

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 – photo taken April 2006



The new four-screen Curzon in Aldgate [East London] which opened on 20 January – 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.

Please don't miss the Annual General Meeting notice. 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

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

CIRCUIT HISTORIES AVAILABLE

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

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CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

(founded 1967)

promoting serious interest in all aspects of cinema buildings

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CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

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VISITS AND EVENTS

Around Hackney Districts

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.

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. The upstairs 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.

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. The **Rio Cinema** remains one of London's best Independent Repertory Art House cinemas and is a grade II listed building.

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.

**Most visits are for members only
details in the full Bulletin**

CASEWORK

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}

More Casework in the full Bulletin



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.
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all issues below have colour cover and inside pages		
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No 27	£4.50	New Victoria/Apollo; Whiteladies Bristol; Clark & Fenn; Compton Organs; Tim Foster Associates.
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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.

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.

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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.

CARTOON CORNER



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

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



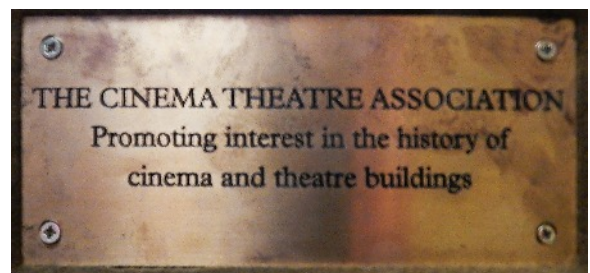
CTA Patron Lucinda Lambton cuts the celebration cake [2]

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. The film was narrated by Sir John Hurt, who sadly died a few days previously on 25 January.

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.

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

Special price for CTA members

£29.50 + £6.00 postage from

Jeremy Buck, CTA Sales Officer

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CINEMA NEWS – 50 YEARS AGO

When the CTA was founded in 1967...

Compiled by Harry Rigby & Ken Roe

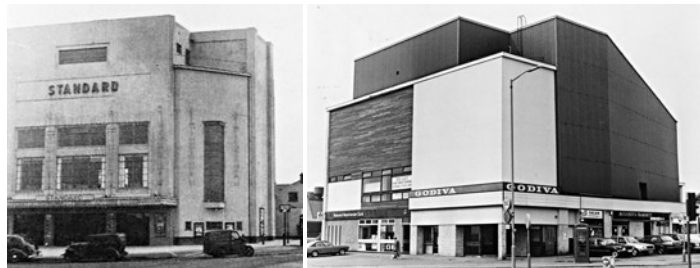
March

- 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}



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

- 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. {19933}



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. {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}



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.

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. {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.

Belfast Telegraph – 26 January

BODMIN (Cornwall)

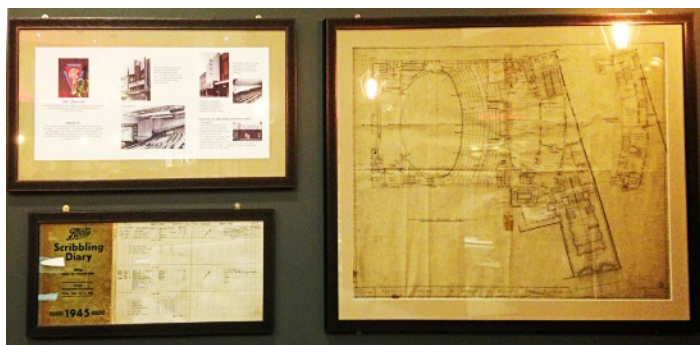
A demonstration was held against the Council's decision to allow Merlin Cinemas to turn the grade II listed Public Rooms into a four-screen cinema.

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. 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. {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 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

**Six more pages of Newsreel
in the full Bulletin**

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

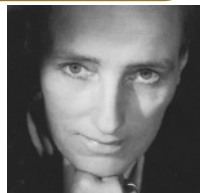
Born in Chesterfield, John starred in *The Elephant Man*, *Alien* and *Midnight Express* (and many other films). His TV appearances included Caligula in *I Claudius* and Quentin Crisp in *The Naked Civil Servant*.

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

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. 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

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

More letters in the full Bulletin

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.

