bingo took over. {37905}
 18th The 1,539-seat Dominion in the Leeds suburb of Chapel Allerton closed with *The Quiller Memorandum*. It became a bingo club and was demolished in the early 2000s. {33604}
 18th The 1,385-seat West End in Birmingham closed with *Return of the Magnificent Seven* and was soon demolished. It had been a Rank roadshow theatre playing 70mm releases. See p10. {19933}



The Dominion in Chapel Allerton, Leeds, at opening in 1937



The West End cinema Birmingham just days after closing

- 21st The World Première of *The Honey Pot* is held at the Odeon Marble Arch. {1830}
 25th The 'new' Regent cinema in the Old Swan district of Liverpool closed with *First Men in the Moon* and was soon demolished. It had been built by ABC in 1938, adjacent to the 'old' Regent, which was only demolished a few years ago. {44853} {44854}
 25th Disney's *The Jungle Book* was the last film at the 710-seat Alexandra in Aldershot [Hants]. It was then sold to Star Cinemas who turned it over to bingo. It was demolished in 1986. {4434}
 27th The 1,500-seat Empire Morecambe reopens with *The Bible: In The Beginning* presented in "D-150 70mm on the giant Vistarama deep curve screen with six-track magnetic stereophonic sound". It was twinned in 1970, later becoming three then four screens. It closed in 1983 and has been demolished. See p11. {40406}
 29th The Première of *Maroc 7* is held at the Leicester Square Theatre. {910}
 30th The Première of *A Man for All Seasons* is held at the Odeon Haymarket. {2511}



The Astoria Finsbury Park [London] in September 2004

- 31st Jimmy Hendrix first set fire to his guitar on the stage of the Astoria Finsbury Park; he was treated for burns {1243}
 ?? The Essoldo Blackburn [in the former Corn Exchange] is renovated after being taken over by Classic and so renamed. {24035}
 ?? A Royal Gala Première of *The Taming of the Shrew* is held at the Royalty Kingsway, London. It had been chosen for the Royal Film Performance on 27 February last and was commencing its run here. {11040}





The Cinema in Wirksworth, a builders' merchants in May 2008

- 1st The 525-seat Cinema in Wirksworth [Derbys] closed with *Daleks Invasion Earth* and bingo took over. [above] {41668}
- 4th The Gala Première of *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* is held at the Astoria Charing Cross Road. {2499}
- 5th A Royal première of *The Sand Pebbles* in 70mm was held at the 1,394-seat Metropole in London's Victoria. {3770}
- 5th The Cliff Richard film *Finders Keepers* was the last film to be shown at the 1,054-seat Regal in Rawmarsh [South Yorks]; bingo then took over. The frontage was lost to a road widening scheme and the auditorium is now a supermarket. {25445}
- 9th The 306-seat News Theatre in London's Baker Street station starts showing feature films and is re-named Times Cinema. {13070}
- 13th A Royal Première of *Casino Royale* was held at the Odeon Leicester Square. [photo below] {841}
- 13th A third (96-seat) public screen is added at the Academy in London's Oxford Street. The whole cinema closed in 1986. {1236}



The frontage of the Odeon Leicester Square showing *Casino Royale*. It gives a good view of the beautiful etched glass entrance doors and the original canopy with its changeable letters. All this was destroyed five months later when it had the 'Zing Treatment'.



The huge photographic poster seen above was erected at midnight on the night before the première of *Privilege* at the Warner. Westminster City Council ordered it be removed immediately as it was a hazard, so presumably it had gone by the time of the evening première!

- 15th The 1,200-seat Coliseum Newport [now in South Wales] closes. It had been operated by Rank, who also had the more modern Odeon virtually opposite. {6679}
- 28th The World Première of *Privilege* is held at the Warner Leicester Square. [photo above] {3778}
- 30th The 800-seat Astoria in Ruislip [then in Middlesex] was modernised and renamed Embassy. It closed in 1981. {31309}
- ?? The 2,060-seat former Astoria in Aberdeen was demolished; it had closed the previous year. {49429}
- ?? Bingo replaces films at the 1,671-seat Carlton in Hull [East Yorks]; the bingo ceased in 2008. [photo below] {6216}



The Carlton Hull in September 2005

We will feature more cinema news from 1967 in every edition of the Bulletin this year.
If anyone knows the exact dates of the ?? ones, please let your editor know.
B&W premiere photos from Kiné Weekly 1967, scanned by Ken Roe

FROM CTA BULLETIN VOLUME 1, 1967

The Curzon Hall, Birmingham

Few people who walk past Birmingham's West End Cinema in Suffolk Street realise that it was here that some of the first films were ever shown in the city. The cinema was originally known as The Curzon Hall, and from 1899 onwards, a Birmingham film pioneer, Waller Jeffs gave some of his first film shows there.

Waller Jeffs was a prolific film-maker, and happily many of his films are in the National Film Archive. Amongst local Birmingham events that he photographed were the turn-out of the fire brigade in 1908, Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show at Aston, the visit of Edward VII to the city in 1909 and Joseph Chamberlain "at home" in 1902.

In her book, "Let's Go to the Pictures", Miss Iris Barry, the celebrated film historian and founder of the Museum of Modern Art Film Library, wrote of a visit to "a delectable place called 'Waller Jeff's Pictures, situated in a steep street in the centre of one of the most important of our English manufacturing towns.'" I asked Miss Barry about this, and she told me that she had vivid recollections of going with her mother by tram from Saltley to visit the Curzon Hall. Miss Barry avows that it was at the Curzon Hall that she first developed her taste for the movies.

Although the interior has changed much, the exterior is still the same as it was in Jeff's day. Unhappily, the entire building is due for demolition in Birmingham's city centre redevelopment scheme.

Over the years, Mr. John Green (now manager of the Scala Superama Cinema) has collected together much material relating to the West End Cinema, and if members should ever find themselves in Birmingham, they are invited to call and see Mr. Green.

Anthony Slide.

Board of Trade Figures

The October issue of The Board of Trade Journal contained some interesting statistics as regards the cinema in 1966. The Journal reported that the number of cinemas in this country at 31st December 1966 was 1,847, being 6 per cent fewer than at the end of 1965. Seating capacity likewise dropped from 2,013,000 to 1,883,000.

To add to the general gloom and despondency, the Journal went on to state that admissions fell by 37,800,000 to 288.8 million. Gross box office takings fell by £2,300,000 to £59.4 million. The average price of admission, however, rose from 45.3 pence to 49.4 pence.

According to the Board of Trade, the fall in the number of cinemas, admissions and gross takings was "well above average".

Anthony Slide

FROM CTA BULLETIN VOLUME 1, 1967

Developments in Morecambe and Lancaster.

At Easter 1967, the Empire Cinema in Morecambe, Lancashire was equipped with RCA 70 mm apparatus and a Giant Vistarama "Deep Curve" screen. The latter, apart from the one at Expo 67 World's Fair in Canada, is the only one of its kind in the world. It was supplied by Andrew, Smith Harkness Ltd., who also equipped the installation at Montreal. At Morecambe some of the projection apparatus has been imported from Milan, Italy.

This enterprise has been carried out at a cost of £20,000 by Morecambe Entertainments Ltd., of which Mr. Trevor Taylor is the general manager. This company is a subsidiary of Orr Enterprises Ltd., of Coventry. According to Mr. Taylor, the picture size at Morecambe is 56ft., and thus bigger than the Giant Screen at the London Coliseum.

The Morecambe Empire (built as a theatre in 1938) re-opened after the installation with the epic THE BIBLE, which was scheduled to run throughout the season. However, at the beginning of July, this was taken off and the film THE SOUND OF MUSIC substituted. This was previously showing at another of the company's Morecambe cinemas, The Palladium. Following this transfer, THE SAND PEBBLES has been substituted at the Palladium. DR. ZHIVAGO is being screened at the Plaza, being exclusive presentation in the area, while the company's fourth Morecambe cinema, The Arcadian, is screening weekly change programmes in competition with the Odeon.

A few miles away at Lancaster, the ABC Palace was modernised earlier this year, emphasis being placed upon seating arrangements designed for comfort. MY FAIR LADY opened the refurbished Palace for a season. Weekly change programmes are screened at the Odeon.

Recently, Morecambe Entertainments are reported to be showing an interest in the old County Cinema at Lancaster, closed down by ABC since 1957.

G.J.Mellor



The Empire Morecambe in 1968. The Arcadian cinema is at the other end of the block.

FIFTY YEARS OF THE CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

A report of the anniversary celebration day on 30 January by Harry Rigby

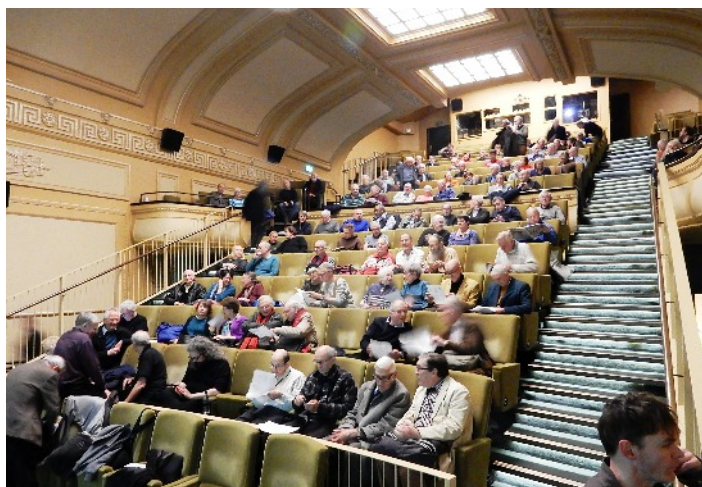
What a day we had; well, we've waited 50 years for it! Allen Eyles made a superb job of organising a very full day to celebrate this important milestone. A flood of members and non-members turned up to join the festivities. I spoke to many I knew from before and also to many I didn't know. I'm sorry if I didn't get round to speaking to every one of you but there were just so many there!

We began in the morning at the BFI Southbank (ex NFT) where the inaugural meeting to establish the CTA was held 50 years ago that very day. Our Chairman David Trevor-Jones gave an introduction to the CTA's mission and said it could be divided into four areas: social, campaigning, archive and publishing and gave a brief outline of each. Allen Eyles then presented some of the cinemas that were visited by the CTA in its early days; all but one of them had been demolished – and that one (the *Scala* Liverpool – see *Newsreel* p20) was coming down as his talk was taking place! Richard Gray went on to talk about the campaign trail and some of the cinemas that the CTA has helped preserve. Both talks were extensively illustrated with slides projected on the main screen in NFT1. All three officers followed up with a Q+A session.



David Trevor-Jones, Richard Gray & Allen Eyles in NFT1 ^[1]

We reassembled in the same cinema in the afternoon for a showing of Alfred Hitchcock's *Sabotage* [1936], presented in 35mm to a full house! This is set in a small cinema where the proprietor has an alternative agenda, to bomb London. In one scene a boy is given a bomb to carry to Piccadilly Circus along with two reels of film. The boy dallies and the bomb goes off on his bus. I think that if they killed a boy in a film today, there would be complaints. Anyway, enough of my rantings. It had the usual Hitchcock twist at the end.



The audience in the Regent Street Cinema ^[1]

After a break (Wetherspoons must have done good business that day) we met up at the Regent Street Cinema. We carried a report of its reopening on p7 of *Bulletin* 49/4. It was a most suitable venue as it was where the first films were shown in this country by the Lumière Brothers in February 1896. We saw these films as part of the programme and I



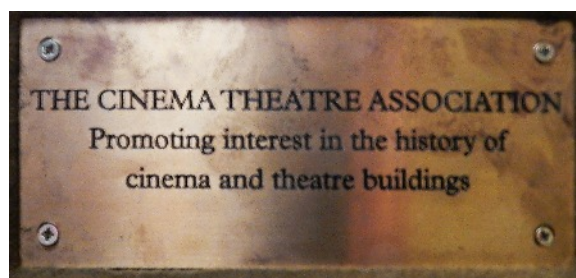
CTA Patron Lucinda Lambton cuts the celebration cake ^[2]

must say I was very impressed at the quality, even of the two out of the eleven that hadn't been restored. Donald MacKenzie provided an organ accompaniment. Lucinda Lambton cut the celebration cake, which was modelled on the Gaumont Twickenham. We then saw *Odeon Cavalcade* and extracts from *An Acre of Seats in a Garden of Dreams*.

A complimentary glass of wine accompanied the slice of cake in the interval before we returned to see the London première of *The Final Reel*. Although made in Norfolk, this film epitomised the demise of many cinemas up and down the country. It featured (among others) the Regal at Wymondham, which still has regular monthly film shows on Sunday afternoons, although it is now used as a working men's club. [See p4.] The film was narrated by Sir John Hurt, who sadly died a few days previously on 25 January – see *Necrology* p27.

The CTA gained several new members from the events. In fact one person was so moved by our Chairman's evangelising that he paid cash on the spot to join! It had been a long day but had been well worth travelling from Yorkshire to attend.

Photos by ^[1]Harry Rigby & ^[2]Kevin Gooding



The CTA seat plaque in the Regent Street Cinema ^[1]

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.

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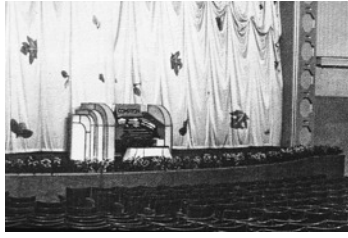
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THE CINEMA ORGANIST

By David A Ellis

The cinema organ was once part of the cinema-going experience in many cinemas. Several companies made these wonderful instruments including Compton and Wurlitzer. In the early days it came in for some criticism. A 1928 article by a Mr Arthur Mason, said that organ lovers are shocked by the arrival of the cinema organ and are perturbed by the appearance of this interloping newcomer. A book by a Dr George Tootell was published in 1927 called *How to Play the Cinema Organ*. Tootell was described as a pioneer of that branch of musical art. He was the first British organist to play a general cinema organ. In 1939, the *Daily Mail* reported that a Mr Albert Lander from Nottingham played hymns at the Baptist Tabernacle on a Sunday and fearsome roars into Tiger Rag at the Regent cinema during the week. It was the same organ because the Tabernacle and the Regent shared the same building.



On 2 March 1931, Chester's first super cinema, the Gaumont Palace, which was originally going to be called the Regent, opened its doors. The cinema installed a Compton organ and during intervals its thunderous sound could be heard. In the opening week the instrument was played by Leslie James, a famous organist, who had made many radio broadcasts. The following week Roland H Cutler was knocking out the notes. The feature was *The Vagabond King*.

Cutler continued playing until Sydney Gustard sat at the console on 4 May 1931. Gustard had played in a number of cinemas, including the Trocadero (later Gaumont Camden Street) Liverpool and Mayfair Aigburth, Liverpool, which also housed a Compton and became the regular organist at the Chester cinema; first playing the week *Paramount on Parade* and *Girl of the Golden West* were screened. He broadcast and made a number of records from the building. His recordings were released by HMV and include, *The Teddy Bear's Picnic* and *The Match Parade*.



Organist Wilfred Wynne sometimes stood in for Gustard. The organ at the Gaumont was advertised as the Mighty Compton. Gustard, who made hundreds of radio broadcasts, left the Chester cinema to play at the Plaza Birkenhead, run by Bedford Cinemas (1928) Ltd. He started there on 8 March 1937. He took the place of Lewis Oddy, who sadly passed away at a young age.

Another fine organist was Frank Gordon, who took over from Gustard at the Plaza in 1938 and played at other cinemas run by the company, including the Mayfair Aigburth, Liverpool. He went on to work at the Ritz (later Essoldo) Birkenhead in 1951. He also did many radio broadcasts. On 30 October 1937 the ABC Regal opened in Chester. They also installed the Compton, described in publicity as the Wonder



The HMV recording van outside the Gaumont Chester

Compton. At the console was Wilfrid Southworth. Southworth played a number of selections, including a series of parodies. The Compton was capable of producing nine colour changes. Southworth was a composer and lyric writer and orchestrated music for various BBC programmes.

Another organist on the keyboard was Norman Shann. Shann had trained as a cinema organist in the 1930s under a Mr Harry Croudson at the Ritz in Leeds. At the Odeon Leicester Square in 1956 a Mr John Howlett, a member of the Cinema Organ Society gave a demonstration recital on their five-manual Compton [photo below]. It is reported that his performance was much appreciated and he was followed by a Mr Reginald New at the console. Many cinemas stopped using the organ by the 1960s and either covered them with a sheet or had them removed. Those that retained them would blow out the cobwebs now and then but most of the time it was the non-sync (record machine) that provided intermission music.



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CONFESSIONS OF A TRIP ORGANISER

By Rachel Woodforde

(assisted, as always, by Giles)

It all started with the pioneering and high-benchmark-setting trip to both coasts of the USA, undertaken by Gary Trinder and David Eve, back in spring 1998. On the coach, as we travelled back to the airport, G and D started to look relaxed for the first time in 10 days. In the very necessary and enthusiastic vote of thanks, it was suggested that we “must do it again!” G and D started to look panicky. “What about Chicago?” said a voice from the back. G and D relaxed again: “We don’t know anyone in Chicago.” To Giles’ horror I turned to him and said “But we do!” And so it began.

It’s really quite easy.



The complete trip organiser with essential equipment: the hired cell phone, the crucial “pink book” telling me what to do next – and far too much camera equipment.

It starts with an idea of a place, or area with plenty of good material. Early seeds are sown on holidays to new places, when true CTA addicts search out the local cinema/movie house/theatre instead of the museum and art gallery. Various publications are thumbled, lists drawn up and maps pored over. In the days before Google search this was harder work. The concierge at our hotel in Chicago was not sure she could allow us to travel on our own all the way north to find the Uptown Theatre. We didn’t. So I only discovered the Riviera on the opposite corner as I led the CTA group up the hill from the ‘E’ stop. “No problem” said Bob Security (actually someone rather high up in the Chicago PD I later discovered). “I think my friend Dave is on duty there today; I’ll give him a call.” He did. We got in and enjoyed a fascinating tour and talk with the owner, struggling to keep his pride and joy open, safe and clean as a nightclub for the unappreciative Chicago youth.

But nothing beats good reconnaissance. And it is actually rather fun, especially if done in good company. There isn’t a theatre, movie or otherwise, whose stage door cannot be found by Giles and Jim Leworthy. And if the front door is open, Jim’s wife Suzanne can distract or charm the most unhelpful guardian with her dazzling smile, while Giles and Jim take a speedy poke about to see if the place merits a place on the itinerary. The latter does come at a risk though: I’m not sure if Jim has forgotten (Giles hasn’t!) or forgiven me for their exposure to hard porn when checking out the Westwood Theatre in one of the seedier suburbs of Toledo, Ohio. Earlier, Willis and Shirley Johnson not only had us to stay for the night but gave up a whole day of their busy schedule, programming nearly 100 screens and maintaining the 14 theatres in their Classic Cinemas business, to drive us down to the



Arriving at the Tivoli, to the bemusement of the local law

Rialto Joliet and Paramount Aurora so that we could make contacts. And all done at the speed at which a hired coach would travel, so that timings could be calculated as well. Then when the CTA (Cinema Theatre Association) stepped off the CTA (Chicago Transit Authority) beside Classic Cinema’s Tivoli in Downers’ Grove, Willis had had a welcome message put up on his marquee and greeted us with a smile that lit up the whole state.

For some reason two recce trips were required for the visit to Copenhagen and Malmo: all those coffee shops I suppose. And there was even more coffee and cake to be taken with Bettina in Germany. Bettina is another who can smooth any path with her glowing smile (she got us in through a stage-door in Berlin after we were chased out of the foyer by the cleaner!) It was Bettina’s mum who remembered seeing *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* in the Wilhelma Theatre, Stuttgart, at the end of the war and so ensured this lovely old building was included in our trip the following year. Making contact with venues got so much easier after the introduction of email (er – my employer’s email, actually) but didn’t always solve problems. Luckily Giles and I had arranged to get to Boston a day ahead of the main group. This meant that not only was Giles fresh and ready to do battle with the uncaring employee of United Airlines over the missing luggage of half the group but it gave us time for a meeting with what turned out to be some very important executives from Clear Channel. It suddenly dawned on me that the restoration of Opera House was well behind schedule and we were being assessed for a hard hat visit.



CTA visit to the Boston Opera House

We passed and were rewarded with a fascinating exploration – even if it is nigh impossible to recognise anyone in the hard-hat group photo! (See the latest issue of *Picture House*!) The flip side is that while we were involved in the meeting at Clear Channel, the staff of the Cutler Majestic, just down the road, were all waiting to show us round, because I mistyped the date in my confirmation email to them. The next day, as the CTA huddled in a dreary arcade to escape the rain, was not a high point in my life. But bless her, the Majestic’s House Manager Nicole Kindred and her team allowed us in for an excellent tour later that week in the half hour before the house opened for the matinée.

I am sure that it is becoming evident that the joy of these trips lies not just in the venues you find to visit but in the people that you meet. Everyone who takes you in shares our passion for these buildings and are full of fascinating stories that they love to share. (Let’s face it though, one doesn’t meet the bored, disinterested owner: they can’t be bothered to accommodate us!) Here are some of my favourites.

Barry Karpel (I think that is how to spell it) of the Warner Theatre, Erie, was so taken aback when two Woodfordes and two Leworthys burst unannounced onto his stage from the side door that he wasn’t able to point out our lack of hard hats and steel-tipped shoes. We exchanged names and he then became the only host on the Boston to Buffalo trip for whom I had no email. After six phone calls when I failed to reach him, I thought I would try once more before deciding whether to drag everyone on a coach ride of two hours (each way!) or drop the venue altogether. I was asked to hold on and the receptionist (who had clearly been told to keep me talking) started to ask me about EastEnders (!) to fill the time that it took Barry to get to a phone. It worked!

Arrangements were made and he guided us all over this really great building, despite the fact that a crew were rigging the stage with the set for a tour of *The Sound of Music*. And no nonsense about not photographing that set – “It’s my theatre, you photograph what you like.” It was also in Erie that the serious photographers were out scouring the shops to purchase more films and memory cards: always a good sign that the trip has exceeded their expectations!

And talking of long coach journeys, I still remember fondly the unflappable Jim, who drove us from Boston to Buffalo and all the various diversions en-route. He was particularly good at turning a deaf ear to my foul language as my map reading went awry and the trip folder fell apart at particularly tense moments. He very graciously glossed over it in his farewell speech and told us that we had been much more fun than the group of funeral directors that he had driven round to crematoria the week before!



Jean-Jacques Schpoliansky, director of Cinema Le Balzac, welcomes CTA members and illustrates his talk with a picture from the tour notes

Equal in enthusiasm was Jean-Jacques Schpoliansky in his welcome of more than 30 of us, when we arrived unannounced (organiser delegation failure) at his Cinema Le Balzac, in Paris. He ushered us into Salle 3 (that had been the office of his grandfather who had originally built the cinema) and entertained us with his stories of the past and plans for the future.

Organising trips to the USA is a doddle in one way: we speak the same language (almost). Visiting Europe requires the courtesy of working in the local language. The cinemas in Stuttgart opened up for us thanks to Wolfram Hannemann, a good friend of Nigel Wolland.



Wolfram Hannemann [L] with Nigel Wolland [R] outside the Metropol Stuttgart

Little help was needed in Scandinavia – they speak English better than we do. The trip to Paris was the first time I took on professional help and we were escorted brilliantly by Gill, a tour guide supplied by

Travel Editions. She not only checked out all my Metro route plans the day before and shepherded everyone through the maze that is the Gare de Lyon below ground but she also soothed and cajoled the non-too-helpful management of the Paramount Opera to allow us in and at least photograph the foyer ceilings. And how did I repay her? By spending most of the next day walking through the red-light district of Pigalle! That trip would also not have happened without the intervention and contacts of Edouard Filho, who spent more time browsing cheap shoes in the Barbès Palace than anyone should have to. But he also added the gorgeous Theatre Dejazet (used as a location for *Les Enfants du Paradis*) as a final surprise at the end of the trip.

† See Internet Corner p31 for link to some photos.



Chinese lunch in Boston

Edouard also made light of that other organiser’s dilemma: sourcing nourishment! He found a good local restaurant and we all had lunch. To be honest, much of the time on recce trips is spent discovering whether there are sufficient outlets to offer a choice of sustenance. Sometimes the results are a bit desperate (one sandwich shop in Coldwater, Michigan?) but there have been some fun meals as well. There was the lunch in the Empire Garden Chinese restaurant in Boston, perhaps more memorable for being in the upper level of an old theatre than for the food. There was a lot of cake and coffee consumed at various venues in Copenhagen. And then there was the amazing Indian buffet lunch served in the first Odeon in Perry Barr, Birmingham, now the Royale Suite wedding venue (freezing cold but with masses of food and plenty of fruit for dessert).



CTA group lunch in the former Odeon Perry Barr

But perhaps the best day ever came as a result of handing over to Mike Hauser the arrangements for our one day in Detroit. My tour notes for Saturday 10 June state that Mike promised “to include the new Opera House, formerly the Capitol, the State, the Music Hall, the Fox, the Gem, the Redford and the Michigan. Somewhere in there we will find time for a picnic or box lunch!” And he did! We were accompanied by a couple of ladies from the local Preservation Society but the City centre was otherwise eerily quiet and empty. We started in the car park that had been the Michigan Theater, where sparrows screamed overhead; climbed all over the ex Capitol now the Opera House; zoomed round the State and the Music Hall as



Mike Hauser shows us round the empty streets of Detroit

the cleaners prepared them for that evening's night club happenings; and were told the story and shown the stop-motion video of how the Gem was picked up, moved 2 blocks east and 3 blocks south before being gently lowered onto entirely new foundations where the YMCA building had been! Then on to the Fox, jaw-droppingly huge and being prepared for a televised boxing tournament that evening. The preparations meant that access to some areas was restricted but the floodlighting added some stunning effects to our photographs. Suddenly the custodian of the organ appeared (can someone remind me of his name?) and led a small group to view the sacred chambers (spotless), even though he was not allowed to play the beast. And yes, a splendid sandwich lunch miraculously appeared along the way. After lunch, our coach took us out to find the Redford, a Japanese atmospheric that, run by volunteers, likes to show movies the way they were meant to be shown. While waiting for the matinee to end, we admired the "dish night" display and had to be very firm with the lady on the candy counter: just because we "knew the lovely Jeremy Buck" that was no reason why we should not pay for our purchases!

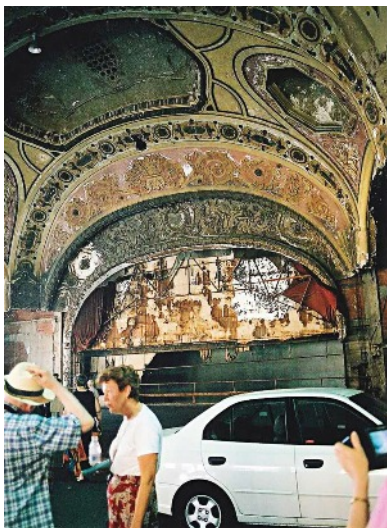
Everyone was so taken with the Redford that the hotel bus was commandeered and most of the group returned for the evening show. At the end, our organist friend from the Fox reappeared to climb the ladder to change the marquee lettering and to explain the organ and its console to the younger generation. He also revealed that his day job was as technical manager at the Star multiplex, then, with 20 screens, the largest 'plex in the USA. He had his keys with him, would anyone be interested? The hotel bus driver was none too pleased to be hijacked but off we went. I finally remembered my responsibilities and dragged everyone away just after midnight.



The Star multiplex, Detroit; the end of a long and amazing day.

Well, I could bore on much longer but I think that's enough. It has been fun to drag out all the scrapbooks and dredge up the memories. I am indebted to Bruce Peter, Ian Meyrick and Mike Wood, who completed the thankless task of writing the visit reports for my trips. It is they who noted down all the vital technical details so important to CTA readers but which I usually manage to miss because I am trying to get some photos myself, or keep track of the roving tripod gang, or simply have my eye on the clock to be ready to round everyone up to move on to the next venue – it only takes 48 hours to stop rushing after complete strangers in the street when I get home! Time does blur the hassles and stress but I'm pleased to have so many happy experiences. Now, where did I put that map of...

Thanks to all the various photographers, I'm afraid I can't recall most of their names!



One of our Detroit guides shows Laurie Reynolds the unique car park that is the Michigan Theater. Just to the right, Devina's video camera catches it all.

HOLIDAY SNAPS



- The Marcel Pagnol cinema in the medieval walled town of Aigues-Mortes in the Languedoc-Roussillon region of Southern France; it was closed unfortunately, so I couldn't have a snoop around inside.
- The outdoor screen in the Piazza Maggiore in Bologna Italy.
- The main entrance to the Cineteca Bologna and the entrance to the screens & library within.

Sent in by Michelle Facey

PORTHOLE TO NOWHERE

By Mike Whitcombe

From the sidewalk at the top of Broad Street, it's almost possible to believe that fire never ravaged the **Regent** in Lyme Regis. The front of the cinema still looks as if, at any moment, the doors will open and a member of staff will announce that tickets can now be purchased from the box office. But stroll up to the closed front doors and peer through them into the darkened foyer and evidence of the devastating fire that consumed the auditorium on 22 March 2016 can be clearly seen. And should you press your nose against the glass of the doors for a better look you will smell even now, six months on, the acrid stench of smoke and destruction lingering in the cool autumn air.

The grade II listed **Regent**, designed by William Henry Watkins, occupies a plot of land bordered by the northern entrance to the beautiful Longmoor and Lister Gardens that offers stunning views of Lyme Bay. Until March of 2016 you could have entered Longmoor Gardens on your way down to the Cobb, immortalised by Meryl Streep in *The French Lieutenant's Woman* and strolled past the unmistakable exterior of a cinema auditorium. Take that path today and you are faced, quite simply, with nothing. Only the projection room portholes staring out into the open air suggest that here was a lovely auditorium that had entertained generations of Dorset folk since 1937. Green painted hoardings currently surround the area where the auditorium once stood and will do so until the rebuilding, yet to begin but which owners Scott Cinemas say will happen, is completed.

The quad frames that stand in front of the **Regent** are still in use. One advertises the fact that films can be seen at nearby **Scott Cinemas** in Sidmouth, Exmouth and Bridgewater. Another informs you that the **Marine Theatre** in Lyme, which is at the very bottom of Broad Street, is screening an occasional film for local residents unable to travel. And another quad frame contains a poster with the tag line from Arnold Schwarzenegger's *Terminator*: "I'll be back!" it says in bold, defiant letters.

For the residents of Lyme Regis and the thousands of holiday makers who have spent a wet afternoon watching a forgettable Hollywood blockbuster inside the unforgettable charm of the **Regent**, that day cannot come soon enough.



MUSIC HALL DAYS

By David A Ellis



The former **Music Hall**, which now houses the Superdrug store in St Werberg and Northgate Street, Chester, has a very long history. It has played host to many historical figures, including Churchill, Dickens, Conan Doyle and the Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen. The building was on a former cemetery, built by Abbot Simon in 1280. It became the ancient chapel of St Nicholas and in 1488 it became the Common Hall. It was considerably altered in 1545 and the ground floor became a storehouse for wool. On 2 December 1606 William, Earl of Derby, applied to the Mayor and Assembly for permission to use the hall for dramatic purposes. In 1777 it became the **Theatre Royal** and many celebrated actors of the time built their reputation there, including a Mr Joe Grimaldi and John Kemble. Distinguished Chester architect James Harrison made alterations in 1855. He was responsible for the Gothic front and it opened to the public on 26 November 1855 as the **Music Hall**, staging a concert. From 1884 until 1914 the concerts of the Chester Musical Society were performed there.

The building was used for lectures and concerts, with the occasional screening of animated films, from the early 20th Century. The North American Animated Picture Company screened pictures of the Boer War. In March 1901 Winston Churchill gave a lecture called *The War as I Saw It*. On 15 April 1915 Sherlock Holmes' creator Sir Arthur Conan Doyle gave a talk on Great Battles of the War. Films were shown full-time from 20 December 1915 and the building was known as **Music Hall Pictures**. The first screening was *The Corsican Brothers*. At this time the screen was at the St Werberg side and a Mr Bobby Williams added piano accompaniment.

In 1921 alterations again took place. The screen was moved to the Northgate side. The first attraction at the converted cinema was *The Kid* shown in November 1921, starring the legendary Charlie Chaplin. The Chester maternity hospital benefited from a screening of *Chang*, shown on 21 March 1928, when they received the entire proceeds. Chester's introduction to the 'talkie' film was on 23 September 1929 when the cinema ran *The Singing Fool* starring Al Jolson, using the sound on disc system. From 1929 General Theatres, coming under Circuits Management in 1948, ran the cinema. The manager for many years was a Mr William Mulvey. He joined the cinema in 1915. Other staff members included projectionists Tommy Sutton and Vincent Dunning. The cinema's last cinematic offering was *Never on Sunday*. The once popular **Music Hall** finally put out the lights on 29 April 1961. A year later Lipton's supermarket took the place of cinema. It went on to become a number of things, including a Foster's menswear and a reject shop.

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]

ASTON-UNDER-LYNE (Tameside, Greater Manchester)



An online campaign has been launched to turn the former Majestic/Gaumont / Odeon / Metro into a cultural venue, including a cinema. It opened in April 1920 and films ceased in the middle of 2003. Part of the foyer was then used as an amusement arcade but the building is currently empty. There is an exterior photograph of a CTA group visit in March 1988 in the current Picture House, page 36 {23553}

Tameside Reporter – 12 January; Manchester Evening News – 18 January; above photo taken June 2005

BALLYMONEY (Co Antrim, Northern Ireland)



The former Palladium is likely to be demolished; strong support on social media may have come too late. It opened in 1937 and closed in May 1969. The frontage was tidied up with a painted mural a few years ago; the CTA viewed the exterior in September 2014, when this picture was taken. {43809}

Ballymoney Times – 8 February

BANBURY (Oxon)

A newly-formed steering group is aiming to restore the former Grand and has issued a call for experts to help out. There are proposals to demolish all but the façade and build flats and shops behind. See p18 Bulletin 48/5. {27592}

Banbury Cake – 26 January

An eight-screen cinema is included in plans to expand the Banbury Quay shopping centre.

Banbury Guardian – 19 January

BARNESLEY (South Yorks)

Work is due to begin this summer on a new ten-screen Empire multiplex with 1,244 seats. It is expected to open by summer 2018, a year behind schedule.

Barnsley Chronicle – 13 January; We Are Barnsley – 17 January

BARNSTAPLE (Devon)



There are plans for a multiplex at the North Devon Centre. Scott Cinemas has warned that their existing four-screen Central (ex Gaumont Palace) could be under threat if another operator takes it on as they don't think there is enough room for two cinemas in the town. Scott acquired an adjacent building with the aim of adding a fifth screen but those plans have been put on hold. A local poll was in favour of retaining the Central [above]. {22744}

North Devon Journal – 22 December, 2 February;

North Devon Gazette – 28 December, 1, 8 February; photo taken August 2003

BELFAST

Over 2,000 people have signed a petition to protest against plans to demolish the ten-screen Movie House and replace with offices, although a new eight-screen cinema could be incorporated in the development. See p23 last Bulletin.

Belfast Telegraph – 26 January

BODMIN (Cornwall)

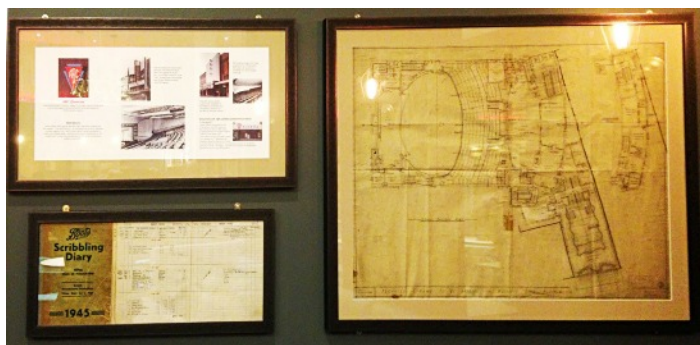
A demonstration was held against the Council's decision to allow Merlin Cinemas to turn the grade II listed Public Rooms into a four-screen cinema.

Cornwall Live – 14 February; sent in by Carl Chesworth

BOURNEMOUTH



The new ten-screen Odeon opened on 10 February, the same day as a new Showcase de Lux in Southampton, 30 miles away – see p24. The Odeon has 1,686 seats, ranging from 340 down to 42. The largest screen is an iSense screen with a 16.9m by 7.19m (55ftx23ft) screen and a Dolby Atmos sound system. The manager of the old ABC and Odeon, Spencer Clarke, had persuaded the management of the new multiplex to have a display in the new Odeon Bar about the ABC and it being the last to carry the name. There are images from the 1937 opening and the last night along with a projectionist's log and an original Glen plan of the (Westover) ABC [top next page]. The old



Odeon (ex Regent) closed the previous day, 9 February, without fuss. Plans to demolish the auditorium of the old Odeon and replace it with a six-storey block of flats have been described as "totally insensitive and downright ugly" by the Civic Society. {55149}

Daily Echo (Bournemouth) – 6 January; 2, 9 February; sent in by David Eve (photos), John R Forster, Keith Shankster & Phillip Stevens

BRANDON (Suffolk)



Planning permission is being sought to demolish the derelict 512-seat former Avenue cinema, last used as Winners bingo hall, which closed around 2007. It opened in 1934 and was built and run for many years by local farmer Ben Culey, together with the Palace Thetford, which is still open on bingo. {27169}

Eastern Daily Press - 31 December; sent in by Ray Dolling; photo taken August 2004

BRAY (Co Wicklow, Ireland)

Wicklow County Council has just granted planning permission for a new retail and cinema development in Bray. To be situated on the town's main street, the 2.4 acre Florentine Centre site has been earmarked for major development since 1996. The completion date has been set for the end of 2018.

[www.greystonesguide.ie] – 17 January 2017; sent in by Gavin McGrath

BRYNMAWR (Blaenau Gwent)

The Market Hall Cinema is still closed due to health and safety issues. Asbestos was discovered during preparatory work for a second screen. See p24 last Bulletin. {26576}

Gwent Gazette – 15, 22 December, 12, 21 January

BURNLEY (Lancs)



Work has started on building a drive-thru Burger King at the nine-screen Reel Cinema. The work is part of a £1.5m full refurbishment of the venue, which opened in May 1977 as the Apollo; it was taken over by Reel in January 2013. {24290}

Burnley Express – 17 January; photo taken January 2006

BUXTON (Derbys)

The 90-seat studio cinema in the Pavilion Arts Centre has been refurbished. The development means that the 40-seat cinema at The Pauper's Pit in the Old Hall Hotel has closed. {39529}

Buxton Advertiser – 12 January

CAMPBELTOWN (Argyll & Bute)

Construction is well underway with the second screen at the A-listed Picture House. The main auditorium is being restored and the roof slates recycled. An old projector is to be displayed in the foyer – although the local newspaper printed a picture of a mercury arc rectifier! The venue is due to reopen later this year.

Campbeltown Courier – 30 December, 13 January

CHELMSFORD (Essex)



The new 388-seat five-screen Everyman opened on 16 December; the capacities are 114, 74, 82, 58 & 60 with another 29-screen screen available for private hire. It is part of the Bond Street development and occupies the upper floors of a building that has the usual array of restaurants on the ground floor. It's a wonderfully well designed stand-alone building, in a lovely riverside position among new developments just off the City centre. {54771}

Brentwood Gazette – 21 December; Chelmsford Weekly News – 22 December; additional information & photo from David Simpson

COLCHESTER (Essex)

Construction has begun on the three-screen Curzon in Queen Street. This boutique cinema could open in September.

Essex County Standard – 13 January

DOVER (Kent)



Construction has begun on the six-screen Cineworld at the St James development. It is in the shadow of Dover Castle. Opening is scheduled for autumn this year.

Dover Express – 26 January; photo by Wilf Watters

DUBLIN (IRELAND)

Work has started on a €2.25bn residential development at Cherrywood, to the south of the City. A cinema is included in the plans.

Irish Daily Mail – 10 February

DUDLEY

Following the handover of the keys to the Hippodrome (see p24 last Bulletin) campaigners have revealed plans for the future of the venue. A large three-storey extension is proposed on the right of the building. Large windows will be installed on the front of the building and new signs erected. A stalls refurbishment would include comfortable seats and new stairs and lifts will be created for better wheelchair access. It is hoped the venue could reopen by 2020.

Stourbridge Chronicle – 12 Jan; sent in by Chris Ingram & Norman Robins

DUNDEE

Plans for a 900-seat eight-screen Light cinema in the Wellgate development have been put back two years.

Evening Telegraph (Dundee) – 20 January; Dundee Courier – 21, 28 January

ELY (Cambs)

The new six-screen Cineworld in Downham Road is scheduled to open in April.

Cambridge News – 31 January

GALWAY (Ireland)

Preparatory work has finally begun on the new Arthouse Cinema. Since the development began in July 2009, it has been dogged by repeated issues that have seen works stalled numerous times over the past seven years. The full work was expected to start in March and take 32 weeks.

Connacht Tribune – 17 February; sent in by Bob Bradshaw

GLASGOW

The space occupied by the former BHS store at the St Enoch Centre is to be transformed into a nine-screen cinema. The developers are in discussions with a "well-known" cinema chain to operate it.

Glasgow Herald, Glasgow Evening Times – 22 December

GRIMSBY (Lincs)

Plans for a cinema in the town centre have been given outline approval.

Cleethorpes Chronicle – 26 January

HALIFAX (West Yorks)

A grade II listed Sion Chapel was bought for £25 in 1988 and transformed it into a centre for the arts. Now it has been renovated and set to reopen this spring. Called the Square Chapel, it will house a 240-seat theatre and a 115-seat cinema. [www.squarechapel.co.uk]

Huddersfield Daily Examiner – 31 January

HANLEY (Stoke-on-Trent)

Light Cinemas is expressing an interest in operating a new ten-screen cinema with an IMAX screen as part of the Unity Walk development. This would be the area's fourth multiplex.

Sentinel – 19 January; sent in by Allan Pointon

HARLOW (Essex)

The six-screen Cineworld at the Harvey Centre opened on 7 December. It is on the upper level in what was the first floor at Tesco. It joins the existing six-screen Cineworld at the Queensgate Centre. {54907}

Harlow Star – 15 December

HARWICH (Essex)

The Electric Palace Trust has received a £51,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The major refurbishment will see the ceiling of the grade II listed building restored. Fundraising continues as the total cost of the project will be upwards of £750,000. {2597}

Harwich & Manningtree Standard – 13 January; East Anglian Daily Times – 25 January

HINCKLEY (Leics)

A proposal to demolish the former Danilo and build apartments is being modified on the advice of planners. Local residents were concerned that the plans only had 18 parking spaces for 29 flats with 1, 2 or 3 bedrooms. {14982}

Hinckley Times – 13 January

HOLBURY (Hants)



The Waterside Theatre has closed. It was built by the Esso Petroleum Company in 1950 as an amenity for the local community. It was equipped with a cinema screen and projectors but they were removed in 1997 as well as the fixed seating. The society that used the theatre has said they will try to find another venue to stage their shows. A campaign has been launched to save the building. {16762}

Southampton Daily Echo – 14, 20, 21 December; West Sussex County Times – 9 February; sent in by Ian Patterson; photo taken March 2009

HORSHAM (West Sussex)

Plans for a six-screen cinema at the Swan Walk shopping centre have been given the green light. Meanwhile plans for converting the former Waitrose store at Piries Place into a three-screen Everyman cinema have been approved. The item on p25 of the last Bulletin got these two mixed up. These developments will threaten the Capitol (ex Ritz); see p32 last Bulletin

West Sussex Gazette – 14 December; Bognor Regis Gazette – 1 February; sent in by Carl Chesworth, Barry Quinton & Terry Swoffer

HUDDERSFIELD (West Yorks)

Light Cinemas is to be the operator of a new multiplex that will form part of the expansion of the Kingsgate shopping centre.

Yorkshire Post – 7, 8 February

HULL (East Yorks)

The former West Park Palace is up for sale again. It was built in 1914 and films ceased in 1959. It has had a variety of uses since then – bingo, snooker and most recently a pub. The Council bought the building several years ago with the idea of demolishing it as part of the Gateway Regeneration Scheme. It is now advertised as suitable for a variety of uses, including a pub or residential. No value has been put on the building. {6218}

Hull Daily Mail – 27 January; sent in by David Alexander

The seven-screen Reel cinema in the St Stevens shopping centre is to get a makeover. The revamp will include a new-look foyer, new toilets and a repaint. The ten-year-old multiplex recently cut its prices to £4. {24775}

Hull Daily Mail – 11 February

IPSWICH (Suffolk)

Further to the item on p25 of the last Bulletin, it has been confirmed that the delayed opening of the new twelve-screen Empire in the Buttermarket Centre will take place on 31 March. It will feature two IMPACT screens with Dolby Atmos sound and two D-BOX screens with vibrating seats alongside stadium seating and extra legroom.

East Anglian Daily Times – 26 January

KINLOSS (Moray)

The Morayvia Science and Technology Centre has built a 29-seat cinema at the former primary school it occupies. The cinema was created with a £5,000 grant and by gifts of time and materials. Seats were bought and collected from the Odeon Manchester and restored. Wood for tiered seating was supplied at cost. It will be used to show cockpit footage from various aircraft and documentaries about aerial rescue missions. [morayvia.org.uk]

Press & Journal (Highlands) – 26 December

LETCHWORTH (Herts)

The Broadway has completed its £3.8m refurbishment. Screen ① can now double up as a theatre and be converted within minutes. {24968}

Midweek Mercury – 8 February

LIVERPOOL (Central)



The former Scala was amongst the last of the buildings in Lime Street to be demolished. It opened in January 1916, adjacent to the Futurist and closed in August 1982. It was last used as a 'gentleman's club'. It can be seen still standing in the photo on p33 of the last Bulletin. {32281}

Liverpool Echo – 18 January; sent in by Alan Hodson & Mike Taylor; photo taken July 2007

The former ABC/Forum could have a huge advertising screen put on the façade. It would be 69ft wide by 30ft high (21mx9m) and will be 16ft (5m) off the ground. The advertising images would not move and would be changed regularly.

Liverpool Echo – 13 February

A theatre featuring a revolving auditorium is to be built as part of plans for a creative district in the City. Based on a similar venture in Amsterdam, where the seats move around the stage, it aims to give audiences a “genuinely immersive experience”.

The Stage – 9 February; sent in by R David Simpson

Editor's Note: I'm sure I saw *Cats* at the New London Theatre in the 1980s, where at least part of the auditorium revolved. I also came across this at Tetley's Brewery Wharf in Leeds in the early 00s; this tourist attraction has since closed.

LIVERPOOL (Speke)

Work has started on the extension to the Mersey Retail Park. It will include an eleven-screen Cineworld, scheduled to open in summer 2018.

Liverpool Echo – 2 February

LONDON (Aldgate)

A new four-screen 275-seat Curzon opened in the Goodmans Field development on 20 January. All screens have reclining seats and 65, 78, 72 & 60 seats. *photo on front cover*

Time Out – 22 November; sent in by Keith Bye, Carl Chesworth & Gavin McGrath

LONDON (Chelsea)



The four-screen Cineworld was due to close on 9 March. It is likely to be demolished with a new cinema included as part of a redevelopment. It opened as the Kings Playhouse in October 1911, a conversion of a 1910 building. After various name changes it was converted into the Kings Road Theatre and hosted the record-breaking run of the stage version of *The Rocky Horror Show* until 1979. It was then converted back to a four-screen cinema. {12983}

Sent in by Tony Duggan & Ken Roe; photo taken April 2006

LONDON (Dalston)

The Rio hopes to raise £150,000 by crowd funding to create a 40-seat second screen in the basement and to refurbish the outside of the building. The process of finalising plans for the grade II listed building have not been completed and could yet include a third screen in part of the circle space. The charity that runs the venue lost £40,000 in the last financial year and could go under without extra revenue. The two extra screens could be completed this summer. The director is trying to find descendants of Clara Ludski, who founded the cinema in 1915. It is proposed to call one of the new screens after her. We will be visiting this venue in April – see p3. {10557}

Hackney Gazette – 29 December, 5 January; Hackney Citizen – 1 January;

Hackney Today – 16 January; Jewish Chronicle – 10 February;

sent in by Gavin McGrath, Chris Godbold & Trevor Haynes; photo on front cover

LONDON (East Finchley)

The trust that runs the Phoenix is looking for a new trustee to help manage the cinema's finances, develop future business strategies and help with promotion. The building dates from 1910 and the trust saved it from demolition in 1985. It was listed grade II in December 1999. {14814}

Hendon & Finchley Times – 15 December; photo [top next column] taken April 2006

LONDON (Elephant & Castle)

A multi-screen cinema is planned for the redevelopment of the shopping centre. See Casework p6.

Southwark News – 15 December

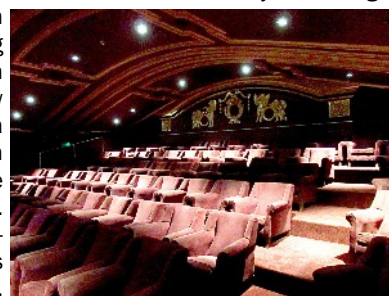


The Phoenix East Finchley

LONDON (Homerton)

Hackney's two cinemas, the Picturehouse and Rio, have been joined by a third. On Friday 3 February the likely Oscar-winner *La La Land* launched the single-screen *Castle* on to a wave of daily screenings.

The Homerton venue has been reopened, with crowdfunding support, by Asher Charman and Danielle Swift, of Pillow Cinema and Hot Tub Cinema fame. It is an 80-seater with single armchairs that were purchased from a large hotel. Ticket prices are £14.50 reduced to £10.00 on Mondays with reductions for members.



The cinema is located upstairs behind the bar with a back-to-front auditorium so as to reveal the plasterwork at the back. The supermarket remains downstairs. The CTA will be visiting in April – see p3. [thecastlecinema.com] {2145}

[lovingdalston.co.uk] – 31 January; sent in by Gavin McGrath [photo]

LONDON (Islington)

Locals have not welcomed plans by Resurrection Manifestation, who now own the grade II* listed former Carlton in Essex Road, to turn the building into a venue that can house large audiences. Plans include conferences, concerts and film shows. Plans to provide residential accommodation on an adjacent site have been refused. {15111}

Islington Gazette – 5, 12, 26 January

LONDON (Morden)



Mecca Bingo is due to close soon at the former Gaumont in Rose Hill. The cinema opened in May 1937 and films ceased in July 1961. The building is listed grade II.

Sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken April 2006

LONDON (Muswell Hill)

The report in the last Bulletin that the Everyman (ex-Odeon) was now a five-screen cinema was rather premature. At the time of writing (mid-February), the cinema was still operating as three screens – front stalls area and two screens under the circle. Work was underway to install the two extra screens in the 'pods' in the rear circle.

Sent in by Jeremy Buck

LONDON (Notting Hill)

The former Coronet may well have been renovated as the Print Room but despite a promise to show films again, none have been screened so far. It is rumoured there is not even a cinema screen in the building. The venue faced a row recently over white actors playing Chinese rôles. {1463}

Evening Standard – 31 January; sent in by R David Simpson

LONDON (Streatham)



Riva Bingo in the Streatham Hill Theatre closed on 28 January. It will become a Cashino, a slot machine emporium; they have 148 sites in the UK. The 1929 venue was mainly used for live theatre but was showing films on Sundays in the late-1930s. The building is listed grade II. {31611}

Sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken April 2004

LONDON (Walthamstow)



The former Cameo at Bell Corner is currently being demolished. It opened as the Empire in February 1913 with 880 seats in stalls and a small circle. It closed as a regular cinema in August 1963 but had spells of cinema use as Bollywood and a Tatler cinema club until August 1961. The interior was destroyed by a false floor being inserted when when the building was converted for snooker use. However, some decorative plaster remained around the old projection box.

Sent in & photo by David Jones; also sent in by John Pilblad

LONDON (West End)

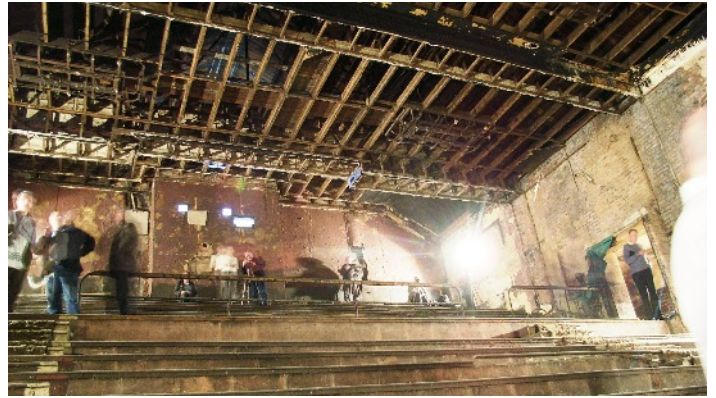
The nine-screen Vue (ex Warner) in Leicester Square is to have a £6.6m refurbishment. Seats and sound systems will be upgraded and there will be 1,385 VIP and luxurious reclining seats. The original building, which opened in October 1938 was demolished in 1991, retaining the façade; the new auditoria were constructed behind, opening in 1996. Vue took over in March 2004. {3778}

City AM – 27 January; sent in by Keith Bye

Crossrail builders have unearthed a hidden vault beneath the now-demolished Astoria. It contained glass bottles and jars for jams and condiments. Research shows there used to be a Crosse and Blackwell factory on the site.

[www.ianvisits.co.uk] – 9 January; BBC Teletext – 5 January; sent in by Geoff Gill & Barry Quinton

LONG EATON (Derbys)



The former Galaxy cinema suffered a serious fire on 24 January. A man has been arrested on suspicion of arson. The building dates from 1907 and was revamped after a fire in 1934. Films ceased in July 1964 and bingo took over but closed in 1993. In 2007 a three-screen cinema opened on the ground floor but closed in 2012. The site is to be redeveloped for flats. The CTA visited in May 2008 and was granted access to the entire building, when the above photo was taken; however, the CTA coach broke down outside the cinema and another had to be sent for.

Nottingham Post – 26 January; sent in by Peter Good, Terry Hanstock, Chris Smith & Robert Taylor

LUTON (Beds)

Plans to demolish the former Union/Ritz and build flats are being recommended for refusal. The Gordon Street façade would have been retained. It opened in October 1937 and films ceased in 1971. It became a bingo hall and was later gutted for two nightclubs.

Luton News – 8 February; sent in by Margaret Burgoine

MACCLESFIELD (Cheshire)

The Council has finally agreed to sell the Churchill Way car park to enable a six-screen cinema to be built. A public consultation is to be held, ahead of submitting a planning application. An operator has now been selected and the opening is expected at the end of 2018.

Macclesfield Express – 25 January

MANCHESTER (Central)

The future of the grade II listed Theatre Royal remains unclear. It was bought in 2012 by firm that owns the Raddison Blu hotel next door in the former Free Trade Hall. Bosses say they are carrying out an “internal feasibility study”. The Theatres Trust has placed the building on the ‘at risk’ register. The venue was used as a cinema from 1921 to 1972; Cinerama was installed in 1963. {2684}

Manchester Evening News – 9 December; sent in by Carl Chesworth

The new arts venue Factory has been granted financial approval by the Council. It will be built on the former Granada TV Studios site and comprise a 1,600-seat theatre space and a larger Warehouse venue with a capacity of 5,000; the two spaces will be able to open out into one another for large scale work. It is hoped to be open in 2020.

The Stage – 15 January; sent in by R David Simpson

MIDDLESBROUGH (Teesside)

There are plans to develop the former Elite/ABC into three separate levels. The ground floor would be opened up and used for retail. A large Chinese restaurant would take up the first floor. The top floor, underneath the large dome, could house art workshops, cultural spaces or shops. The building opened in July 1923 and films ceased in 1987. It became bingo and then a pub, which closed in January 2015. {18510}



Evening Gazette (Teesside) – 16 January; inset photo from a VHS videotape; main photo top next column

[AE writes:](#) The large dome was above a reputedly circular auditorium.

MIDSOMER NORTON (Somerset)

JD Wetherspoon has said that they hope to open a pub in the former Palladium in 2017 but could not guarantee it. Delays were caused by bats and an access problem over land owned by another party, who has since died. {28883}

[somerstetive.co.uk] – 28 December



The ABC Elite Middlesbrough in June 2006

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME (Staffs)

The eight-screen Vue (ex Warner Village) is to reduce the number of seats in each screen by replacing them with larger ones.

The Sentinel – 14 February

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

The former Orion in Westerhope, a bingo hall since films ended in January 1970, has now closed and the premises are advertised as For Sale or To Let. The CTA visited in October 2011. {36877}

Sent in by David & Margaret Williams

Demolition continues at the former Paramount/Odeon. Machinery has been used to raze the auditorium but the façade will have to be taken down by hand. It was one of seven Paramount theatres built in the UK and opened in September 1931 with 2,602 seats, a full stage and an organ. It was tripled in 1975 and a fourth screen added on the stage in 1980. The building was listed in 1999 but de-listed in 2001. It closed in 2002 and is believed to have been stripped internally in 2003. The site is expected to be clear by the end of this year. {3307}

Evening Chronicle, The Journal (Newcastle) – 1 February; photo below by Gary Trinder



NORWICH



The Norwich Society has called for any redevelopment of Anglia Square to include a concert hall. It is unclear from the report if this means a new build or adaptation of the current four-screen Hollywood cinema (ex Odeon) [above]. The report claims that the City already has enough cinema provision.

Eastern Daily Press – 24 January; *Norwich Extra* – 26 January; sent in & photo by Steve Oldfield

OLDHAM (Greater Manchester)

Vandals have targeted the new Odeon in the grade II listed former, Town Hall, just months after it opened. A brick was thrown through a window, causing it to bend and crack. See p28 last Bulletin. {54342}

Oldham Evening Chronicle – 29 December

OMAGH (Co Tyrone, Northern Ireland)

Planning permission has been granted for a new seven-screen cinema at Kevlin Road, to be operated by Omniplex. Work is expected to start in March and it is hoped that the cinema would be open by Christmas. The town already has a seven-screen IMC (ex Studio) cinema; the CTA viewed the exterior in September 2014.

News Letter – 17 December; *Ulster Herald* – 22 December

PETERBOROUGH (Cambs)

The thirteen-screen **Showcase** has been upgraded to a Cinema de Lux. The more luxurious leather seats mean that the overall capacity has been drastically reduced. {25240}

Spalding Guardian – 29 December; photo taken July 2007

PLYMOUTH

Nearly 5,000 people have opposed plans to demolish the **Reel** (ex ABC). The venue is to stage a music night in screen ①. Seats will be removed to allow plenty of room for dancing. The last time the building was used for live shows was in 1967 [the year the CTA was founded] when it was an 'intact' ABC and hosted The Beatles and Morecambe and Wise. See p28 last Bulletin. {24749}

The Herald (Plymouth) – 15 February

REDHILL (Surrey)

Planning permission has been granted for a development incorporating a six-screen cinema at Marketfield Way. No operator has been named.

Surrey Mirror – 19, 26 January

ROMSEY (Hants)

Planning permission has been refused to raise the roof at the **Plaza**. This was to be part of a £300,000 programme of works to expand and refurbish the venue. The society will now submit a revised planning application, omitting the roof element. The CTA visited the venue in June 2015 – see p9 Bulletin 49/5. {41645}

Southampton Daily Echo – 6 January; sent in by Patrick Hayward & Ian Patterson

RUSHDEN (Northants)

Plans for the Rushden Lakes development have been revised. The proposed cinema will have 14 screens, rather than 12 but there will no longer be a hotel or bowling alley. The plans were due before Councillors in February.

Northants Telegraph – 9 February; sent in by Chris Godbold & Trevor Haynes

SCARBOROUGH (North Yorks)

Work has started on the North Bay development, which will incorporate a seven-screen **Light** cinema.

Scarborough News – 19 January

The Council voted 22-21 to spend £4m on demolishing the 2,393-seat **Futurist**. The group campaigning to save it said the demolition would do a "real disservice" to the town. They had proposed to upgrade it so it was capable of taking larger productions. The Theatres Trust said the plans would have brought "real economic benefits" to the town. Both groups are now hoping an application from the Council for a certificate of immunity from listing will be rejected by the culture secretary; a decision is expected imminently. See Casework p6. {1842}

The Stage – 19 January; sent in by Barry Quinton

SELSEY (West Sussex)



It looks like the former Pavilion could change from storage use and become a cinema again with theatre and function hall. The building will have to undergo substantial alterations and extensions to facilitate these developments. It was built in 1913 and films ceased in September 1964 with *Summer Magic*. {43436}

Chichester Observer – 29 December; photo taken March 2009

SHEFFIELD



The former **Don** cinema, currently used as a self-storage facility, was damaged by gales on 11 January. Part of the steel cladding covering the façade was ripped off. The cinema opened in 1912 and films ceased in March 1958. {26559}

BBC North News – 11 January; sent in by Mike Higginbottom & Harry Rigby; photo taken February 2005

The new **Light** multiplex at The Moor is expected to open in March, earlier than previously announced.

Sheffield Telegraph – 5 January

The carpet store in the former **Capitol/Essoldo** at Lane Top has had the canopy removed and the frontage covered with steel cladding. It opened in September 1939 with 1,716 seats and closed in October 1975. {25450}

Sent in by Mike Higginbottom

A legacy left by former CTA member Dr Clifford Shaw has enabled the Broomhill Community Centre to install a cinema. The money was allocated to create a safe and inclusive space where members of the community can enjoy films at an affordable price.

Sheffield Star – 27 January; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Stuart Smith



The grade II listed **Abbeydale** has been taken over by a charity – the CADS [Creative Arts Development Space] Trust – on a 25-year lease. They plan to hold film screenings, talks, music and theatre and are hoping to apply for grants to improve the fabric of the building. Events have already taken place but are restricted to 15 days per year because of the lack of a full premises licence. The short-term aim of the charity is to make initial improvements to the 1920s building to enable it to secure a full premises licence. {22681}

Star (Sheffield) – 11 January; *Sheffield Telegraph* – 12 January; sent in by Carl Chesworth; photo taken April 2010

SOUTHAMPTON

A new ten-screen **Showcase de Lux** opened at Westquay on 10 February, the same day as the new **Odeon** in Bournemouth (see p18) 30 miles away. It features laser projection and Dolby Atmos and reclining seats in all screens. The main XPlus screen measures 64ft 6in (19.6m) wide.

Daily Echo (Bournemouth) – 8 February; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Philip Stevens

STOWMARKET (Suffolk)

The 234-seat Regal recorded its highest admission numbers ever in 2016 with 67,562 visitors, an increase of 4,000 on 2015. The busiest day was 30 December when 738 people came through the doors to watch one of the five films on offer that day. The venue celebrated its 80th birthday last year. It was taken over by the Council in 1972. {6241}

East Anglian Daily Times – 2 January

SUNDERLAND



The former Savoy in Southwick was destroyed by fire on 3 February. It opened in December 1912 with rear projection. Films ceased in March 1959 and it became a bingo hall. Does anyone know when bingo ceased? For the last 18 months it had been used as a furniture and household goods outlet and auction rooms. The tenant had been in dispute with the landlord and had handed over the keys and vacated the premises by 4pm that day. By 5:45pm the building was on fire. Two people have been arrested on suspicion of arson. {44075}

Sunderland Chronicle – 3, 4 February; photo taken September 2006

TEIGNMOUTH (Devon)

Planning permission has been granted for the Mars Hill Church to renovate and refurbish the restaurant, function room and auditorium of the grade II listed Riviera. Work has already started but there is no time scale for completion. See p25 Bulletin 50/6. {22755}

Herald Express (Torquay) – 25 January

TRANENT (East Lothian)

Plans for a multi-million pound refurbishment of the Fraser Centre have been given the go-ahead by the Council. It is housed in the former Winton cinema, which opened in 1921 with 600 seats on a single floor. The new scheme includes two cinemas. {45808}

East Lothian Courier – 16 February

WALTHAM CROSS (Herts)



Gala Bingo in the former Embassy closed on 2 January. The cinema opened in November 1937 and was tripled in 1972. Films ceased in September 1993 and the tripling was removed for bingo. The future of the building is unknown. {2505}

Sent in by Darren Keeling & Ken Roe; photo taken March 2016

WELLINGTON (Shropshire)



The former Clifton celebrated its 80th birthday on 18 January. Films ceased in April 1981 and it became a shop. The former circle reopened as a cinema for 18 months from May 1987. The shop closed in September 2012 and there is currently a campaign to save the building and convert it into a multi-purpose arts centre. Campaigners have called for it to be made a building of local interest. Local comedian Bernie Clifton has given his backing to the campaign. {37745}

Telford Journal – 5 January; *Shropshire Star* – 18, 20 January; photo taken August 2007

WETHERBY (West Yorks)



The 156-seat Wetherby Film Theatre has been taken over by Rob and Julie Younger, who operate cinemas in Richmond (North Yorks) and Barnsley (South Yorks). The previous owners, now in their seventies, are looking forward to a well-earned retirement. The venue first opened in 1915 and films ceased in April 1964. It had a spell on bingo and was reopened in July 1994. The new owners have pledged to retain the heart of the cinema and not make any significant changes. [www.wetherbyfilmtheatre.com] {3507}

Harrogate Advertiser – 21 February; photo taken July 2004

WOLVERHAMPTON

The Light House Media Centre is under threat of closure after 25 years of operation following funding cuts. A comedy night was held with performers giving their time free; over £2,000 was raised. The venue has also been screening films for Valentine's Day.

Express & Star – 10, 11, 14 February; sent in by Ivan Harris

WORTHING (West Sussex)

The Connaught Studio has spent £80,000 upgrading the seating. The old seats were given away 'as seen' to anyone who could pick them up and give a donation to the Mayor's charities. The Council has vowed to continue to curb repeated overspends in the running of its venues.

The Argus (Brighton) – 28 January; *Worthing Herald* – 2 February; sent in by Barry Quinton

YORK

The High Court has dismissed a legal challenge by Vue and other local cinema operators against the Council's granting of planning permission for an increase in the size of the proposed cinema at Monks Cross.

The Press (York) – 19 January

MISCELLANY

HOW STUPID CAN YOU GET?



The Ritz Ballroom in Brighouse (West Yorks) has been told to change its name or face legal action by the owners of the Ritz Hotel in London. The operator thought it was a scam until a hard copy of the letter arrived in the post. They also requested the venue surrender its Internet domains and Twitter and Facebook accounts. It opened as the Ritz cinema in March 1937; films ceased in June 1961. {37341}

BBC Yorkshire News Website – 21 February; sent in by David Alexander

KODAK WINDS BACK THE CLOCK

Kodak plans to start selling a type of film called Ektachrome again before the end of the year. The film, which has very fine grain, good contrasts and clean colours was phased out in 2012. According to photographers, it gives results that digital cannot achieve. Ektachrome was popular in the 1940s as it allowed photographers to process their own films. The latest version will contain a new kind of emulsion that meets new environmental regulations.

Daily Telegraph – 28 January; sent in by Carl Chesworth

From the CTA Bulletin in 1994

THE END OF THE PROJECTIONIST?

Is the end of the projectionist – and indeed film itself – just around the corner? If experiments that Pacific Bell are to carry out this summer are successful, it could well be. They are to start sending digitally transmitted films over fibre optic lines from studios to 12 California cinemas and thus eliminate the need to transport reels of film, which is extremely costly. Many people are extremely sceptical and argue that digital projection of anything near the quality of 35mm film is only feasible for the smallest of screens. They add that the contrast will not be as good and the cost of digital projectors needed for each screen will be in the region of £67,000. Inevitably digital projection quality will improve and costs will fall, with the result that one day the cinema projectionist will be a thing of the past.

From Ernie Pawley and Norman Robins; rediscovered by Les Bull



CAN YOU IDENTIFY THE MISSING MEMBERS ?



Photographed on the Tinseltown Theatres visit to Los Angeles, California.

This group of CTA members gathered outside the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium, San Gabriel, CA on 5 November 2002.

Top Row: Davina Reynolds, Eileen Killy, Betty Sword, Mark Price, Ray Ritmeester, John Skinner.

Back Row: Richard Tite, David Vinnels, Michael Wood, John Benzing, Ron Hecht, Richard Norman, Neville Taylor, Brent Skelly, Michael Sargeant, Tim Addyman, David Smith, Richard Lacy, [?], Richard Finch, Laurence Geary, Robert Stoker, Roger Screen.

Second Row: John Surtees, Joy Surtees, John Seligman, Brian Luck, Colin Lund, John Peto, Bryan Eckersley, [?], [?], Keith Parkinson, Kath Parkinson, Malcolm Davis, Sheila Manning, [?], Laurie Reynolds.

Front Row: David Williams, Steve Locking, Barrie Gilbert, Jo Simmonds, Ruth Tite, Sarah Warne, Graham Rumble, Ken Roe.

CINEMA BUSINESS

A VUE TO A PURCHASE

TH Real Estate has bought the Omni Centre in Edinburgh, home to a twelve-screen Vue cinema, from Aviva Investors; the operation of the cinema is currently unaffected. However, the same developer owns the St James Centre regeneration scheme directly opposite, whose early signings include the first Scottish site for a five-screen Everyman cinema.

Glasgow Herald – 26 January

CURZON AWARD

The Curzon Cinema Group received a BAFTA for 'Outstanding Contribution to British Cinema' at the awards ceremony on 12 February in London's Royal Albert Hall. This recognises their work in promoting and financing a diverse range of films for showing in their cinemas and online. In his acceptance speech, the CEO mentioned that the Chairman, Roger Wingate, has held that position for 50 of Curzon's 80-year existence.

Sent in by Jeremy Buck

LAUNDRY BASKET

A nationwide crackdown on money laundering has kept gamblers away from Rank's Grosvenor Casinos. Visits fell by 6% in the six months to the end of 2016 whilst revenues dropped 2%. Operating profits fell 16% to £26.1m. The group, which also includes Mecca Bingo saw pre-tax profits down 17% to £35.4m as the national living wage added to costs.

Evening Standard – 26 January; sent in by Keith Bye

NORTH DEVON



North Devon Theatres trust has been placed in administration, meaning the Queens in Barnstaple and the Landmark [above] in Ilfracombe have closed. The Trust said that attendances had dropped by 20% in the last year and their grant from the Council had been reduced by more than £110,000. More than 8,000 people have signed a petition against the closures. The CTA visited the venues in May 2005, when the above photo was taken.

The Stage – 20 January, 2 February; sent in by Barry Quinton & R David Simpson

SPEND A PENNY WINNERS

The Theatres Trust has announced the eight theatres it has selected to receive £15,000 each from the 'Spend A Penny' campaign. Submissions for these grants were received in October. Shelley Theatre, Bournemouth; Darlington Hippodrome; Liverpool's Royal Court; Little Angel Theatre, Islington, London; Marine Theatre, Lyme Regis; Tyne Theatre and Opera House, Newcastle-upon-Tyne; Stephen Joseph Theatre, Scarborough; Theatre Royal Wakefield.

Theatres Trust Press Release – 9 January; sent in by Anthony Wills

BOWLED OVER?

Ten pin bowling is the second most popular first-date activity, after the cinema. The company Hollywood Bowl saw turnover hit £106m last year. The number of games played was up from 10.4m to 12.1m. The first indoor bowling alley opened in 1840 in New York. Does anyone know if there are still any bowling alleys in former cinemas in the UK?

Daily Mail – 14 December; sent in by Carl Chesworth

CINEWORLD

A record 100m visits were paid to Cineworld cinemas last year. Revenue was up 12.6%; box office sales grew 7% overall and 3.7% in the UK. The group has 226 cinemas with 2,115 screens.

Daily Mail – 12 January; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Barry Quinton

ODEON NEWS

Odeon cinemas' owner AMC Entertainment, the cinema part of the Chinese Wanda conglomerate, has bought Nordic, a Scandinavian cinema chain, for nearly £745m. This adds 68 venues and 463 screens to the estate. The acquisition needs clearance from the European Commission before it completes.

Daily Mail – 24 January; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Barry Quinton

Odeon has appointed Carol Welch, former global chief marketing officer of Costa, as managing director for Odeon UK & Ireland. She will take over the rôle of Duncan Reynolds, who has been promoted to the new position of group development and real estate director, in which he will lead future capital investment across Europe.

Campaign – 10 January; sent in by Carl Chesworth

BROADWAY HISTORY

Andrew Lloyd Webber has become the first person in more than 60 years to have four shows running on Broadway at once. The feat has only been achieved once before, by Rogers and Hammerstein in 1953.

Evening Standard – 10 February; sent in by Barry Quinton

STRIKE ACTION AT PICTUREHOUSE

Workers from the Ritzy Cinema in Brixton, Hackney Picturehouse, Picturehouse Central in Piccadilly Circus and the Crouch End Picturehouse went on strike on Saturday 11 February for the London Living Wage. Workers took the biggest industrial action ever in UK cinema history after 96.8% voted to take strike action. The Picturehouse chain is part of Cineworld.

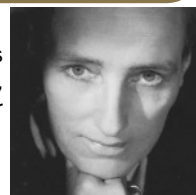
[www.bectu.org.uk/news/2676]; sent in by Carl Chesworth

NECROLOGY

ANNE HOELLERING 90

Anne purchased the Academy Cinema in London's Oxford Street, with her father, in the mid-1950s, and managed it with her husband, George (director of *Murder in the Cathedral*) until closure in 1986.

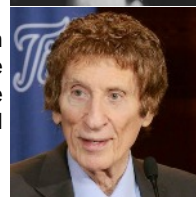
Daily Telegraph; sent in by Jeremy Buck



MIKE ILITCH 87

Mike was founder and owner of the fast food chain 'Little Caesar's Pizza'. In 1988 he purchased the Fox Theatre in Detroit and saved it from probable demolition, spending \$12m on its restoration and preservation as a performing arts centre.

Facebook; sent in by Jeremy Buck



DEDDIE DAVIES 78

Born in Bridgend, she often played timid, mousey spinsters and nuns. She is probably best known as the wife of Mr Perks [Bernard Cribbins] in the 1970 film *The Railway Children*.

The Stage – 12 January; sent in by Barry Quinton



SIR JOHN HURT 77

Born in Chesterfield, John starred in *The Elephant Man*, *Alien* and *Midnight Express* (and many other films). His TV appearances included Caligula in *I Claudius* and Quentin Crisp in *The Naked Civil Servant*.

The Stage – 9 February; sent in by Barry Quinton



GORDEN KAYE 75

Born in Huddersfield, he was probably best known for playing René Artois in 'Allo 'Allo in all 85 episodes and also the stage version. He suffered serious head injuries when a plank was blown through his car windscreen in a storm in 1990.

The Stage – 2 February; sent in by Barry Quinton



LETTERS

TO ALL THE COMMITTEE

Well, what a memorable day for me! Thank you so much for the presentations and the films, especially *The Final Reel*. The whole day was so well organised and the presentations so well put over with all the mics at the right levels and people knew how to use them. Seeing all the all lost cinemas with their wonderful architecture made me regretful I had never visited them but when I was growing up my 'locals' satisfied me; two in Ruislip that John Benzing shared with me and the ones on my 'outer orbit' in Uxbridge, Harrow, Pinner and Northwood. I never visited Chesham so was fascinated by the article on the Embassy and visited the museum there last weekend. The Grosvenor was of real interest as I did go there quite often, being on the tube. I remember having afternoon tea in the foyer café and queuing up to see *Davy Crockett* for a matinée and standing at the rear of the stalls behind the barrier. A full house for a matinée! Another local cinema within walking distance of my home was the Ideal in Eastcote, which was previously the Community Centre. It closed in the mid-fifties and was known as 'the flea pit' but they ran reissues, changing programme every three or four days. At the time I never really appreciated this cinema but boy, how I wish it was still there. The manager there was always throwing kids out for throwing things at the screen! Although I knew I would not know anyone yesterday, I did strike up a conversation with Alan Bettles, an ex-Odeon manager, during the interval last night. He was most interesting. Also the welcoming Commissionaire in uniform last night completed a great day. Well done!

Tim Leman

CONGRATULATIONS

A belated congratulations to all involved in the celebratory *Bulletin* and *Picture House*. Worthy tributes to the CTA as it reaches its half-century. I was particularly pleased to see the photo of the Aaben (Hulme, Manchester) and Trevor Rhode's letter in *Picture House*. It brought back memories of an epic trek I made from Sheffield (via British Rail and bus) in the late 1970s to see *Days of Heaven*. The Aaben may well have been the only cinema in that bit of the north to screen it – there was certainly no sign of it east of the Pennines. Not that there were many of us to share the experience, though the fact that it was a midweek matinée could have had some bearing on the low turnout. Hulme, as I remember it, seemed like the back of beyond with the Aaben stranded in a wasteland of dereliction. The experience was worth taking a day off work, though. Yours, looking forward to further decades!

Terry Hanstock

Thanks to all those involved in organising the splendid day at the National Film Theatre [BFI Southbank] and Regent Street Cinema on 30 January. The tremendous amount of work in arranging the events is much appreciated. The effort made for a long but really enjoyable day. Also, the impressive celebratory issues of the *Bulletin* and *Picture House* deserve the highest praise.

Les Bull

FINAL CURTAIN FOR ABC

The casual observer, walking along Westover Road in Bournemouth, around six-o'clock on the evening of Wednesday 4 January, could have been forgiven for thinking that the ABC Cinema was celebrating an opening night. Hundreds of excited patrons milled around the entrance foyer, many cramming the pavement to take photos of the famous DeLorean car from *Back to the Future* fame, which was parked outside. Television crews from the major television networks jostled for the best shots and staff were rushed off their feet. Sadly, though, the crowds were not gathered for an opening but for a final night instead. After eighty years of entertaining the masses the dear old ABC Westover – the last ABC branded cinema still operating – was closing. For anyone with the remotest interest in cinema it was truly a historic evening.

My wife and I were fortunate to have tickets for a couple of Premier Seats in screen ①, the former circle. As Adrian Cox's backpage spread in the last *Bulletin* shows, this was undoubtedly the best auditorium on the south coast. For the final night, it was wonderful to see every one of the 634 seats occupied. And when the tabs opened for one last time it was impossible not to shed a tear.

The final film, which was shown in all three screens, was the 1985 classic *Back to the Future*, starring Michael J Fox. Each auditorium was a sell-out and all proceeds went to the Dorset Mind charity.

Champagne and cupcakes were handed out as you entered the building and on our seats there were complimentary goodie bags with popcorn and a bottle of water. General Manager Spencer Clark made a dignified speech before the show that was preceded by Adrian Cox's short film *The Last ABC*.

It was an emotional evening and not only because we were saying goodbye to a cinema that had been a firm favourite with the people of Bournemouth for eighty years. Many former ABC employees were in the audience and, as a former ABC man myself, it was wonderful to see and reminiscence with some former colleagues, including Daphne, George, John and, best of all, Bob Dobson. It was also a privilege to speak to Spencer Clark, a man who clearly loved the building as much as he enjoyed being its manager.

WR Glen designed many masterpieces during his career and the ABC Bournemouth was certainly one of them. Although it was modernised in late 1969 it still possessed the grandeur of a picture palace, a place where dreams can and do come true. Nobody will convince me that this well-maintained site should have closed. But, as usual, money (rather than the march of progress) talks and we are left the sadder for it. Both my wife and I were glad that we could honour this great cinema by attending its final evening and for that we would like to say thanks to Adrian Cox, who made our visit possible.

Mike Whitcombe

HULL INDEPENDENT CINEMA



I have recently become aware of this new venture, which describes itself as "a local charity run by a small team of volunteers, working hard to build audiences for independent, art and world cinema in Hull". This appears to be a replacement for the long-established Hull Screen facility that operated in the Central Library but following restructuring of the building moved into the City centre Reel Cinema with support from the City Council, which has now been withdrawn. The new operation uses four venues across the City – Hull Truck Theatre Studio, Trinity House Academy Theatre, Fruit (a music venue) and the Middleton Hall at the University of Hull [above] and also has links with an enthusiasts' monthly film night at the Cineworld multiplex. Hull Truck Studio has full cinema facilities and promotes its own live screenings. The Middleton Hall has recently had a £9.5 million refurbishment, which has included full cinema facilities and now seats 450. The October/December 2016 programme covered a total of 29 screenings shared among the venues.

David Williams

SPOTLIGHT ON CHESTER

Re: p32 Jan/Feb Bulletin, Leicester Palace and Floral Hall by Ian Patterson. In his article Mr Patterson mentions a sale of contents in 1959. The manager of the Royalty Chester, Mr Dennis Chritchley, bought the two Strand Electric 'sunspot' spotlights from the Palace theatre and they were installed in the Royalty. Before demolition of the Royalty I obtained one of them; the other was too rusted to save. I restored the arc lamp and trunnion and it is still in my possession. All information about their acquisition was given to me by the Royalty stage electrician Mr Ron Jones.

Roger Shone

REGAL KINGSTON

Further to Newsreel Vol 51 No1 Jan/Feb 2017 I thought readers might like to see these pictures.



1. Artist's impression of the revamped building with the **REGAL** name prominent. Films may still be seen again at the Regal as a developer's notice on the old main entrance promises a 'boutique cinema' – whatever that is!



2. The sad interior taken in late 2016 by myself. It was from this damaged area above the proscenium that the sound of the mighty Wurlitzer came via a tone chute, as the organ chambers were on the roof. The ex-Regal Wurlitzer can still be heard doing what it was designed to do, playing preludes to film shows at The Musical Museum by Kew Bridge: see [www.musicalmuseum.co.uk] for film programmes.

Michael Ryder

PRESENTATION

Presentation, which involved using tabs, seems to have gone. Music before the film is no longer played in many cinemas. Ornate plasterwork is a thing of the past. There are no continuous performances, allowing people to be flexible. There are too many ads and trailers and only one feature, at high prices. While we wait, we are confronted by a blank screen. There is no atmosphere and the film hits the screen, just as if someone has turned the telly on. Many cinemas are small, not big enough to give you the big screen experience. Wouldn't it be nice if old presentation techniques could be used with today's digital technology? With big HD TVs and a wide choice of film channels and DVDs it is cheaper and cosier to stay at home and watch a movie. Also, as films have a short run in the cinemas before hitting the High Street, film buffs haven't too long to wait to watch new films on DVD.

David A Ellis

ERRATA

A tiny correction – in his article on p11 of the last Bulletin, Les Bull mentions that the CTA Committee met at the BFI in Piccadilly – it was in fact the BAFTA offices in Piccadilly.

Jeremy Buck

WAS IT JUST A DREAM?

I was deeply saddened to learn of the planned adaptation of the former Odeon/Broadway Cinema in Peterborough to residential accommodation – see p28 last Bulletin. Sometimes one daydreams of restoring a large 1930s cinema with no expense spared and thinks just what could be achieved. Such was my reaction when I first visited the just refurbished Broadway in 2001 and was shown around by the then new owner. I could not believe just what I was seeing with such great attention to detail and the quality of it all. OK so the seating had been reduced to 1,200 but there was still such a sense of scale. I doubt whether there was any cinema in the UK at that time, or even today, or in the near future, that could see such a superb revamp. Even the Stockport Plaza has needed great care with its use of funds to restore it to what it now is today. I am hoping that somewhere there will be a John Maltby standard photographic record of this. Is there?

Edward Huggins

EAST YORKSHIRE VISTS



I recently visited the Parkway five-screen cinema in Beverley [above] which opened a few months ago and was surprised to find that it advertises itself as a Cinema and Theatre and one of the screens is fully equipped with stage facilities. After what appears to have been monthly one-night stand shows since August, they hosted a professional pantomime from 16 December to 1 January, which they advertise as "starting a tradition, which we hope will enthrall for years to come". After being without a cinema for several years since the Playhouse closed and decades without a theatre, it is ironic that this new facility should follow closely on the East Riding of Yorkshire Council opening its own theatre, (The East Riding), in December 2015. This was a conversion of a disused chapel.



I took the above photo a few months ago when work was in progress to restore the façade of the former Lounge Cinema in Bridlington and convert the former foyer area into retail premises with apartments on the upper floors. The shuttering that had obscured this, the original mosaic decorative name of the theatre/cinema since the early 1960s, had been removed but on later visit I noticed that this sign is once again hidden by shuttering. The auditorium of the Lounge is now occupied by the three-screen Forum Cinema, which is accessed, through the former stage area from the neighbouring Forum amusements arcade.

David Williams

FOUNDER VIEWPOINT

Noting that the film *The Founder* (re: origin of MacDonald's) is not showing at my ten-screen Vue but is included on a small screen at a twelve-screen Cineworld, I turned to FAQ on the Vue website. This says a film may not be shown in all cinemas because there is a limited print. My impression is that the popularity of a film is taken into consideration, so two Odeons in Kent both have nine screens but one audience will watch Michael Keaton, the other will not. Not a dud film but I have to travel! PS: The voice on Vue kept saying she did not recognise me saying "The Founder" but they are showing it all over UK!

Martin Tapsell

OBITUARIES

HENRY SLIWA, 68



Henry Sliwa [R] with the Mayor of Harrow and his wife in 1987

Henry Sliwa was in cinema management for most of his career, mainly with Granada. He started in 1964 as a page boy at the Empire cinema in Bedford. Henry soon expressed a desire to move into management and moved to the Granada Bedford in 1965, working alongside myself as trainee manager. During this time he saw the final years of pop package tours and the start of 70mm roadshow films. He initiated a number of publicity campaigns, winning a prize from 20th Century Fox for promoting *Planet of the Apes*.

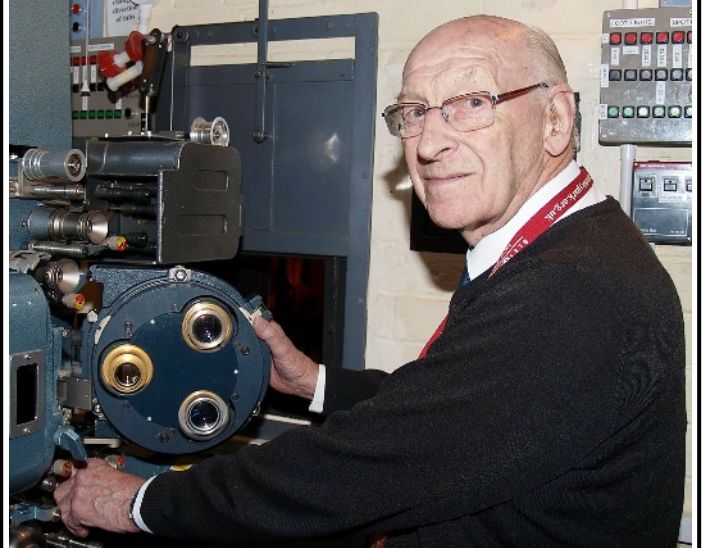
His training continued at Clapham Junction and Shrewsbury and at 21 he became manager of the Granada Leytonstone. Henry later managed Kettering, Rugby and Kingston. In 1974 he managed the Granada Slough, which was the company's first triple cinema. He had a spell running Granada Bingo clubs (including Acton, Aylesbury, Bournemouth and Crystal Palace) but I think his heart was still in the cinema business.

Henry moved to the Granada Harrow in 1986, which he managed for the next ten years. On 22 November 1987 he presented a special 50th anniversary day show, which included a personal appearance by Bod Danvers-Walker and Jack Ferguson at the Wurlitzer. ATOS maintained the Wurlitzer and they and other organ societies presented regular Sunday morning organ shows there. ATOS held their 'Young Organist of the Year' contests there.

Granada sold this remaining cinema to Cannon in January 1989 and Henry continued to run Harrow under a number of name changes, including MGM/UA, Virgin and ABS. The cinema closed in November 1996 to become Gold's Gym. Henry then managed the ABC Friar Street in Reading until that closed in 1999. He then made a career move, managing the Polish Club in Slough until last year, when bowel cancer was diagnosed. Henry proved a knowledgeable host when the CTA visited the Granada Harrow in July 1989.

R David Simpson

KEN DRAPER, 88



Ken sadly died on Monday 23 January, aged 88. He left school at 14 in 1942, entering into a five-year apprenticeship as a projectionist on the Isle of Wight. With the limited opportunities there he moved to Essex, joining a small independent cinema circuit, later joining ABC at the Rivoli Southend, transferring to the ABC Islington in 1954. It was here he read about Cinerama and in October 1954 he started at the Casino Cinerama Theatre in London's West End, staying there for the next three years. Still wanting to improve his skills he moved to MGM studios at Borehamwood but in 1958 with the studios closure he moved down the road to Associated British Studios. It was here he spent the next eight years working in the preview, dubbing and post sync theatres, music scoring stage and transfer bay.

In 1986 he joined ITN in London as a teleciné operator but later returned to Associated British Studios as a sound camera operator. Over the next ten years also working as a microphone boom operator in the post sync and music stage on such TV productions as *The Saint*. He retired in 1993 and on a visit to Bletchley Park in 1996 he became aware of the Projected Picture Trust Museum and became an active member. He was later elected curator and running the trust's Museum of Cinema Technology and Cinema at the park, continuing until its closure in 2015. In 2008 for his dedication to the Cinema Industry and the preservation of its history. Ken was awarded the Frank Littlejohn Award by the BKSTS. (The award is given annually for an outstanding contribution to cinema projection in the UK.) In 2009 Ken was also awarded a long service award by the Trustees of Bletchley Park. It was a privilege to have known Ken; he was a lovely man who will be sadly missed.

Nigel Wolland

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



The Granada Harrow in March 2004

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.

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

HAPPY BIRTHDAY – 80 YEARS

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



Granada 174 Powis Street, Woolwich. Opened 20 April 1937.
Architect Cecil Masey, façade Reginald H Uren; interior decorative treatment Theodore Komisarjevsky. Grade II* listed.

MEMBERSHIP

NEW MEMBERS

Listed below in order of application, we are pleased to welcome new and re-joining members to the CTA: Stuart G Bull, Peter Metcalfe, Malcolm James, Rosemary Moore, David Imrie, Davin Wakeford, Bert Hamblet, David Holloway, Matt Smith, David Hutchison, Clare Glenister, Christopher King, Richard Ballinger, Trevor Rhodes, Brian Oakaby, Sally Brearley, Rowan Brearley*, Keith Addison and Keith Walker.
(* Associate Member)

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Rachel Marks, Fabian Breckels and Laura Protheroe (Associate) have recently joined the select band of Life Members of the Association. We wish them happiness and a long life to enjoy their pursuit of our hobby.

DONATIONS

Our sincere and grateful thanks are extended to the following members who thoughtfully included a donation when renewing their annual CTA subscriptions: JCS Altman, DM Armstrong, DR Barker, DR Bennett, PJ Bennett, MJ Bigham, M Breeze, W Burns, GH Catterick, AJ Caygill, SA Christie, D Corbin, DA Cox, D Daniells, R Deahl, MM Dupré, KS Ebsworth, VA Edwards, ML Facey, KJ Finch, M Ford, JR Forster, RA Franklin, WG Gilbert, GW Gill, RJ Girling, G Greaves, RO Jones, AP Jowett, AS King, PA Kirner, B Lampport, TC Leman, MD Lightfoot, AC Llewellyn, DJ McIntyre, J McWilliams, MA Ostler, T O'Sullivan, AJ Peel, S Quick, DJ Reeves, PD Regan, HR Rowley, RA Sales, HA Scott, TR Sedgwick-Jell, CB Simmonds, SD Simpson, C Snowden, P Springall, BJ Steer, EM Trott, CW Turner, AA Wilks, JHC Williams and PG Yaxley.

IN MEMORIAM

We are sorry to report that Kenneth J Draper of Milton Keynes, died aged 88 on 23 January 2017. He had been a member of the CTA since December 1997. Our sincere condolences are sent to his family and friends. An obituary appears opposite.

Neville C Taylor, Membership Secretary

INTERNET CORNER

- ★ [tinyurl.com/hskowom] A gallery of photos from the *Bournemouth Daily Echo* of the last night at the ABC – see last Bulletin.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/zpk8yjs] & [tinyurl.com/hes8emg] *Bournemouth Echo* reports on the ABC and the Regent/Odeon, each with a gallery of photos. *Sent in by Philip Stevens.*
- ★ [tinyurl.com/jhyk2sx] A *Bournemouth Echo* report on the new Odeon with a gallery of photos & video. *Sent in by Philip Stevens.*
- ★ [tinyurl.com/jaj9d2f] The urban explorers at [28dayslater] have been inside the former Paramount/Odeon Manchester, now being demolished; some sad photos. *Sent in by Nick Taylor.*
- ★ [tinyurl.com/jkqc3u9] A page on [BuzzFeed.com] – 21 Stylish [UK] Cinemas You Must Visit Before You Die. *Sent in by Richard Norman.*
- ★ [player.bfi.org.uk/film/watch-day-in-houghton-le-spring-1930] On the BFI website, a 5½ minute film from 1930 about Houghton-le-Spring (Durham). Watch for the Grand. *Sent in by George Reywer.*
- ★ [tinyurl.com/zr789a8] A page from the *North West Evening Mail* about a vintage film show at the Coronation Hall Ulverston; has some facts and photos on local cinemas. *Sent in by Terry Hanstock.*
- ★ [tinyurl.com/h3l494t] A page from the *Lancashire Telegraph* 'Do You Remember Visiting These Old Blackburn Cinemas?' Has a gallery of 12 photos. *Sent in by Philip Crompton.*
- ★ [tinyurl.com/hd4sqq] A page on the Messy Nessy website about some of the world's endangered cinemas. Good photos.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/ju8rc2p] Another Messy Nessy page on the Barbès Palace cinema in Paris, now a shoe store – see p15.
- ★ [www.youtube.com/watch?v=JtNGl6Kkw5Q] Nothing to do with cinemas. This is Queen's *Bohemian Rhapsody* played on a 1905 81 key Marengi Fairground Organ. 5½ mins: interesting!
- ★ [www.youtube.com/watch?v=9i_mG-qDzD8] Again, not directly related to cinemas. This 6¼ minute video is a history of the Wanamaker Organ at Macy's store in Philadelphia USA. The organ has 6 manuals and 28,750 pipes and is played regularly.

WILF'S TALE OF TWO CINEMAS

By Wilf Watters

It seems to me that there can't be many towns or villages still with two cinemas still standing. Many of course have been turned into other uses but it must be unusual for two to be still in existence. Then I noticed that under my nose, so to speak, my own town has two!



Tenterden in Kent, was early in getting one as the Electric Picture Palace [above] opened in 1912. All on one level with the screen right above the little entrance, it provided local farmers and their workers with films that they have never witnessed before. About 1930 it became the Cinema and was taken over by Shipman & King, with two changes of programmes every week. The projection box had its own entrance at the other end of the building and it's still there today. After closure, the box became a betting shop and lately a small coffee bar. It originally had a grand round concrete entrance, most of which is still there but it had a new front door facility now housing an estate office. The cinema survived until the new Embassy opened in 1938, when it was closed and locals tell me that the army took it over for storage due to the threat of the possible Second World War. Today it is in fine condition because small shops have been cut into the side and the building is well maintained. (A secret ambition of mine is to re-open it as a Digital cinema but it's a bit too much for me to cope with)



The Embassy [above] opened and it was a complete change for locals. Here was a large super cinema nearby in the High Street, featuring luxury seating, modest but pleasing interior fittings and plenty of room including the refreshment room and grand entrance hall. It was another Shipman & King theatre. A fine opening brochure was published. The years went by and things changed and the cinema closed in 1968; the last film shown was *The Virgin Soldiers*. We appreciate the assistance of the Tenterden Town Museum for providing these posters [R] and the opening brochure from 1937. A local photographer Alan Crotty recently unearthed a set of pictures he took in the last week in the Embassy and they give the impressions of a well-run cinema as the two projectionists show [R]. He also, after closure, together with a friend hired the place and perched a 9.5 cine projector on the edge of the balcony to show his railway films! The Embassy is listed and has had several uses since then but still stands proud in the High Street as a reminder of what towns looked like in years gone by.

Now of course everyone wants a cinema back. Several nearby towns have got a new Digital theatre and the good folk of Tenterden have been asking for one of their own. The scene now shifts to Dover. There they are building a Multiplex very near where the Granada was recently demolished and overlooked by the castle. They have a little Silver Screen cinema hidden away down the side of the town's museum, so concealed that you wouldn't know it was there, However it is popular with pensioners, getting in for £5, which includes a hot drink!. The management, however, watching the Multiplex going up, have been casting their eyes at Tenterden. Talking with them they say that to make a commercial success a new cinema would have to have three screens due to the booking arrangements of the film companies. They have been looking at possible sites but to no success. Tenterden Council has been given £3.5 million for 'Amenities Assets' by a housing estate concern, which is building on the edge of town (more possible customers ??) and it is felt that the Council should assist in setting up a cinema in the town. So we watch with interest. I just want to be able to stroll into town and go to the pictures, as we always used to.

