

50  
years

CINEMA  
THEATRE  
ASSOCIATION

[www.cta-uk.org](http://www.cta-uk.org)

# BULLETIN

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The Vue [ex Warner] Leicester Square, which has reopened after a £6.6m refurbishment; photo 19 July by Allen Eyles



The 28-seat Everyman at King's Cross; photo taken July 2017



## FROM YOUR EDITOR

Thanks you to all who rallied to my call for more articles and holiday snaps. I now have enough for this Bulletin and have had to hold some over. Please keep them coming as my stock will run out some day.



Here is a picture of an Agapanthus just coming out in my garden. It reminded me of an ABC chandelier; turn the page upside down. There is a fine example [although probably a reproduction] in Wetherspoons Coronet in the former Savoy/ABC in Holloway, north London. I have included the photo next to the plant so you can compare.

In the last issue I told you we had been on holiday to Scotland. I forgot to mention that, when we were researching our route, we found that Google Streetview had captured the Screen Machine mobile cinema at Durness in Scotland. This is probably the most northwesterly village on the British mainland. Although we were there in June, the weather was more like March!



On the back page you will find some more pictures and information about the Storyhouse in Chester, a conversion and addition to the former Odeon. On one of the emails I got, the sender had missed the 't' out of the name so it read 'Soryhouse'. I leave you to decide whether this describes the building or not!



On the subject of holidays, I took the above photo when on holiday in August. But where was I and what was the cinema? No prizes – answer next time. Hint: England.

*Harry Rigby, CTA Bulletin Editor*

## CARTOON CORNER



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

**DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE  
FRIDAY 20 OCTOBER**

## CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

(founded January 1967)

promoting serious interest in all aspects of cinema buildings

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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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## VISITS AND EVENTS

### Double Bill of Illustrated Talks

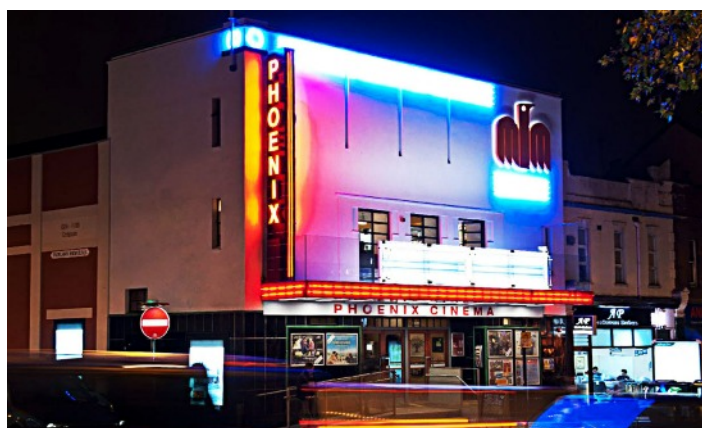
THE HISTORY OF THE **PALACE** THEATRE, WESTCLIFF-ON-SEA  
BY DAVID SIMPSON



David, a CTA member and the archivist at the **Palace Theatre**, Westcliff-on-Sea, presents an illustrated talk about this lovely provincial theatre from conception in 1905, through its eventual opening in October 1912 and its many trials and tribulations in the years since then. It's also the story of one remarkable woman, whose legacy provided the foundation of the theatre's success today. Over the years management companies have come and gone and there have been periods of closure but the Grade II listed theatre has defied all the odds. With just 600 seats it has an intimacy beloved of performers and we'll hear about some famous names who started their careers at this lovely theatre.



THE **PHOENIX** FINCHLEY AND ITS AMAZING SURVIVAL  
BY GERRY TURVEY



Gerry has been associated with the **Phoenix** for a considerable time and has fully researched its amazing history, producing a book on the subject. The **Phoenix** is often referred to as one the very few oldest surviving cinemas in continuous use.

His illustrated presentation will inform us about its initial guise as the **Picturedrome**, changing its name as it evolved through changes of ownership and commercial pressure, the threats it experienced, the physical changes it underwent and how its policies allowed it to survive against competition in Finchley and Muswell Hill from the development of new concerns like the **Gaumont** and other big local cinemas of the 1930s.

**Venue:** The Gallery at Alan Baxter Associates, 75 Cowcross Street, Farringdon, London EC1M 6EL.

**Admittance:** £8 on the door (includes light refreshments), Non-Members welcome as guests.

## CASEWORK

By Tim Hatcher

### Grade II\* Listed



The **Regal** in Uxbridge, utilised as a nightclub for a considerable period, is likely to receive revisions to name and image, which may entail interior alteration and redecoration. The Association is pressing not only for reduction of the numerous floor level insertions installed during a previous adaptation but also for a more sympathetic colour scheme, which in tandem would render the atypical and noteworthy deco motifs more discernible. {13729} *Photo above taken March 2004.*

The exterior of the **Dreamland Cinema** at Margate has now been restored and resembles its appearance upon opening, with only minor differences in signage. The local Council is to be contacted to ascertain the intended progression of the restoration. {15123}

### Grade II Listed

A meeting is to be arranged with the prospective purchaser of the **Royalty** at Harborne in order to discuss his projected strategy for its future. A car cleaning facility has now opened on an adjacent site, yet the building currently remains at risk of vandalism. {1836}



Various operators have recently considered a reversion of the **Grand** at Westbourne [Bournemouth] to cinematic operation following its protracted employment as a bingo hall. To date none has advanced a definitive proposal; regrettably, however, all have indicated that they would intend to convert the auditorium to a triple cinema. *Photo above taken May 2006.*

A watching brief is being maintained on the major scheme about to be undertaken at the **Hyde Park Picture House** in Leeds. Particular concern exists over the future of the foyer, which exhibits great charm with its multiplicity of original features including secondary lighting by gas. {1836}

**More Casework and Events  
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	<b>Special Issue</b> featuring the Cinemas of George Coles with 26 original photographs reproduced in sepia.
No 18	£3.00	Sydney Colwyn Foulkes; United Picture Theatres; Tivoli Wimborne.
No 19	£3.50	Co-operative Cinemas; Ideal Lambeth; Dursley; Alister Macdonald; Granada Tooting.
No 21	£3.50	100 Years On; Travelling Shows; Reggie Rea; Albert Hall Sheffield; Regal Wells; West End Adverts; Scotland.
all issues below have colour cover and inside pages		
No 25	£4.50	Oldest Cinema (Brighton); FE Bromige; Gaumont Managers; Carlton Swansea; Committee's Choice.
No 26	£4.50	Paramount Newcastle; Edward Stone; Granada Men; E de Wilde Holding; Electric Portobello Road.
No 27	£4.50	New Victoria/Apollo; Whiteladies Bristol; Clark & Fenn; Compton Organs; Tim Foster Associates.
No 28	£4.50	James McKissack; WJ King; Torbay Cinema; Tabs.
No 29	£4.50	Cinerama in Britain; Braziers the Builders; John Fernée; Waller Jeffs; John Duffin's paintings.
No 30	£5.00	The Davis Family, Croydon; Apollo Hammersmith Organ; Norwich Roadshows.
No 31	£7.50	Special 84-page edition: <b>Essoldo</b> – A Family Business: Sol Sheckman and the <b>Essoldo</b> 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 <sup>th</sup> 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 Publications

### Electric Pictures – A Guide to the Films, Film-makers and Cinemas of Worthing and Shoreham

By Ellen Cheshire and James Clarke. A5 paperback, 130 pages, fully illustrated, £12.99 plus postage.

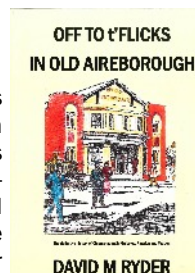
As the subtitle suggests, this is not just a history of cinema buildings in these Sussex towns. Although there are chapters about the cinemas of Worthing, Shoreham and Lancing, the majority of the book describes the film-making and film production that took place there. This is sure to be of interest to many members. The book commemorates 120 years of film in these towns, capturing the region's rich cinematic legacy and its place in British film history. From film-making pioneers through to blockbuster films and key events in the film history of the coast, this book draws on research from film archive and local history resources to tell the story. Richly illustrated and featuring contributions from local historians and film and theatre specialists, including Kevin Brownlow, there is also a chapter about Sir Sydney Samuelson and a Heritage Trail guide to key locations and the cinemas.



### Off To t'Flicks In Old Aireborough The definitive history of cinema-going in Guiseley, Rawdon and Yeadon

By David M Ryder. A4 paperback, 88 pages, fully illustrated. £9.95 plus postage.

With the aid of contemporary newspaper reports and advertisements, recorded interviews with those involved, minute books and booking diaries and his own memory, local film historian and archivist (and CTA member) David Ryder has produced a comprehensive history of the cinemas in these Yorkshire towns. The story takes us from October 1907, when the first flickering images were projected onto a screen in Yeadon's **Temperance Hall**, to another October evening 79 years later when the projectors were finally turned off in the two studio cinemas in the former balcony of the Yeadon Picture House – or "New Uns" as it was affectionately known. David first started work on this project in 1986 and the result makes for a fascinating read.



### Still Available (reviewed in the last issue)

**Screen Stories: Lewes Goes to the Pictures**  
£8.99 plus postage.

### Coming Soon

Reprints of the two out-of-print circuit histories ABC and Gaumont are due from the printers shortly and full information should be available by the next Bulletin. If you would like to be kept informed when copies are available, send an email to the Sales Officer at [sales@cta-uk.org] or drop him a line at the address shown below and you'll be the first to know!

### 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) The Smallest Show on Earth

By Patrick Church [Abbeygate Picturehouse, Bury St Edmunds]  
248 pages, paperback, illustrated, ISBN 978-1786297990  
£9.99 from the cinema, Waterstones or Amazon.

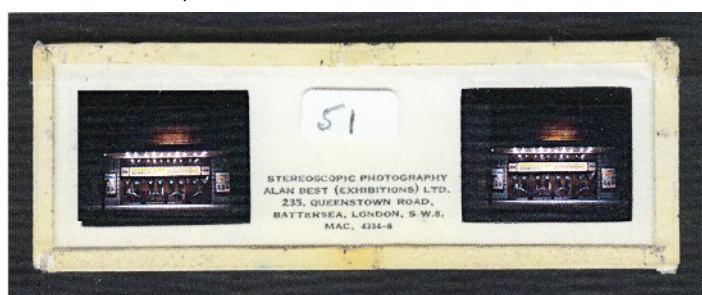


# STEREOSCOPIC CINEMAS

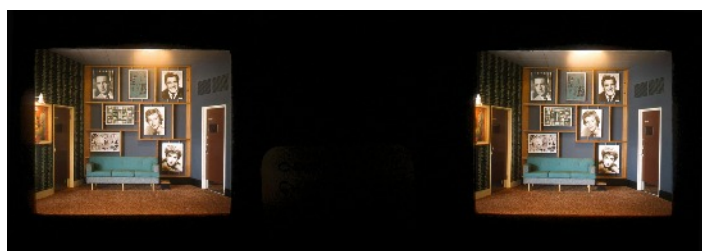
By Harry Rigby

A collection of stereoscopic [3D] slides has been donated to the CTA Archive by Carl Chesworth. A friend of mine, Ian Fagg, generously scanned all the slides and reported:

They appear to be a pair of 35mm transparencies mounted in a glass mount. On examination they seem to have been shot using Dufaycolor film as the colour matrix is readily visible when the image is enlarged significantly. From the information printed on the slide mounts it would appear that this was the work of a company making kiosk and foyer furniture for the cinema industry, particularly for the Rank Organisation, since Odeon and Gaumont sites feature in the listing. There are 51 slides in the collection [there are some duplicates] including 10 Gaumont and 16 Odeon sites. The photography was listed as "Stereoscopic Photography, Alan Best (Exhibitions) Ltd, 235 Queens Road, Battersea, London SW6." There is also a reference to MAC 4334-8. An example of one of the slides is illustrated below.

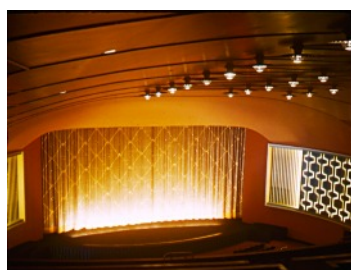
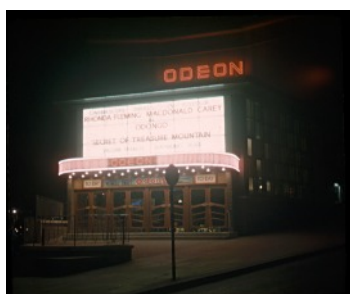


I have viewed these through a stereoscopic viewer and I have to say that the 3D effect is not great. However, they give a fascinating insight into cinema design in the mid-1950s. If any member would like to see the collection and has a means of viewing stereoscopic jpg images, I can make them available by email. [14Mb]



An example of a stereoscopic jpg image [Odeon Sheffield]

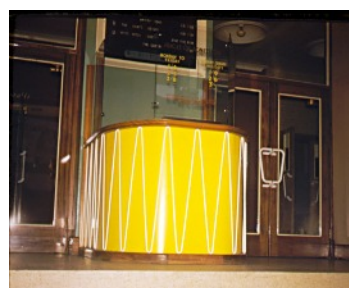
Meanwhile, here are some examples of the images as single frames; I think they are the right eye image. Others in the collection include the Majestic Hull as a ballroom, one each of Shepherds Bush, Old Kent Road, Sidcup, Bristol, Westbourne Grove and several unknown ones.



The Odeon Sheffield



Doncaster Odeon and/or Gaumont



The Gaumont Kettering



Usherette's Ice Cream Tray



Gainsborough Gaumont Foyer



Chorlton Gaumont Kiosk



Haymarket Gaumont Foyer



# CINEMA NEWS – 50 YEARS AGO

## When the CTA was founded in 1967...

Compiled by Harry Rigby & Ken Roe

### September

- 3<sup>rd</sup> The Gala British Première of *Two Weeks in September* is held at the Playhouse Theatre in Glasgow. {7184}



The Regal/Wedgwood Staveley in April 2005

- 4<sup>th</sup> The 808-seat former Regal at Staveley [Derbys] reopened as the Wedgwood after being closed for just over a year. Films ceased two years later and bingo took over. {33438}
- 7<sup>th</sup> The première of *To Sir, With Love* is held at the Astoria Charing Cross Road [R]. {2499}
- 16<sup>th</sup> The 727-seat Sutton Grand Cinema in Dublin closes and is converted into a supermarket. {40666}



The Picturedrome Holmfirth in August 2005

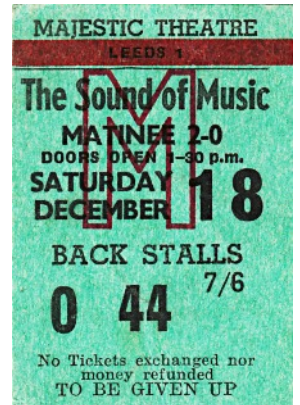
- 16<sup>th</sup> The 400-seat Picturedrome in Holmfirth [West Yorks] closes in favour of bingo. {2432}
- 28<sup>th</sup> The Plaza in Dublin [Ireland] is converted into a 754-seat Cinerama theatre, opening with *Grand Prix*. {11606}
- 20<sup>th</sup> *Two for the Road* was the last film to play in the original auditorium of the Odeon Leicester Square [London] before it closed for 'modernisation'. It reopened in December. {841}
- 27<sup>th</sup> The Plaza Theatre in Regent Street, London closed as a single screen with the Blake Edwards film *Gunn* starring Craig Stevens. The sumptuous Italian Renaissance style interior was gutted to become a twin-screen cinema. {2503}
- 28<sup>th</sup> A season of films opened at the 1,219-seat Cambridge Theatre in London and lasted about four months. Film seasons had played here before. {30509}
- 30<sup>th</sup> Films cease at the Queens Hall cinema in Palmers Green [London] shortly after being taken over by Star Cinemas. Bingo took over but did not last long before the building was demolished in 1971. {31140}

- 30<sup>th</sup> The 294-seat Tatler News Theatre in central Manchester closed. Two weeks later it became a BFI regional film theatre. {33860}



The Berkeley Hull in July 2005, shortly before demolition

- 30<sup>th</sup> The 1,200-seat Berkeley in Hull closes and becomes a bingo club. The cinema had been built in 1956 in a post-war housing estate and so only lasted 12 years. The bingo lasted longer – about 40 years. {44997}
- ?? The *Sound of Music* finishes a 128-week run in 70mm at the 2,392-seat Majestic in Leeds [West Yorks]. {2718}
- ?? The 1,460-seat Metropole in the St Paul's district of Bristol is taken over by Star Cinemas. It soon becomes a part-time cinema / bingo operation and films cease the following year. Bingo closed in 1974 and intermittent cinema operations followed until 1980. {44606}



The former Odeon Sidcup as a swimming pool in July 2006

- ?? The Odeon Sidcup reopens as a swimming pool. {27808}
- ?? Mecca buys five cinemas from the Scottish-based George Green circuit; the Playhouses at Dundee {21356}, Ayr {23270} and Wishaw {22992} and the Picture House in Paisley {23265} would remain as cinemas but the Pavilion Bathgate {24307} would close and become a bingo club. The cinemas didn't last long.
- ?? The 887-seat Kensington Cinema in Thorne [South Yorks] closes in favour of bingo, just months after being taken over by Star Cinemas. {27444}

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 photos from Kiné Weekly 1967, scanned by Ken Roe



## October

- 7<sup>th</sup> The ABC Victoria in Cambridge reopens after the 'Luxury Lounge' treatment. The first film was *Doctor Zhivago* in 70mm. {36850}



The Coronet Elephant & Castle in March 2004

- 9<sup>th</sup> The 2,315-seat Coronet in London's Elephant & Castle was modernised and renamed ABC. The façade was covered with blue metal sheeting. Only the stalls area was used, having had the 'Luxury Lounge' treatment. The reopening film was *Bonnie and Clyde*. Films ceased in November 1999 and the stalls seats were removed to become a music venue. {27019}
- 12<sup>th</sup> The Gala opening première of *Thoroughly Modern Millie* is held at the new Odeon St Martin's Lane in London [R]. The subterranean cinema had 737 seats and a floating screen. Ray Cossey, formerly of the Gaumont Norwich, was appointed manager of the new Odeon; he became the youngest of Rank's West End managers. *Thoroughly Modern Millie* played for about a year. {2509}



The Byron Hucknall in May 2008

- 13<sup>th</sup> The Byron Hucknall [Notts] closes as a single-screen cinema to be split into a 404-seat cinema upstairs and bingo downstairs. It reopened in December. Films ceased in June 2006. {13428}
- 14<sup>th</sup> The 2,252-seat Essoldo (ex Savoy) Hayes [then in Middlesex] closed with *Attack of the Crab Monsters*. It became a bingo club. {30166}
- 15<sup>th</sup> The World Première of *Dr Faustus* is held at the ABC Ritz in Oxford with Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor in attendance. {22679}
- 16<sup>th</sup> The Royal Première of *Far From the Madding Crowd* is held at the Odeon Marble Arch. {1830}
- 18<sup>th</sup> The World Première of *How I Won the War* is held at the London Pavilion Piccadilly Circus [photo top next column]. {2496}
- 19<sup>th</sup> The World Première of *Pretty Polly* is held at the Astoria Charing Cross Road [R]. {2499}
- 19<sup>th</sup> ABC2 opens in Glasgow, a 922-seat new-build adjacent to the existing Regal/ABC. {38564}



- 26<sup>th</sup> The European Charity Première of *The Happiest Millionaire* starring Tommy Steele is held at the Leicester Square Theatre [above]. {910}
- 28<sup>th</sup> The 1,132-seat Picture House in Doncaster closes. It had been operated by ABC, who had opened a new cinema nearby in May. {19934}



The Hillsborough Park cinema in Sheffield in February 2005

- 29<sup>th</sup> The 1,300-seat Hillsborough Park Cinema in Sheffield closed with a double [X] programme. It reopened a week later as a bingo club. {25743}
- ?? The Astoria at Baldock [Herts] began bingo sessions on Wednesday and Friday evenings. Films finally ceased in 1969 although bingo continued until 1986. {48446}
- ?? The 400-seat Castle cinema in Newcastle Emlyn [Carmarthen] closes and the building is given over to retail use. {32641}



# ABANDONED CINEMAS

By Gavin McGrath

In this article it is time to look behind closed doors at the cinemas that have lain derelict awaiting their final outcome. The dusty seats, the ripped screens, the plaster-covered floors and the ghostly atmosphere all mark a really sad loss to places of former glory.



The Odeon in Cambridge Street Aylesbury opened in June 1937 and was one of a number of houses designed for the circuit by Andrew Mather. The 1,451-seater was tripled in August 1973 when two smaller screens were created in the rear stalls area. Its days were numbered following the arrival of the ABC multiplex cinema elsewhere in the town and it closed in October 1999. Sainsbury's Supermarkets purchased the building in the hope of building a new store on the site but, despite being given planning permission, it ended up in the hands of Churchill Homes who announced they would build retirement flats on the plot. Either way, demolition of the cinema was inevitable and the bulldozers finally arrived in March 2017, almost a year behind schedule. The above picture featuring the foyer was taken in September 2015.



The Vue cinema on the Park 66 development just outside Bury was opened as a Warner in June 1989 by Liza Minnelli on what was then Pilsforth Industrial Estate. The twelve-screen multiplex, designed by the Brian Clancy Partnership, was the first for the company in the UK and was rebranded Warner Village in the mid-1990s following a substantial facelift. It became a Vue in 2004 and closed in July 2010 when the company relocated to the town centre. The 3,950-seater lay abandoned until April 2016 when the bulldozers moved in. The rest of the site was also cleared including the Megabowl, which closed in March 2012. A planning application was submitted to the Council in December 2016 for a mixed-use development to include light industrial units and retail space, including a supermarket and drive-through restaurant. The above picture was taken in December 2014.



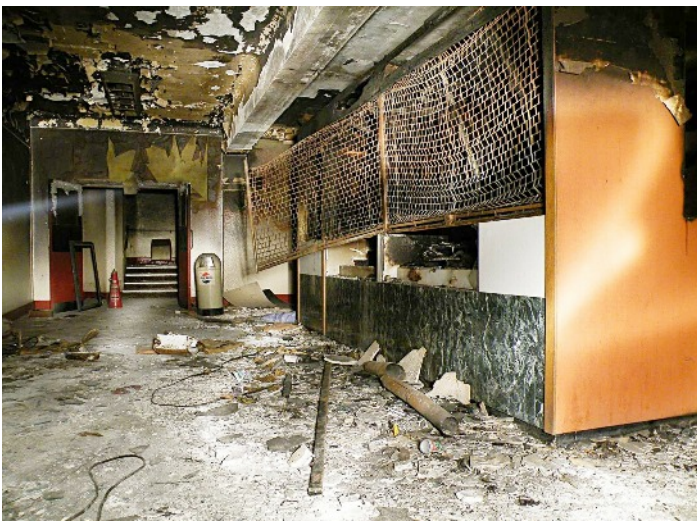
The Robins Cinema on London Road in Camberley started life as the Regal opening in August 1932. It was designed by Harold Seymour Scott and was operated by the County Cinemas chain. It was taken over by the Odeon circuit and renamed in the mid-1940s but sold to Classic in 1967 and renamed Classic. The company tripled the cinema in October 1975 at a cost of £90,000, although the Vogue Bingo Club was not affected by the change. It became a Cannon following the takeover and was set to close in February 1994 when owners MGM gave notice to staff. It was rescued however at the last minute and kept open by the Robins independent chain. The doors were eventually closed in May 2003 when the landlord received a better offer and the Sovereign Snooker Club was left as sole tenant before moving out two years later. A proposal for a lap dancing club in 2004 was met with opposition from a nearby mosque. Two fires at the building in 2006 and 2009 left the structure in bad shape and it was demolished as a result in 2013. The site is now occupied by flats.



The Odeon on The High (now West Square) in Harlow, was designed by TP Bennett & Son and opened in February 1960. The 1,244-seater originally had a stepped section at the back of the auditorium rather than a conventional balcony and became a three-screen cinema when tripled in 1987. It closed in August 2005 and despite being sold off still remains empty. It replaced the Regal, a temporary cinema built in 1952, which Rank purchased to get the advantage of the new location. The above picture is believed to feature Screen ②.

Cinema/Screen name "Regal's" alterations to name "Odeon"		
<p>Sunday, January 3rd—7 days</p> <p>Glenn Ford    Debbie Reynolds <b>IT STARTED WITH A KISS</b> Colour and Cinemascope</p>	<p>Sunday, January 17th—7 days</p> <p>Norman Wisdom <b>FOLLOW A STAR</b></p>	<p>Sunday, January 31st—7 days</p> <p>John Wayne    William Holden <b>THE HORSE SOLDIERS</b> Colour by De Luxe</p>
<p>Mickey Rooney    Steve Cochran    Marie Van Doren <b>The Big Operator</b></p>	<p>Geoffrey Hearn    Jane Hylton    Gordon Jackson <b>Devil's Bait</b></p>	<p>Sell the Atlantic with the adventures of the sea! <b>Lifeline</b> Eastman Colour</p>
<p>Sunday, January 10th—11 days</p> <p>Betty Hutton <b>THE FIVE PENNIES</b> Technicolor</p>	<p>Sunday, January 24th—7 days</p> <p>Gary Cooper    Rita Hayworth    Van Heflin <b>THEY CAME TO CORDURA</b> Technicolor    Cinemascope</p>	<p><b>THIS IS A THEATRE WITHIN THE RANK ORGANISATION</b></p>
<p>"Purple and Flares" Series With Jimmy Durante <b>The Ama Girls</b> Technicolor    Cinemascope</p>	<p><b>Senior Prom</b> Louis Prima    Keely Smith    Mirth Miller Carmen Cramer    Bob Crosby    Tami Ardon My Martin and His Orchestra</p>	





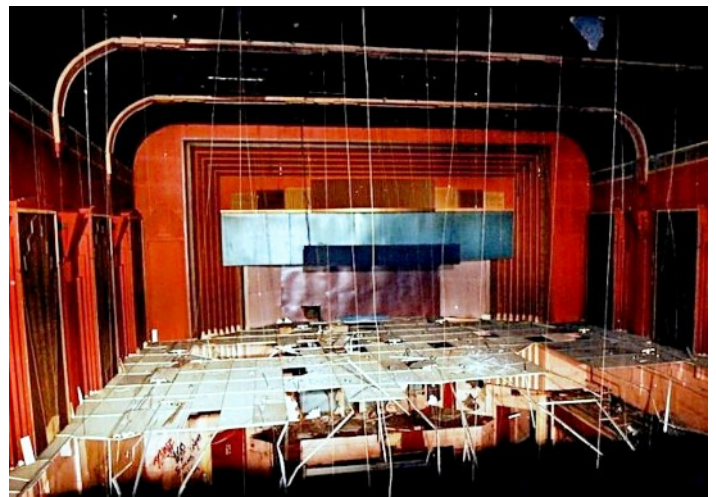
The Albert Ernest Shennan-designed **Carlton** in the Liverpool suburb of Tue Brook looks more like a sandcastle than a cinema. It opened in June 1932, was renamed **ABC** in December 1962 and was modernised in 1972 when the rear stalls were converted to a Painted Wagon pub; the cinema was then confined to the balcony. In July 1980 an independent operator took over the cinema and ran it as the **Carlton** again until closure in December 1982. It has remained unused ever since, apart from being home to a pub called The Lord Derby via the entrance on West Derby Road but this has been closed since at least 2008. It then made the news in November 2010 when the dead body of a man was found inside. It has been publicised that demolition of the building was imminent for a number of years now, to make way for housing and retail outlets but it is still standing at the time of writing. The above picture was taken in November 2009.



The **Odeon** on London Road in the North End area of Portsmouth opened in December 1936 and was another in the chain designed by Andrew Mather. The façade has an instantly recognisable tower with cream faience and green vertical stripes and is topped with red tiles. The auditorium, originally with 1,824 seats in stalls and balcony, was tripled in August 1973 and a fourth screen was added in 1990 in the front stalls. The cinema closed in January 2008 having been sold off by the company. Sainsbury's has occupied the former foyer area with one of its 'Locals' since 2013 but the screens remain unused. Urban explorers have revealed that water has penetrated the building and that some flooding has occurred in two of the screens as a result. The picture above is believed to be of Screen ②. The owners have submitted at least two proposals, most recently in March 2017, to have the auditorium demolished and replaced with new homes. It is understood that the Sainsbury's Local in the foyer area will not be affected. The picture above was taken in September 2009.

**Photos courtesy of:** Harry Seager (Odeon Aylesbury); fragglehunter (Vue); Large Pig (Robins); Jazzy D (Odeon Harlow); George Toohey (Carlton); Adam Slater (Odeon Portsmouth); phill.d (Glenroyal and Regal).

More abandoned cinemas are featured in detail at the following websites: [www.28dayslater.co.uk] and [www.derelictplaces.co.uk].



The **Glenroyal** on Briggate in Shipley [near Bradford, West Yorks] opened in September 1932 and was part of the AS Hyde circuit along with its namesake in Horsforth. It was designed by Ernest H Dawson and faced with rustic bricks and cream terracotta. The cinema closed in December 1962 and was converted to the Glen Casino, which opened in January 1963, by the then owners Star. It was EMI Bingo by 1974 and initially closed in 1982. It was reopened by Walkers and taken over by King's Leisure in 1990 becoming King's Bingo. This closed in January 2005 and the building lay derelict until gutted by fire one night in January 2013. Such was the damage caused the decision was made to demolish the building the following day. The suspended ceiling to segregate the stalls from the balcony can easily be seen in the above picture, although it had been left in severe tatters. Proposals for an apartment block on the site were unveiled in October 2007 with another for a mixed-use development in October 2015 but the site remained vacant as of September 2016.



The **Regal** on Kirkgate in Wakefield is more famous as an abandoned cinema that it was as an operating cinema and has been visited several times by urban explorers. The 1,590-seater was designed by ABC's in-house architect WR Glen and opened in December 1935. It was renamed **ABC** in the early 1960s and was tripled in November 1976 when two screens were created in the rear stalls. It was renamed **Cannon** following the takeover and closed in 1997 following the opening of the **Cineplex**. It has remained empty ever since due to a covenant having been placed on it. The picture, from December 2007, shows Screen ① from the top of the circle but what can't be seen is that the area in front of the stage has become waterlogged. A scheme to convert the former cinema into flats, shops and a rooftop garden was approved in 2009 but never went ahead and a further proposal submitted in December 2013 involved demolishing the building and replacing it with an apartment block. A return to films however is unlikely as it was announced in October 2016 that The Light chain of cinemas are planning a nine-screen multiplex adjacent to the Market Hall and Trinity Walk Shopping Centre. The Friends of ABC/Regal/Cannon Cinema Wakefield are hoping to keep memories of the cinema alive and have a very good page on the social media site Facebook.





# 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



There are plans to reopen the former **Argosy** in Bucksburn as a community hall. It is not known when the cinema opened and closed – can anyone help? It became a bingo hall and later snooker, which closed in the mid-1990s. The building is completely stripped back to the shell but evidence still exists of the former operating booth at high level, which connected directly to a private residence.

*Evening Express (Aberdeen) – 18 August; photo taken September 2008*

## BARNESLEY (South Yorks)

Plans for an Empire multiplex on top of the Alhambra Centre have been scrapped. The news comes just weeks after permission was given for ten screens instead of nine. The Council has signed up Cineworld to operate a thirteen-screen 2,400-seat cinema at The Glassworks Centre, anchored by a 450-seat 18m high 'super-screen'.

*Barnsley Chronicle – 16 June, 14 July*

## BIRMINGHAM (Longbridge)

Plans have been submitted for a nine-screen Light Cinema to be built as part of a new leisure complex overlooking the new Austin Park, on the former MG Rover site. Work is expected to commence in November and be completed in early 2019.

*Birmingham Mail, Bromsgrove Advertiser – 5 July*

## BLACKBURN (Lancs)

Restoration has begun on the grade II listed Cotton Exchange. The building used to house a five-screen **Apollo** cinema and others before that. It is to become an arts centre, which will incorporate a cinema. {24035}

*Lancashire Telegraph – 9 August; sent in by Philip Crompton*

## BLACKPOOL (Lancs)

Plans have been submitted for a new nine-screen Light cinema to be built on the Tower Street car park next to the Houndshill Centre. It will include an IMAX screen.

*Blackpool Gazette – 22 July; Lancashire Evening Post – 25 July; sent in by Carl Chesworth*

The **Regent** is to invest in a new projector and sound system. It reopened in July 2016 using 124 seats in the circle with an antiques centre in the stalls below. The building is listed grade II. {6549}

*The Gazette (Blackpool) – 16 August; sent in by Ray Dolling*

## BODMIN (Cornwall)

Plans have been approved to convert the grade II listed Public Rooms into a four-screen Merlin cinema; it will be called the **Capital**. No time scale has been given.

*Western Morning News – 15 August*

## BOGNOR REGIS (West Sussex)

James Courtage is the new manager of the three-screen Picture-drome. His appointment allows long-serving manager Louise Allsopp to concentrate on overseeing the recent acquisitions to Adam Cunnard's Electric Theatre chain. 31-year-old James started at the Picturedrome four years ago, when it was just two screens, serving as deputy manager for the last three. During this time he's also acted as relief manager at the **Plaza** Dorchester and the **Maxime** Blackwood. A fourth screen is currently under construction with an opening date pencilled in for the beginning of 2018. {14782}

*Sent in by Mike Whitcombe*

## BORTH (Ceredigion)

**Libanus 1877** opened on 7 July as a fully-equipped 4k cinema with 59 seats. It is currently offering three daily shows of latest releases. The cinema is housed in a chapel that had been disused for a number of years, while still being kept in good condition, with the auditorium on the ground floor and a restaurant that opened in March above. Screen tabs are in use and there is a small stage. Borth is a village of about 1,400 people augmented in summer with visitors staying in surrounding caravan parks. It is seven miles north of Aberystwyth, which itself has two full-time single-screen cinemas. Despite its small size, the village is still connected to the national rail network with a station on the Aberystwyth to Shrewsbury line. [www.libanus1877.com]

*Sent in by Jeremy Perkins*

## BOURNEMOUTH

Plans have been submitted to demolish the former **ABC** and replace it with flats but retaining the façade, if it still exists under the cladding. The local Civic Society has said there is no justification for the demolition and has lodged an objection. It has said that it is likely that a significant amount of the original interior remains, hidden by the 1970s twinning. {24207}

*Daily Echo (Bournemouth) – 29 July, 7 August; sent in by John Forster, Geoff Gill & Philip Stevens*

Odeon has said that the sound levels in the iSense screen at the BH2 complex are in line with regulations, following a number of complaints that it is too loud. The issue has been highlighted with the popularity of *Dunkirk*; one patron said it wasn't so much the volume but the bass levels. Odeon said the sound systems are checked monthly. Earlier, a power failure had caused the cinema to close for a few hours on 2 August.

*Daily Echo (Bournemouth) – 2, 20 August; sent in by John Forster & Philip Stevens*

## BOVEY TRACEY (Devon)

There are ambitious plans to restore the derelict grade II listed **King of Prussia** pub and convert it into a cinema, theatre, arts centre and a fine dining restaurant.

*Herald Express (Torquay) – 19 July*

## BOWNESS-ON-WINDERMERE (Cumbria)



The **Royalty** celebrated its official 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on 22 July. There was a concert on the Wurlitzer organ, which was also used to accompany the 1923 silent film *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. The cinema actually opened on 24 February 1927 and was then called the **Public Hall**; the name is still visible on the façade. The flat stalls floor had removable seats and a maple dance floor for conversion to a ballroom. There were 600 seats in stalls and balcony. It was renamed the **Royalty** in 1930 and a second 100-seat screen was added on the



stage in 1995. The following year a 65-seat screen was added in the former circle lounge. The original auditorium remains substantially unaltered but now with 400 seats. The Wurlitzer organ also dates from 1927 and was originally installed in the Almira theatre in Cleveland, Ohio. It was shipped to England and fitted in the Rex Stratford, East London in 1936. After being in storage for many years, it was installed in the Royalty in 2012. {18521}

*Westmorland Gazette – 13 July; sent in by Philip Crompton; photo taken June 2008*

### BRACKNELL (Berks)

A new eleven-screen Cineworld was due to open on 15 September. It will have a 4DX screen.

*Bracknell News – 2 August*

### BRIERLEY HILL (Dudley)

Plans to turn the former Danilo into a theatre were refused. It opened in December 1936 and films ceased in February 1969. It became a bingo club until 2000, since when it has been a succession of night-clubs. {37851}

*Express & Star – 11 August; sent in by Chris Ingram via Carl Chesworth*

### BRYNMAWR (Blaenau Gwent)

The 320-seat Market Hall Cinema was officially reopened on 12 July by Newport-born actor Michael Sheen. It had been closed temporarily due to asbestos fears. There are plans for a 130-seat second screen in an adjacent building. The CTA visited after the AGM in May. {26576}

*South Wales Argus – 4, 13 July*

### BURGESS HILL (West Sussex)

A ten-screen Cineworld is to be built in the town centre. It should be open by 2020.

*Argus (Brighton) – 25 July*

### BURNHAM MARKET (Norfolk)

The Hoste Arms in Burnham Market (aka Chelsea by the Sea) now has a 20-seat cinema where you can view films while being served drinks by a "personal waiter". Presumably Kia Ora won't be on offer. [tinyurl.com/y7bapfsf]

*Sent in by Terry Hanstock*

### BURNLEY (Lancs)

Plans have been submitted to turn the entrance area of the former Empire Theatre into a café bar with a rear terrace and balcony. There is a campaign to reopen the main part of the grade II listed building, which has been empty since 1995 and is in serious decline. A new study has shown it would not be financially viable if reopened. {36755}

*Burnley Express – 3, 16 August; Lancashire Telegraph – 17 August; sent in by Philip Crompton*

### CAMBRIDGE

An IMAX screen opened on 21 July in screen ⑨ at the Light cinema (ex Cineworld), Screens ① to ⑧ will be re-stepped and fitted with luxury seating during September and October, two auditoria at a time.

*Cambridge Independent – 26 July; Cambridge News – 4 August*

### CANVEY ISLAND (Essex)



The owner of the four-screen Movie Starr has been forced to monitor the door of the cinema after two groups of travellers arrived on the seafront. They were sneaking in to watch films and stealing the pick and mix. The Council has been very proactive in its response. {14619}

*Basildon, Canvey & Southend Echo – 31 July; photo taken July 2007*

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### CHORLEY (Lancs)

The site has been cleared and building work is about to commence on the Market Walk shopping centre extension. It will incorporate a Reel cinema.

*Lancashire Telegraph – 5 August*

### CHRISTCHURCH (Dorset)



The Regent had a scheduled closure in July whilst refurbishment was carried out in the bar. However, the closure was extended when a fault was revealed on the outside of the building. A full structural survey was called and the venue was able to reopen using the stalls only. Work started on 21 August to strengthen one of the main columns used to support the balcony, which was expected to reopen on 8 September. More serious repairs are being planned and expected to be carried out in summer 2018. Meanwhile, temporary scaffolding will be put in place this autumn to provide support to the south east wall of the auditorium. {24540} *Photo taken May 2006.*

*Daily Echo (Bournemouth) – 15, 22 July, 21 August; sent in by Philip Stevens*

### COLERAINE (County Londonderry, Northern Ireland)

The Jet Centre was evacuated after an electrical fire during a screening of the World War Two film *Dunkirk*. The cinema was evacuated briefly after a stage speaker in the cinema screen apparently short-circuited.

*BBC News; sent in by Bob Bradshaw*

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# STORYHOUSE CHESTER



Storyhouse is a major new civic cultural hub presenting drama, film and literature, housed in the shell of the 1930s Odeon. Storyhouse aims to connect people through storytelling and brings theatre and cinema back to Chester after a decade-long absence.

The building includes a new 800-seat main theatre space, a studio, 100-seat cinema and library with over 700m of shelving. The shelving is arranged over three levels in the old auditorium, with direction notices such as 'Fiction' and 'Philosophy' in the entrance foyer. There is a curved screen of shelving at the rear of the Odeon main space. It uses a dark stained and lacquered plywood carcass to create the Art Deco style. The joinery also includes a routed diamond shape to continue the Art Deco theme. The same finish and diamond shape was used throughout the building, in the bar and restaurant areas, computer benching and even on the lift shaft.

In the stalls area the tables and computers for browsing coexist with a centrally-placed bar serving meals, with one area for more formal dining. One of the best preserved features I noticed was the original stairway to the circle foyer. The entrance to the new theatre is through the proscenium of the Odeon. In the very comfortable new cinema (in the old circle area) there are screen tabs in use. The building is open 12 hours a day. [2514] [www.storyhouse.com]

*Sent in by David Ellis, Terry Hanstock, Richard Lysons & Jeremy Perkins*

