

50
years

CINEMA
THEATRE
ASSOCIATION

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BULLETIN

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The Everyman [ex Plaza] at Oxted (Surrey), which is to become a three-screen venue; photo taken April 2004



The new Depot cinema at Lewes (East Sussex), which we will be visiting in August; photos by Allen Eyles

FROM YOUR EDITOR

It was good to meet some of you at the AGM at the Memo in New-bridge. What a marvellous restoration they have done. Mike has done a report for us with some pictures. By the time you read this, I will have met some more of you on the Brixton visit.

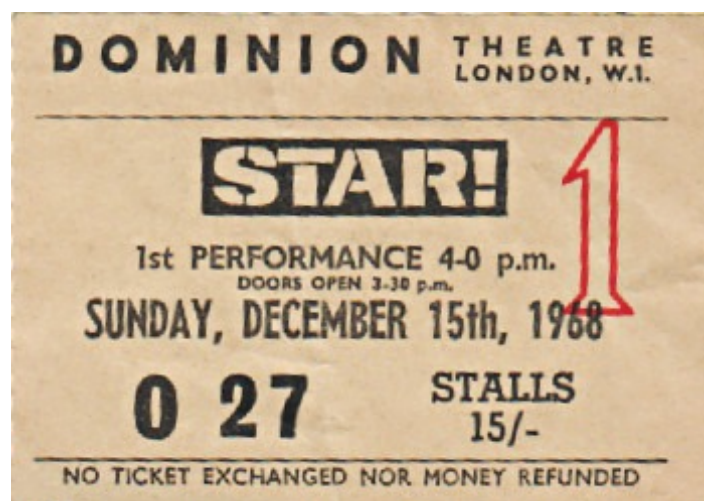
Because the number of pages in the Bulletin has to be a multiple of four, I had some space to spare so I have managed to fit in a lot of your holiday snaps [only in the full Bulletin]. I thought I had plenty but I must have been wrong as I have virtually exhausted my stock. If you sent me some and I haven't used them, please let me know as I may have mis-filed them. Please get snapping this summer [if we haven't had it already] and send me some more.

I have also nearly run out of articles. I have been promised another one for next time and there will be the Brixton visit report but there will still be some space that needs filling with your input. I know we all want to be out in summer and not indoors writing articles but please see what you can come up with.

ERRATA

On p27 last Bulletin the Light at Sheffield opened on Good Friday, which was 14 April and not 14 March, as I mistyped. On the back page, the caption for the Paragon places it in Deal, whereas it is in Herne Bay. Another mistype; spotted by Martin Tapsell.

Harry Rigby, CTA Bulletin Editor



CARTOON CORNER



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

**DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE
SUNDAY 20 AUGUST**

CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

(founded January 1967)

promoting serious interest in all aspects of cinema buildings

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CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

BULLETIN: Members are invited to submit items for possible publication to the Bulletin Editor. However, it is stressed that the publication of an item does not necessarily imply that it reflects the views of the Cinema Theatre Association, its Committee or its Bulletin Editor. It is assumed that submissions are for publication, unless stated otherwise; items may be shortened or edited at the discretion of the Editor. Please enclose SAE and state if you require items to be returned, otherwise everything will be passed on to the CTA Archive.
VISITS: Members and non-members are reminded that they attend visits entirely at their own risk and no responsibility can be accepted by the Cinema Theatre Association or the owners of the buildings for any accidents or injury sustained during the course of any visit.
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VISITS AND EVENTS

Best Of the New:

Depot Cinema at Lewes (East Sussex)

Organised by Allen Eyles



The entrance to the Depot – additional photo on front cover

Come and see the new £8 million three-screen independent Depot cinema designed by Burrell Foley Fischer in a refreshing alternative to standard multiplex design in one of the country's most picturesque towns. A careful and thorough adaptation of what was previously a depot for local brewery Harvey's, the new Depot brings full-time cinema back to Lewes after a gap of nearly 47 years. Enjoy a drink and food at the large new café and bar, sitting outside if it is a nice day, where there is plenty of space deliberately not used for parking. We will see all three screens before the afternoon shows and enjoy a brief introduction by local group *Reel Lewes* to its hour-long, professionally edited film of reminiscences on cinema-going in the town, which will be specially shown for us circa 1-1:30pm in one of the screens. We expect to talk to the cinema's Creative Director Carmen Slijpen about this remarkable new venue. *Reel Lewes'* new book on Lewes cinemas will be available for purchase and Depot will be the subject of a major article in this year's edition of *Picture House*. There will be a mid-afternoon stroll around town to see the sites of the town's three earlier cinemas, all marked by plaques. Or you can go to Lewes Castle, Anne of Cleves house and other tourist attractions. Or stay and buy a ticket to one of the films showing at the Depot – check website: [www.lewesdepot.org]. We hope that members in East and West Sussex will take advantage of this free visit, not just to see the cinema but also to meet and socialise with other CTA members.

Getting there from London: Fastest trains are scheduled to take only one hour from London Victoria, eg Southern rail service from Victoria (10:47am), London Bridge (10:42am, change at Haywards Heath), East Croydon (11:03am) to arrive Lewes 11:47am. Earlier and later direct trains from Victoria every half hour. Depot is on the other side of Lewes station car park, just two minutes away using the side exit from the platform on which trains from London arrive. Coming by car, the cinema is in Pinwell Road with a public car park at the back of the cinema and the station car park opposite.

Most visits are for members only
Details in the full Bulletin



CASEWORK

By Tim Hatcher

A Request for Members' Assistance.

Historic England has launched an initiative entitled 'Enrich The List', which aims to expand the depth of detail in listing descriptions of statutorily protected buildings. Some early designations appertaining to cinemas lack precision and omit salient features that could prove vital in preventing subsequent abuse if listed building consent is sought. Members with factual architectural knowledge, information, or photographs of their local listed cinemas are thus requested to contribute to this crucial enterprise. Full details, including guidance on varying degrees of participation, may be found at: [historicengland.org.uk/listing/enrich-the-list].

Grade II* Listed



Plans for alteration of the Granada in Woolwich reveal the intention of constructing two major extensions and additionally, as previously feared, drastically modifying the fly tower. No objection is being forwarded to the former; however, alteration of the fly tower is being strongly opposed as it would permanently preclude possible return to full entertainment usage in the future. *Photo above taken April 2015.*

Plans for conversion of the State at Grays into a Wetherspoon hostelry have been forwarded by the project's architects. These largely demonstrate respect for the integrity of the cinema, although concerns arise over the siting of ladies' lavatories in the distinguished circle foyer and the insertion of large areas of fenestration into the rear stage wall.



As part of a major programme of works involving an investment of £2.4m by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Hyde Park Picture House in Leeds is to have a second cinema constructed in its basement.

Photo above taken June 2005.

More Casework in the full Bulletin

PUBLICATIONS

Back Numbers Available

BULLETINS

We can supply back numbers of most Bulletins from Volume 21 (1987) to date. Prices for issues from 1987 to 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.



New Publication

Screen Stories – Lewes Goes to the Pictures

by **Ruth Thomson**. 98 pages, A5 paperback, fully illustrated. £8.99 plus postage.

Published to coincide with the opening of the new **Depot** cinema in Lewes, Sussex, this attractive book outlines the history of the two earlier cinema buildings in the town – the **Cinema de Luxe** and the **Odeon**. Their story is mainly told through reminiscences and anecdotes collected from residents and from newspaper articles. There are many fascinating illustrations, and a final chapter describes the history of the **Lewes Film Club** and **Film Society** and gives the background to the creation of the **Depot** and a look at the plans of the new cinema.



Coming Soon

50th anniversary reprints of two CTA circuit histories written by **Allen Eyles** – **ABC**, *The First Name in Entertainment* and **Gaumont British Cinemas**. Both titles have been out-of-print for a while and are hard to find in the second-hand market. Watch for details in the next issue...

Ordering

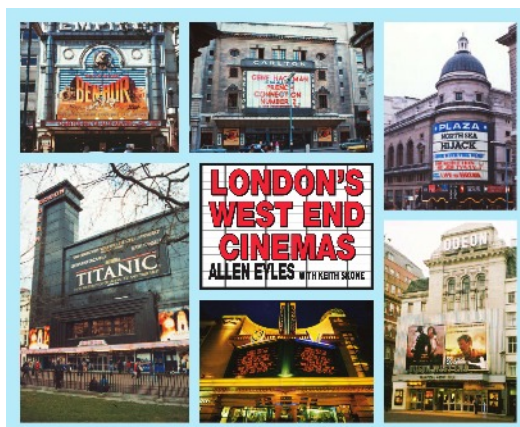
For books and other items except DVDs, please add £3.00 for post and packing for orders up to £20.00 in value, £6.00 for orders from £20.01 to £40.00 and £11.00 for orders above £40.01. For DVDs, please add £3.00 for up to 3 DVDs and £6.00 for more than 3 DVDs.

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.

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**.

NORTH BY NORTH-EAST (REVISITED)

A report of the CTA Visit 26-29 April 2017

By Mike Wood

The previous CTA visit to the North East and Northumberland coast organised by David Eve was the first cinema visit away from my comfort zone of London and the South East. I confess to having slipped into a clichéd smug Southerner but one that had become aware of the wonderful coast, beautiful interior, fantastic towns and cities and the wonderfully friendly people and so this trip proved it again, plus a little of the Scottish Borders added for good measure.



Work in progress at the Darlington Hippodrome [2]

Taking David's advice, most of us arrived by train at Darlington to find the coach waiting to take us to the Hippodrome & Palace / Civic Theatre (1907, Owen & Ward with Hoskins, Grade II) familiar from the previous visit as live theatre although it had been on film before closure in 1956. Now it is in an advanced stage of restoration and a bold re-working of the later additions. Divided into two groups we took it in turns for a really good hard hat tour courtesy of the project leaders and construction company.

After refreshments we bussed to the Central Hall (1846, John Middleton, Grade II) which was originally assembly rooms; later it showed early talkies and regular film programming. It has been restored and now hosts special events as part of the new multi-purpose Dolphin Centre.



Screen ① at the Odeon [ex Regal] Darlington [2]

Across town is the Regal / ABC / Cannon / MGM / Odeon (1936, Percy L Browne & Harding with WR Glenn, Unlisted) built within the original side walls of the CJ Phipps Theatre Royal. Apart from two screens tucked under the balcony in 1977 and conversion to digital utilising the original box for Screen ①, this was pure Regal/ABC in the auditorium and a visit to remember as the newly opened nine-screen Vue just the other side of town(and briefly visited) is bound to take some of the audience.



The exterior and interior of the Hippodrome Bishop Auckland [2]

With a few backward glances, we boarded the coach for Bishop Auckland and the Hippodrome / Hippodrome Picture House / Essoldo (1909, JJ Taylor, Grade II). Although on bingo since 1966, it shows its theatrical origin with a box either side of the square proscenium fronting a deep stage, the upper circle having been hidden from view by a false ceiling. After only a moment's wait for the game to finish, we were able to view the very well-kept interior.

A little way further North took us to the beautiful Beamish Hall Hotel by the museum grounds and, after settling in, we met for a welcome dinner. The hotel was originally part of the living museum attraction and is only a short walk by a back gate, where the next morning a tram was waiting to take us into 'town' where we met the project leaders for the creation of a fifties era addition, for which the Ryehope Grand Picture Palace / Grand Theatre (1914) will be reconstructed to form a transition between the two areas. The thought and care with which Beamish carries out its restorations and that they want a local small town cinema to be included was really good to hear. After tea and biscuits we had a couple of hours to roam before meeting up for lunch and then onto the coach.

The rest of this report
plus a report of the AGM and South Wales visit
can be read in the full Bulletin.



CINEMA NEWS – 50 YEARS AGO

When the CTA was founded in 1967...

Compiled by Harry Rigby & Ken Roe

July



- 1st The Palladium West Derby Road, Liverpool [above] closes to allow road widening. {54359}
- 1st The 1,170-seat Ritz in Potters Bar [Herts] closed with Morecambe and Wise in *That Riviera Touch*. It was demolished within a few years. {31258}
- 3rd ABC takes over the 620-seat Scala on Liverpool's Lime Street. The façade was 'modernised'. See 20 Bulletin 51/2. {32281}
- 15th The 1,516-seat Odeon in Kingston upon Thames [then in Surrey] closes with *The Great Escape*. Bingo opens two months later; that lasts exactly 20 years and the building is demolished in 1989. {21194}
- 21st The 1,294-seat Rialto at Enfield [Middlesex] is renamed Granada after being taken over by them two years previously. It only lasts until July 1971, when bingo took over. {15191}
- 22nd The 1,500-seat Mayfair/Odeon in Brick Lane, Shoreditch [London] closes with *Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines*. It is sold to an independent operator and renamed Naz, reopening a week later showing Bollywood films. {15262}
- ?? The 2,190-seat Odeon in Ilford [then in Essex] closes for two weeks for 'modernisation'. {16668}
- ?? The manager of the 539-seat Cinema at Horbury [West Yorks] blames its closure on "rowdy teenagers". {47962}



The Century Pitsea in April 2009

- ?? The Century at Pitsea [Essex] introduces part-time bingo; films were to cease in 1970. {28704}
- ?? Driffield [East Yorks] voted 289 for and 102 against the Majestic Cinema opening on a Sunday. {48197}



August

- 12th The 1,420-seat Essoldo in Queensbury [North London] closes with *My Fair Lady*. It reopens for bingo two months later. {18002}
- 16th The Gala Première of *Divorce American Style* is held at the Astoria Charing Cross Road. {2499}
- 26th The ABC Pinner [Middlesex] gets the 'Luxury Lounge' treatment. See p7. {31162}
- 26th Films cease at the Buffalo in Ashington [Northumberland] and bingo takes over. The last film was *The Family Way*. {44165}



The Princess Batley in May 2004

- 26th The Princess in Batley [West Yorks] closes in favour of bingo. The last film was *The Family Way*. It is now a dance studio. {47978}
- ?? The 700-seat Palace in Cefn-Mawr [Denbigh] is destroyed by fire and subsequently demolished. {30197}

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 première photo from Kiné Weekly 1967, scanned by Ken Roe



FROM CTA BULLETIN VOLUME 1, 1967

The New A.B.C. Pinner - Cinema or Rest Home?

I suppose I went to the reopening (26.8.67) of the A.B.C. Pinner (formerly the Langhan) with some trepidation. It had been a favourite cinema in my childhood, because it seemed different to other houses - smaller than some, not flashy (unlike the Granadas and Odeons), but just a quiet, comfortable cinema, where I could see off-beat films. In those days before the demolition of the nearby ABC North Harrow (formerly the Embassy) the Langhan did not take the ABC releases, but the independent one instead - oldies, classics and continental programmes. Yes, I saw my first "foreign film" at Pinner.

As I said, I went expecting the worst - or rather, I knew what to expect. The interiors of new cinemas are all now designed in more or less the same style - curved walls at the side of the screen, covered in drapes, directing one's gaze towards the centre of this stretched, shapeless proscenium; very plain, and functional but a little unexciting, especially if all new cinemas are to be like this. And the ABC Pinner is no exception. I suppose it is all very sumptuous. After all, yards and yards of yellow floor to ceiling curtaining does create an aura of "luxury". The designers have also installed new "luxury" seating described as being more like "fireside armchairs, placed side by side at a special angle with so much leg room between the rows you could almost drive a car between them."

In fact, the stalls have been renamed a "luxury lounge area". (I apologise for overusing the word luxury but this is ABC's main public relations feature at Pinner now). And of course, you've just got to pay for that luxury. The new price is 6/6d. The dear old balcony (initially the same as before - new paint but the same old seats) is now cheaper than before - 5/-. This is where I think that "Pinner ABC creates big cinema history" by reversing the usual seat price policy.

Nothing very special heralded the reopening. The current ABC release for that week was shown, and the only added attraction was the provision of a console organ, plus performer, who gave us a medley before the programme, played us into the Pathe News at half time and played us into the foyer at the end.

No speeches, no free gifts, no celebrities. Needless to say, it was not a full house, not even for a new cinema, not even for the "Man from U.N.C.L.E." Not to worry, for I'm sure the C.T.A. applauds the reopening of this cinema, however stereotyped the design might be. At least it wasn't pulled down!

Michael Darvell

For Your Diary

The next meeting of the Association will be held in the small cinema of the National Film Theatre on Monday, September 4th at 7.30 p.m. We are honoured to have as our guest speaker the Chief Architect of Association British Cinemas. It is hoped as many members as possible will be present.

Members are asked to note that until further notice, all correspondence for the Secretary should be addressed to Mr. Marcus Eavis, 123B, Central Road, Worcester Park, Surrey

NEWSREEL

The items in this section are taken mainly from press cuttings from local newspapers; there may be minor errors in reporting dates or other detail.

Photos by Harry Rigby within entry, except where stated.

A number in curly brackets {nnnnn} is the reference for the Cinema Treasures website. Go to: [\[cinematreasures.org/theaters/nnnnn\]](http://cinematreasures.org/theaters/nnnnn)

ABERDEEN

It is understood that Light Cinemas is in negotiations to operate an 800-seat seven-screen complex earmarked for the Bon Accord Centre. It will occupy the centre's empty bowling alley.

Evening Express (Aberdeen) – 5 May

AMBLESIDE (Cumbria)

The vegetarian restaurants at Zeffirellis and Fellinis cinemas have won four top awards for food and hospitality.

Westmorland Gazette – 21 February; sent in by Terry Hanstock

ASHFORD (Kent)

Construction has started on the town centre development at Eldwick Place, which will incorporate an eight-screen Picturehouse cinema. No opening date has been given.

Kentish Express – 4, 11 May

BASILDON (Essex)

A "major cinema chain" is in discussions with the Council to open a cinema in East Square.

Basildon Yellow Advertiser – 1 June

BEDFORD

The new seven-screen Vue at Riverside is due to open in July. There will be over 900 seats. The town already has a six-screen Cineworld.

Bedfordshire on Sunday – 7 May

BELFAST

Planning permission has been granted for an office development to replace the Movie House on Dublin Road. The report does not mention any possible cinemas in the new building. See p23 Bulletin 51/1.

Belfast Telegraph – 17 May

BIRKENHEAD (Wirral)

A mysterious fire was discovered in the former Savoy/ABC cinema on Argyll Street about 6pm on Bank Holiday Monday 29 May. The cause of the fire is unknown but is being investigated jointly with the local police. The building is in a poor state of repair and due to be demolished. {32707}

The Town Hall in Hamilton Square is the last venue in the town where film can be shown. It is one of the few Town Halls that can boast its own cinema. At one time it was used as the Wirral Museum and the cinema was part of the exhibits, using the Assembly Hall. The projection equipment was supplied and maintained by the Projected Picture Trust [PPT].

Sent in by Mike Taylor

BLACKBURN (Lancs)

An eight-screen Reel cinema is to be built on the former Waves water fun centre. Two screens will show Bollywood films. Blackburn already has a ten-screen Vue.

Lancashire Telegraph – 3 May

BOGNOR REGIS (West Sussex)



More than two years after it was first announced that the Picturedrome Bognor Regis, would get a fourth screen, work will finally begin to make it a reality. Permission for construction to finally begin on the

114-seat auditorium at the Council-owned cinema, that is run by Adam Cunard's Electric Theatre Company, finally got the go ahead at the third attempt on the last Monday of April 2017. Work was meant to start in 2015 but an access dispute with a local resident along with the election of new councillors, who opposed Council money being used as a loan to fund the work, prevented building from starting. Uncertainty over whether the new screen would be realised grew as time wore on. As 2017 dawned it was even feared that permission for the new auditorium, which will be housed in a single-storey extension on land that is currently the cinema car park, could be withdrawn as costs began to spiral. But on 24 April 2017 Bognor Town councillors agreed by nine votes to one to extend the original £850,000 loan to £965,823 to allow work to begin. A round of applause broke out in the council chamber when the outcome of the vote was announced with Town Mayor Pat Dillon saying: "I think you have made the right decision." That decision was in the balance from as early as May 2015 when newly elected councillors opposed the original loan that had been approved just two months before and which was to be paid back over a twenty-five year term. By the end of the year, though, local residents had expressed support for the loan so the Council held another vote to approve it. Work should then have started but before it could, the owner of a property adjoining the cinema refused to allow the builder's crane to swing over his land. This resulted in Cheesemur Building Contractors having to devise an alternative method of constructing the new screen. Not surprisingly, this involved extra costs. To authorise the additional six figure sum now needed the Town Council needed to meet, discuss and approve the loan for a third time. Construction will now begin on 26 June. To accommodate the work, the Picturedrome will not open until 4pm on weekdays. During the summer holidays the cinema will open around 1pm as opposed to 11am. Weekend opening times will not be affected. Picturedrome management are delighted that a fourth screen will now become a reality and they are expecting it to be open for business in spring 2018. {14782}

Sent in by Mike Whitcombe; Bognor Regis Post – 28 April, 12 May

BRADFORD (West Yorks)



The Youth Centre in the former Plaza closed last September and the building is currently vacant. It opened as the Cross Lane Picture House in September 1914 and films ceased in March 1963. Bingo took over but closed in 2010 when the venue was converted into the Joshua Project. The CTA visited in August 2011, when the above picture was taken. {32800}

Sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken August 2011

BRIGHTON (West Sussex)

The Odeon will have to spend £1,500 to repair an automatic ticket machine after a man smashed the screen. On his way out of the cinema, he pushed a fire exit door open so hard that he broke the hinges. Police are appealing for any witnesses.

The Argus (Brighton) – 12 May; sent in by Barry Quinton

The grade II listed former Astoria was expected to be sold again in June. Bids in excess of £7.5m have been received; the previous owners would make £2m profit after only two years. It will probably make way for student accommodation. The cinema opened in 1933 with 1,823 seats; films ceased in 1977 and bingo took over. This closed in 1996 and the building has been largely unused since. {1844}

Argus (Brighton) – 30 May

BRYNMAWR (Blaenau Gwent)

The Market Hall Cinema reopened in May after being declared free of asbestos. It was forced to close last November when the substance was discovered during building work for a second screen. The CTA visited in May – see p21. {26576}

Gwent Gazette – 20 April, 1 June

BURNLEY (Lancs)

By the time you read this, work should be almost complete on the revamp of the nine-screen Reel cinema. It includes redevelopment of the foyer, new seating, new auditorium sidelights, a complete refitting of the toilets and new carpets and flooring throughout.

Burney Express – 16 June; sent in by Carl Chesworth

CAMBRIDGE

The nine-screen Light [ex Cineworld] is installing a digital IMAX screen. It was due to open on 21 July with *Dunkirk*. {24296}

Cambridge News – 18 May

CHESTER



The new £37m Storyhouse opened on 10 May. A new 800-seat theatre has been built adjacent to the former Odeon, which itself has been gutted to house a library and a 100-seat boutique cinema in a pod at roughly circle level. Access to the new theatre is via red staircases through the proscenium of the Odeon. [www.storyhouse.com]

The Observer – 7 May [tinyurl.com/k49tzgv]; Chester & District Standard – 11 May; sent in by Ivan Harris; photo by David A Ellis

CHESTERFIELD (Derbys)



The Winding Wheel has held an exhibition to celebrate its 30th anniversary. The building opened as the Picture House in September 1923 and was enlarged in 1930. It was taken over by Odeon, being so renamed in 1937. Films ceased in 1981. The exhibition included memorabilia from the cinema days and the last projector used in 1981, stored in Chesterfield museum. {22413}

Derbyshire Times – 11 May; photo taken September 2006

CHICHESTER (West Sussex)

Roger Gibson, artistic consultant of the New Park cinema and director of its annual International Film Festival, was recognised at the 2017 Cannes Film Festival. He was honoured by being named as one of four jury members of the Europa Cinema Label during the 49th Directors' Fortnight.

Bognor Regis Post – May 2017; sent in by Mike Whitcombe

CHIPPENHAM (Wilts)



The Astoria [Reel] is to expand from two to five screens by converting the disused stalls area, once occupied by a bingo club. The existing screens in the former circle would also be modernised. The scheme was first mooted in 2011 but postponed. If plans are approved, completion is scheduled for October. The building first opened in May 1939. {24537}

Gazette & Herald – 4 May; photo taken March 2006

CHORLEY (Lancs)

Artist's impressions have been released of the new six-screen cinema to be built as part of the town centre redevelopment. It will be operated by Reel Cinemas and is due to open in late 2018.

Chorley Citizen – 10 May

CIRENCESTER (Glos)

Plans for a cinema in the town might not be dead, despite Everyman pulling out of the Brewery Court project last year. The developer is once again in talks with the Council.

Wilts & Glos Standard – 20 April

COOKSTOWN (Co Tyrone, Northern Ireland)

The contractor responsible for the recent refurbishment of the five-screen Ritz was named "Highly Commended" in the recent Northern Ireland Master Building Awards. {26710}

Tyrone Courier – 3 May

DEAL (Kent)

Work has begun to create a 3,000-seat open air theatre and cinema on the site of the former Betteshanger Colliery. It is due to open next year. [www.betteshanger-parks.co.uk]

Thanet Gazette – 14 April; sent in by Margaret Burgoine

DERBY

£8.6m has been allocated by the Council for a 5,000 capacity performance venue to replace the Assembly Rooms, which was damaged by fire in March 2014 and subsequently demolished.

Derby Telegraph – 15 June; sent in by Christopher Smith

DORCHESTER (Dorset)

Spencer Clark is the new manager of the Plaza Cinema, run by the Electric Theatre Company. He was formerly the manager of the ABC Bournemouth, which sadly closed in January 2017.

Sent in by Mike Whitcombe

DURHAM

Plans to develop the Gala Theatre have been put on hold "indefinitely". The Council owners will wait to assess competition from a six-screen Odeon, which is currently being built and a promised three-screen Everyman. See p15 Bulletin 50/4. {24672}

Northern Echo – 19 May

Six more pages of Newsreel
in the full Bulletin

LETTERS

HAMMERSMITH DEMOLITION



This is the remains of the Hammersmith Cineworld [ex Regal] on 8 May. Very sad – a great old cinema.

Tony Duggan [photo]

RE: HUGH SYKES' 'WANDERINGS' IN THE LAST BULLETIN:

- Gaumont Beaufort Square, Chepstow, Gwent (1938, Enoch Williams and William Edward Trent): I have that all is left is the façade, everything else having been demolished.
- Picture Palace / Ritz, Frances Street, Newtownards, Co. Down, NI (c.1916, although HS has 1937): I have this as retail but he thinks it has been demolished.
- Electric Theatre / Picture House, Larne, Co. Antrim, NI (1911): I have no note of this existing, so HS's 'fate unknown' might indicate that it has indeed gone?
- Regal Larne, Co. Antrim, NI (1937): no note of this but does façade and foyer exist?

Richard Gray

- Picture Palace / Ritz Newtownards: Yes, this is in retail use.
- Electric Theatre / Picture House Larne: This was a distinctive timber-framed building. I have always believed it to have been demolished.
- Regal Larne: This has been completely demolished. The site is an unofficial car park.

David Simpson

RULES DON'T APPLY

I can relate to Mike Whitcombe's letter (Vol 51 no 3) concerning hard-to-find movies. Having watched Warren Beatty promoting his film *Rules Don't Apply* on BBC1, I was anxious to see it; however, despite living in an area of north London which is well endowed with cinemas (both arthouse and multiplex), I could not find it anywhere. As with Mike the excellent *New Park* cinema in Chichester came to my rescue with three showings on separate days; I made a special trip down there and thoroughly enjoyed the film. On making enquiries I discovered that it had performed badly in the States and been given a mauling by the Guardian's film critic; but surely a multiplex could have found room for it in its smallest screen for a week? Even the *National Film Theatre* has failed to give it an airing. I could however have seen it at the *One Hotel*, Aldwych for £55!

Anthony Wills

BUS TO THE ODEON



Spotted on the ceiling of a 97 bus, part of a mural depicting the Odeon at Mile End.

Sent in & photo by Gavin McGrath

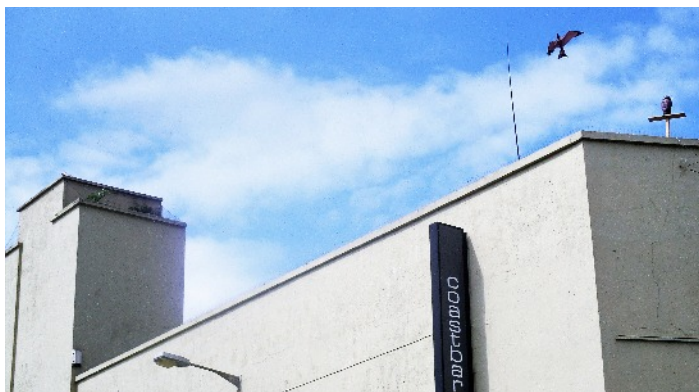
LEICESTER

Further to Ian Patterson's interesting letter in the last Bulletin, I was a regular visitor to the *Palace Theatre* and Leicester City centre cinemas in the 1950s. Yes, there were striptease shows but I don't recall the name of Pauline Page. I do however remember a Pauline Penny whose billing was 'She Strips To Conquer' and underneath her name 'the naughtiest girl of all'. These shows were very mild compared with what can be seen on the TV or cinema screen now; the girls were not allowed to move on stage. The *Palace* also presented variety shows, plays and an annual pantomime. After a show I used to go round to the stage door, armed with my autograph book, which I still have and have autographs, amongst others, of Mike and Bernie Winters, Jimmy Wheeler, Marty Wilde and a young Shirley Bassey. I also have Pauline Penny's autograph and a photo and a small collection of playbills, including those when she appeared.

Contained within the *Palace* complex on its left hand side was the passageway that led to the *Floral Hall* cinema. If a show was on you could hear it as you passed by. Today all the cinemas and theatres in the City centre have gone except the *Odeon*, opened 1938 which is now a party venue and banqueting suite and the *Little Theatre*. But take a walk up High street and you will see the narrow entrance of the former *Cameo* with the letters **ELECTRIC THEATRE** carved in stone. The facade of the former Gaumont still stands opposite the Market Place in a very rundown condition awaiting its fate, whilst on the other side of the market in Town Hall Square can be seen the three large centrally arched windows and blocked up exit doors of the former *Picture House*, which fronted Granby Street. The replacement buildings do not join each other, there being a yard between the two.

Carl Jennings

FAKE BIRDS DEFEND FORMER CINEMA



Look up and you find seagulls are being scared away from the roof of the former Odeon, Deal by an owl, a hawk tied to an aerial and maybe a third bird.

Martin Tapsell

A RESPONSE TO TED BOTTLE'S LETTER IN THE LAST BULLETIN.

I sympathise with Ted Bottle's comments in the last Bulletin about the to-day's lack of presentation, which is particularly apparent in the major circuit cinemas. Fortunately there are independent cinemas that still aim to 'put on a good show'. If he is able to visit London's West End there are currently productions at two theatres, which I think he would appreciate; *An American in Paris* at the *Dominion* and *42nd Street* at the *Theatre Royal Drury Lane*. Both use a traditional house curtain, beautifully lit, even if not with footlights. Both are musicals and both have their orchestra in an orchestra pit, not somewhere at the back or side of the stage or even in a room somewhere else! And both shows happen to be extremely good.

Tony Williams

Letters, Cinema Business, Miscellany
and more articles in the full Bulletin

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

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

80 Years

Odeon 22 Castle Hill, Dudley. Opened 28 July 1937.
Architects Budge Reid / Harry Weedon. Listed Grade II. [no image]



Ritz (ABC), 122 Abbey Street, Nuneaton.
Opened 23 July 1937. Architects Verity & Beverly. Listed grade II.



Regal 67 Teme Street, Tenbury Wells.
Opened 29 July 1937. Architect Ernest S Roberts. Listed grade II.



Embassy (Cannon/ABC/Odeon/Everyman) 22 High Street, Esher.
Opened 23 August 1937. Architect David E Nye. Listed grade II.

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].

CAN YOU HELP US?



If anyone has information or photographs of the Wednesbury Gaumont/Odeon/Silver cinema please get in touch with us.
Photo above dated November 1949.

Clive Polden, CTA Archivist

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.

THE BUILDING BUFFS

This is a reprint of an article in *What's On In London* dated 13 February 1981 by Michael Darvell

One group that will bemoan the demise of the Odeon Lewisham this weekend is the Cinema Theatre Association, a collection of passionate cinema-goers who have, since 1967, built up their own following for the super cinemas of a bygone era. In their 14 years of existence they have traipsed the length and breadth of the country looking at old picture palaces, studying the architectural features with a loving eye and a perpetual fascination for the finer points of detail that would escape the gaze of most patrons who visit these buildings. This Sunday, 15 February 1981, the Association will take a conducted tour of the **Palace Theatre** in Clarendon Road, Watford, which was, in its time, used as a cinema but combined with music hall entertainment. After studying this not uninteresting property a tour of the local **Odeon Film Centre** will be made. This dates from 1937 when it opened as a **Gaumont** complete with a WurliTzer organ and a café. It is now a triple-screen property. The afternoon's pleasure will be completed by a trip round the Ladbroke bingo and social club in King Street. This began life in 1913 as the **Central Hall Picture House** with an orchestral accompaniment to the silent films. Later it became the **Regal** and ended its life as the **Essoldo**. This tour de force of Watford's pleasuredromes begins at 1:45 and finishes at approximately 5:15. Refreshments we are told, will be on sale (presumably in the foyer) at the old **Essoldo**.



The Palace Theatre Watford in July 2006

Any group that pursues an interest with such dedication is bound to contain its own flavour of nuttiness. The Cinema Theatre Association is no exception to the rule. But here I must pause and declare an interest, if not a responsibility, for being one of the four founder members of the group way back in 1967. I remember it well, the day we met in the booking hall of the **National Film Theatre** each clutching a copy of the particular issue of *Films and Filming* in which the advertisement placed by Eric A George appeared, canvassing all those who were interested in forming a study group for cinema building rather than the films that are shown in them to get in touch. And from such small beginnings was formed what has now become a large and not unimportant organisation of about 300 members all over the country who meet and correspond regularly through the CTA's bi-monthly Bulletin.

Although I was one of the founders. I have dropped out owing to other commitments but still follow with interest the workings of this unique group. What seemed to me in 1967 of perhaps minor and passing interest has, it appears, become an obsession with many of the Association's members. The detail contained in the Bulletin is amazing. It is especially strong on historical coverage and often devotes whole articles to one cinema or geographical area. Hence such titles to the contributions as: *The Alma Kinema, Luton*; *The Odeon Theatre, Colwyn Bay*; *Notes on the Regal, Abingdon*; or *A Sad Story at Scunthorpe* (the closure of the **Classic**, Cole Street). Would you have thought there was that much to say about the cinema situation in 1981? Well, with all the closures and the changing use of cinemas it appears that, yes, there



The former Regal/Essoldo Watford in July 2006

is a lot to report on the state of the cinema as a building, an architectural feature, an entity in its own right. And the CTA is one group that actually cares about cinemas. It is doubtful whether the Association has any real power in being able to persuade authority (the Greater London Council, the Rank Organisation, EMI) into doing anything about the preservation of old cinemas but it has formed a useful and informed body of opinion on the subject. It is able to make representations to these bodies to try to just convince them that maybe their properties are worth saving for future generations to enjoy.

The Department of the Environment has already listed several properties including the Mecca of the cinema world the famous **Granada Tooting**: once a glorious super cinema in the Spanish style and the pride of Sidney Bernstein, it no longer shows films. The CTA regrets the passing of the **Granada Tooting** as a cinema but is relieved that at least it is extant: the hall of mirrors, the spectacular staircase, the front lobby are all still there to be seen and probably visited by pilgrims from the Association for many years to come.

Apart from visits to cinemas the Association arranges talks and slide shows, has its own archive of books, photographs and information on the subject and hopes to provide as complete a picture as possible of the passing cinema scene. It also publishes a *Directory of Cinemas* ‡ at £1.40, which is a guide to the cinemas operating in the UK. It also lists photographs available through the Association, so if you're looking for a study of the **Maxime**, **Sketty**, **Swansea** or the **Ritz Linlithgow**, then your search stops here. If this sounds like your idea of fun write to Marcus Eavis, or just turn up at the **Palace Theatre** in Watford for the grand tour beginning at 1:45. The Annual General Meeting in May will also include a visit to a central London cinema, possibly either the **Odeon Leicester Square** or, as the CTA still quaintly refer to it, the **New Victoria**, which the world now knows as the **Apollo**.

‡ No longer available



The Odeon Leicester Square in April 2016