

50
years

CINEMA
THEATRE
ASSOCIATION

www.cta-uk.org

BULLETIN

Vol 51 No 3

ISSN 1479-0882

May / June 2017



The former Odeon/ Astoria Brixton, now the Academy, which we will be visiting on 2 July – see p3; photo taken May 2003



The Hollywood Cinema in Great Yarmouth, which is to have an extensive makeover – see Newsreel p24; photo taken July 2007

FROM YOUR EDITOR

There are two articles in this edition on the cinemas of Northern Ireland. I have left them both in as, although they overlap a little, they are seen from a different viewpoint. The CTA visited the Province in 2014; that visit report is on pages 14-19 of Bulletin 49/1.

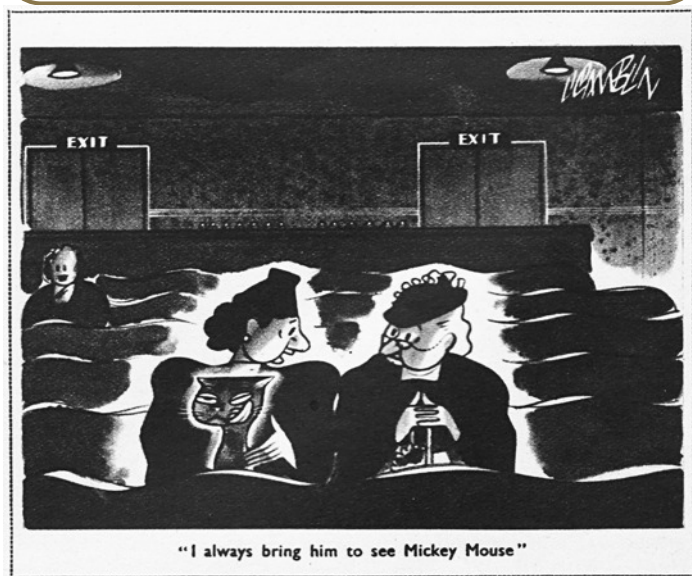


Hugh Sykes' article continues with a visit to Dublin and mentions the LUAS tram system. I went to a model railway exhibition in York over Easter and there was a superb model of the trams in O'Connell Street in 1949. The detailing was excellent and the cinemas were even showing films of that year. Above is a photograph of the model of the Metropole and the Capitol; there was also the Carlton and the Rotunda (later Ambassador). The Savoy isn't there as, if I remember rightly from when I was in Dublin, it was on the other side of the street, opposite the Carlton.

Finally, another tight issue so I have again no room for holiday snaps. As I said last time, please don't let that stop you from sending in more from your holidays this year. I will be at the AGM in Newbridge and also on the Brixton visit on 2 July – details opposite. I am still looking to retire from the post of Bulletin Editor so you have two opportunities to chat to me if you would like to take over. See you there!

Harry Rigby, Editor CTA Bulletin

CARTOON CORNER



"I always bring him to see Mickey Mouse"

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

**DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE
TUESDAY 20 JUNE**

CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

(Founded January 1967)

promoting serious interest in all aspects of cinema buildings

Company limited by guarantee. Reg. No. 04428776.
Registered address: 59 Harrowdene Gardens, Teddington, TW11 0DJ.
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CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

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VISITS: Members and non-members are reminded that they attend visits entirely at their own risk and no responsibility can be accepted by the Cinema Theatre Association or the owners of the buildings for any accidents or injury sustained during the course of any visit.
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Typeset in Franklin Gothic Book by Harry Rigby
Printed by The Ludo Press Ltd, 18 Wimbledon Stadium Business Centre,
Riverside Road, London, SW17 0BA [www.ludo.co.uk]

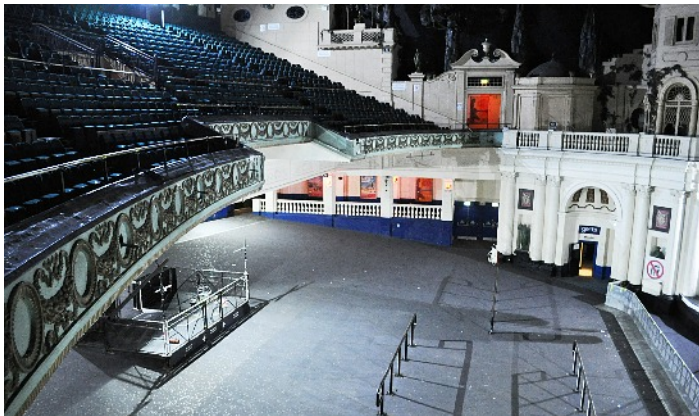
VISITS AND EVENTS

Brixton Beauties

Sunday 2 July ; organised by Ken Roe

10:30AM O2 ACADEMY BRIXTON (GRADE II*)
211 STOCKWELL ROAD, SW9 9SL

Our second 50th Anniversary visit of the year that coincides day and date, is to the Odeon Astoria as it was known as a cinema back in 1967. The Astoria Theatre was the first of four magnificent Astorias built by independent exhibitor A Segal in the inner London suburbs (Streatham is now a multi-screen Odeon, Finsbury Park is now a church and Old Kent Road has been demolished). The Brixton Astoria was opened on 19 August 1928 with Al Jolson in *The Jazz Singer* plus a variety show on the stage. Designed by architects Edward Albert Stone & Thomas R Somerford, with interior decorations in an Atmospheric / Italian Renaissance style by Marc Henri, seating was provided for 2,982 with 1,899 in the stalls & 1,083 in the circle, beneath twinkling stars in the ceiling. It was equipped with a Compton 3 Manual/12 Rank organ. It was taken over by Paramount Pictures in December 1930 and by Oscar Deutsch's Odeon Theatre circuit in November 1939. The Odeon Astoria was closed as a cinema by the Rank Organisation on 29 July 1972 with Charles Bronson in *Red Sun* and Christopher Jones in *The Looking Glass War*.



The interior of the Academy Brixton in October 2013

The Rank Organisation removed the stalls seats and converted the building into a Sundown discotheque, which only lasted four months. It was then used for storage by the Rank Organisation for several years, during which time it was given a Grade II listing in January 1974. It re-opened as the Fair Deal, a rock concert venue with a concert by UB40 on 12 March 1982 but the operators went bankrupt and it closed in April 1982. It re-opened as the Academy on 7 October 1983 with a concert by Eek-a-Mouse. In March 1990 it was upgraded to a Grade II* listed building. Photo on front cover. {1244}

12:00 NOON ELECTRIC BRIXTON
1 TOWN HALL PARADE, BRIXTON ROAD, SW2 1RJ



The Electric/Palladium as The Fridge in 2004

The Palladium Picture Theatre was opened 20 March 1913. It was designed by architect Gilbert W Booth in a flamboyant Neo Classical/Baroque style, which at that time matched the Edwardian grandeur of the adjacent Brixton Town Hall. Seating was provided for

1,200 in stalls and circle levels. In 1926 a Wurlitzer 2 Manual/4 Rank Model B organ was installed. It became the Palladium Cinema in October 1929 when it was taken over by the Associated British Cinemas chain. In April 1956 the decorative façade was altered to a rather plain 'modern' look and it became the Regal Cinema. In October 1963 it was renamed ABC Brixton. In October 1977 it was leased to the independent Ace Cinemas chain and was renamed the Ace Cinema, which closed 28 March 1981. It became a concert venue and briefly a roller disco but closed after being damaged by a fire. In June 1985 it became *The Fridge* nightclub and in recent years has operated as a nightclub named the *Electric Brixton*; it retains most of its original decorative interior.

12:50 TO 2:50 RITZY PICTUREHOUSE (GRADE II)
BRIXTON OVAL, COLDHARBOUR LANE, SW2 1JG



The Ritzy Brixton in 2004

The Electric Pavilion opened on 24 March 1911. It was designed by architectural firm EC Homer & Lewis. All 800 seats in the Renaissance Revival style auditorium were on a single level. It became the Brixton Pavilion Cinema in 1937. In 1954 noted architect George Coles made alterations to the building (possibly the installation of CinemaScope). For many years it was operated by the Classic Cinemas chain as the *Classic Cinema*, a repertory cinema. In recent years it has been operating as the Ritzy Cinema and in 1994 four new screens were built on adjacent land, which was once the site of the Frank Matcham designed Brixton Theatre that was destroyed by German bombs in WWII. The Ritzy is now part of the Picturehouse group (owned by Cineworld). Seating in the original auditorium is now 346 and it is a Grade II listed building.

We are delighted to announce that the Ritzy Picturehouse has arranged for a special 50th Anniversary screening of the Stanley Kramer directed 1967 comedy/drama *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* [U] starring Spencer Tracy, Sidney Poitier and Katharine Hepburn, commencing at 1pm; running time 1 hour 48 minutes. Admission £8.00 (special offer for CTA members); pay at the door or can be pre-booked online at www.picturehouses.com.

... arrangements overleaf



The interior of the Ritzy Brixton in May 2010

Arrangements: Brixton Tube Station on the Victoria Line (Zone 2). Cross Brixton Road on the pedestrian crossing immediately outside the tube station and turn right. Take 2 minutes to walk under the railway bridge and taking the second turning on the left (Stockwell Road) you will see the O2 Academy across the road.

Booking: This is a free visit for members & associate members only. (pay admission to the Ritzy Picturehouse). Please register your intention of attending by telephoning the Visit Registration number 020 8800 8393, leaving your name(s), membership/associate number(s) and contact phone number on the answering machine. Registration for the visit will close on 24 June.

Coming Soon

PORTO

A late spring visit to Northern Portugal; May 2018

The CTA is planning a visit to the Cinemas and Theatres of Porto and the surrounding area. We are looking at a stay of between 5 and 7 days, departing in the latter part of May 2018.

Expressions of interest would we most welcome from members.

Please send letters with SAE to Ray Ritmeester, CTA Portugal, 66 Woodside Road, High Wycombe, HP13 7JB.

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 19 May *Carol* (2015) [15] at 11am
Friday 19 May *Beautiful Thing* (1996) [15] at 7:30pm
Friday 9 June *Kong: Skull Island* (2017) [12A] 11am & 7:30pm
Saturday 10 June *Six Miles from Home* at 7:30pm only
the 50th anniversary of the Stockport Air Disaster
Wednesday 21 June *The Miracle Worker* (1962) [PG] at 7:30pm
Friday 23 June *Golden Years* (2016) [12A] at 11am
Friday 13 June *Blue Velvet* (1986) [18] at 7:30pm
Friday 7 July *20th Century Women* (2016) [15] at 11am
Friday 7 July *Alien Covenant* (2017) [18] at 7:30pm
Friday 14 July *The Time of Their Lives* (2017) [12A] at 11am
Friday 14 July *Moonlight* (2016) [15] at 7:30pm

Behind the Scenes tours at 11am on **Tuesday** 30 May,
Monday 26 June & Monday 31 July; £6 – book or simply turn up.

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

THE REGAL EXPERIENCE, WYMONDHAM

Sunday 18 June *Florence Foster Jenkins* (2016) [PG]
+ *Randle And All That* (1946 comedy short)

Shows at 2:30pm at the Wyndham Ex-Service's Club
(former Regal cinema) NR18 0AT [tinyurl.com/zddvkq4].
Further information from Michael Armstrong [01953 603246].

Editor's Note: The Regal celebrated its 80th birthday in March this year. Although regular films ceased in June 1993, the 35mm projectors are still there and in working order. {30603}

WURLITZER ORGAN CONCERTS AT THE TROXY STEPNEY

490 Commercial Road, London, E1 0HX

Sunday 23 July at 3:30pm – Richard Hills
Sunday 24 September at 3:30pm – Robert Wolfe

Tickets £15.00 [www.cinema-organs.org.uk]

WURLITZER AT THE ROYALTY, BOWNESS-ON-WINDERMERE

Lake Road, LA23 3BJ [www/nm-cinemas.co.uk]

90th Anniversary of the Cinema and the Wurlitzer Organ

Saturday 22 July: 12:30pm – Simon Gledhill in concert
6pm – David Ivory accompanies
The Hunchback of Notre Dame (1923)

FILM STUDIES COURSE AT EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY

The University of Edinburgh is organising a four-week *Film Studies* course from 5-30 June. The course includes access to selected events at the Edinburgh Film Festival. The closing date for applications is 31 May. Details at: [www.summerschool.ed.ac.uk/course/filmstudies]

YORKSHIRE SILENT FILM FESTIVAL

Takes place throughout May at various venues across Yorkshire. Details at [www.yorkshiresilentfilm.com].

LATE NEWS

By Ken Roe

Although these events happened a while ago, news has only just reached us. The jungle telegraph is slow in certain parts!

BIRMINGHAM (Small Heath)



The 772-seat Green Lane Picture House opened in February 1914 and closed in 1957. It became a furniture store and later a Cash & Carry, with the height of the auditorium reduced by an entire storey. That closed in September 2016 and the building became vacant. {39680} *Photo taken March 2008.*

ILFRACOMBE (North Devon)

The sports bar in the former Alexandra Theatre closed in February 2017 and the building became vacant. The venue was a conversion of a 19th Century Market Hall and showed films in the early 20th Century. {50871}

LEEDS (West Yorks)

The former Tower has been refurbished and previously hidden details were revealed. It reopened in November 2014 as a cocktail bar known as *The Brotherhood of Pursuits and Happiness*. The cinema opened in April 1920; it closed in March 1985 and became a discothèque. {41187}

RAWMARSH (South Yorks)

The former Regal was demolished in 2013. It opened in October 1931 with 1,054 seats. The final film was *Summer Holiday* in April 1967 – see p9 last Bulletin – and bingo took over. A road-widening scheme meant that the frontage was demolished; entrance to the bingo was by the original stalls entrance down the side of the building. It later became snooker and then a supermarket. A new Tesco has been built, partly on the site. {25445}

YEADON (West Yorks)



The former Picture House has reopened as a pub called *The Yard*. The cinema opened in August 1925 and was twinned by Star in the 1970s. Films ceased in October 1986 and it went over to bingo, which closed in 2004. It was converted into a pub called *The Aviator* [Leeds/Bradford Airport is nearby], which closed in February 2016 due to "rowdy behaviour". {34012} *Photo taken March 2011.*

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 2015 are £4.00 per year (6 issues); individual issues are £1.00 each. Prices for issues in 2016 and 2017 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; Tab s.
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 50 th 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.

These are special offer prices for readers of the CTA Bulletin.

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)

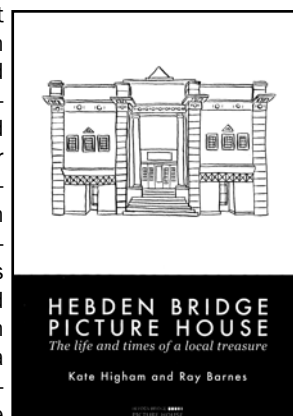
Hebden Bridge Picture House

The Life and Times of a Local Treasure

by **Kate Higham** and **Ray Barnes**. ISBN 9781527202993.

190 pages, paperback, £10.00 plus £3 postage. Available from the cinema at New Road, Hebden Bridge HX7 8AD, or online at www.hebdenbridgepicturehouse.co.uk/buy-history-book

The Picture House opened in 1921 and this interesting book charts it's eventful history up to the present day. The building was acquired by an enlightened local Council in 1971 and is still under local authority control today. It has survived many closure and conversion threats and in December 2015 was severely damaged by flooding. Since then the building has been refurbished and re-opened, with enthusiastic support from an active Friends Group. This book also contains a potted history of the development of cinema in the UK and two useful appendices; a gazetteer of historic cinemas in the Calder Valley and a section about feature films shot in and around Hebden Bridge.



Kings Theatre

The Rise, Fall and Rebirth of Brooklyn's Wonder Theatre

by **Matt Lambros**. Available through Amazon, etc but possibly not on UK site. US price is \$49.99, hardback

On 7 September 1929 the Loew's Kings Theatre in Brooklyn opened its doors to the public for the first time. Less than 50 years later they were shut, seemingly for good. Designed by the Rapp & Rapp architecture firm in the French Baroque style, the Kings is not only an architecturally important piece of Brooklyn history but from community standpoint as well. Many Brooklynites had their first date at the theatre, or walked across the stage during their high school graduation. Now, after almost 40 years of darkness, it reopened in 2015, to become the largest indoor theatre in Brooklyn and the third largest in New York City. It is a place for the community to gather once again, hosting everything from Broadway shows to concerts. Take a trip through the history of the Kings via photographs and artefacts spanning the theatre's heyday through its renovation. Watch the theatre return to its original splendour and learn for yourself why it's called Brooklyn's "Wonder Theater".



CAMPAIGNING TO SAVE YOUR HISTORIC CINEMAS

By Tim Hatcher
Grade II



A site visit has been undertaken to the Ritz at Nuneaton, which is currently offered for sale at the price of £650,000. It has now transpired that a major supermarket chain has been assembling a series of sites around the cinema; this has the potential of aiding regeneration of the area, yet alternatively could pose a threat to the building's future. {25909} *Photo above taken August 2004.*



The project to renovate the Globe at Stockton-On-Tees has now resumed and a letter of support has been requested of the Association; this has been duly forwarded. It is reported that asbestos removal is currently in progress. {1835} *Photo above taken June 2006.*

Unlisted

The application to demolish the Grand at Banbury has been re-submitted following modification; the CTA has renewed its objection. A local campaigner is also actively promoting the building's retention. {27592}

A second planning application for redevelopment of the Regent at Bournemouth has been rejected, again on grounds of adverse visual impact upon the surrounding conservation area. Unfortunately, the survival of the main structure rearward of the façade continues to remain unlikely and emphasis is now being directed toward salvage of consequential extant features, of which the murals attributed to Frank Barnes are notably significant. {20081}

An attempt is to be made to incorporate filmic references in the redeveloped (multi-named but latterly) Cineworld in Chelsea. {17033}

Revelation of many substantial original internal features during demolition of the Kensington Kinema has garnered significant national publicity. It has also once again laid bare the ineffectiveness of inspections for potential listing by Historic England. It is perhaps a vain hope that the loss of this building may prove a stimulus for increased emphasis upon the protection of the diminishing stock of traditional cinemas, comparable to the impact of the wanton destruction of the Granville Theatre in Walham Green in 1971, upon recognition of the architectural merit of theatres and music halls. {13801}

In similar vein, demolition of the Paramount in Manchester has commenced, despite a profundity of intact original features remaining. When contacted, an official of Historic England stated that his organisation was averse to intervening when planning permission is in place. Perhaps such permission would not have been granted if Historic England's original survey had proven sufficiently rigorous. {2430}



Excepting comment upon treatment of the façade of the People's Palace / Gaumont in Bristol, proposals regarding its redevelopment have been deemed acceptable. The Theatres Trust's recommendation for a detailed survey to be executed prior to commencement of operations has been endorsed. {20707} *Photo above taken February 2006.*

Recent interior photographs of Smart's Picture Palace [Essoldo] in Bethnal Green reveal that original features, which until recently had survived, have now been largely eliminated. {16512}

Regrettably an independent attempt by a local campaigner to secure listed status for the ABC/Reel in Plymouth has been rejected by Historic England. {24749}

Objection has been submitted to a revised planning application relating to the Odeon at Redhill. Retention of the noteworthy pylon, now possibly unique, will be discussed with the local conservation officer.



The possibility has been raised of three members of Ringwood Regal Committee purchasing the Corn Exchange Cinema in that locale; this organisation has proven itself to be a highly effective campaigning group. {28134} *Photo above taken March 2009.*

A local resident of Wath-upon-Deane, near Rotherham, has contacted the Association concerning the possibility of listing the Grand cinema. Unfortunately it is not considered that this venue meets the requirements for such designation. See p8 last Bulletin. {25795}

In addition to the CTA, The Theatres Trust and Save Britain's Heritage are also opposing demolition of the Futurist in Scarborough. The local Council is due to reach a final decision in the summer this year. {1842}

The Association has decided against pursuit of the case of the King's Hall / Savoy in Newcastle-under-Lyme, although the Victorian Society is to outline the building's distinction to the local Council. See p2&6 last Bulletin. {38923}

50TH ANNIVERSARY TOOTING GRANADA VISIT

A report of the CTA visit on 26 February by Mike Wood

Probably most CTA members were not aware that the very first of our long tradition of group visits started fifty years ago to the very day, to the (then) Granada (1931 Cecil Masey with Theodore Komisarjevsky) in Tooting, South London, when still on film. It might seem obvious now, since it has achieved iconic status as the only Grade I listed cinema building and dubbed the cathedral of the movies but I am not so sure that it would have seemed so back in the day, when there were many more fine cinemas starting to disappear. The listing was not granted until 1972 and it is worth reading the Historic England assessment:

A world class cinema – without doubt the most lavishly decorated interior of any cinema in Britain and among the most lavish in Europe; the finest evocation of the sumptuous movie palaces of the 1920s and 1930s, the flagship of the Granada circuit. It is the masterpiece of its creators – Sidney Bernstein, the architect Cecil Masey, the mural artists Lucien le Blanc (possibly alias Leslie le Blond) and Alex Johnstone but, towering above all, the inspiration and imagination of Theodore Komisarjevsky, the Russian expatriate prince and theatrical impresario, who is now remembered chiefly for his cinema design. The building closed as a cinema in 1973, reopening as a bingo club three years later.

So where better to go as part of our programme of fiftieth birthday celebrations and who better to lead us there than long-time London cinema walks and past visits organiser, Ken Roe. A good few did the full walk, starting at Balham, Gateway to the South but your correspondent joined the circle queue at the hallowed doors. This was supervised by the curmudgeonly uniformed commissioner [R], who looked vaguely familiar and who nearly got run over in the rush on doors opening.

From then on and split into two groups of about forty each, it was a good time exploring the Gothic interior, which is familiar but always worth another look and including an organ interlude, recorded but the console was on display. A catch-up with tea and biscuits and old friends finished a heart-warming birthday bash for the old girl (I mean the CTA of course). Our thanks go to Ken Roe for organising the visit and to Gala Bingo for hosting us and looking after this wonderful building.

Photos by the author, except where noted.

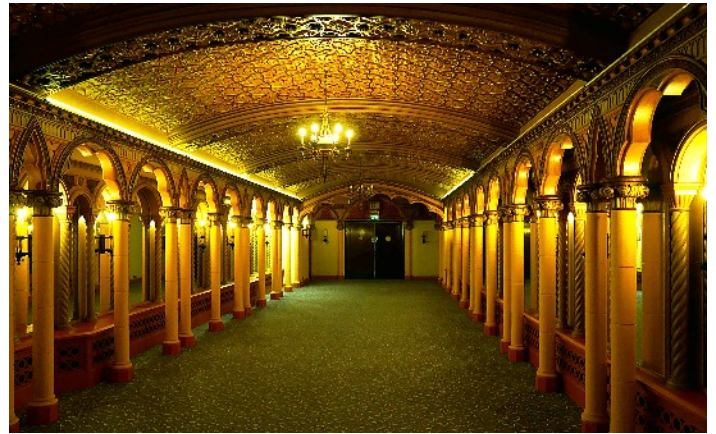
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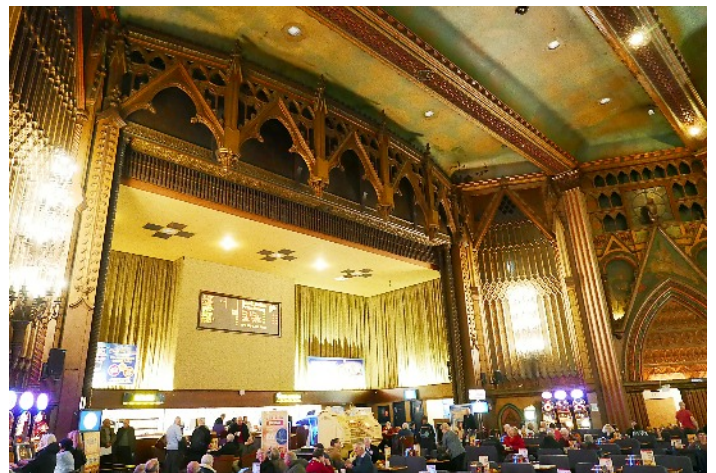
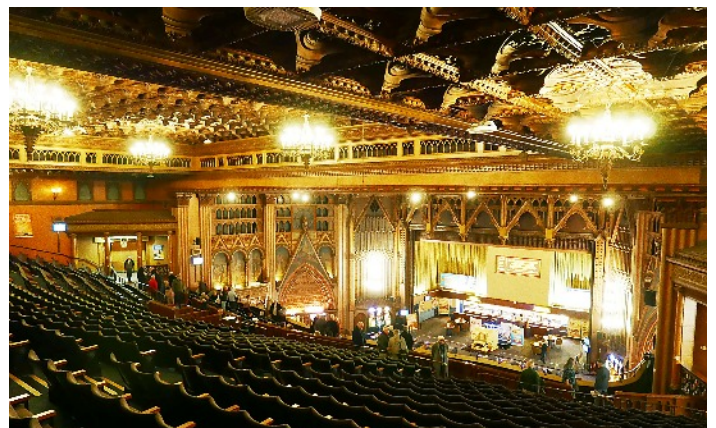
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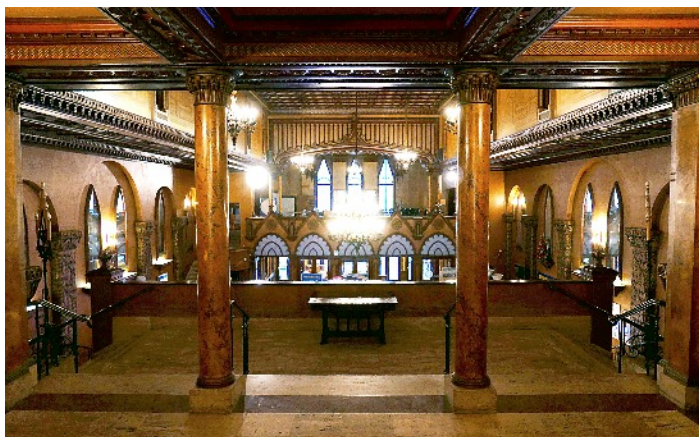
An early photo of the
Granada Tooting at night
courtesy Cinema Treasures



The hall of mirrors



Two views of the auditorium of the Granada Tooting



The entrance hall of the Granada Tooting

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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CINEMA NEWS – 50 YEARS AGO

When the CTA was founded in 1967...

Compiled by Harry Rigby & Ken Roe

May

- 4th The première of *The Professionals* is held at the Odeon Marble Arch. [R] {1830}
- 6th The 923-seat Rex in Lewisham [SE London] closes and is converted into a bingo club. It reopened as a twin cinema two years later; this venture lasted until 1986. {30709}
- 6th The 1,310-seat Century in London's Kings Cross was renamed Granada; it closed a year later. {15045}



The auditorium of the Granada Kennington being demolished in 2004. Flats have been built behind the retained façade.

- 13th *Carry On Nurse* was the last film to be shown at the 2,056-seat Granada in Kennington [London]. It was immediately converted into a bingo club. The foyer is now a Tesco Metro. {22900}
- 17th A new 1,378-seat Odeon opens in Swansea on the first floor above shops. The opening film was *The Sound of Music* in 70mm. It was recently demolished; see p29 last Bulletin. {17958}
- 18th A new 1,277-seat ABC opens in Doncaster with a 70mm print of *Doctor Zhivago*. It closed in 1992 and is still empty. {24505}
- 19th A new cinema, the Regent, opens in Dublin with 457 seats on a single floor. The opening film was *A Man For All Seasons*. The venue only lasted 18 years before closing. {52052}
- 25th The première of *Stranger in the House* is held at the Leicester Square Theatre [R]. {910}
- 25th The Gala Première of *You're a Big Boy Now* is held at the Warner Leicester Square [below]. {3778}



June



- 3rd The 1,259-seat Kings Theatre in Sutton in Ashfield [Notts] closes with *Lady and the Tramp*. Bingo commences a month later. Today the venue is a Wetherspoons pub [above]. {24493}
- 3rd The 550-seat Grand at Thame [Oxon] closes after being on part-time bingo for a while; bingo becomes full-time. Films recommenced in January 1968 but only lasted six months. {44337}
- 5th The Capitol Scarborough reopened after alterations and redecoration in the hands of Mecca. From this point films were shown once nightly, seen from seats in the circle, whilst bingo was played in the stalls afternoons and early evening. This didn't last long and it eventually became bingo only. {1840}
- 10th The former 1,706-seat Odeon in Colwyn Bay reopens as the Astra Entertainment Centre after being closed for ten years. There was a bingo club in the stalls and a 700-seat cinema in the circle; the opening film was *Doctor Zhivago*. {35192}
- 12th The Royal World Première of *You Only Live Twice* is held at the Odeon Leicester Square. {841}



- 19th The 1,711-seat Gaumont in Eltham Hill [SE London] closed with David Niven in *Happy Go Lovely*. It was converted into a bingo club, which still operates today [above]. {14991}
- 22nd The Gala Première of *Triple Cross* is held at the Warner Leicester Square [R]. {3778}
- 25th The 1,884-seat Rialto at Leytonstone [London] was renamed Granada. {40947}
- 26th The Odeon in Walsall [then in Staffs] reopened following a complete makeover. It was destroyed by fire just under four years later. {32640}
- ?? The 873-seat Picture House in Huddersfield closes to be demolished for a town centre redevelopment. {40051}
- ?? The Criterion in Gosport [Hants] was refused a bingo licence; one was eventually granted. {45030}



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

Britain's Oldest Cinema Building Open Again

Following the closure of the Chester Music Hall Cinema by the Rank Organisation, and its subsequent conversion to a supermarket, the oldest cinema building in the country is now the Bradford Theatre Royal, which dates from 1864.

The Bradford Royal became a cinema in 1921 and the first film shown there was the Chaplin masterpiece THE IDLE CLASS in which the great Charlie appeared in the dual role of a Dandy and the baggy-pants Tramp. It was independently run by the Bradford Theatre Royal Cinema Company, of which the Berry family of printers were the principal directors. In 1965 the cinema closed for complete reconstruction and modernisation costing £30,000 in which Todd A-0 and Dimension 150 were fitted. Following a Gala opening in December 1965 with MY FAIR LADY (which ran for six months) other films of lesser calibre were shown. The cinema closed down in September 1966 when the affairs of the company were in liquidation.

After a closure of six months, the cinema opened again in February this year with the old Jolson classic THE SINGING FOOL. The new company leasing the building are Expo Twenty, who comprise Councillor Wood of Bingley; Mr. Vernon Sellwood and Mr. K.R.Eadsby. The latter two gentlemen have more than forty years experience in the cinema trade, both in management and publicity. At the time of the formation of Expo Twenty, both were in the employ of Star Cinemas Ltd. The policy at Bradford is to run the building as a contemporary cinema and screen films of outstanding merit and interest rather than compete with the big circuits.

The name of the Bradford hall has been changed to The Irving Royal in honour of its association with the great actor Sir Henry Irving who died while appearing there in 1905. It has been arranged for the film BECKET to be screened in October this year on the anniversary of Irving's death. Already the enterprising Expo Twenty have formed a late-night cavalier Film Club for members only and other innovations are planned in the future.

G. J. Mellor

For Your Diary

On April 30th, we shall visit The Ionic Theatre, Finchley Road, Golders Green (a few minutes walk from Golders Green Tube, crossing over to Finchley Road and walking up it a few yards). This cinema was opened by Pavlova in 1913, and the manager, Mr. Graham Humphries, has an interesting collection of early trade periodicals, etc.

On June 5th, there will be a meeting of the Association at the Small Cinema of the National Film Theatre. More details later.

On July 2nd, we shall visit the Brixton Astoria and, if all goes according to plan, the Brixton Granada (formerly The Empress Music Hall).

We apologise to members for having been forced to cancel the visit to the Pavilion, Hoddesdon on April 2nd.

ELECTRIC PALACE HARWICH RESTORATION

By Chris Strachan

REPAIRS AND REFURBISHMENT PROJECT



This major Project is divided into three phases: (1) Project Development, (2) Works and (3) Expansion of Activities and Audiences. The aim is to repair and refurbish one of the best examples of a post-1910 Cinematograph Act / pre-1914, small-town cinema to a high standard and which will be sympathetic to the preservation of the decorative splendour of the plaster ceiling as well as sensitive to the acoustic qualities of its barrel configuration.

The 2014 survey of the ceiling carried out at our request by the specialist firm Locker and Riley of London (who carried out work on West End theatres after the partial collapse of the *Apollo* theatre ceiling in December 2013) confirmed that there were areas of small movement at the interfaces between the relatively thin plasterwork and the more substantial plaster roundels and transverse fruit bands. It was emphasised that there was no immediate danger but they advised that with the areas of movement having been identified the ceiling would require to be repaired and stabilized. Everyone agreed that the only option was to plan to remedy the situation within a reasonable time scale. This would entail applying for external funding, which would be augmented with our own local appeal for additional funds so that both the safety and the decorative aspects of the building would be dealt with in a single co-ordinated project. This is a complex project that will of necessity be spread over four years – and if the two years of the investigative survey and subsequent fund-raising undertaken are included that will make it six years, which is very similar to the time it took for the initial restoration of the building from near total dereliction in 1975 to the first re-opening in 1981. What will emerge at the end of this project will be a safely repaired and attractively re-decorated auditorium and external façade. Some areas, such as that above the stage, which were added after the original building works in 1911 but which were never fully completed will be surveyed and then completed (a) to match the rest of the building and importantly (b) to maximise safety – relevant to people who use or perform on the stage and those who ‘work’ the screen as well as those who carry out regular inspections of the roof space and the heating/ventilation plant. After very useful consultations with the Heritage Lottery Fund it was also agreed to add further upgrading of facilities to the project, such as upgrading the seating and toilets.

Jonathan Blagrove, who screened his film *The Final Reel* at the CTA's 50th Anniversary Celebrations, has expressed an interest in filming the Electric Palace Repairs and Refurbishments Project.

In summary, the application for the Heritage Lottery Funding has been a very interesting and positive experience. The high listed status (Grade II*) helped considerably as did the Trust's track record since 1975; and the number of Letters of Support from near and far was not only encouraging but added considerable gravitas to the application. These included very supportive letters from the Cinema Theatre Association; the foremost Historian of UK cinemas; a well-known Architectural Historian; spokespersons of local and regional Theatrical groups; and well-known local, national and international musicians, all of whom know the building and its qualities.

The Trustees are very pleased to announce that the meetings with the Heritage Lottery Fund in Cambridge have been successful, thanks to the work of our professional negotiator Sarah Odell, Director and Charity Consultant of Spires Heritage Ltd, who has very ably made the case for the Grant and to the EP Trustees who have contributed to the joint effort.

The widespread affection felt for the building, its well-established place in UK cinema history and its ever-evolving rôle in the local community all point to this being the start of another successful project – this time with the object of ensuring the future of the Electric Palace for the rest of this Century. The whole building will then be an even greater asset to the Harwich community and the wider catchment areas from which the cinema attracts its audiences.



Following consultations with the cinema's insurers we have taken the precautionary measure of installing a safety net, which is close to the under surface of the ceiling [above] and which will remain in situ throughout Phase 1, ie the Project Development phase. This work was carried out at the end of November by Locker & Riley and feedback from customers, Trustees and visitors has been that they realise that the installation was carried out for good reasons and that visually it much is less intrusive than might have been anticipated.

The opening meeting of the Forward Planning Committee was held on 16 March. Those present included :

- Architects appointed for the Project – Shaun Soanes and Loriana Jaconelli of Nicholas Jacob Architects of Ipswich and London,
- Sarah Odell, Director Spires Heritage and our appointed Liaison Manager with the Heritage Lottery Fund,
- Allen Eyles, foremost author of books on Historic Cinemas of the UK and Editor of the Cinema Theatre Association (CTA) Annual Magazine *Picture House* (as guest),
- Richard Gray, author of *Cinemas in Britain* and Chairman of the CTA Casework Committee (as guest),
- David Looser, Chairman of Harwich Electric Palace Trust (HEPT),
- Colin Crawford, Secretary of HEPT/ Editor monthly *Prog&News*,
- Chris Strachan, first Secretary and subsequent Chairman of HEPT.

SUCCESSFUL LAUNCH OF LOCAL APPEAL

There was a full house on Sunday 26 June 2016 when Electric Palace Patron Clive Owen launched a Local Appeal for Funds to augment those resulting from Grants. Clive had very kindly arranged for the main event of the evening's entertainment to be a several-months-pre-release preview of his very enjoyable new film I.

The target for the Appeal is £60,000 and the launch got off to a flying start, raising £2,500 – including £650 from an excellent up-market raffle organised by the Café on the Pier. Since then there have been several successful ‘fund-raisers’ notably a concert by local band *Spiderz*, who kindly donated all their fees to the appeal, raising the magnificent sum of £2,200.

Many amounts from other Films, Event Cinema screenings and Concert shows as well as donations bring the total raised so far to well over £22,000. This is very good progress but there is obviously some way to go and we are pleased to know that *The Harwich & Manningtree Standard* will be supporting the campaign by publishing regular updates. More news re Grants and Appeal later this year. All being successful, work should start in spring 2018.

MORE WANDERINGS

By Hugh Sykes



The Regal Evesham in September 2012 †

2 July: Evesham. Regal cinema fully open with quite a varied programme. Now one can book a table, enjoy a meal and watch a film or live broadcast of ballet, opera etc on the big screen. The former Clifton continues in its altered form as licensed premises.

3 July: Trip to the *Rocks by Rail* Rutland Railway Museum. Noted, whilst passing, the Uppingham Theatre, open for various stage productions with a recently-built entrance foyer on the left hand side of the property. On the Oakham Road, viewed the much altered Rutland cinema with at least three businesses therein and a take away in the rebuilt foyer.



The Rutland Cinema as a Social Club in 1980



The Uppingham Theatre in October 2005



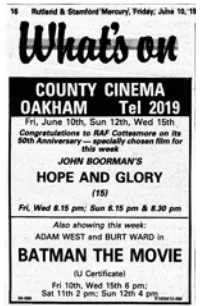
The County Oakham on Cine/Bingo c1980

Onto the Museum, which has a superb collection of 'Iron Ore' industrial artefacts with steam and diesel locos, wagons etc. Afterwards, down into Oakham, which, since the demolition of the County, has been without a full-time cinema. However I found a leaflet for *Cinema for Rutland* based within the County Museum with shows once a month.

9 July: Ann and I ventured to Banbury. Whilst on a good tour of the town, we saw Odeons ①&② fully open but no news on the former Grand; it remains 'For Sale' but not boarded-up.



The Rutland Uppingham as rebuilt (Oct 2005)



1988 advert



The Odeon [ex Essoldo] Banbury in February 2004 †



The Canton Cardiff as Iceland

15 August: Ann and I travelled to Cardiff for a couple of days with Fr Andy, who very kindly took us 'on tour'. The first afternoon included The Royal Mint at Llantrisant; most enjoyable. Next day, I managed to get an up-to-date photo of the Canton, now with its full Iceland branding and all cleaned up. The old cinema had a circular tower with **CANTON** thereon, where the present entrance is and four large extractor fans on the roof. Our day visits included the Dan yr Ogof Caves; we ventured underground on both tours, lower and upper – the latter has a vast cathedral-like cavern, where weddings take place! From the Caves to a place I've not been to before, Brecon. We found the Coliseum just opening up and celebrating 90 years of cinema with the latest releases.



The Coliseum Brecon



The Theatre Royal Merthyr Tydfil

17 August: I was let loose with a Valley Lines day ticket for £12 – and very good value too. The first cinema was in Merthyr Tydfil. Walking past the site of the Castle and up the hill to where the Richard Trevithick Pen-y-darren Memorial stands, there next door is the Theatre Royal, sadly boarded-up, latterly on bingo but in great need of some TLC. Is it listed? It even had an organ installed in 1929 for cinema use, although more of a straight type but removed in the 1930s?



The former Hanbury in Bargoed

From Merthyr by rail to 'Change at Queen Street' for a Bargoed service and a good walk around the town. Bargoed had three cinemas in the 1950s so walking the full length of the High Street I came across the shuttered Hanbury cinema, latterly in retail use and now awaiting new owners. In 1950 it had 731 seats, prop Hanbury Palace and New Hall Cinemas Ltd (part of the Jackson Withers circuit) prices 9d to 1s/9d. The local Job centre is now where the Palace/Cameo stood, with 504 seats, also 9d to 1s/9d. Almost opposite stood the New Hall Playhouse, which opened in 1908 and became a cinema in the 1920s. It sadly burnt down in 1958 and was demolished. The site became home to a new Woolworth's store, which I believe is now a B&M Bargains outlet.



The Clifton Palace in Roath, Cardiff

Back to Cardiff via Rhymney (no visits) to pick the car up and meet at Chepstow for a meal. Unfortunately I hit Cardiff's rush hour (ugh!) and took a wrong turning but I found a former early cinema, the Clifton Palace, opened c1913 on the corner of Clifton Street and Rugby Street in Roath but closing in the early 1930s to become a Woolworth's store, now a Tesco Express outlet. I wonder what's above the current ceiling. FWW did look after their ex-cinemas; has any member knowledge please?

After joining up for our meal, we went 'non-motorway' home, passing Chepstow, noting the site of the Gaumont, closed in 1971 and demolished after commercial use c1989. The current upper frontage looks very much like the Gaumont – or a copy; was all the building actually knocked down?



The Savoy Skelmanthorpe

Just one more: Whilst at the Kirklees Railway, Clayton West *Fairbourne in the Hills* Gala, I noted a cinema building, the Savoy in Skelmanthorpe (West Yorkshire) now open as a fitness centre.

Now for 2016's holiday – a few days in Northern Ireland. We booked with Parry's of Landywood, near Cannock, a five-day (Mon-Fri) break out via South West Scotland at Cairnryan and Stenna Lines ferry to Belfast, a very calm 2½ hours crossing. Staying at the Stormont Hotel, just across the road from the more famous building, we were on the Tuesday (23 August) given a conducted tour of Belfast on the coach so only a few venues were viewed. So the first Northern Ireland cinema found was the Strand, currently with four screens and retaining the art deco style. Continuing on board, we noted the modern Movie House complex and the wonderful Opera House, surviving bombings with rebuilds each time. What a gem! We even toured down the Falls Road, then back into the City, where Ann and I left the coach for NI Railways and a journey to Cultra and Bangor.



The Strand Belfast in September 2014 †

At Cultra, on one side of the railway is the Transport Museum where all the railway items are, with the Folk Museum a good walk over the line and up a hill. Sadly, in view of our itinerary, we decided to leave the open-air site for another occasion.

So to Bangor by rail and a good walk around this busy town. Sadly, nothing left cinema-wise in the centre with the Omniplex seven-screen open on Valentine Road. There were two cinemas in Bangor c1959: the Adelphi on Main Street, props Rialto Cinema Co, 450 seats, prices 7d to 1s/9d, pros width 30ft but the gem in the town was the Tonic in Hamilton Road, props Bangor Cinemas Ltd, 2,000 seats, prices 10d to 2s/3d, pros width 49ft, stage 22ft, five dressing rooms, café and ballroom. It opened in 1936 with a 3-8 Compton organ and Melotone,

illuminated console on a lift with Henry Wigfield playing. The Compton was removed in 1969 to Bangor Boys' School but I believe it has recently been moved again. The Tonic closed in 1983 and was gutted by fire on 21 June 1992 and demolished shortly after. [See p15.]



The frontage and Compton organ at MovieLAND Newtownards

After a ride on the miniature railway, it was time for Ann and I to catch the bus to Newtownards, then after some kind TIC directions and help, we walked to the MovieLAND picture house adjacent to the Ards Shopping Centre. I ventured inside, to be made very welcome and, upon asking permission of the management to take photographs of the mighty 3-8 Compton organ, was granted a visit upstairs to the large room over the foyer. Some advertising panels were taken down and a glass panel slid away to reveal the 3 manual Compton console in front of me. After thanking the team for their hospitality it was time to get back to the hotel – there was a direct bus! c1950 Newtownards had two cinemas: the **Regent** in Regent Street, props Solar Cinemas Ltd, 850 seats, prices 9d to 2s/3d. It suffered a fire in 1977 and was demolished. The second was the **Ritz** on the site of the **Picture Palace**, opened before 1917, taken over by Union in 1936 and rebuilt as the **Ritz**, opening in March 1937, 713 seats c1950. It closed in July 1966 and I believe it was also demolished for shops. Our bus journey took us along the Upper and Lower Newtownards Road, where several early Belfast cinema once stood.

24 August was an outing to the Giant's Causeway by our coach. Out via the main road to Larne, I noted the station but missed seeing the eight-screen **Omniplex** at the harbour. Sadly we didn't stop but Larne had at least three earlier cinemas. Brief research details: **Electric Theatre** opened June 1911, became the **Picture House** August 1927, wired for sound 1930 but closed September 1936, fate unknown; **Savoy**, October 1953 to May 1970, demolished; **Regal** 1937-1986, bingo, film four screens November 1992-May 2001, auditorium demolished but façade and foyer exist? Whilst passing on-board the coach, I did view what looked like a converted chapel in use as a carpet warehouse. Worth another look next time?

Our journey continued on the Coast Road with a brief stop in Carnlough. Not enough time to venture far but in a local shop, McKillops, the gentleman behind the counter told me of the Marine being built with all the brickwork first then fitting the Nissen Hut afterwards. Films were screened elsewhere in the town before 1959, maybe in *The Dining Room Ballroom*, which exists near the small harbour. The coach continued further through Cushendall and, yes, there in Chapel

Road is the former **Moyle** cinema, which the CTA tour found in September 2014; it remains open as **Vincent's**. We only had a short view of Ballycastle as we passed through; sorry, no update for the former 397-seat cinema after garage use.

Upon arrival at the Causeway Centre, which was crowded, Ann and I walked down the road to the station terminus, the HQ of the Giant's Causeway and Bushmills Railway, 3ft gauge. After the arrival of the 12:30 from Bushmills, the duty officer very kindly opened the loco shed for me to view and photograph the two steam engines plus the diesel shunter. Steam is out of use and current services are operated by a diesel engine in one of the coaches. There were thousands of people at the Causeway – glad to have seen and been on the site of this natural wonder.

We re-boarded our coach for a non-stop journey back to Belfast via Bushmills, Portrush, Port Stewart and Coleraine. In the latter we passed the **Riverside Theatre** within a school complex. Then, passing the station and its lovely signal box, we turned into Railway Road and home to the 500 seat **Picture Palace**, which is open as **S&T Moore**, a shop. [See p15.]

Thursday 25 August was our changeover day, leaving Belfast for Dublin via the A1, passing Bainbridge but noting the **Iveagh Movie Studios** as we went by, then into Ireland on their M1. We passed Dundalk and Drogheda to the capital City, entering the M50 tunnel section and finding a new **Odeon** multiplex by the docks, also near the LUAS Tram System terminus, **The Point**, newly open.

Dublin City centre had multiple roadworks for joining up the two separate tram systems, so it was very crowded. We were dropped off by Trinity College Park for a few hours freedom. Ann and I had a good walk around, finding on the corner of Townsend Street and Hawkins Street the **Screen Cinema**, which had opened in 1964 on the site of the **Theatre Royal** and **Regal** cinema. Unfortunately it closed on 28 February 2016; the film posters are still in the frames but it was shuttered.



A GR VII postbox in Dublin



The Olympia Theatre Dublin

We found Pearse Station and watched a few DART trains go by, then over the River Liffey for the tram system and Connolly Station (we could have travelled via DART but walked). After finding both we ventured on to Connolly Station, being made very welcome by the IR staff. After a few train photos it was time to board a LUAS tram for Heuston Station; €1.90 each Zone 1 – excellent value. I photographed loco 216 on a Cork express then walked back to the City. We asked how much to visit the Guinness Storehouse – €20 each – thanks but no thanks. We visited a large Catholic church where they have eight confessionals; must be a very sinful parish. Along Dame Street we found a British GR post-box in full use but now painted Irish green – an amazing survivor. Just a few yards further is the lovely glass canopy entrance to the **Olympia Theatre**, fully open. We noted details for the **Savoy** cinemas in Upper O'Connell Street, which has four screens. Built in 1929 it had a 3-12 Compton organ, console on lift and opened by Quentin Maclean but removed in 1969 and since broken down.

We re-joined our coach for our overnight stay at the Talbot Hotel, Stillorgan. An early breakfast, then on the Stena Adventure to Holyhead from Dublin docks; a calm crossing again. So Ann and I found some cinemas and theatres but we wish to go back again one day. 2017 will hopefully be the great north of Scotland and Orkney in June/July.

Photos by the author, except # by Harry Rigby

PROVINCIAL CINEMAS OF NORTHERN IRELAND

By Gavin McGrath; part 1

There have been some great examples of small-town cinemas in the Province but these have all vanished in favour of multiplexes that have now spread across the land, surrounded by a sea of car parks and a demand for an overwhelming choice of films. Here in a two-part feature I will look back at some of the more documented cinemas that existed across Northern Ireland with, of course, one exception, the City of Belfast. I have however allowed Dundonald an entry, despite technically being part of Belfast, as it is quite some way from the City itself. The cinemas that we know little about have been summarised at the end of the article.

In the second of this two-part feature I'll discuss the remainder of the Province's cinemas and multiplexes, including those in Londonderry, Newry and Omagh and cover some of the locations where outdoor cinemas and drive-ins have been held.

Antrim had a prominent cinema of 430 seats in Castle Street, only to be replaced in the mid-1950s by a smaller one directly opposite with 100 seats fewer. It looks like commercial television was already beginning to bite. The first multi-screen cinema in the town, the **Cineplex** on Fountain Hill, opened in October 1994 with four screens. This only lasted until December 2013, affected, no doubt, by the opening of the ten-screen **Omniplex** on the Junction One Retail Park in April 2011. It was, however, reopened the following March for a limited period screening classic films, which many people seemed to favour. It has been converted in part to a surgery and pharmacy. The small town of Ardglass had the **Shield Picture House**, converted from a dance-hall by the Gilligan family in 1936. This ran until January 1962.



The Omniplex Armagh

The city of Armagh had two early cinemas, the **City** in Market Street and the **Picture House** in Russell Street. The latter, which opened in 1909, was operated by Irish Empire Palaces and served the townsfolk for over 50 years, closing at the end of January 1961. It blamed falling attendances and the closure of the local barracks. Its commissionaire, Jimmy Magee, had worked there for 40 years. The 782-seat **Ritz** in Market Street opened in December 1937 and was acquired by ABC from Union. After closure in February 1974 it was purchased by John McManus and reopened that December but it was a short-lived venture, closing in 1977. It was demolished and the **Market Place Theatre and Arts Centre** stands on the site. The **City Film House** in Market Street opened in November 1995, a venture between the local Council and Diamond Cinemas and closed in June 2007. The Ward Anderson circuit took over the building and carried out a £1 million refurbishment, opening it as the four-screen **Omniplex** in 2009.

Ballycastle had a picture house in the 1920s but the more elaborate **Castle** cinema appeared in Market Street in the mid-1930s. It lasted until the 1970s but the frontage was later removed and the building is now in use as a garage. The village of Ballykinlar in County Down seems an unlikely place for a cinema but indeed there was one – at the local camp for the troops. The 250-seater was run by a Miss Sandes and was in business by 1928, lasting for at least 40 years. The cinema was bombed in 1974 but there is still a Sandes Home for soldiers on the site. The **Reo** cinema on Ballynure Road, Ballyclare

was active in the 1950s, although there had been an earlier picture house in the town since the 1920s. It was later used as a furniture store but was demolished and a Lidl supermarket built on the site.



The State Ballymena

Ballymena had an early picture house, plus the **Lyric** in the early-1930s run by Logan and Walsh but the first of any size was the **State** on the Pentagon. It opened in December 1935 and the first film to be screened there was *Ruggles of Red Gap*. It closed in 1978 but was reopened five years later as a twin-screen cinema. In 1994 four screens were planned by taking over Allen's garage but it is not obvious if this was ever carried out. It was operated by Ward Anderson when it closed in July 1998 due to the opening of the new **IMC**. The last films to be shown were *Godzilla*, *The Wedding Singer* and *Barney*. Plans for an arts centre in 1999 called **Altered State** never materialised and the building was damaged by fire in 2002 and then demolished in 2006. Two years after the **State**, the **Towers** in Galgorm Road came on the scene. It opened in December 1937 and was run by Supreme Cinemas. The 1,150-seater closed in 1976 and was demolished in 1983. Finally, the **IMC** on Larne Link Road is a seven-screen multiplex opened by the Ward Anderson group in July 1998. One of the screens was made into a **Galactic** in 2015.



The Palladium Ballymoney

The **Palladium** in High Street Ballymoney opened in 1937 and was a modest 500-seater. It closed in May 1969 when the last film to be screened was *Planet of the Apes*. Derelict by 2008, it had a reproduction of its façade painted on the hoardings to jazz the place up a bit. Plans to bring a cinema back to the town haven't gathered much pace but a selection of films have been shown at the **Town Hall**. John Corry built the **Picture House** in Dromore Road, Ballynahinch in 1925. Subsequent proprietors included Ben Bloomfield and Frank Hargreaves but the business ran out of money and it closed in 1977. The Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster bought the building for £9,000 and converted it to a church, which it remains as today. The **Tatler** in Main Street, Ballywalter appears to have been a renaming of the **Mid Ards Cinema** that opened in the mid-1930s and was rebranded in 1950. It closed during the 1960s and was later demolished.



The Iveagh Banbridge

In Banbridge, the first cinema was a conversion of a roller-skating rink in Kenlis Street run by Mr J Finney. He replaced it with the Picture House in Victoria Street, opened in 1924 on the site of a joinery works. The first film to be shown was *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. It closed in 1956 and became a warehouse before being demolished for a new road link. The Iveagh opened in December 1955 and was designed by John McBride Neill. The directors of the company were Mr JF Finney and Lt Col G Finney. The first film at the 850-seater was *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* with the opening night's proceeds going to the Earl Haig Fund. It was sold to the local Council in 1999 and lasted until the end of March 2001. Phil Coulter performed on stage the day before the doors closed. Its manageress, Mrs Doris Matier, had worked there since the day it opened, before passing away in 2013 aged 81. A Christian group called the Pulse expressed an interest in the building but it was demolished in 2004. The IMC in Downshire Place opened as the New Iveagh in March 2004. It was in part a conversion of a former swimming pool and was the Iveagh Movie Studios by 2008. IMC bought the cinema from Dominic Quinn in February 2016 with an emphasis on increasing the number of screens to four as part of a £2.5 million refurbishment. As if one cinema wasn't enough for Banbridge, an eight-screen Omniplex opened in July 2016 at The Outlet Retail Park. One auditorium has a MAXX screen, bringing the company's total to six, while the remaining seven have Sony 4K projection and Dolby 7.1 surround sound.



The Tonic Bangor

Bangor had a few early cinemas such as the Picture House in Main Street, opened in 1912, the Picture Palace in Quay Street, opened in 1915 and the Maypole in Shore Street, opened in 1917. The larger ones began opening in the 1930s, such as the Adelphi in Main Street and the Astor on Seacliff Road, now a church but Bangor's jewel in the crown was surely the Tonic on Hamilton Road. The 2,250-seater was designed by John McBride Neill with a ballroom attached and opened in July 1936. The first main feature to be shown was *The Man Who Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo*, supported by *Music Is Magic*; a Compton 3Manual/8Rank organ was installed. The cinema's operators included Bangor Cinemas Ltd, Odeon Theatres (Ireland) Ltd and the Scott Brothers. Among the big names to have done concerts there were the Bay City Rollers, Glen Campbell and Van Morrison, the last being Cannon and Ball. It closed in October 1983 when the last films to be screened were *Watcher in the Woods* and *Night Crossing*. The Grade II listed building was damaged by fire in June 1992 and was later demolished; a retirement home now occupies the site. A later

addition to local cinemas was the Queen's on Queen's Parade, a 400-seater first listed in 1953. It was fire-bombed in October 1977 and subsequently closed. Bangor's only remaining cinema is the Omniplex on Valentine Road, which opened as the Cineplex in 1994 with four screens. It was renamed Bangor Multiplex and finally Omniplex and now has an additional three screens. In Bushmills films were screened at the Orange Hall before the Palladium in Main Street came along in the 1940s. It is still standing and was recently being used as an antique shop. Carnlough, on the Antrim Coast Road, had the Marine cinema on Whitehill Road. It was opened by Tommy Kelly around 1950 in an old Nissen hut and survived until it went up in flames at some point during the 1970s or 80s.



The Ideal Carrickfergus

Carrickfergus had a couple of notable cinemas. The Castle was based in a former Unitarian church on Joymount and was already operating by 1928. It had closed by the early 1950s when it was being used by the Technical College. The Ideal in West Street opened in the early 1930s and was run by Supreme Cinemas. The 350-seater survived well into the 1970s but the building is no more. Before demolition it had a variety of uses, including a snooker hall, supermarket, roller-skating rink and the Hot Gossip nightclub. The current cinema is the six-screen Omniplex at Rodgers Quay, opened in April 2000. The Cinema on Lower Strabane Road, Castlederg was built by Leslie Stewart and opened in 1934. It was sold to William Barry in the 1950s and closed in 1980. It reopened in 1990 but closed the following year with *The Last Picture Show*. It was demolished in April 2014. Coalisland had a small 300-seat cinema known originally as the Picture Palace. It was established by a group of local businessmen using a converted warehouse and opened in December 1922. By 1929 it was being run by Bill and Albert Bernard and known simply as The Cinema. At the time of its closure in October 1985 it was reputed to be the oldest running picture house in the Province. It is now Michael Dorman's chemist shop but a plaque over the entrance serves as a reminder of the building's former use. The Castle was a small 200-seat cinema in Castlecaulfield active in the 1950s and run by SG Wells



The Palace Coleraine

In Coleraine, the Picture House on Railway Road was a conversion of a roller-skating rink owned by the McGilligan family and opened in 1914. It was later known as the Picture Palace, most likely when it was reconstructed in 1937 and then simply the Palace. It closed in the 1970s and was converted to shops. The Palladium in Society Street opened in 1932 and was rebuilt after a fire that occurred in September 1936. The 900-seater was taken over by Odeon Theatres

(Ireland) Ltd in 1963 but later run by Shaun Henry. It closed in August 1990, a week after the **Jet Centre** opened on Riverside Park South. Planning permission to build apartments on the site has been approved. The **Jet Centre** had four screens in its cinema and also had an ice rink and bowling alley, which later closed, leaving the cinema on its own. The Ward Anderson-run cinema shut its doors in April 2005 but was reopened as the **Movie House** in July 2006. The current number of screens at this site is eight.



The Cinema Comber

The **Andrews Memorial Hall** in Comber was screening films in the 1920s but the **Picture House** in Castle Street didn't open until January 1934. The 330-seater was situated in former stables next to The Old House and run by William McDonald. The Old House was later demolished and a brand new building erected on the site opening as the **Comber Cinema** in December 1957. The ceremony was carried out by the Rt Hon JL Andrews and the first film to be shown was *Interlude*. The 400-seater with balcony was later run by the Solar Group and was targeted in a fire-bombing campaign of provincial cinemas in October 1977. It closed in October 1984 with *Top Secret* and was demolished in June 1985. There were two private cinemas in the town, the **Tudor**, opened in August 1974 by Noel Spence and the **Excelsior**, opened in the 1990s by his brother Roy. The first was in a converted shed next to his house and had 66 seats; the other was in former film studios and had 28 seats.



The Ritz Cookstown

Cookstown had the early **Picture House**, listed in the 1920s, before the **Phoenix** on Fairhill Road came along in the early 1930s. The latter was operated by Cookstown Electric Picture House Ltd, later Charles Donaghy and survived until the 1980s. Two cinemas active in the 1950s were the **Medway** in Chapel Street and the **Royal** in Molesworth Street, both run by TA Quinn. The **Royal** is now the **Lanyon Hall**, operating as concert venue with live bands. A late opening was the **Ritz** in Burn Road in 1980, now run by Columba Eastwood as the **Ritz Multiplex**. A second screen was added shortly after with a further three added when the building was extended in 1999. The cinema is complemented by a kids' play area and a coffee shop, with retail outlets outside. The **Omniplex** at Highfield Heights in Craigavon opened in March 2015, built on the site of the Irish Road Motors factory at a cost of £5 million. The eight-screen cinema includes a MAXX screen with Barco Auro sound. Border town Crossmaglen had a small cinema on the first floor of the **Market House** in Cardinal O'Fiaich Square. The hall was leased to Richard Haywood and opened in March 1944 when the first film to be shown was *Arabian Nights*.

He ran it until 1954 when Canon Murray took it over and kept it going until 1969. The **House** was burned down by British troops in 1974 and a community centre now stands on the site. In Crossgar films were shown at the **Market House** but there was no proper cinema until the Trohear family built the **Festival** cinema in Mary Street following the success of their cinema at Dundrum. The building has now gone over to industrial use. Donaghadee had a **Picture House** as early as 1923 with listings for an **Arcadia** in 1932 and a **Regal** from 1937, although it is not obvious if these are in fact the same building. The **Regal** was a 300-seater located in Manor Street and was still going in the 1960s. It was later used as a community centre but demolished around 2008 to provide a car park for a new centre that was built.



The Grand Downpatrick

Downpatrick had an earlier picture house, the **Pavilion** in Market Street but the most significant cinema was the **Grand**, also in Market Street, which opened in December 1935. It was run by Thomas Breen and the first film to be shown at the 560-seater was *Roberta*. It was modernised in 1968, which sacrificed over 100 seats and closed in 1974. It reopened in December 1980 showing *The Aristocats* and closed again for good in 1991. The frontage was later demolished and rebuilt for retail use. The possibility of a multiplex for the town was discussed for a number of years until the **Eclipse** finally arrived on Owenbeg Avenue. The £4million cinema opened in June 2009, has six screens and is owned by the Barrett family.



The Montague Dromore

In Dromore films were shown in the **Orange Hall** courtesy of a Mr Hurst and later a Mr Larmour and also at the **Town Hall** courtesy of a Mr Rodgers, James Dale and later his son Robert. From 1969 until 1976 the operation was run by David and Rosemary Harrison until the Education and Library Board required the space to house the local library. The **Montague** cinema opened in February 1955 showing *The Robe* and was a 400-seater named after its owner Edward Montague. When the cinema closed it became the **Big Ridge Ballroom** playing host to various showbands. Dundonald had the cinema with the shortest post-war lifespan of any in the Province, the **Metro** on East

Link, which opened its doors in September 1956 and closed them again in 1961. It cost £50,000 to build and had a balcony but evidently not the potential to become a huge success. It had a spell under the name Rex but ended up as a garage. It was later demolished and the site is now occupied by a McDonald's restaurant. The current cinema in the town is the Omniplex on Old Dundonald Road, which opened in December 2008 and has eleven screens. The small town of Dundrum had the Castle cinema in Main Street. This was opened by the Trohear family in a converted shop in 1948 and closed in the 1960s to become a garage.



The Astor Dungannon

Dungannon had an abundance of cinemas of which the earliest seems to have been the Empire as early as 1923. Dungannon Cinema also opened in the Forester's Hall in January 1932. The first of any standing was the Castle in Market Square, opened in the early 1930s by a Mr Hobson but was later run by L & W Cinemas in tandem with the Astor. It was destroyed by fire in November 1971 and the site was rebuilt to house retail outlets. The Astor in George's Street opened in October 1939 and, although not purpose-built, was nevertheless very palatial for the time. Following closure it went over to bingo and in 1997 a children's play centre called Krazy Maze was opened in the building by ex-social worker Briege McGlone. By this time the frontage had been rebuilt, possibly as a result of bomb damage in the 1970s. In the 1950s Sydney Eakins leased the Orange Hall to show films under the Viceroy Cinema name. Master hypnotist Edwin Heath was one of the notable attractions at the hall. Dungannon's multiplex is in the Oaks Shopping Centre on Oaks Road and opened as Global Cinemas in June 2000. The six-screen cinema with 839 seats closed in November 2014 but reopened after a £3 million refurbishment as the Omniplex in March 2016. The Dungannon Film Club screened films at Ranfurly House and the Square Box. In Dungiven films were screened at St Canice Hall in Main Street as early as the 1940s and as late as 2013. John McElhinney was well-known for being the projectionist and stated that the hall was still operating on celluloid. Parish Priest Father Aiden Mullan announced in 2015 that the hall was being sold off as it was losing money.



The Ritz Enniskillen

Early cinema-goers in Enniskillen made their way to the Assembly Room at the Town Hall of 1901 before the Regal arrived in Wellington Road. The Regal opened in January 1936 and was initially run by Enniskillen Cinemas Ltd although under the control of Odeon Theatres (Ireland) Ltd by 1963. It closed in 1967 and became home to the Fermanagh Unionist Association in 1972. The Unionist Hall, as it is now known, still screens films organised by the Fermanagh Film Club. The front of the building is now in use as a toy shop. The Ritz in Forthill Street opened in 1954 with *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* and was purchased by John McManus in 1961. The 700-seater closed in March 1992. The adjacent Railway Hotel wanted the property for an extension but it has remained empty ever since. The Castle Centre cinema opened in the Castle Leisure Complex on Raceview Factory Road in 1991 with three screens but closed in January 1998 owing to bomb damage. It was reopened with seven screens by the Ward Anderson circuit in April 2000. It became an IMC having been taken over by the company in 2016. Films are also screened at the Ardho-wen Theatre courtesy of the Fermanagh Film Club.

Fintona had the Pavilion in Mill Street operating in the 1950s, when the seats were ripped up during a performance of *Rock Around the Clock*. The premises are now in use as a retail shop. Not far away in Fivemiletown was the Classic in Main Street, run by T McKeagney and M McCaffrey. This has since been demolished and the site is occupied by housing. Another small town to have a cinema was Garvagh, namely the Avon cinema, which is reputed to have stood for the Allies Victory over the Nazis. The 275-seater was run by Ralph Robertson but is another to have succumbed to demolition. One of the true small-town cinemas was at Gilford in County Down where George Pentland, a tailor by profession, opened the Picture House in 1909. It was located in hay loft store at the back of his shop, where films were projected onto the back wall. Mrs Pentland accompanied the films on piano and hot water bottles were available when it was cold. It is said to have closed in 1931 but was used for other entertainment up until the 1950s. In 2007 the store was dismantled and re-erected at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum. A later cinema in Gilford during the 1950s was the Dunbarton, run by a local mill company, which was later used as a church hall by the Presbyterians.

The Movie House on Glenwell Road in Glengormley opened in September 1990 and has six screens, the largest holding 309 and the smallest 51. A preview screening of *Ghost* was the first film to be shown at the multiplex. Also in the Newtownabbey area the Lido on the Shore Road at Greencastle opened in March 1955 and was a single-floor cinema designed by John McBride Neill. The opening bill included an appearance by Frank Carson, then an up-and-coming comedian. It closed in 1970 and became St Mary's Church but was later demolished and a new church built on the site. Irvinestown had the Adelphi cinema in Mill Street, opened in the 1950s. Although it appears to have been still going in 1973 it ended up as the Delany Suite for Mahon's Hotel next door. In Keady, the Scala on Granemore Road was purpose-built for CinemaScope in 1953 and originally run by CJ Mallon. The 400-seater was still going in 1988 but by 2013 was available for sale with an £85,000 price tag. A short film of the cinema is on YouTube at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=tqbX2nNbVC8]. Films were also shown at the Town Hall on Lake Road.

Kilkeel had an earlier cinema known as the Royal, run by John Rooney but the one of note in this seaside town is the Vogue, which opened in Newry Street in April 1940. The opening ceremony for this 490-seat cinema with circle was performed by the Countess of Kilmorey and the first film to be shown was *Rage of Paris* along with a short entitled *Song and Story*. In the 1950s it was run by William McGonigle and Jim McCulla but later by John Quinn and Seamus Fitzpatrick. It was refurbished in 1998 reopening with 295 seats and eventually closed in September 2007 due to the lessee retiring. The last film to be shown was *Transformers* in what was the last single-screen cinema operating in the Province [see Newsreel p24]. The Cinema in Frederick Street Killyleagh was opened in a former butcher's store by Harold McMurray, a draper by profession. The first film to be shown in 1933 was *Scandal for Sale*. The cinema was leased to William McGonigle in 1968, who later purchased it outright and sold it to a Baptist church, which still occupies the building today.

... to be continued



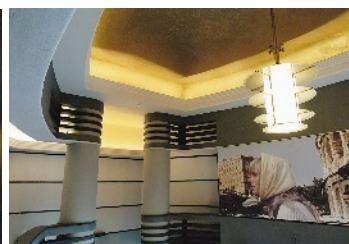
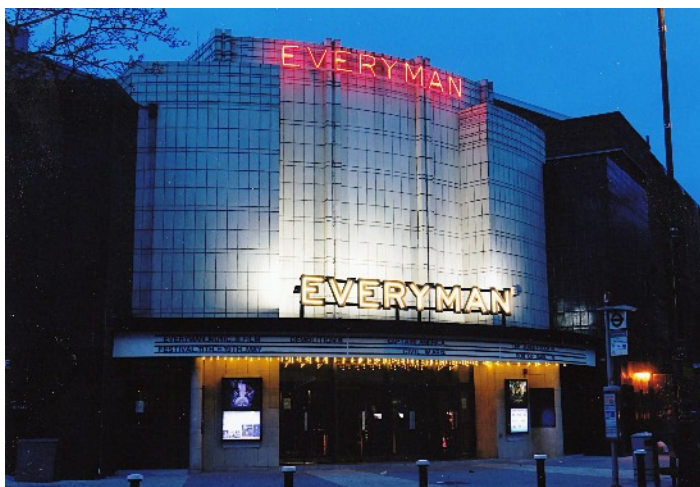
EVERYMAN CINEMA, MUSWELL HILL

By David Brown

It is necessary to correct the information included in the January/February 2017 Bulletin. All five screens did not open in November 2016; however, the Screen ① stalls area did reopen after extensive refurbishment and restoration of all the lighting facilities. Luxury seating and an impressive new access has been installed together with a new innovative projection facility. This was the first phase of the project, which provides an initial total of three screens including Screens ② and ③, which were the first to be refurbished with luxury seating. The additional two screen 'pods' are now being installed at the rear of Screen ①, strictly in accordance with English Heritage requirements, with completion planned for June 2017. The Screen ① front circle area will also be restored to use to provide further valuable seating and complete the overall effect.

A new bar and catering area now graces the inner foyer adjacent to Screens ① (stalls), ② and ③ entrances. The Screen ① (circle) lounge will be the access area for the new Screens ④ and ⑤ and is sched-

uled for refurbishment in due course. Everyman should be applauded for their extensive investment in this building and it is great to see the cinema entering an exciting new chapter of its life, following the depressing run-down 'UCL/Odeon blue period'. It should be mentioned that the additional two screens are vital for the continued viability of the operation and Everyman should be congratulated for their sensitive handling of the project. The accompanying photographs, taken in November 2016, clearly illustrate their commitment to the conservation of this unique building.



BLACKBURN CINEMAS

By Charles Morris

For the sake of historical accuracy, may I comment on the item in the last Bulletin under *Cinema News 50 Years Ago* – March concerning the Essoldo Blackburn? This building (the former Majestic, former Cotton Exchange) was renovated and reopened by Essoldo on Sunday 19 March 1967 and remained under that name and under Essoldo's ownership for the next five years. It did not become the Classic until that company took over Essoldo in April 1972.



The Classic Blackburn c1976

The renovation was one of Essoldo's earliest 1960s modernisations and the reopening, with *The Spy in the Green Hat*, took place on the day following their Royal cinema's closure after a fortnight's screening of *The Family Way*.

The Royal had been compulsorily purchased for the town centre redevelopment and this was a big blow to Essoldo, who had fought the purchase vigorously. The Royal was a former Northern Theatres property dating from 1937 (being a rebuild of a previous theatre / cinema on the site) and usually enjoyed the ABC release. In 1963 it achieved a box office record of £2,500 with *Summer Holiday*, starring Cliff Richard. (To put this in perspective, another Essoldo cinema, the Winter Gardens in Hoylake, Wirral, failed to achieve a weekly box office of more than £200 during the whole of 1963.)

Following Classic's acquisition of the Blackburn Essoldo, they attempted to dispose of the site to the Council and, when this failed, they tripled it in March 1976. It was subsequently leased to Unit Four cinemas in 1981, whence it became an Apollo cinema and closed in December 2005 following the opening of a Vue multiplex in the town. It is Grade II listed.

There were originally four other cinemas in the town centre: the Olympia and the Central (both closed in 1957), the Palace (a former theatre converted to a cinema in 1936, closed in 1957, reopened in 1960, closed again in 1964, reopened (circle) in 1975 and closed finally in 1984) and the Odeon, formerly Rialto, which closed in 1974. Further out of town there were the Savoy (closed 1957), the Ritz, former King's Hall (1958), the Victoria (1960), the Roxy, former Regent, (1961) and the Palladium and Alexandra (both closed in 1962), though the latter later showed Asian films (as did the Savoy after many years on bingo). The Empire at Ewood, another Essoldo and former Northern Theatres property, soon became an Asian cinema after the Classic takeover and is now a theatre. The Star cinema at Little Harwood closed in the early 1960s and became a club but reopened as an early Unit Four cinema in 1970 and lasted until 1982. The Vue is now the town's only cinema.



Four views of the Royal Blackburn

ABC HOME CINEMA IN BACK GARDEN

In *Internet Corner* in the Jan/Feb Bulletin we carried a link to a report in the national press about CTA member Anderson Jones, who has built a 34-seat replica ABC cinema in his back garden. Anderson has now sent some photos of his £70,000 cinema, which took 4½ years to build. He has been collecting cinema memorabilia since he was six years old and everything in the cinema has been reclaimed from cinemas; the red seats came from the ABC Hanley, which closed in 2000. Anderson got hold of some original ABC carpet but didn't have enough for his cinema, so he had to approach a company with samples of the carpet and they managed to make an exact copy. It set him back a few thousand pounds but he says it was "well worth it".



The building is 40ft long, 22ft wide and 20ft high and takes up half the garden of his semi-detached house near Stoke-on-Trent. It has a 17ft by 7ft screen, black and white old-style toilets and a concession stand. There is an Automaticket machine in the ticket office.

Anderson got an ABC uniform and an usherette's tray for his wife. The most recent addition is some functioning neon on the front of the building. A former kitchen fitter, Anderson did all the work himself. It is hoped a CTA visit can be arranged. If anyone has any ABC memorabilia, please contact Anderson at theabccinemastoke@gmail.com.



CAN YOU IDENTIFY THE MISSING MEMBERS ?



A CTA Group photo taken on the *East Meets West in Berlin* visit 3 April 1999.
Photographed by Neville Taylor on the steps of the Volksbühne in former East Berlin.

Back Row: Giles Woodforde, Paul Chadwick, [?], Jo Simmonds, Clifford Shaw, Grant Waglan, Bryan Eckersley, Davina Reynolds, Colin Jenner, [?], Phillip Ingleby, Richard Norman, Irving Mendelsohn, Peter Lawley, Jeremy Buck, Jeffrey Mackenzie, Allen Eyles, Roger Screen, Richard Gray, Tim Hatcher, Andrew Richardson.

Middle Row: Nick Taylor, John Benzing, Patricia McBride, Steve Locking, Ray Parry, Malcolm Davis, Graham Rumble, Dorothy Weise, Elizabeth Grayson, Colin Lund, [?].

Front Row: Pat Moriarty, Keith Addison, Patricia Moriarty, Michael Crowle, Ken Roe, Patricia Levy, Eileen Killey, David Simpson, Laury Reynolds.

CINEMASCOPE COMES TO BURNLEY

By Michael Harrison



A 1925 aerial shot of Burnley, showing the cinemas

During 1954 CinemaScope was starting to appear in cinemas around the country. In December it was announced that the **Palace**, which had been closed since the end of May, would be undergoing £20,000 worth of renovations. This would make the **Palace** Burnley's luxury cinema, with a complete refit including redecoration, new carpets, new seats and CinemaScope with a 45ft screen. The new owner was Mr Harry Buxton. The first film would be *King of the Khyber Rifles* and the opening day would be 27 December. Also at this time the nearby **Roxy** was also undergoing a transformation with a 32ft wide curved screen and the promise that CinemaScope would be installed in the very near future.

All this was to transform the balance of power in the Burnley town centre cinemas. Up to this the main cinemas were the **Odeon**, **Empire**, **Savoy** and the **Grand**. These were the cinemas that got first choice of releases with the **Palace** and **Roxy** left with the crumbs. With the **Odeon** having lost the chance because of the dispute with 20th Century Fox and the owners of the other three seemingly unwilling to take the chance, all the big films were now going to the **Palace** and the **Roxy**. This meant that the quality of films at the **Empire**, **Savoy** and particularly the **Grand** were not up to the usual standard, with re-releases and dubbed foreign films mainly filling the void.

The **Odeon** continued with the Rank release and the first CinemaScope film was advertised in April 1955. CinemaScope was not installed at the **Grand** or **Savoy** and they both closed during 1956. Meanwhile the **Empire** first advertised a CinemaScope film on 24 October, *The Interrupted Melody*. One website states the **Empire** closed for a time in 1955 but my research shows films advertised for every week of that year.

INTERNET CORNER

- ★ [\[www.itsaboutlincoln.co.uk/lincolns-lost-cinemas.html\]](http://www.itsaboutlincoln.co.uk/lincolns-lost-cinemas.html) Lincoln's Lost Cinemas.
- ★ [\[www.coxhoehistory.org/cinemas.html\]](http://www.coxhoehistory.org/cinemas.html) Coxhoe's Lost Cinemas [County Durham]
- ★ [\[tinyurl.com/l72yhfg\]](http://tinyurl.com/l72yhfg) A page on the Dacorum Heritage Trust website – 100 years of cinemas in Hemel Hempstead.
- ★ [\[railwaymaniac.com/2016/05/cinemas\]](http://railwaymaniac.com/2016/05/cinemas) Nottingham and its cinemas. *Above four items sent in by Gavin McGrath*
- ★ [\[tinyurl.com/l7tjxys\]](http://tinyurl.com/l7tjxys) A page from the USA Smithsonian Institute: *Movie Palaces Let Everyday Americans Be Royalty*, concentrating on the Mark Strand theater. *Sent in by Terry Hanstock*
- ★ [\[tinyurl.com/jaj9d2f\]](http://tinyurl.com/jaj9d2f) The 28dayslater urban explorers have been inside the **Paramount/Odeon** in Manchester, which is currently being demolished. Some interesting photos.
- ★ [\[tinyurl.com/mosdgpv\]](http://tinyurl.com/mosdgpv) Article from the *North West Evening Mail* about the background of operator Charles Morris and the **Roxy Ulverston**. *Sent in by Terry Hanstock*
- ★ tinyurl.com/z2vcnpx An article on the *Vox* website about film formats and projection – although it calls a projector a camera!
- ★ [\[mentmore.webplus.net/page27.html\]](http://mentmore.webplus.net/page27.html) Portsmouth's Lost Cinemas; has some photos and what was showing in 1953.

MAYFLOWER TOUR

By Ian Patterson

A REPORT OF A TOUR OF THE **MAYFLOWER** THEATRE, SOUTHAMPTON ORGANISED BY THE *SOUTHERN ECHO* ON 29 MARCH



I went round on this and spent a fascinating two hours. Although I have attended shows at this building since 1965, I learned a number of things that were new to me. The **Mayflower** (formerly the **Gaumont**) was built as the **Empire Theatre** in 1928 and at that time was the tallest building in Southampton. Many famous acts appeared there over the years including Gracie Fields, Gertrude Lawrence, Vera Lynn and Margot Fontaine; Laurel & Hardy appeared there in their last tour in 1950.

It was first used as a cinema in 1933 when it was acquired by the Gaumont Picture Corporation, eventually changing its name to **Gaumont**. It originally had a roof garden but this has since disappeared. When it was first built, the shore of Southampton water was much nearer. However much of the land was reclaimed in the 1930s due to the building of the New Docks.

The building has three levels – stalls, dress circle and balcony; its standing boxes are still in use today and are believed to be the only ones in use in this country. There are no pillars in the auditorium – the dress circle is supported by a huge iron beam that runs from one side of the building to another. In 1961 it was suggested that it should be turned into a joint tenpin bowling alley and dance hall and in 1970 proposals were made for a bingo hall. Both these ideas were shelved in the face of fierce public opposition. A further application for bingo was made in the early 1980s, which attracted a petition of 70,000 people against. The application was referred to the Secretary of State, who turned it down in 1984. Rank had said by that time that the building was unprofitable and was losing money.

Although in use as a commercial cinema for some years, it had always had some live performances, both professional and amateur. At that time films and live performances were approximately 50% equal. I have heard it said that the local amateurs kept the place going for years. It was finally sold by Rank and is now owned by a trust. It closed in the mid-1980s and reopened on 24 February 1987 as the **Mayflower**. A competition was run to choose a new name, which was won by a local lady. The previous name **Gaumont** would have been a registered trade mark and been retained by Rank. Ironically the opening show was *Peter Pan*, which was performed by a local amateur company.

It now premieres shows before they go to the West End but local amateur shows have now disappeared. Although not the largest building in Southampton, it is still the largest theatre building in the South of England. The theatre is due to close for three months next year for more improvements, although further details have not been announced. The foyer was completely renovated not long ago with large displays outside showing current and future productions. The exterior is very impressive, especially at night. It is highly recommended for a visit and would make an excellent venue for a CTA Annual General Meeting. The superb **O2 Guildhall** is within ten minutes' walk and the **Nuffield** is short bus ride away.

Photo taken May 2006 by Harry Rigby

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]

ABERDEEN

The downstairs bar at the Belmont Filmhouse closed on 28 March; the cinema remains open. The space is likely to be used as a function suite to increase revenue. {26736}

Press & Journal (Aberdeen) – 21 March

An application has been lodged to build a new seven-screen cinema with 800 seats as part of the redevelopment of the Bon Accord Centre. The £2.2m project was first approved three years ago.

Evening Express (Aberdeen) – 30 March

ALDEBURGH (Suffolk)

The Aldeburgh Cinema is to house a self-help area in the foyer to provide tourist information. It will include an interactive terminal for the public to use to access key tourist information websites. The Council closed the Tourist Information Centre last autumn.

East Anglian Daily Times – 18 March; sent in by Terry Hanstock

ALNWICK (Northumberland)

JD Wetherspoon has scrapped its plans to turn Alnwick's Corn Exchange into a pub, pulling out due to commercial reasons. However, the company says it is still keen to open in the town but no other sites are on the table at present. The 1862 building was used as a cinema in the early 20th Century.

Northumberland Gazette – 20 October; sent in by Gavin McGrath

AXBRIDGE (Somerset)

The 36-seat Roxy celebrated its tenth birthday on 10 March. The volunteer-run cinema is housed in the former Red Lion, a Georgian Coaching Inn. {49373}

Weston Mercury – 16 March

AYLESBURY (Bucks)



The original Odeon has been demolished. It opened in June 1936 and was tripled in August 1973. It closed in October 1999 when a new six-screen ABC (now Odeon) opened nearby. {24121}

Sent in by Martin Tapsell [photo]

AYR

The Gaiety Theatre has had a third of its funding cut. The operators have said there is a viable budget to the end of the 2017/18 pantomime season but they might have to close after that.

The Stage – 16 March; sent in by R David Simpson

BANBURY (Oxon)

Plans to turn the former Grand Theatre into flats have been approved by the Council, despite strong opposition from campaigners. See Casework p6 & also p18 last Bulletin. {27592}

The Stage – 23 March; sent in by R David Simpson



BARNESLEY (South Yorks)

The Council has pledged a further £70m on top of £50m already committed to a major revamp of the town centre. The Glass Works scheme is scheduled for completion in May 2020 and will include a thirteen-screen Cineworld. In 2014 Empire cinemas announced they were planning a multiplex on the roof of the Alhambra Centre; nothing further has been heard.

Yorkshire Post, Sheffield Star – 10 March; sent in by Carl Chesworth

BEESTON (Notts)

Broxtowe Borough Council is aiming to bring back a cinema to the town with a seven to eight screen "niche" cinema on the site of the former Fire Station. A cinema operator is said to be interested.

Nottingham Post – 27 March; sent in by Terry Hanstock

BIRKENHEAD (Wirral)



The former Essoldo/Classic/Cannon in Birkenhead has just had a new lease of life. Following closure as a cinema in 1990 it became a quasar centre followed by a carpet warehouse and then a nightclub under various guises. It has remained empty for the last couple of years after it was discovered to be a very large cannabis farm, for which the owner was jailed. It went to auction last July (price not known) and recently has had a coat of paint and re-opened again in February as another night club, *Marbella Mambo*. Incidentally the old ABC / Savoy around the corner, where the 'For Sale' boards have been taken down, is now looking a pretty forlorn sight.

Sent in by Alan Hodson [photo]

BIRMINGHAM (Central)

Last year a lamppost was erected outside the Electric cinema in Station Street, which the owner says has ruined the view of the façade for photographers. Now the Council is planning to hang advertising banners from the lamppost. The Council has been asked to move the lamppost just a few feet. The cinema's business rates have increased by 300%. {9559}

Birmingham Post – 23 March

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BIRMINGHAM (Sutton Coldfield)



Cinema-goers and staff had a fright when a woman accidentally reversed her car through bollards and into the front doors of the Empire at 2pm on 30 March. Emergency services were called but no-one was hurt. Staff joked that the grade II listed former Odeon nearly became a drive-in cinema! {15012}

Royal Sutton Coldfield Observer – 7 April; photo taken April 2007

BISHOP AUCKLAND (Durham)

The developer behind the cinema and leisure project at St Helens Auckland has said that construction is hoped to start this winter. A national cinema operator has been signed up and opening is scheduled for the end of 2018.

Northern Echo – 21 March

BLACKBURN (Lancs)

A new £6.5m eight-screen cinema is to be built on the former Waves Fun Centre in Nab Lane, which was demolished last year. It will be built by the Council and leased to a major independent operator for 20 years; four operators are in a competitive tendering process.

Lancashire Telegraph – 17 April; sent in by Philip Crompton

BORDON (Hants)

Plans have gone on show for the new town centre being developed on the former Prince Philip Barracks. It includes – yes, you've guessed again – an eight-screen cinema.

Bordon Messenger – 24 February, 5 March; sent in by Carl Chesworth

BOURNEMOUTH

The new ten-screen Odeon attracted more than 23,000 customers in its first week after opening on 10 February. {55149}

Daily Echo (Bournemouth) – 10 March

Permission to demolish most of the former Odeon [ex Regent / Gaumont] and replace it with a ten storey block has been rejected as “unacceptable”. A subsequent application for a fourteen storey block was also thrown out. {20081}

Bournemouth Advertiser – 16 March; Daily Echo (Bournemouth) – 4 April

BRADFORD (West Yorks)

A contractor has been appointed to build the 780-seat six-screen Light cinema at the Broadway Shopping Centre. Work to clear the area started in August last year and completion is scheduled for autumn or winter this year.

Telegraph & Argus (Bradford) – 3 March

BRIGHTON

Workers at the Duke of York's cinema went on strike on Saturday 18 March in a dispute over pay and union recognition. The workers are calling on Picturehouse, owned by Cineworld, to pay the living wage and recognise their chosen union. Staff at some other Picturehouse cinemas went on strike in February – see p27 last Bulletin.

The Argus (Brighton) – 7, 20 March; sent in by Barry Quinton

CAERNARFON (Gwynedd)

Work has started on the £4m extension to The Galeri. It will have two cinemas with 71 and 120 seats, freeing up the main 394-seat auditorium. Opening is scheduled for early summer 2018. The venue has recently celebrated its 25th birthday. {31746}

Daily Post (Wales) – 24 March

CANTERBURY (Kent)

The proposed multiplex at Kingsmead has had its number of screens cut from eight to six.

Canterbury Times – 12 April

CHESTER

The new Storyhouse was scheduled to open on 11 May. It features a library and a 100-seat 'boutique' cinema in a soundproof box in the shell of the original 1936 Odeon. A flexible 800/500 seat main theatre and a 150-seat studio theatre are housed in a brick and glass extension. Some photos can be seen on the *Chester Chronicle* website at [tinyurl.com/mog56mw].

Chester Chronicle – 7 March; sent in by Richard Lyons

DARTFORD (Kent)

Planning permission has been granted for four extra screens at the Showcase de Lux in the Bluewater Centre, taking the total to 17. One auditorium will have a large format XPlus screen and a Dolby Atmos sound system. All screens will have electric reclining seats. Work has already begun and is due for completion by Christmas. {24663}

News Shopper (Bromley) – 1 March; Gravesend Reporter – 2 March

DENHAM (Bucks)

The former Denham Film Studios are being redeveloped. Apartments in the grade II listed art deco HQ start at £350,000. Residents will be able to sit in the 1936 cocktail bar and visit the restored 32-seat cinema where directors like Steven Spielberg watched the first rushes of their films. Framed film posters line the corridors of the 49 one, two and three bedroom apartments, each named after Hollywood actors.

The Times – 10 March; sent in by Keith Bye

DEWSBURY (West Yorks)

The New Picture House cinema has moved to new premises. The community venture has been going since October 2012 when it occupied Yorkshire House but it has relocated to the upper floors above the Heron Foods supermarket in Church Street. It holds seats for over 60 people and is also home to artists' studios. It currently screens about three top films a month.

Dewsbury Reporter – 3 February; sent in by Gavin McGrath

DUDLEY

Campaigners striving to restore the Hippodrome have launched an appeal for £4,500 for a solicitor to help draw up plans. They can then be submitted to the Black Country LEP in a bid for funding.

Express & Star – 4 April; sent in by Ivan Harris

EDINBURGH (Central)



Pub operator JD Wetherspoon opened its new pub on 13 December. The company has spent £2.5 million developing the outlet in the former Caley cinema in Lothian Road. The pub is called *The Caley Picture House*. Films ceased in 1984 and the building was last used as a music venue; it is listed grade B. {23066}

Hospitality & Catering News – 12 December; sent in by Gavin McGrath; photo taken March 2004

EDINBURGH (Morningside)

A model of the Dominion has been made out of Lego. It uses 2,400 bricks and took several weekends to make. {23061}

Edinburgh Evening News – 27 February

ELY (Cambs)

The new six-screen 954-seat Cineworld was due to open on 12 May. Screen ③ has 155 seats.

Newmarket Journal – 16 March; sent in by Stewart Kidd

FROME (Somerset)

The Westway reopened as a three-screen cinema on 22 February. The operators are Pat and Beryl Scott, from the Ritz in Burnham-on-Sea. Tickets are priced at £4 and an intermission will be held between the trailers and the feature. [www.sandbcinemas.co.uk] {24700}

Somerset Live – 16 February

GIRVAN (Ayrshire)



The former Regal has been deemed structurally unsafe. It is not known when films ceased but it was latterly used as Vogue Bingo then Omega Bingo. The building has been empty for several years. {50825}

Ayr Advertiser – 14 March; photo taken August 2009

GREAT YARMOUTH (Norfolk)

Plans have been submitted to transform the Hollywood Cinema. The proposals include a new glass-clad restaurant at the front and a new bar and terrace on the first floor, overlooking the sea. The five-screen cinema will also have a major upgrade. The building dates from 1875 and was formerly the Royal Aquarium. The scheme will be self-funded by the owner, Peter Jay and the tenants. {17924}

Eastern Daily Press – 9 March; photo on front cover

GRIMSBY (North Lincs)

Plans have been unveiled for the Freshney Place development. They include [yes] a nine-screen cinema. An un-named operator is mentioned.

Cleethorpes Chronicle – 6 April; Grimsby Telegraph – 8, 12 April; sent in by Carl Chesworth

HAVERFORDWEST (Pembroke)

The developer behind the Slade Lane area proposals has announced that it has signed an agreement with Premier Cinemas to operate a five-screen cinema. Natural Resources Wales has objected to a rival development at Riverside, which also includes a cinema, as they consider the area to be a flood risk.

Western Telegraph (Pembroke) – 8 March; sent in by Carl Chesworth

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD (Herts)

The Cineworld at Jarman Park has had a full renovation, including a new 307-seat superscreen auditorium. The venue now has 17 screens (including an IMAX screen) and 1,788 seats. It is one of the five cinemas recently sold by Empire for £96m. {24766}

Herald Express (Hemel Hempstead) – 2 March; sent in by Carl Chesworth

HOVE (Brighton)

Hove has its first cinema since the 1970s. *Tom's Film Club* has recently started to curate a variety of movies to be shown at The Old Market.

The Argus (Brighton) – 8 February; sent in by Barry Quinton

HUCKNALL (Notts)

The owner of the Byron bingo says he may be forced to close after thieves ransacked the building for a second time on 24 March; it was also broken into in October last year. The thieves disabled the alarm system before taking £10,000 cash and damaging fruit machines. The bingo hall is in the stalls of the former Byron cinema, which closed in October 1967; there are attempts to reopen the circle cinema. {13428}

Nottingham Post – 31 March; sent in by Terry Hanstock

IPSWICH (Suffolk)

The new fourteen-screen Empire in the Buttermarket Centre opened on 31 March. It features luxury seating in all screens and the opportunity for customers to upgrade to a sofa or electronically-controlled recliners in its two biggest screens. All screens have laser projection; screen ① has a screen 20m by 8m and Dolby Atmos sound with 49 speakers. Meanwhile, the first floor area occupied by Starbucks at the Cineworld has closed and building work is going on; the cinema is remaining tight-lipped about what is happening.

Ipswich Star – 15, 31 March

KEIGHLEY (West Yorks)



The Picture House is having a spring clean. The façade has been washed down and white woodwork repainted. The roof of screen ② is being repaired, which means scaffolding over the frontage in due course. The 1913 sign will be restored.

Keighley News – 10 April; photo taken April 2010

KILKEEL (Co Down, Northern Ireland)



The Council is to consider the future of the grade II listed former Vogue. It opened in April 1940 with 490 seats in stalls and circle. It closed in September 2007 upon the retirement of the operator. The Police Service had been leasing the property but the lease expired in April last year and the building has come back into Council management. The CTA viewed the exterior in September 2014, when the above photo was taken. {18147}

Moume Observer & County Down News – 22 February

KIRKCALDY (Fife)

A planning application notice has been lodged for an eight-screen cinema on the site of the former swimming pool. The document only gives notice of the applicant's intention to seek major planning consent in the future. Previous plans have failed to come to fruition. An exhibition of potential designs produced an "overwhelming response" from the public.

Fife Free Press – 9, 30 March; Dundee Courier – 25 March

LEIGHTON BUZZARD (Beds)

Development of land south of the High Street could depend on whether a cinema operator is prepared to open up in town. The Town Council is contacting potential operators, which could be more boutique than mainstream. The town's last cinema, the Oriel, closed in 1972 and was demolished in 1985.

Leighton Buzzard Observer – 21 February

LIVERPOOL (Everton)



Proposals to refurbish the former Mere Lane Picture House and convert it into 45 one-bedroom apartments have been submitted to Liverpool City Council. If the plans are approved, a new build extension will also be added to the vacant site to house an additional nine one-bed flats. The venue opened in November 1916 and films ceased in September 1963. It has since served as a bingo parlour, a snooker hall and most recently a social club, which closed in 2007. {44867}

Your Move (Liverpool) – 13 April; photo taken July 2007

LIVERPOOL (Kirkby)

Reel is to operate a six-screen cinema on the former library site in Newtown Gardens. It is hoped to be open next year.

Liverpool Echo – 11 April

LONDON (Croydon)

Controversial plans to redevelop the Fairfield Halls have been approved, despite 381 objections from former staff and residents. The £30m scheme includes a revamp of the 1,800-seat concert hall and the demolition of a multi-storey car park to build 218 new homes, a college and art gallery. The charity that formerly ran the venue went bust last year, making 200 staff redundant – see p23 Bulletin 50/5.

The Stage – 2 March; sent in by Barry Quinton & R David Simpson

LONDON (Golders Green)



Notices have appeared on the grade II listed Golders Green Hippodrome announcing that the freehold, currently held by the El Shaddai International Christian Centre, is going to auction on 9 May. The charge has been brought by the Department for Communities and Local Government with a writ of possession granted by the High Court. It opened in December 1913 with 2,245-seats and equipped with a projection box. It was used by the BBC from 1969 until 2005 and is currently used as a church.

Ham & High – 9 March; sent in by Keith Bye; photo taken April 2006

LONDON (Haggerston)

Councillors have voted to delay a decision on whether to demolish the former Odeon Hackney Road and build housing. The cinema opened in July 1938 and films ceased in May 1961. It became a bingo hall, which closed in June 2015. {13886}

Hackney Gazette – 6 April; Hackney Citizen – 7 April; sent in by Tom Laughlan

LONDON (Hammersmith)

The Cineworld (ex ABC) was demolished in March. It had closed in April 2016. See p26 Bulletin 51/1. {3773}

Sent in by Ken Roe & Malcolm Gambles

LONDON (Kensington)

Campaigners opposed to the demolition of the former Odeon called for an emergency listing after the original 1920s interior was exposed during the works. Historic England defended its decision not to list the building, saying a Certificate of Immunity from Listing was in place until September 2018. Many of the features uncovered have been damaged by subsequent interior works. {13801}

Evening Standard – 2 March; Kensington & Chelsea News – 7 March; getwestlondon – 9 March; sent in by Keith Bye, Malcolm Gambles & Tom Laughlan

LONDON (Kentish Town)

The proposed cinema in the former Pizza Express building could be in doubt as the developer has put the whole site up for sale with the work unfinished. The site is shrouded in scaffolding with the words “Cinema Coming Soon”.

Camden New Journal – 2 March

LONDON (Peckham)



London's cheapest cinema, the six-screen PeckhamPlex faces being demolished for a new tower block. The cinema has said that it is willing to relocate if the Council provide it with an alternative home nearby. It opened in September 1994 in a former Sainsbury's supermarket. {21139}

Southwark News – 13 April; sent in by Keith Bye; photo taken September 2004

LONDON (Stoke Newington)



Plans have been announced to restore the former Savoy/ABC as an Arts Centre. It opened in October 1936 and closed in March 1977. It reopened as the Ace in March 1982 but closed in February 1984. The interior has been subdivided and today is home to a snooker club and a Turkish community association. The new plans hope to eventually bring back the single space. {14878}

Hackney Gazette – 6 April; sent in by Tom Laughlan; photo taken September 2004

LONDON (West End)

The Vue [ex Warner] in Leicester Square closed on 9 March for a major refurbishment – see p22 last Bulletin. Reopening is scheduled for “summer 2017”.

Sent in by Allen Eyles & Ken Roe



AMC is set to undertake a major refurbishment of the Odeon Leicester Square. Many have feared that the 1,683-seat auditorium and the Compton organ would be lost. However, AMC has allayed concerns and confirmed that the single screen and organ would be retained. The work will cost between £10m and £15m; no dates have been given. {841} *Photo taken April 2016.*

Variety – 11 April; sent in by Carl Chesworth, Raymond Dolling & John West

Last year it was feared that the Curzon Mayfair might have to close because of sound problems affecting new luxury flats to be built above it. A petition to save the cinema attracted over 27,000 signatures. Now the developer of the flats has asked Westminster Council for planning permission to install soundproofing. {7507}

West End Extra – 17 March; sent in by R David Simpson

MAESTEG (Bridgend)

Plans have been released for the modernisation of the Town Hall, a grade II listed building. They include a studio theatre space suitable for intimate live performances and digital cinema screenings.

Market Trader – 31 March; sent in by Hugh Sykes

MANCHESTER (Central)

Squatters have taken over the former Cornerhouse, vacant after it moved to HOME. They say they are not just using it as a place to eat and sleep but as their own arts space. They hope to put on film screenings, workshops and music events. The seats remain inside the venue but all equipment was removed. {2677}

Manchester Evening News – 22 March; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Nick Taylor

Vue is to take over the twenty-screen Odeon Printworks. The Competition and Mergers Authority said the site must be disposed of following AMC's takeover of Odeon last year. Odeon say that all 113 employees will be retained by Vue.

MEN website – 14 April; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Nick Taylor

MARGATE (Kent)

The famous vertical fin sign at Dreamland is being restored. Work on a historical lighting technique has enabled the original colours of the 1935 neon sign to be accurately replicated. Scaffolding has come down from the grade II* listed building and an official switch-on is planned. The search is on for an operator to run the Sunshine Café and bars.

Isle of Thanet Gazette – 10, 24 March; sent in by Margaret Burgoine

MONTROSE (Angus)

The team behind the project to put a cinema in the former swimming pool has sent out a DIY SOS to local tradesmen. They are being asked to sign up to a strip-out of the former pool; the date still has to be set. The project bought the building from the Council for £1. Several fundraising initiatives are to be launched to raise the £2m needed for the conversion.

Dundee Courier – 16 March; Evening Express (Aberdeen) – 17 March

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

Scaffolding from around the former Paramount/Odeon collapsed into the street about 11pm on 3 April. No-one was injured and the road was closed overnight to clear the debris. The Health & Safety Executive [HSE] stopped all work until an inspection was carried out. The cinema is currently being demolished – see p23 last Bulletin. {3307}

Northern Echo – 6 April; Evening Chronicle (Newcastle) – 13 April (and many others); sent in by David Alexander, Margaret Burgoine, Carl Chesworth & Hector Hill

NOTTINGHAM

Light Cinemas is to be the operator of a nine-screen multiplex at the Broadmarsh Centre.

Nottingham Post – 4 April; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Terry Hanstock

The world's smallest cinema, the 22-seat Screen 22 in Broad Street closed in April. The operator has decided not to renew the lease following a roller skating accident. {21757}

Nottingham Post – 27 March; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Terry Hanstock

OKEHAMPTON (Devon)

Planning permission has been approved for Merlin Cinemas to add a third screen at the Carlton; the seats have been ordered. The toilets will also be revamped. See p27 Bulletin 51/1.

Tavistock Times Gazette – 6 April; sent in by Carl Chesworth

OLDHAM (Greater Manchester)

The recently-opened seven-screen Odeon in the grade II listed former Town Hall has been shortlisted for five prestigious industry awards, including Project of the Year, in the 2017 Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors Awards North West. The winners were due to be announced on 19 May with all regional winners going to the grand final in October.

Oldham Evening Chronicle – 13 March; sent in by Carl Chesworth

PENARTH (Vale of Glamorgan)

The Pier Pavilion is to close its 69-seat cinema during the summer months and the rest of the building will only be open for four days a week. Questions are being asked about the management of the venue, which had a £4 Lottery funded restoration in 2013. {43429}

South Wales Echo, Penarth Times – 2, 11 March; sent in by Anthony Wills

PETERBOROUGH (Cambs)

Owners of the Queensgate Centre announced that Odeon would operate a planned eleven-screen cinema in the redeveloped centre. Now they have started talks with two other cinema operators; they say the move has been triggered by a change of ownership of Odeon, which was acquired by AMC last year. Problems getting an agreement could delay the cinema by three months.

Evening Telegraph (Peterborough) – 6 April

PORTSMOUTH

The former Odeon cinema in London Road, North End, has been earmarked for development. The Andrew Mather designed Odeon opened in 1936 and closed in January 2008 when Odeon sold on the ninety-nine year lease. A Sainsbury's Local now occupies the long entrance foyer and will remain but the rest of the building, which has remained empty since closure, will be demolished to make way for 15 homes – a mix of one to four bed town houses and flats – and 23 car parking spaces. The building is on a large plot of land, which once contained a cinema car park for a hundred cars. Before the cinema closed, though, the car park was closed and part of it was fenced off as it was not to be included in the 2008 sale of the lease. Until the plans are published it is unclear whether this area of the car park, now overgrown and derelict, with a burnt-out car visible from the road, is to be included in the new development.

The News (Portsmouth) – 7 March; Portsmouth View – 10 March; sent in by Mike Whitcombe

RAMSGATE (Kent)

JD Wetherspoon has confirmed that the new pub in the former Royal Victoria Pavilion will open on 29 August and not 18 July, as previously announced. The delays are due to bad weather and renovation of the grade II listed building taking longer than expected. A fire on a fork-lift truck on site in April did not hinder the work. {43938}

Thanet Gazette – 31 March, 7 April; sent in by Margaret Burgoine

RHYL (Denbigh)

Rhyl Little Theatre has teamed with Wicked Wales to launch Wicked Cinema / Cidwm Sinema – an affordable pop-up community cinema run by volunteers. The volunteers include young people from the FHW-supported Young Programmers Network. It will be the first time the theatre has screened films in over 50 years.

Film Hub Wales Press Release – April; sent in by Allen Eyles

SCARBOROUGH (North Yorks)

The company behind the new seven-screen Light multiplex at North Bay has objected to the recently submitted five-screen cinema plans at Newborough. The grounds for objection are loss of office space, parking and transport issues. The groups behind both bids separately indicated that Scarborough could not support two cinemas. However, the Council looks set to give approval to both cinema plans. Work had

already started on the former but was halted when a live electric cable was found running through the site. The Newborough developer has been told that archaeological excavations will be needed to safeguard an ancient burial ground.

Scarborough News – 9 March, 6, 13 April; Yorkshire Post – 13 April

SHEFFIELD



The new nine-screen 952-seat Light cinema at The Moor officially opened on Good Friday 14 March, although there were preview screenings the day before. Seats in the auditoria range from 170 to 51. {55430}

The Star (Sheffield) – 4 April; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Stuart Smith [photo]

More than 500 people have signed a petition calling for the Library Theatre to be retained. There are proposals to create a five-star hotel. The Council has admitted that the 260-seat art deco theatre may not feature in a redeveloped building.

Sheffield Telegraph – 23 February; sent in by Hugh Patching

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA (Essex)



The New Empire (ex Rivoli/ABC) has been demolished. Films ceased in January 1988 and it reopened as a live theatre later that year. Ten years later, the landlord called in the Bailiffs over non-payment of rent. In July 2015 the derelict building was badly damaged by a fire. It was bought by an unidentified Hong Kong company last year.

Southend Echo – 6 March; sent in by Paul Bland, Raymond Palmer & David Simpson [photo]

STAFFORD

Proposals to demolish the former Express & Star offices in Bridge Street and build a six-screen 800-seat Odeon have been approved by the Council. Diggers have already moved onto the site. The cinema is expected to be handed over in March 2018.

Express & Star – 23 February; Staffordshire Newsletter – 21 March; sent in by Carl Chesworth, Ivan Harris & Allan Pointon

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON (Warks)

The building that will house the new Everyman has been handed over for fitting out. The cinema is due to open in June.

Stratford-upon-Avon Herald – 9 March

TUNBRIDGE WELLS (Kent)

New plans for the development of the site of the former Essoldo/ABC have been unveiled. They include a boutique cinema.

Kent & Sussex Courier – 24 March; sent in by Carl Chesworth

WAKEFIELD (West Yorks)

Council plans to sell the £3m Market Hall to developers who want to build a nine-screen The Light cinema have been greeted with disdain by local residents. There is a twelve-screen Cineworld less than a mile away.

Wakefield Express – 10 March

WELLINGTON (Shropshire)

The Clifton Arts Community Centre say they are preparing to apply for a five-year lease on a former HSBC bank in Station Approach to convert it into an 80-seat cinema. Their ultimate aim is to raise £500,000 to reopen the former Clifton.

Shropshire Star – 4 March

WESTON SUPER MARE (North Somerset)

The cinema space in the Dolphin Square development is due to be handed over to Cineworld in June. An eight-screen cinema with 1,572 seats is planned.

Somerset Live – 24 February

WOLVERHAMPTON

An artist's impression of the proposed Westside development has been released. It will feature a twelve-screen cinema; no operator has been named. See p26 Bulletin 50/6.

Staffordshire What's On – 1 April

WORTHING (West Sussex)

Some more information to supplement the item on p25 of the last Bulletin. The single-screen Connaught Studio has undergone a major refurbishment. The auditorium, originally opened in October 1916 as a theatre, was on one level without a rake. It had a seating capacity of 250 with the projection box extending over seats at the rear third of the auditorium. A new drop wall from the front of the projection box now closes this rear section off from the auditorium with a bar occupying the space. Inside the reduced auditorium a 'balcony' has been built. Thirteen steps lead to this area, which has five rows of seats that can accommodate 86 patrons. Four rows of 'stalls' seating (70 seats in total) remain between the balcony and the screen. A new surround sound system generously donated and fitted by Bowers and Wilkins [B&W] has also been installed. The new-look screen opened at the end of February 2017.

Friends of Worthing newsletter; sent in by Mike Whitcombe

Worthing Council is planning to increase the budget for Worthing Theatres (which operate the Assembly Hall, Connaught Theatre and Studio and the Pavilion Theatre) by £160,000 to £1.58 million next year, even though the theatres are expected to overspend by £132,000. Since 2013/14 revenue from the theatres has increased by £800,000 or 38%. Money taken from films increased from £396,000 to £656,000 with revenue from comedy shows rising from £72,000 to £272,000. The recent Christmas panto *Peter Pan* was another success with net income after costs totalling £180,000, up £86,000 on the previous year.

Worthing Journal – March; sent in by Mike Whitcombe

NEW PRAISE FOR CIRCUIT HISTORIES

"After being involved in the UK film industry for so long I can't quite break the habit of buying cinema books, but there are surprisingly few interesting ones appearing now... But here are a few from past and present which are worth reading [including:] ... For your inner geek may I recommend Odeon Cinemas by Allen Eyles, Vols 1 & 2; while it might appear these fell from Arthur Bryant's bookshelf, they are charming reminders of how these stunningly designed English cinemas were once regarded as futuristic palaces of dreams, constituting an entire artistic movement in themselves. The many photographs are particularly glorious."

www.christopherfowler.co.uk/blog/2017/04/05/unusual-cinema-books

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.

50 YEARS OF THE CTA

50 years is a long time for an Association to keep going these days but we are lucky, as members of the Cinema Theatre Association, to have two very fine publications: *Picture House* and *The Bulletin* printed most professionally for us – a great credit to all concerned. Visits and Archive also. Whether interested in the 'back street' silent kinemas or the fabulous art deco super cinemas or the digital auditoria of today, it's all there for us to enjoy and long may it do so. Congratulations.

Hugh Sykes

50 YEARS AGO DATE CORRECTION

My movie diary for 1967 states: Thurs 5 Jan, Royal World Première of *A Countess from Hong Kong* at the **Carlton Theatre**, Haymarket at 8:45. I was there. I got a programme (full of ads) and saw Charlie Chaplin, Sophia Loren and Marlon Brando. I've seen many stars in my life but to see Chaplin has always been the highlight of my movie life; it's a 'hairs on the back of your neck rising' moment in the life of a movie-goer. I will never forget the night. In your January list you state the date as 10th; just writing to correct it to 5 January – because I was there.

John Popey

Editor's Note: Some of the dates came from *Kine Weekly* so we may have inadvertently printed the date of publication rather than the actual date of the première. If you spot any more mistakes like this, please let us know.

FINDING THE FOUNDER

When multiplexes first burst onto the scene, I was working at a traditional High Street cinema. I remember our manager telling us that 'plexes would change forever the way we watch our movies. He claimed seats would be sumptuous, that picture and sound quality would be outstanding and that 'plexes, with their numerous screens, would offer a diversity of films that poor old two or three screen converted cinemas could not. This last claim has never really come true as Martin Tapsell highlighted in bulletin Vol 51 No 2, when he described his attempt to see *The Founder* starring the ever-intense Michael Keaton. Like Martin, I had to work hard at seeing this movie. My local multiplex, a Vue, showed little interest in screening it and I had to wait several weeks before my wife and I could finally see it on a Sunday lunchtime at our local single-screen arthouse cinema, the **New Park** in Chichester. Michael Keaton, as usual, was intensely captivating in a movie that was worth the admission fee. Unfortunately, the film's lack of superheroes or space aliens intent on destroying earth yet again probably explains why most 'plexes seemed reluctant to give this small budget flick a run. And that really is a shame. Cinema chains obviously want to make as much profit as possible but if they have a site with, say, ten screens would it kill them to have one exclusively for more thoughtful or quirky fare? The only multiplex I enjoy visiting (despite it being forty odd miles from me) is the recently opened ten-screen **Odeon** in Bournemouth. On 18 March they were showing twelve films – but seven of those films were for kids and were being screened just once before lunch. This meant that for the bulk of the day, just four films were running in the ten screens. *Beauty and the Beast*, that week's big release, was showing nineteen times during the course of the day! Demand for the film was huge but 19 times in one day! Multiplexes have revolutionised cinema-going but with a little more effort they might actually show films we really want to see.

Mike Whitcombe

THE WEE PICTURES, CAMPBELTOWN

The March/April issue has arrived and looks full of interesting news as usual. However, one item on page 19 caught my attention: the contributor has got the story round the wrong way, a mercury arc rectifier will be displayed in the former entrance foyer (not the new foyer) and not an old projector, so the local *Campbeltown Courier* did print the correct picture. The cinema, built in 1913, upgraded in the atmospheric style in 1935 by the same architect (Albert V Gardner – a Glasgow architect with several cinemas to his name), is now heading towards the completion of a £3.5 million restoration and expansion, with a second screen built in ground at the rear of the **Picture House** and a new foyer/café in adjacent buildings. Some images and information are available on the website: [www.campbeltownpicturehouse.co.uk].

Ron Inglis Project Manager, The Centenary Project

CHELTENHAM SILVER LADIES

The Celluloid Ladies

This relief sculpture depicting two female figures entwined in celluloid film was originally located on the front of the Odeon cinema in Winchcombe Street.

The sculpture was designed by Newbury Abbot Trent (1885–1953), a respected English sculptor who studied at the Royal College of Art and Royal Academy Schools where he became an associate.

These two film-entwined ladies are constructed out of individual large blocks of stone and they were originally built into the front elevation of the 1932 Art Deco style Odeon cinema. The cinema was demolished in 2014 to make way for a new housing and retail development.

The Public Art Panel and Cheltenham Borough Council were keen to preserve the sculpture which was rescued during demolition. The Brewery Quarter, where Cheltenham's modern multi-screen cinema is now located, offered to give the ladies a new home and they were restored stone-by-stone and installed in August 2015.

Further to the pieces on these bas-reliefs and the subsequent explanatory plaque, I have now had a chance to look at the text. It concentrates on the sculptural aspects and by-passes the original cinema. Its architect WE Trent is not named but the sculptor, Newbury A Trent, his cousin is. A missed opportunity?

Tim Sedgwick-Jell

PRESENTATION

David A Ellis' letter on Presentation in the last issue was 'spot on'. The art of showmanship displayed by cinema and theatre managements no longer survives in the form it once did. In my youth, it was the practise at the Birmingham Stockland Green Plaza for the festoon tabs to open and close each film and every complete show was marked by the operation of the front plum coloured tabs. This pattern was replicated elsewhere in my experience.

The same indolent exercise that Mr Ellis complained about exists in most theatres. The use of tabs has been largely abandoned so it is possible to enter the auditorium and see a set open to view instead of it being concealed, which is rather like receiving an unwrapped birthday present. The build-up of excitement was heightened by the full illumination of the footlights, the opening music and the rising of the house tabs in full light to reveal the set. Now the house lights are dimmed and actors wander on. If tabs are used they rise in complete darkness, which kills any anticipation. There is no more dramatic ending to a production than by lowering the tabs. Instead the stage lights are extinguished and lit again for 'curtain calls' before the cast saunter off into the wings which is a great anti-climax to the production. One can only assume that the present generation accept the status quo as they know nothing different. My apologies for using 'rude' words like house tabs and footlights! Whatever came over me?

Ted Bottle

Further to David Ellis' letter about presentation, I agree with every word of it. The industry is falling down on presentation. Years ago cinema managers used to dress up as characters from the films they were showing and cinema foyers and exteriors showed lavish cut-outs of the films. Think of the 1960s and how *Ben Hur* and *Cleopatra* were presented. Since then, cinemas have dropped local press advertising (said to be because of cost), cut out cinema stills (although rumour has it that the stills company went out of business). Local shops and hairdressers used to carry adverts for local cinemas. This has also been abandoned. Poster advertising still exists on large posters, on the side of buses and bus shelters but not showing specific cinemas. The presentation at the newly opened **Showcase** cinema in Southampton has the odd poster but is dwarfed by the large foyer. The answer you get these days if you enquire about a film is "Check on the Website". However not everyone has (or wants) a computer. The **Mayflower Theatre** in Southampton is a good example of how to present a product with excellent external displays. See p21.

Ian Patterson

VISIT REPORTS

Whilst visiting the newly-opened Curve arts centre in Slough, I noticed the promised three paving stones from the Granada Path of Fame have finally appeared in the garden there, over seven months late. The stones are Sabu, Sally Gray and Leslie Banks. They have a Perspex covering, which I hope is strong as children were jumping on them.

Whilst visiting Ealing on 31 March I noticed that a small pop-up cinema had opened on the site of the former ABC, showing a mixture of films in repertory, including *La La Land*.

R David Simpson

PETERBOROUGH

On p29 of the last Bulletin, Edward Huggins enquires if there is a 'John Maltby' photographic record of the Odeon/Broadway cinema in Peterborough. Yes there is; it is held by Historic England [previously National Monuments Records]. Their phone number is 01793 414622 and they will send an application form and price list.

Martin Lightfoot

HELP WANTED

Talking Pictures TV is looking to film some 'talkies' with people who used to work in the film industry. From cinema owners, projectionists and usherettes to make-up, wardrobe and other studio rôles. Were you an extra on a big classic or did you tear a ticket when a big star visited your cinema? If this was you and you would like to share some of your memories with us, please get in touch by phone, email or post, whichever is easiest. The address is Renown Pictures, PO Box 592, Kings Langley, WD4 4DB

tel: 01923 290555; website [www.renownfilms.co.uk]

MISCELLANY

IS THIS A RECORD?

The film *Man Down* starring Shia Labeouf set a box office low record at the beginning of April. In its only UK showing (at the Reel Cinema Burnley) it sold only one ticket and took just £7 over the weekend of 1/2 April.

Metro – 6 April; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Anthony Wills

VIRTUAL DRIVE-IN CINEMA

Work is due to begin on an "immersive" attraction for the Disney Corporation in Nashville, Tennessee. From the outside, the August Moon drive-in will resemble a white dome, rising in the shadow of the local football stadium. Inside, in front of a big screen, classic cars will be parked in rows on a grassy field. Patrons will leave their real cars outside and walk in to find the artificial sky steadily darkening over 45 minutes. On the inside of the dome would be projected a setting sun. The cinema will seat 350 and should be open next year.

The Times – 8 February; sent in by Keith Bye

TOILET HUMOUR LACKING



The cinema in the Barbican Centre has introduced "gender neutral" toilets. Labelled "gender-neutral with urinals" and "gender neutral with cubicles", the move caused crowding in the latter facility. Patrons, especially women, have complained about the change.

Evening Standard – 5 April; sent in by R David Simpson; photo taken April 2013

CINEMA BUSINESS

CINEWORLD

Cineworld plans to open 40 new multiplexes with 441 screens in a move that will create 1,000 new jobs over four years; six cinemas are expected to open in 2017. Revenue jumped 13% to nearly £800m last year with audience numbers topping 100 million. Ticket prices increased 2% last year to a UK average of £6.25. The chain also has cinemas in Poland and Israel; the average ticket price outside the UK is £3.65.

Daily Mail, Daily Telegraph, Daily Record, cityam – 10 March;
sent in by Keith Bye, Carl Chesworth & Barry Quinton

NORTH DEVON

On p27 of the last Bulletin we reported that North Devon Theatres Trust had gone into administration and that the Landmark in Ilfracombe and the Queens in Barnstaple had closed, with all future shows being cancelled. Now North Devon Council has taken back control of the two theatres and is looking to reopen them as soon as possible.

The Stage – 23 March; sent in by Barry Quinton & R David Simpson

AMC BUYS NORDIC

AMC Entertainment Holdings, the world's largest movie exhibitor, has bought Stockholm-based Nordic Cinema Group for US\$ 651.9 million. Nordic had 68 theatres with 463 screens and about 68,000 seats. It will operate as a subsidiary of Odeon Cinemas, which AMC acquired last year. AMC has now hit the milestone of over 1,000 theatres and 11,000 screens across the globe.

AMC Press release – 28 March; sent in by Carl Chesworth

PICTUREHOUSE BOYCOTT

Sir Ian McKellan, Sir Patrick Stewart, Susan Sarandon and Ken Loach are among 25 actors and screenwriters who have signed a letter backing the boycott of Picturehouse Cinemas nationwide. Part of the document reads, "We find it disappointing they fail to pay your lowest paid staff the living wage." Picturehouse Cinemas replied, "For many years we have paid well above the minimum wage." Five Picturehouse cinemas in London were planning to strike on 15 April.

Eastern Daily Press – 23 March; sent in by Barry Quinton;
BBC TV News – 14 April; sent in by R David Simpson

PARAMOUNT

The London Paramount resort in Kent is set to open in 2022. This is the third time the launch date has been put back. Planning permission for building on the Swancombe peninsula was expected to be applied for in 2015 but it is now likely to be this year. The Chief Executive stepped down in February days after questions were raised about one of its Chinese Investors. The £3.2bn Park hopes to rival Disneyland with more than 50 rides, a nightclub and a 2,000-seat theatre. It is estimated that 33,000 jobs will be created. Tickets are expected to cost £57 for a one-day entry.

Dartford and Swanley News Shopper – 21 February, 15 March; sent in by Reg Larkman

EVERYMAN BACK IN THE BLACK

Everyman Cinemas reported a 45% jump in sales to £29.6m last year; profits of £540,000 were declared. Box-office admissions were up 40% to 1.7 million. The group now has 20 cinemas.

Daily Telegraph – 14 March; sent in by Carl Chesworth

IMAX TO SPREAD ACROSS EUROPE

IMAX has struck a deal to more than double the number of its large screens in European cinemas run by the continent's biggest operator. AMC, which owns Odeon, among other brands, plans to create 25 new IMAX theatres over the next three years, about ten of which will be in the UK.

BBC Teletext – 11 April; sent in by Barry Quinton

GAUMONT SELLS

French mini-major Gaumont is to sell its 34% stake in Les Cinémas Gaumont Pathé, one of Europe's biggest cinema theatre chains, to fellow shareholder Pathé in a deal worth €380 million. Gaumont's exit from Les Cinémas Gaumont Pathé ends a 16-year partnership with Pathé on the theatre circuit. The chain is France's biggest and also operates in the Netherlands, Switzerland and Belgium, comprising 108 theatres and 1,076 screens.

Variety – 1 March; sent in by Bob Bradshaw

OBITUARIES

SIR GERALD KAUFMAN 86



Gerald Kaufman was born in Leeds, the seventh and youngest child of Louis, a tailor, and his wife Jane, Jewish refugees who had escaped the pogroms in Poland to settle in Yorkshire. Gerald won a scholarship from his primary school to the fee-paying Leeds grammar school. He won a scholarship to Queen's College, Oxford, where he read philosophy, politics and economics and chaired the University Labour Club. He fought and lost his first parliamentary election in 1955, against Harold Macmillan. He was also defeated in 1959 at Gillingham, before finally achieving election in 1970 to the safe inner-city Manchester seat of Ardwick and subsequently Gorton from 1983. He held the seat until his death, winning a 24,000 majority in the 2015 general election, after which he became Father of the House, the MP with the longest unbroken service. He was knighted in 2004. Gerald dated his love for the cinema from being taken to see Disney's *Three Little Pigs* cartoon at the Rialto, Briggate as a child in Leeds and he became a notable film buff, with a particular enthusiasm for musicals. He had been a patron of the CTA for 30 years.

The Guardian – 27 February

I thought you might like this photograph taken in the projection room in Birkenhead Town Hall in 2000. Sir Gerald was attending a special screening for the Futurist Cinema Company, arranged through the Hamilton Quarter. He was the guest speaker to talk about cinema and his book *My Life in the Silver Screen*. The other gentleman next to Sir Gerald was Mike Groves from the cinema company.

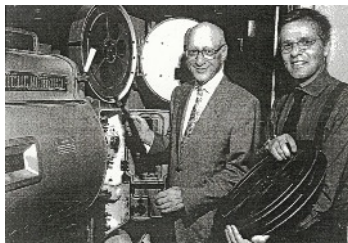


Photo courtesy of RT Quayle ABIPP (supplied to the PPT North West)

Mike Taylor, PPT North West

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

NEVILLE PARRY 84



Neville Parry, who retired in 2014 but continued to work for a few hours every Monday at Aldeburgh Cinema, died after being taken ill on Saturday 18 February. He left school at 14 for a job at the Playhouse in Felixstowe, before moving across town to the Ritz cinema. After being rejected by the RAF due to his height, he travelled to Australia and sold Wurlitzer jukeboxes for three years, until returning home and marrying Jean – an usherette he met in Felixstowe. For many years, he combined driving ambulances with working as a projectionist in the evenings, before taking a more permanent rôle at Aldeburgh Cinema, aged 64.

East Anglian Daily Times – 21 February [tinyurl.com/j75l5n7]; sent in by Terry Hanstock

Editor's Note: I met Mr Parry in February 2000 when I turned up at the Aldeburgh Cinema unannounced. He kindly showed me round and stayed back to put the lights up to allow me to photograph the auditorium. The newspaper link above contains a short video.

NECROLOGY

ROBERT DAY 94

Robert worked his way up from a clapper boy to a director, responsible for such films as *Two Way Stretch* with Peter Sellers and *The Rebel* with Tony Hancock [see below]. He made his directorial debut with *The Green Man* and oversaw five *Tarzan* films.



ALEC McCOWEN 91

Alec was a distinguished actor on stage, television and film. His screen debut came in 1953's *The Cruel Sea* and he made his mark in *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner*. He also appeared in Hitchcock's *Frenzy*, among others.



ALAN SIMPSON 87

Together with Ray Galton, Alan Simpson helped define the tone of television comedy for 20 years with Hancock's *Half Hour* and *Steptoe and Son*. Both series spawned feature films; Hancock's *The Rebel* and two about *Steptoe and Son*.



JEAN FREEMAN 81

Probably best known as the redoubtable café owner Ivy in Roy Clarke's *Last of the Summer Wine*, Jean appeared in 274 episodes over its 37-year run. Her few film appearances included *Scrubbers* (1982) directed by Mai Zetterling.



TIM PIGOTT-SMITH 70

Tim passed away less than a month after he was made an OBE for services to drama. He was in *The Jewel in the Crown* and *Downton Abbey* on ITV. His first film appearances was *Aces High* in 1976.



All from The Stage & Daily Express; sent in by Barry Quinton

ARCHIVE

ARCHIVE ENQUIRIES

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

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

ARCHIVE OPPORTUNITIES

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

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

HELP THE ARCHIVE IDENTIFY CINEMAS

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

SENDING DONATIONS BY POST OR EMAIL

We are always keen to receive donated material and can accept this in different formats. Of course, we always prefer to have originals. If however you cannot part with the material, then we are happy to accept scanned material or copies of your digital photographs.

Please let me know before sending donations by post and do not send them directly to the archive as there is no facility to accept post securely. Please send items c/o 14 Ivychurch Gardens, Cliftonville, Margate, CT9 3YG. Small quantities of scanned material or digital photographs can be emailed to [archive@cta-uk.org].

Clive Polden, CTA Archivist

London's West End Cinemas

by Allen Eyles with Keith Skone.

Large format paperback, 210 pages, fully illustrated with over 400 pictures, including 71 in colour.

Special price to members – £20.00 + £3 postage.



This is a redesigned and much enlarged third edition of a book not available for more than 20 years, fully updated by its original author, Allen Eyles. It is a complete record of all the cinemas that have entertained picture-goers in the West End from 1906 to 2013. There are maps, appendices of club cinemas and theatres as temporary cinemas as well as a name index.

Published in collaboration with English Heritage.

MEMBERSHIP

NEW MEMBERS

We have been pleased to be able to send a warm welcome to the following new members of the CTA: David Adrian Sykes, Mark Soulsby, Swindon Interiors, Nuneaton Local History Group and Robert de Ste. Croix.

DONATIONS

Our most grateful thanks are extended to the following renewing members who added a donation to the annual subscription:

DA Abbott, I Bacon, J Barber, WA Bates, PT Bayley, P Beresford, AS Booth, DP Brown, B Campbell, M Carte, T Chapman, PJ Chester, J Clarkson, P Cooper, GE Cranch, DG Daykin, L Deacon, MS Derriman, B Eckersley, WJ Elliott, ET Faulkner, PJA Ferrari, R Findlay, RJ Fox, PH Garrick, GC Gibson, A Goodwin, E Griffiths, RP Hagon, W Hallowell, P Hamer, GF High, A Hodson, SA Jarvis, CR Jennings, K Johnston, SB Kay, M King, JM Knight, RC Lobb, PV Marie, RL Maudsley, AE McCann, TD Mills, RM Paddock, N Pemberton, JW Perkins, RP Pilbeam, JE Pilblad, JE Prickett, DP Rees, NJ Ruben, JM Seligmann, BW Simpson, GM Staples, JM Sturdy, RJ Tite, MJ Vickers, B Wakefield, PJ Walters, DA Warner, AJ Weise, GJ Wheeler, RE Williams, DR Williams, TK Williams, DB Williams, D Williamson, J Wootton, CT Wright and MJ Yallop

IN MEMORIAM

With sadness as the news has only recently reached us, we record the passing of the following members of the Association. Alison, Associate member and wife of member Andy Maltby of Bourn, Cambridgeshire, passed away in September 2016 at the age of 61. Alison joined the CTA in 2008. Ian Dennis Bird of Stratford-on-Avon died in July 2016, aged 81. He joined CTA in 1997.

Neville C Taylor, Membership Secretary

RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY

In connection with a proposed feature on the Odeon (ex-Paramount) Manchester in *Picture House*, the Editor (Allen Eyles) requires a list week by week of the films shown from opening in October 1930 to December 1939. The research will need to adhere to a particular format and be supplied as a Word document, ideally by August this year. The research could be done in Manchester or in the British Library at St Pancras in London or at Boston Spa (near Wetherby) West Yorkshire. Name credit will be given for the completed work.

If interested, please contact Allen Eyles at [allen@aeyles.plus.com] or by phone: 01444 455 763.

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

FOR SALE: Archivist disposing of a few ultra-rare pre-war copies of *Kine Weekly* also *Mercia Cinema Society* publications and similar. Detailed lists on receipt of SAE.

D Ryder, 24 Edwin Avenue, Guiseley, LEEDS, LS20 8QJ



WILF GOES INTO BATTLE

By Wilf Watters

Just a note to correct my last article. There must be more towns and villages with more than two cinemas standing! Just look at Deal, on the Kent coast, it has four old cinemas still there, three of which could be brought back into cinema use without too much alteration.



The Seniac / Hollywood / Abbey Theatre in Battle

This time I'm looking for old cinemas in very different occupation. Starting at Battle in East Sussex, this one called the Seniac hasn't been noticed as it was a very independent concern. The front and foyer were for two hundred years the village lock-up. Then in 1936 the auditorium was added and the name changed to Hollywood Cinema then it became known as the Abbey Theatre, despite not having plays due to the very shallow screen area and it being very near the famous Norman Abbey. For years it served the village of Battle helped by the fact that British and Canadian troops were stationed in the Abbey. The cinema closed in May 1967 because the owner wanted to retire. In August 1999 it was taken over by the auctioneers Burston & Hewett and for the last few years has been opened for auctions once a month. Visiting recently I noticed that most of the seats were still there, minus



The screen end of the former Abbey Theatre Battle



Three views inside the former Abbey Theatre in Battle, now used as an auctioneers

the ashtrays originally mounted on the backs of them. Even the original carpet was in place, very worn, down to the floorboards and I think they have restored the main overhead light fitting. I was told that films were sometimes shown there but I don't believe it. The carpet is so worn and is a health hazard – goodness knows how many bugs live there. I asked an assistant if he could take me up into the projection room but he said that nobody goes up there and you have to climb a ladder outside; I looked for this but there was no ladder! Well worth a visit. Battle station is very near.



The former Bijou / Red Lantern in Herne Bay

Next we move onto Herne Bay in Kent. Here the main building is very prominent in the High Street. This was the Cinema de Luxe, opening in August 1911 then it became the Bijou Theatre in 1912. It was the Red Lantern from 1926 to closure in 1937. Today it still proudly displays the name **PICTURES** and it's open every day with furniture and collectable items on show. Inside there isn't too much to reveal its cinema origins, but it's still worth a look. Union cinemas acquired the cinema in 1936; it closed for the winter of 1937 and never opened again.

Just along the same High Street can be found a Tandoori shop. This was the Paragon and was a very early closure; in fact it closed during the First World War and the building was taken over by very many businesses. If you slide into the back gardens of the building the main auditorium can be seen. It measured 100ft by 18ft. Picture-goers in Herne Bay now have the Kavanagh cinema built into a Civic Centre. It has two screen and shows new releases.

Thanks to my sources:
Cinema Treasures and
Martin Tapsell's books on Kent.



The exterior and rear auditorium of the former Paragon in Deal

