

50  
years

CINEMA  
THEATRE  
ASSOCIATION

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

# BULLETIN

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The Regal Bathgate (West Lothian). The charity that runs it has gone into liquidation – see Newsreel p24; photo taken April 2006



The former Ritz Clipstone (Notts), which has recently been demolished – see Newsreel p25; photo taken September 2006



## FROM YOUR EDITOR

The new *Rewinding Back* feature seems to have been very popular, as I have received a lot of submissions – too many to include in this issue but I'll try to deal with them all in due course. I also haven't had space for any holiday snaps or a Necrology this time but I've still got the items you sent in. As I said last time, my supply will run out eventually so keep them coming. Just a reminder that everything you send me eventually finds its way into the CTA Archive; if you want something returning, please say so and include SAE – many thanks to those who already do.

In my last editorial, I included a picture of a street sign *Cinema Street* and asked you where it was. We had just cycled the Hull to Hornsea greenway on the former railway line and I took the photo down the side of the former Star in Hornsea, East Yorkshire. The 351-seat cinema was a conversion of a former Assembly Rooms. It was demolished in 1973 and a library built on the site. {48184}



This time I have a puzzle picture sent in by Allen Eyles. Where is (or was) this ABC? Again, the clue is 'some-where in England'. No prizes, answer on p19.

I would welcome feedback on the *Internet Corner* feature in the Bulletin. Do you find it useful or is typing in long URLs [website addresses] too painstaking? If they are too long I always generate a 'tinyURL'. Don't forget that these are case-sensitive so it does matter whether you use capitals or lower case.

On p13 Hector Hill has sourced an article on the coming of sound to films. In it he mentions non-sync records. This opens up an opportunity for someone to write an article on the (legal) use of gramophone records for non-sync in cinemas. Could it be you?

This is the last issue of our golden anniversary year. We hope you have enjoyed a look back at some of the things that happened in 1967. In this issue I have reprinted some articles from the Bulletin Volume 1 of that year. The article on p9 of the reopening of the Odeon Leicester Square after 'modernisation' caused me to chuckle – it talks about Victorian 70mm projectors. We are not amused.

Harry Rigby, CTA Bulletin Editor



DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE  
WEDNESDAY 20 DECEMBER

## 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. PRODUCTS: The Cinema Theatre Association does not necessarily recommend or endorse any products or services advertised in the Bulletin or in any flyer or document included in any mailings to members.

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# VISITS AND EVENTS

## Christmas with Mirth in Walthamstow



### Wednesday 20 December

This year's Christmas celebration will be held at the Mirth, Marvel & Maud bar located in what were the foyer areas of the former Granada/EMD, Hoe Street, Walthamstow in north-east London.

The Granada, dating from 1930, was one of the most spectacular of the circuit's cinemas – designed by Cecil Masey, with the interior decoration by Theodore Komisarjevsky – and is now listed Grade II\*.

The auditorium awaits restoration but meanwhile the Antic pub group is utilising the foyers to good effect – 'Mirth' conjures up the convivial atmosphere of a pub, 'Marvel' is the main auditorium and 'Maud' refers to one of the screening rooms under the balcony! We hope to see the left-hand screening room but most likely not the main auditorium. We have also arranged to visit the adjacent multiplex, the Empire, opened last year. This forms part of a residential and retail development with Pollard Thomas Edwards being the architects. It comprises nine screens and we hope to have a guided tour of all of them.

5:00pm – Empire visit;

6:30pm – Granada Christmas party.

CTA Christmas parties are always great fun. Wine or soft drinks and special nibbles will be served. Tickets, £12.00 each, available in advance please, from Richard Gray, 45 Arnold Road, London E3 4NU. Please enclose SAE, with cheques made out to the Cinema Theatre Association. The Mirth, Marvel & Maud also serves suppers and tables for this can be booked when requesting tickets for the party.

**Getting There:** The Empire is almost on the corner of Hoe Street and the High Street in Walthamstow. The best way to get there is by taking the Victoria Line tube or London Overground to Walthamstow Central. From the Victoria Line proceed up the stairs to the Overground platform and turn right on coming out of the station, then turn left to walk 3 minutes up Hoe Street. The Empire is on the left at the junction with the High Street. The Granada ('Mirth') still displaying its EMD vertical sign is next door, around the corner to the right of the Empire.

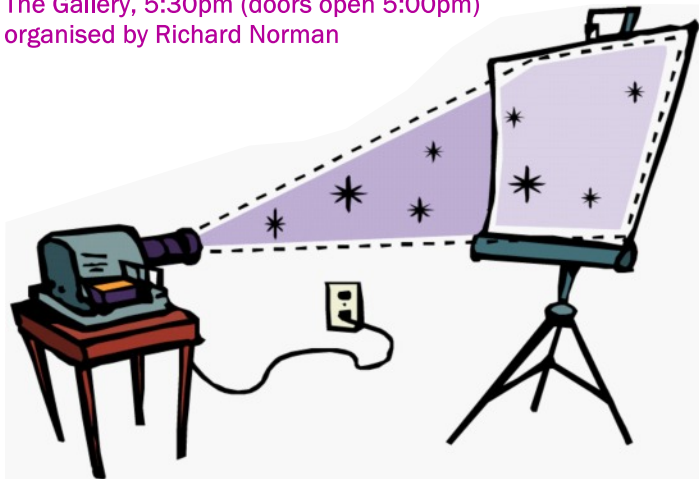
Richard Gray, Ken Roe [photo] and Kevin Gooding

## Members' Slide Show and Social

Saturday 13 January

The Gallery, 5:30pm (doors open 5:00pm)

organised by Richard Norman



## KALEIDOSCOPE

This year's Members' Slide Show, really lurches forward into some movies at various points, promising a kaleidoscope of members' interesting and different offerings received and others that are currently under preparation for display on the 'big screen'.

An opportunity to socialise with members and guests with light refreshments including wine available. The CTA's bookstall will be open for the purchase of a wide range of cinema history books and other related topics. (Credit/Debit cards accepted.)

If any member wishes to present some cinema-related photos, stills, movies, recordings, a story or ephemera, etc, please email: [RichardNormanCTA@aol.com]

**Venue:** The Gallery, at Alan Baxter Associates, 75 Cowcross Street, Farringdon, London, EC1M 6EL (see overleaf for travel directions).

**Admittance:** £8.00 on the door. Guests welcome.

(Includes light refreshments.)

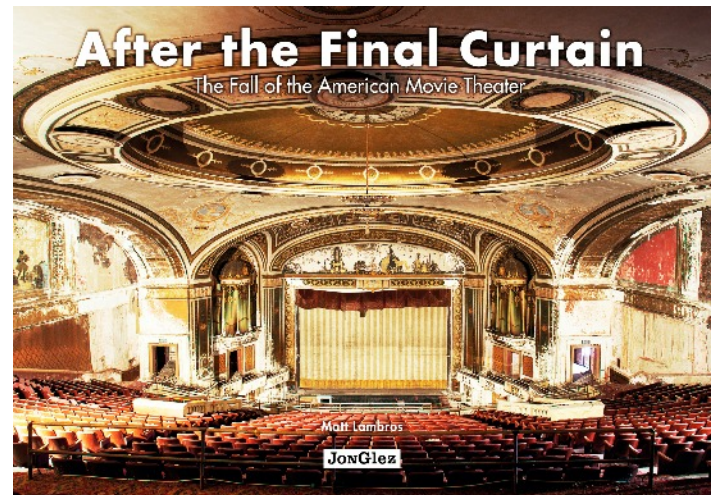
## After The Final Curtain

Illustrated talk by Matt Lambros

Saturday 24 February

The Gallery, 5:30pm (doors open 5:00pm)

Our guest speaker is visiting the CTA from the US where he has acquired a strong reputation for the quality of his photographic and publications work of movie palaces. We are pleased to welcome him to the UK for the first time to sample some of his creative work.



"There's nothing remarkable about most movie theaters today but that wasn't always the case. Before the birth of the multiplex, going to the movies was an event akin to attending a Broadway show. Eventually, the nickelodeons, vaudeville and opera houses of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century merged to form the dramatic, now virtually extinct movie palace.

In the early years, most movie palaces gave films second billing, showing vaudeville performances as the main act. As motion pictures became more popular, theaters began to open in towns across the country. Apart from being a center of entertainment and social life, theaters were the great equalizer for the lower, middle and upper classes; as in Shakespeare's Globe theater, varying ticket prices put seeing a movie within reach for all social classes, from the very rich to the very poor.

With the emergence of the multiplex theater, management companies found it more and more difficult to fill the seats, leaving movie palaces with largely uncertain futures. Some were demolished, some were renovated for other uses and some remain derelict to this day. *After the Final Curtain: The Fall of the American Movie Theater* will shed some light on what remains after the last ticket was sold."

**Venue:** The Gallery, at Alan Baxter Associates, 75 Cowcross Street, Farringdon, London EC1M 6EL (see overleaf for travel directions).

**Admittance:** £10.00 on the door. Guests welcome.

(Includes wine and light refreshments)

... Events continue on next page



**Getting to The Gallery:** On leaving Farringdon (old) station (not the Turnmill Street exit), turn left – or when leaving Farringdon Main Line station, turn right – and walk east 150 yards towards ‘Snappy Snaps’ shop. Entrance to The Gallery is opposite; walk through the large gates, cross the courtyard to the far end, turn right down the steps and you’re there!



## Northern Region Presentation.

A chance to see the CTA presentation originally held in London on 18 November 2017.

## Brief Encounters on Film

by Richard Norman

Saturday 3 February at 1:30pm (doors open 12:30pm)



An illustrated talk depicting various cinema and theatre buildings (interiors and exteriors) used during location scenes in feature films. There will be a 30-minute prelude on one of the cinema organs housed at the Heritage Centre. Presentation concludes at about 4:00pm.

**Venue:** The Theatre Organ Heritage Centre, Alexandra Road, Peel Green, Eccles, Manchester, M30 7HJ (with free parking).

**Admission:** £5.00 – tickets sold on the door.  
Light refreshments available.

This presentation is held in collaboration with the Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust (LTOT).

## 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 12 January *Viceroy's House* (2017) [12A] at 11am  
Friday 12 January *Metropolis* (1927) [PG] at 7:30pm  
Friday 19 January *Victoria and Abdul* (2017) [PG]  
Sunday 21 January *Blow-Up* (1966) [15] at 7:00pm  
Friday 26 January *The Graduate* (1967) 12A

Films at 11am & 7:30pm except where stated.

Behind the Scenes tours at 11am on Monday 29 January;  
£6 – book or simply turn up.

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

### THE FECKENODEON (Worcestershire, B96 6HN)

This year's programme is now on-line. CTA members wishing to attend can book tickets (£5) at [www.fecknodeon.co.uk] or by phone through TicketSource on 0333 666 3366 (local call rate) – or you can contact the Society directly on [films@fecknodeon.co.uk].

25 November *Hidden Figures* (2017) [PG]  
30 December *School For Scoundrels* (1960) [U]  
27 January *All The President's Men* (1976) [15]  
Shows on Saturdays at 7:30pm. Licensed bar at all performances.

### THE REGAL EXPERIENCE, WYMONDHAM

Sunday 10 December *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation* (1989) [12] + *Mickey's Christmas Carol*

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

### THE FOURTH RENOWN FILM FESTIVAL

Sunday 11 February. Open from 9am to 6pm. Tickets £15.00.  
Watersmeet Leisure Centre, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire, WD3 1EH.

Presented by the people behind the TV channel *Talking Pictures*. A day of lost film & TV show screenings and appearance by guest stars including Rita Tushingham, Melvyn Hayes, Brian Murphy, Derren Nesbitt and Shirley Ann Field. A variety of stalls including film memorabilia, books, DVDs, including the CTA sales stall.

Information: [www.renownfilms.co.uk]  
Ticket bookings: 01923 290555.

# 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; <b>Ideal</b> Lambeth; Dursley; Alister Macdonald; Granada Tooting.
No 21	£3.50	100 Years On; Travelling Shows; Reggie Rea; <b>Albert Hall</b> Sheffield; <b>Regal</b> 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; <b>Carlton</b> Swansea; Committee's Choice.
No 26	£4.50	Paramount Newcastle; Edward Stone; Granada Men; E de Wilde Holding; <b>Electric</b> Portobello Road.
No 27	£4.50	New Victoria/Apollo; <b>Whiteladies</b> 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; <b>Apollo</b> 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	<b>Beaufort</b> 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 <b>Clifton</b> Circuit; Jeremy Perkins on Brighton; Circuit Releases of 1960.
No 37	£8.50	Special 92-page issue; saving the <b>Electric Palace</b> Harwich.
No 38	£6.00	Northern Morris Associated; <b>Point</b> Milton Keynes; Going to the Cinema in Birmingham; <b>Palace</b> Conwy; <b>Carlton</b> Haymarket; Military Cinemas; Cinema Murders.
No 39	£6.00	WWI and the Film Trade; Tale of Two <b>Regals</b> ; Odeon North Finchley; <b>Majestic</b> Oxford; Films at the <b>Royal Albert Hall</b> .
No 40	£6.00	<b>Tolmer</b> Euston; Michael Stringer memories; West End in the 1950s; Stafford Entertainments; Will Onda & James Atroy; Stephen Waddingham – a <b>Granada</b> man.
No 41	£6.00	CTA's 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary; <b>Plaza</b> Stockport; Grosvenor Rayners Lane; <b>Majestic</b> 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.





## 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 on p2.  
please add £3.00 for 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!

## Still Available (reviewed in previous issues)

- **Electric Pictures – Films, Film-makers and Cinemas of Worthing & Shoreham.** £12.99 plus postage.
- **Off T'flicks In Old Aireborough – Guiseley, Rawdon and Yeadon.** £9.95 plus postage.
- **Screen Stories – Lewes.** £8.99 plus postage

## Ordering

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

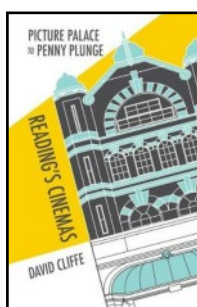
Orders to Jeremy Buck, CTA Sales, 34, Pelham Road, London, N22 6LN. Cheques/POs payable to Cinema Theatre Association, or send credit/debit card number with expiry date and security code. A complete sales list is available by sending an SAE or can be seen on the CTA website [www.cta-uk.org] where you can also place your order. using PayPal. A sales list is sent with every order.

## Also Available (but not from the Sales Officer)

### Picture Palace to Penny Plunge – Reading's Cinemas

by David Cliffe. 112 pages, A5 paperback, illustrated. £12.00.  
Published by Two Rivers Press (www.tworiverspress.com),  
ISBN 978-1-909747-31-9.

Twenty different cinemas have graced Reading's streets over the years, many long-forgotten and some of the earliest very short lived. This book tells the story of the era of the single-screen cinema, from travelling shows and early Electric Theatres, through the art-deco 1930s to the present day multiplexes and outdoor screenings. It traces the technological developments too and describes each cinema and also includes appendices listing some of the films made in or near Reading and some of the actors and directors with Reading connections. Illustrated throughout with contemporary photographs and drawings, the book is a good record of the town's cinematic history.



### London Theatres

By Michael Coveney, 272 pages, hardback, RRP £30  
Published by Frances Lincoln,  
available from Waterstones, Amazon etc.  
ISBN 978-0-711238-61-9

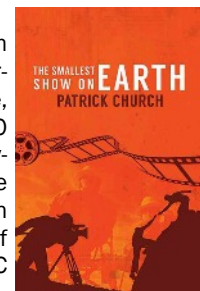
Leading theatre critic Michael Coveney invites you on a tour of forty-six of the theatres that make London what it is, with stories of the architecture, the productions and the personalities that have defined each one. Sumptuous photographs by Peter Dazeley of the public areas, auditoria and backstage areas complete the picture.



## The Smallest Show on Earth – an autobiography

by Patrick Church. 232 pages, paperback, illustrated. £9.99.  
Published by Austin Macauley (www.austinmacauley.com),  
available through Amazon, Waterstones, etc  
and from the Abbeygate Cinema, Bury St Edmunds.  
ISBN 978-1-7862979-9-0.

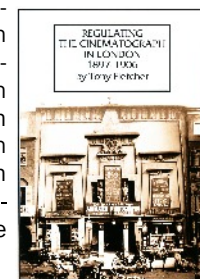
Patrick has worked in the cinema business from the 1960s to the present day, beginning in Peterborough and continuing now at the Abbeygate, Bury St Edmunds, where he has been for 50 years. He describes his early life in the countryside and the various stages of his career and the fascinating history of his present cinema, which since opening in 1924 has had many changes of ownership. From large chains like Cannon, ABC and Odeon, through Star, Hollywood Cinemas, Picture House / Cineworld to the present independent operation. At one time it was the smallest MGM-branded cinema! Pat reckons he has worked for twelve different owners at Bury but has always managed to “dodge the bullet” and stay on! An interesting read.



## Regulating the Cinematograph in London 1897-1906

By Tony Fletcher. ISBN 978-1-910722-06-0. £15

Readers of Tony Fletcher's 2013 publication *A Kinematograph Journey Through London 1907-8* will welcome this latest work in the same A4 format, covering earlier years in a somewhat similar approach. It begins with places showing film in London before the first cinematograph regulations came into effect in November 1898. It then presents a selection of over 100 places where film exhibition took place between 1899 and 1906 in the various areas of London, alphabetically from Battersea to Woolwich – only one, the Daily Bioscope in the City of London, would seem to have been specially opened as a full-time cinema.



Fletcher uses Fire Brigade reports and other records of films being shown and the book is very lavishly illustrated with photographs, plans, programmes and publicity material, mostly from the London Metropolitan Archives. The author is simply happy to record the facts and not draw any conclusions and generally gives no indication of what happened at these venues after 1906. Anyone with an interest in London local history or the earliest manifestations of film exhibition will find this a valuable and entertaining book. It is not currently available on Amazon.

Available with free postage and packing for CTA members from the author Tony Fletcher at 11 Claverdale Road, London SW2 2DJ.  
Phone: 0208 671 6551 Email: [celluloidtapestry@hotmail.com]

Review by Allen Eyles



A **MUST** for your collection

## CINEMAS IN BRITAIN

A History of Cinema Architecture

by Richard Gray

First published in 1996 to celebrate the centenary of cinema in the UK. In this fully revised edition, the text has been completely rewritten and expanded and there are extra photographs, 10 in full colour. Of particular interest is the 24-page gazetteer of cinema buildings, telling the reader what there is to see in most places in the UK. There are useful appendices about listed cinemas, a glossary of architectural terms and a comprehensive bibliography.

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

Special price for CTA members  
£29.50 + £6.00 postage from  
Jeremy Buck, CTA Sales Officer

34 Pelham Road, Wood Green, London, N22 6LN



# CAMPAIGNING TO SAVE YOUR HISTORIC CINEMAS

By Tim Hatcher

## Grade II Listed

The trust campaigning to restore the **Royalty** at Harborne has assembled a management board that includes several high-profile members. It has been granted £5,000 by the local authority as an initial amount to finance consultancy studies. {33866}



The Ritz Nuneaton on bingo in June 2003

The local Council in Nuneaton is to be encouraged to serve an enforcement notice upon the owner of the Ritz in order to facilitate swift repair to the roof of the structure. See Newsreel p28. {25909}



The Stephen Joseph Theatre Scarborough in August 2007

Objection has been forwarded to plans proposing yet more damaging alterations to the Odeon – now **Stephen Joseph Theatre** – in Scarborough, permission for which has been sought from the local Council. The scheme would involve drastic revision to the foyer areas, which currently comprise the only original internal elements not severely compromised previously. These works would also include insertion of new fenestration, which additionally would impact adversely upon the building's external appearance. {1843}

Overall the refurbishment project presented for the Odeon / Everyman in York is deemed acceptable, yet the intention of laying parquet flooring in the first-floor foyer has drawn forth objection from the Association, which regards this as an inappropriate intervention. {2788}

## Unlisted

Numerous local residents of Peterborough objected to a planning application to convert the Odeon / Broadway into residential and business units; encouragingly this was refused subsequently by the local Council, which wishes to retain the venue for entertainment purposes. It is now anticipated that the building will reopen as a theatre expeditiously, despite the constraints imposed by its limited staging facilities. See Newsreel p29. {19950}

A scheme to retain the **Regent** in Bournemouth has met predominantly with approval from local residents. The proponents are attempting to raise funds for a feasibility study into the viability of such an undertaking. The covenant preventing use of the building for film exhibition may prove a stumbling block, as may ownership by development company **Libra Homes**, which is likely to submit modified plans for housing. These will prove challenging for the local Council to reject if they fall within the strictures imposed for the cinema's redevelopment. See Newsreel p24.

The same developer owns the nearby **ABC / Westover**, for which site planning permission has also been sought. The new structure would not breach height restrictions for the locale and thus refusal may prove problematic; the Association has nevertheless objected. Particular concern arises over the suggestion that a replica may be substituted for the extant original façade.



The Danilo / Essoldo [etc] Hinckley in September 2005

As no strategy for the reuse of the **Danilo** at Hinckley has emerged and alternative employment of the site is likely to be sought, the Association has suggested retention of the significant elements of the façade, including the noteworthy corner entrance of Germanic influence. {14982}

The local Council has recently taken into storage the panels of the frieze from the frontage of the **Gaumont** in Doncaster until hopefully a new permanent location may be identified. {18617}

It is regrettable to report that during the demolition of the **Odeon** in Aylesbury the terrazzo floor in the lower foyer was also destroyed. The CTA had advocated its preservation. {24121}



The Embassy Chadwell Heath in July 2006

Following an application strongly supported by the CTA, the **Embassy** in Chadwell Heath has recently been granted Asset of Community Value status. {14646}

The **Gaumont** at Wednesbury is to return to film exhibition with an investment of two million pounds allotted to its renovation. The CTA was successful in gaining inclusion of this cinema in the local conservation area. See p30 last Bulletin. {32515}



# WELSH CASEWORK

By John Skinner

SWANSEA / ABERTAWE



A planning application has been lodged by Boss Brewing of Swansea to set up a new micro-brewery and tap room in the Grade II listed former Landore Cinema a mile north of Swansea City Centre and close to the Liberty Stadium. The brewery wants to repaint the building grey with black window frames and entrance doors (currently painted white and red respectively). It also plans to do some re-plastering and recladding of the interior walls with plaster board.

CTA Cymru (Wales) does not object to the change of use but has expressed concern that any modifications to the interior do not alter any of the original plasterwork that survives and that the proscenium and vaulted ceiling should be preserved. The Conservation Officer of Swansea City Council and the Victorian Society have also expressed concern at the lack of precise detail in the application. The building operated most recently as Casey's Builders Merchants' warehouse.

The Landore Cinema opened on 18 November 1913 and was one of the first of Swansea's early cinemas to close, in 1939. Its opening publicity described the building as "one of the prettiest and cosiest theatres in South Wales" with the engagement of a bijou orchestra to accompany the films.

Other purpose-built suburban cinemas that opened around the same time were the Gem, Morriston (3 March 1914) now an exhaust and tyre centre, the Pictorium, St Thomas (4 September 1913) now demolished and the Uplands Cinema, Uplands Crescent (11 April 1914), now demolished.

## 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

### 2018 Cinema Calendar

With twelve different colour photos of British Cinemas old and new: Ashbourne Elite; Chard Cerdic; Coventry Odeon multiplex; Doncaster Woodlands Picture House; Gloucester Regal / ABC; Huddersfield Grand; Macclesfield Picture-drome; Richmond upon Thames Odeon; Sheffield Capitol; Snodland Wardona; Sutton in Ashfield Kings; Wolverhampton Odeon.

Still only £6, including postage. Please make cheque payable to Harry Rigby or simply send £5 note plus two loose first-class stamps to:

Harry Rigby, 65 Tennyson Avenue, Harrogate, HG1 3LE or email [harry.rigby@ntlworld.com] for details of how to pay by EFT and save yourself a stamp!



## THE CINEMA MUSEUM

The old Lambeth Workhouse where Charlie Chaplin spent some of his childhood has been home to The Cinema Museum for 19 years.

Despite numerous attempts to buy the building over the years and promises in writing from SLAM (South London and Maudsley NHS Trust) that they would sell it to the Museum for a fair and independent price; they are now planning to sell at speed to the highest bidder, telling them The Cinema Museum's lease expires in March 2018, implying that we can be easily evicted.

The Museum has never asked SLAM for charity – it is prepared to pay a fair price to secure its home and its future so why does SLAM keep refusing to do that? The Cinema Museum is willing to work with potential developers to find a solution that provides affordable housing without destroying cinema heritage, our Museum and our important community-wellbeing work.

What SLAM may be forgetting is that the Museum is entirely run by volunteers at no cost to the public purse and it has a committed following – proven when the Museum recently won the Time Out Love London award.

We call on Dr Matthew Patrick and the board of SLAM, to keep their promise, be fair to the Museum, who have provided vital community services (as well as housing the country's most significant collection of cinema memorabilia) and agree to work with us to find a solution that guarantees not just their sale profits but also our sustainable future.

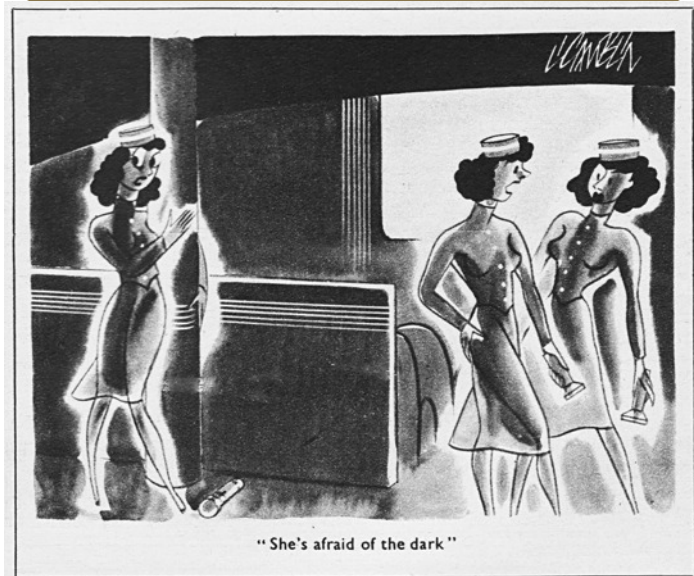
Please sign the [change.org](https://change.org) on-line petition at [\[tinyurl.com/y7n8z9om\]](https://tinyurl.com/y7n8z9om)

At the time of writing [end of October], 13,186 signatures have been gathered.



Staff and volunteers outside The Cinema Museum

## CARTOON CORNER



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



# FROM CTA BULLETIN VOLUME 1, 1967

## C.T.A. News

The Association has now been in existence for one year, a very difficult year in many ways, with the Secretary, Chairman and Editor being away from London for varying lengths of time. During the year, the Association has to date visited 4 cinemas and held 3 meetings of general interest. 6 issues of the Bulletin have been distributed.

We are grateful to all those who have shown an interest in the activities of the Association, in particular the Granada Circuit, Association British Cinemas and the management of the Ionic Golders Green and The Astoria Brixton. Thanks must also go to Miss Jackie Powell at the British Film Institute for making the small cinema of the National Film Theatre available for our meetings.

In order to cater for members outside of London, the Association is forming two branches - A West Country Branch and A Midlands and Northern Branch. The organiser for the West Country Branch will be our Chairman, Eric George (21 Upton Road, Torquay, Devon) and the organiser for the Midlands and Northern Branch will be Kenneth Roe (27 Walnut Avenue, Alvaston, Derby). Mr. Roe is at present temporary manager of the Royal Hippodrome Theatre, West Derby Road, Liverpool 6 (Tel. ANfield 6430), and he will be pleased to take members or friends round this interesting building, which was converted into a cinema in 1939.

Vital Statistics: Board of Trade figures for 1967, when compared with those for 1966, illustrate the continuing gradual decline of the cinema in Britain. Attendance dropped from 288.8 million to 264.8 million, a decline of 8% Gross box office takings however only declined by 3%, from £59.4 million to £57.6 million, the average admission price having risen during the year from 49.4d to 52.2d. The total number of cinemas in business dropped from 1,847 to 1,736, excluding 33 houses temporarily closed, an annual drop of 111 cinemas. In terms of seating capacities, small cinemas, that is those with 500 or less seats, declined by 17, from 342 to 325; those seating from 501 to 1,000 by 25, from 480 to 455; those seating from 1,501 to 2,000 by 18, from 263 to 245; and, finally, those super palaces seating over 2,000 by 15, from 94 to 79.

## For Your Diary

The next C.T.A. visit will be to the Rank Organisation's Palace Theatre, Tottenham High Road, on Sunday 28th January 1968 at 3 p.m. Opened in 1908, as a music hall, it is a good example of an Edwardian suburban variety theatre. It is one of the few cinemas with back projection, and still has emergency gas lighting.

For those travelling from Central London, the 2.27 p.m. train from Liverpool Street to Bruce Grove might be convenient. The Palace is about 5 minutes walk from the station. Tottenham is also well served by buses from many parts of London.

There is a possibility that after visiting the Palace, we shall visit the Bruce Grove Cinema, only five minutes walk away. This cinema, now a Star Bingo and Social Club, had 1,729 seats and opened in 1921.

The Association wishes all its members a happy and prosperous New Year.



# FROM CTA BULLETIN VOLUME 1, 1967

## THE ODEON, LEICESTER SQUARE

The new-look Odeon, Leicester Square, reopened on 28th December 1967 with the premiere of Paramount's SMASHING TIME.

The familiar front of house, famous for the dominating tower, is basically unchanged, but there is now a huge eyecatching interior lit sign, a new canopy stretching along the entire frontage, and new style plate glass doors.

The entrance foyer is completely restyled to give an attractive appearance, with an island pay box and contemporary sales kiosk.

The ceiling is given a spectacular effect through the use of triangular modules of alternate polished and anadised aluminium, while teak panelling is used extensively on the walls.

This effect is continued in the circle lounge, where the ceiling has been lowered to give the area a greater sense of space.

In the lounge there is also a licensed bar area, with two separate units.

In the auditorium red appears to be the dominant colour.

But in fact, the seating is in an unusual alternating pattern of red, orange and mauve.

The carpeting, in the same colour, continues the theme set in the foyer and lounge.

The auditorium has been completely redecorated, and the seating respaced, so that the capacity of the theatre has been reduced by 74 to 1,994.

The actual seats were made at Rank Audio Visual's factory at Goldbourne, Lancs. The new proscenium curtains, made at Rank Audio Visual's London display workshops, are in satin, with multi-coloured panels.

The proscenium arch has been reshaped into a contemporary style, and the screen itself is also new, with a 52ft by 26ft Harkness Perlux model.

The theatre is equipped with three Victorian x 70/35mm projectors, fitted with Super Zenith 450 arc lamps.

The Compton organ has been retained.

W. Smith

## The Regal Edmonton

On December 17th we visited the Rank Organisation's Regal Theatre, Edmonton. Opened in 1934, originally as a 3,000 seater (now 2,500), it represents a magnificent example of the suburban, super picture palace, occupying as it does a large and valuable corner site dominating the surrounding townscape. The famous banqueting rooms (once the cafe), the great revolving stage with its four lifts, the former huge waiting rooms, the unique masonic temple, the attractive proscenium lighting and curtaining, all these features made the visit memorable, let alone the beautifully proportioned auditorium, which although huge remains intimate

Shortly the Regal will be "double decked" with bingo in the present stalls area and a small modern cinema above. It was unfortunate that so few members participated in this interesting visit to one of the dwindling number of super cinemas in the London region. It is hoped that better visits will be better supported.

Marcus Ellis



# CINEMA NEWS – 50 YEARS AGO

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

Compiled by Harry Rigby & Ken Roe

### November

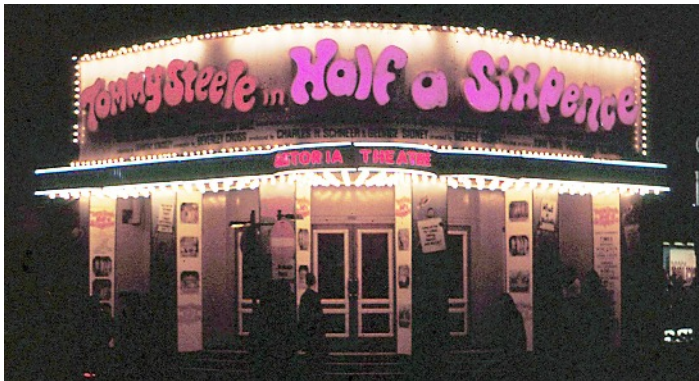
- 4<sup>th</sup> The Astor in Bexleyheath [then in Kent] closes to become a bingo club. {27801}
- 9<sup>th</sup> The World Première of *Custer of the West* in 70mm was held at the Casino Cinerama [now Prince Edward Theatre] in London. {2497}



- 9<sup>th</sup> The Royal Première of *Camelot* in 70mm [above] was held at the 1,789-seat Warner in London's Leicester Square. {3778}
- 13<sup>th</sup> Panton Film Distributors reopen the closed 1,005-seat Odeon Colindale [London] and rename it Curzon. {15727}
- 15<sup>th</sup> The ABC Central in Reading reopens with the 'Luxury Lounge' treatment. {34957}
- 18<sup>th</sup> The 1,650-seat *Essoldo* in the East London district of Hackney closed with *How I Won the War* and bingo took over. {13887}
- ?? The 1,814-seat *Essoldo* in the Southey Green district of Sheffield starts closing on Wednesdays, only to close completely in May 1969. {25709}
- ?? Classic Cinemas took over the Jacey Cinemas circuit and the Clavering circuit of Cameo Cinemas.

### December

- 12<sup>th</sup> The Royal World Première of *Doctor Dolittle* in 70mm is held at the Odeon Marble Arch. {1830}
- 13<sup>th</sup> The première of *Bedazzled* is held at the Carlton Haymarket. {1838}
- 21<sup>st</sup> The 1,357-seat Astoria in London's Charing Cross Road holds the première of *Half A Sixpence* in 70mm. [below] {2499}



- 27<sup>th</sup> The 1,683-seat Odeon Leicester Square [London] reopens with a première of *Smashing Time* starring Rita Tushingham and a stage show featuring Cliff Richard and the Shadows. The cinema had been 'modernised'. See p9. {841}

- 30<sup>th</sup> In Gateshead the *Essoldo* closes as it was in the way of a new viaduct for the A1. {40089}



- 30<sup>th</sup> The 1,150-seat Dale at Willenhall [then in Staffs] closed with Dick van Dyke in *Lt Robinson Crusoe*. It became a bingo club and is now a Wetherspoons pub [above]. {37408}



- 30<sup>th</sup> The 1,050-seat Avion Aldridge [then in Staffs] closed to become a bingo hall [above]. It is now a Wetherspoons pub. {1239}
- 31<sup>st</sup> The première of *The Ambushers* starring Dean Martin as Matt Helm is held at the Columbia Shaftesbury Avenue. {6244}
- ?? The 400-seat Jacey Marble Arch closes. It was built as a News Theatre and latterly showed mainly 'adult' films. {13069}
- ?? The 728-seat Grove in Ilkley [West Yorks] closed and was demolished the year after. {40846}
- ?? The Shipman & King circuit buys the Futurist Cinema in Birmingham. {3189}
- ?? The 700-seat Plaza in Queensferry {25505} and the 1,100-seat Plaza in Flint {25505} [North Wales] are taken over and both soon renamed Wedgewood.

Ken and I hope you have enjoyed this look back at 1967 cinematic events in this year's Bulletins, so all that remains to say is:



Film frame courtesy Kevin Wheelan



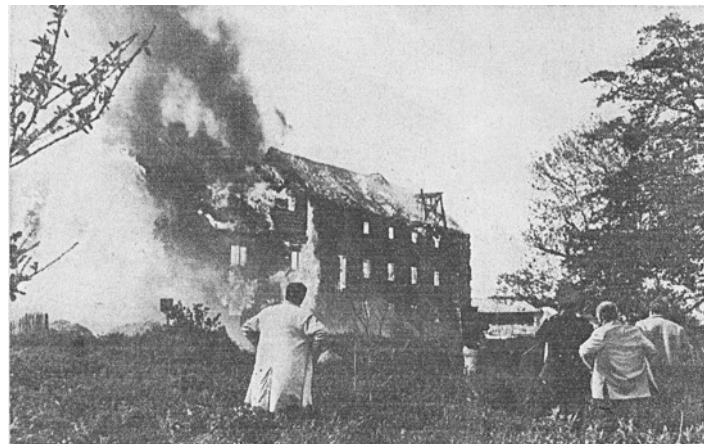
# IT ALSO HAPPENED IN 1967

By John Popey

I was 22 in 1967 when I went to the Warner Theatre in Leicester square to see *The Shattered Room*. It was not a big première event, it just opened on 8 June. The ticket price was 7/6, wow! 7/6 was a lot of money in 1967.



The story starts in May 1966 when the movie was being filmed on location at Hardingham Mill in Norfolk. I left home and headed to the bus station. There was no direct bus there so I got on an old single-decker bus that looked as if it was left over from the 1940s. It dropped me on the main road and, after a two mile walk down country lanes, Hardingham Mill was in sight and the film location. The first thing I saw was an 8-seater Yankee car with Gig Young leaning on it. I got out my Kodak Folding Brownie 620 and asked for a photo. "Sure, John Boy." came the reply; as he did not know my name was John he must have said that to everybody. Next I moved on to Dame Flora Robson. It was lunch break and she was eating a sausage. She said to me, "Do have a sausage." I took her photo and got an autograph plus a thumb print in my autograph book. We chatted about Errol Flynn – remember he had only died about eight years before. I then spotted Oliver Reed and Carol Lynley walking down an old farm track. They stopped for a picture and Miss Lynley headed for her large trailer for a rest, not to be seen again, I took pictures of the old mill before it was burned down later in the week and also photos of co-star Judith Arthy; she had been in the movie *They're a Weird Mob* and on the front page of *Tit-Bits* in August 1966. After two hours I headed back to the bus and home to develop the film reel. The one of Oliver Reed and Carol Lynley was published in *The Surrey Comet* in July 1967; Judith Arthy was published in the *Norwich Evening News* on 4 July 1967 and 50 years later Oliver Reed and Carol Lynley plus one of The Mill was published in the *Evening News* in 2016. They paid me £1.19 in 1967 – I still have the invoice! I'm now 72 – where did all the 50 years go?



Hardingham Mill set on fire for the film, despite local protests

## Editor's Note:

John 'found' this call sheet [R] for *The Shattered Room* location shoot at The Mill dated 24 May 1966. There wasn't room to print it full page but two interesting items on it are:

- Rushes will be viewed in the ABC cinema Norwich at 22:30 hours.
- A motto at the bottom reads:  
"Lock up your daughters,  
but keep them well handy,  
'Cos the film unit's in town,  
and things can get randy!"

CALL SHEET									
PRODUCTION NAME - THE SHATTERED ROOM					ROLL NO. 1				
STORY LINE - 1st Part: Shattered Room					CALL FOR DATE: 24.5.66				
SETS OR LOCATIONS - SET: MILL					TIME: 10.00 AM				
ACTS	SCENES	CHARACTERS	TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME
ACT 1	1	John, Flora, Gig	10.00	10.10	10.20	10.30	10.40	10.50	11.00
ACT 2	2	John, Flora, Gig	11.10	11.20	11.30	11.40	11.50	12.00	12.10
ACT 3	3	John, Flora, Gig	12.20	12.30	12.40	12.50	1.00	1.10	1.20
ACT 4	4	John, Flora, Gig	1.30	1.40	1.50	2.00	2.10	2.20	2.30
ACT 5	5	John, Flora, Gig	2.40	2.50	3.00	3.10	3.20	3.30	3.40
ACT 6	6	John, Flora, Gig	3.50	4.00	4.10	4.20	4.30	4.40	4.50
ACT 7	7	John, Flora, Gig	5.00	5.10	5.20	5.30	5.40	5.50	6.00
ACT 8	8	John, Flora, Gig	6.10	6.20	6.30	6.40	6.50	7.00	7.10
ACT 9	9	John, Flora, Gig	7.20	7.30	7.40	7.50	8.00	8.10	8.20
ACT 10	10	John, Flora, Gig	8.30	8.40	8.50	9.00	9.10	9.20	9.30
ACT 11	11	John, Flora, Gig	9.40	9.50	10.00	10.10	10.20	10.30	10.40
ACT 12	12	John, Flora, Gig	10.50	11.00	11.10	11.20	11.30	11.40	11.50
ACT 13	13	John, Flora, Gig	12.00	12.10	12.20	12.30	12.40	12.50	1.00
ACT 14	14	John, Flora, Gig	1.10	1.20	1.30	1.40	1.50	2.00	2.10
ACT 15	15	John, Flora, Gig	2.20	2.30	2.40	2.50	3.00	3.10	3.20
ACT 16	16	John, Flora, Gig	3.30	3.40	3.50	4.00	4.10	4.20	4.30
ACT 17	17	John, Flora, Gig	4.40	4.50	5.00	5.10	5.20	5.30	5.40
ACT 18	18	John, Flora, Gig	5.50	6.00	6.10	6.20	6.30	6.40	6.50
ACT 19	19	John, Flora, Gig	7.00	7.10	7.20	7.30	7.40	7.50	8.00
ACT 20	20	John, Flora, Gig	8.10	8.20	8.30	8.40	8.50	9.00	9.10
ACT 21	21	John, Flora, Gig	9.20	9.30	9.40	9.50	10.00	10.10	10.20
ACT 22	22	John, Flora, Gig	10.30	10.40	10.50	11.00	11.10	11.20	11.30
ACT 23	23	John, Flora, Gig	11.40	11.50	12.00	12.10	12.20	12.30	12.40
ACT 24	24	John, Flora, Gig	12.50	1.00	1.10	1.20	1.30	1.40	1.50
ACT 25	25	John, Flora, Gig	1.60	1.70	1.80	1.90	2.00	2.10	2.20
ACT 26	26	John, Flora, Gig	2.30	2.40	2.50	3.00	3.10	3.20	3.30
ACT 27	27	John, Flora, Gig	3.40	3.50	4.00	4.10	4.20	4.30	4.40
ACT 28	28	John, Flora, Gig	4.50	5.00	5.10	5.20	5.30	5.40	5.50
ACT 29	29	John, Flora, Gig	6.00	6.10	6.20	6.30	6.40	6.50	7.00
ACT 30	30	John, Flora, Gig	7.10	7.20	7.30	7.40	7.50	8.00	8.10
ACT 31	31	John, Flora, Gig	8.20	8.30	8.40	8.50	9.00	9.10	9.20
ACT 32	32	John, Flora, Gig	9.30	9.40	9.50	10.00	10.10	10.20	10.30
ACT 33	33	John, Flora, Gig	10.40	10.50	11.00	11.10	11.20	11.30	11.40
ACT 34	34	John, Flora, Gig	11.50	12.00	12.10	12.20	12.30	12.40	12.50
ACT 35	35	John, Flora, Gig	1.00	1.10	1.20	1.30	1.40	1.50	2.00
ACT 36	36	John, Flora, Gig	2.10	2.20	2.30	2.40	2.50	3.00	3.10
ACT 37	37	John, Flora, Gig	3.20	3.30	3.40	3.50	4.00	4.10	4.20
ACT 38	38	John, Flora, Gig	4.30	4.40	4.50	5.00	5.10	5.20	5.30
ACT 39	39	John, Flora, Gig	5.40	5.50	6.00	6.10	6.20	6.30	6.40
ACT 40	40	John, Flora, Gig	6.50	7.00	7.10	7.20	7.30	7.40	7.50
ACT 41	41	John, Flora, Gig	7.60	7.70	7.80	7.90	8.00	8.10	8.20
ACT 42	42	John, Flora, Gig	8.30	8.40	8.50	9.00	9.10	9.20	9.30
ACT 43	43	John, Flora, Gig	9.40	9.50	10.00	10.10	10.20	10.30	10.40
ACT 44	44	John, Flora, Gig	10.50	11.00	11.10	11.20	11.30	11.40	11.50
ACT 45	45	John, Flora, Gig	12.00	12.10	12.20	12.30	12.40	12.50	1.00
ACT 46	46	John, Flora, Gig	1.10	1.20	1.30	1.40	1.50	2.00	2.10
ACT 47	47	John, Flora, Gig	2.20	2.30	2.40	2.50	3.00	3.10	3.20
ACT 48	48	John, Flora, Gig	3.30	3.40	3.50	4.00	4.10	4.20	4.30
ACT 49	49	John, Flora, Gig	4.40	4.50	5.00	5.10	5.20	5.30	5.40
ACT 50	50	John, Flora, Gig	5.50	6.00	6.10	6.20	6.30	6.40	6.50
ACT 51	51	John, Flora, Gig	6.60	6.70	6.80	6.90	7.00	7.10	7.20
ACT 52	52	John, Flora, Gig	7.30	7.40	7.50	8.00	8.10	8.20	8.30
ACT 53	53	John, Flora, Gig	8.40	8.50	9.00	9.10	9.20	9.30	9.40
ACT 54	54	John, Flora, Gig	9.50	10.00	10.10	10.20	10.30	10.40	10.50
ACT 55	55	John, Flora, Gig	11.00	11.10	11.20	11.30	11.40	11.50	12.00
ACT 56	56	John, Flora, Gig	12.10	12.20	12.30	12.40	12.50	1.00	1.10
ACT 57	57	John, Flora, Gig	1.20	1.30	1.40	1.50	2.00	2.10	2.20
ACT 58	58	John, Flora, Gig	2.30	2.40	2.50	3.00	3.10	3.20	3.30
ACT 59	59	John, Flora, Gig	3.40	3.50	4.00	4.10	4.20	4.30	4.40
ACT 60	60	John, Flora, Gig	4.50	5.00	5.10	5.20	5.30	5.40	5.50
ACT 61	61	John, Flora, Gig	5.60	5.70	5.80	5.90	6.00	6.10	6.20
ACT 62	62	John, Flora, Gig	6.30	6.40	6.50	7.00	7.10	7.20	7.30
ACT 63	63	John, Flora, Gig	7.40	7.50	8.00	8.10	8.20	8.30	8.40
ACT 64	64	John, Flora, Gig	8.50	9.00	9.10	9.20	9.30	9.40	9.50
ACT 65	65	John, Flora, Gig	10.00	10.10	10.20	10.30	10.40	10.50	11.00
ACT 66	66	John, Flora, Gig	11.10	11.20	11.30	11.40	11.50	12.00	12.10
ACT 67	67	John, Flora, Gig	12.20	12.30	12.40	12.50	1.00	1.10	1.20
ACT 68	68	John, Flora, Gig	1.30	1.40	1.50	2.00	2.10	2.20	2.30
ACT 69	69	John, Flora, Gig	2.40	2.50	3.00	3.10	3.20	3.30	3.40
ACT 70	70	John, Flora, Gig	3.50	4.00	4.10	4.20	4.30	4.40	4.50
ACT 71	71	John, Flora, Gig	4.60	4.70	4.80	4.90	5.00	5.10	5.20
ACT 72	72	John, Flora, Gig	5.30	5.40	5.50	6.00	6.10	6.20	6.30
ACT 73	73	John, Flora, Gig	6.40	6.50	7.00	7.10	7.20	7.30	7.40
ACT 74	74	John, Flora, Gig	7.50	8.00	8.10	8.20	8.30	8.40	8.50
ACT 75	75	John, Flora, Gig	8.60	8.70	8.80	8.90	9.00	9.10	9.20
ACT 76	76	John, Flora, Gig	9.30	9.40	9.50	10.00	10.10	10.20	10.30
ACT 77	77	John, Flora, Gig	10.40	10.50	11.00	11.10	11.20	11.30	11.40
ACT 78	78	John, Flora, Gig	11.50	12.00	12.10	12.20	12.30	12.40	12.50
ACT 79	79	John, Flora, Gig	1.00	1.10	1.20	1.30	1.40	1.50	2.00
ACT 80	80	John, Flora, Gig	2.10	2.20	2.30	2.40	2.50	3.00	3.10
ACT 81	81	John, Flora, Gig	3.20	3.30	3.40	3.50	4.00	4.10	4.20
ACT 82	82	John, Flora, Gig	4.30	4.40	4.50	5.00	5.10	5.20	5.30
ACT 83	83	John, Flora, Gig	5.40	5.50	6.00	6.10	6.20	6.30	6.40
ACT 84	84	John, Flora, Gig	6.50	7.00	7.10	7.20	7.30	7.40	7.50
ACT 85	85	John, Flora, Gig	7.60	7.70	7.80	7.90	8.00	8.10	8.20
ACT 86	86	John, Flora, Gig	8.30	8.40	8.50	9.00	9.10	9.20	9.30
ACT 87	87	John, Flora, Gig	9.40	9.50	10.00	10.10	10.20	10.30	10.40
ACT 88	88	John, Flora, Gig	10.50	11.00	11.10	11.20	11.30	11.40	11.50
ACT 89	89	John, Flora, Gig	12.00	12.10	12.20	12.30	12.40	12.50	1.00
ACT 90	90	John, Flora, Gig	1.10	1.20	1.30	1.40	1.50	2.00	2.10
ACT 91	91	John, Flora, Gig	2.20	2.30	2.40	2.50	3.00	3.10	3.20
ACT 92	92	John, Flora, Gig	3.30	3.40	3.50	4.00	4.10	4.20	4.30
ACT 93	93	John, Flora, Gig	4.40	4.50	5.00	5.10	5.20	5.30	5.40
ACT 94	94	John, Flora, Gig	5.50	6.00	6.10	6.20	6.30	6.40	6.50
ACT 95	95	John, Flora, Gig	6.60	6.70	6.80	6.90	7.00	7.10	7.20
ACT 96	96	John, Flora, Gig	7.30	7.40	7.50	8.00	8.10	8.20	8.30
ACT 97	97	John, Flora, Gig	8.40	8.50	9.00	9.10	9.20	9.30	9.40
ACT 98	98	John, Flora, Gig	9.50	10.00	10.10	10.20	10.30	10.40	10.50
ACT 99	99	John, Flora, Gig	11.00	11.10	11.20	11.30	11.40	11.50	12.00
ACT 100	100	John, Flora, Gig	12.10	12.20	12.30	12.40	12.50	1.00	1.10

## ALSO TAKEN IN 1967:



Clockwise from top left: Gig Young, Dame Flora Robson, Oliver Reed & Carol Lynley, Judith Arthy



## Clockwise from top left:

John and mum at the Odeon Marble Arch; the London Pavilion, the Plaza Piccadilly Circus.

Suzannah York and partner arriving at the Odeon St Martins Lane on 12 October for the 8pm premiere of *Thoroughly Modern Millie*;

Dame Edith Evans at the same event.



# WILF WONDERS...

## ...where all the studios have gone

By Wilf Watters

This time we look at old films. The TV channel *Talking Pictures* shows many old British films that have not been seen for very many years. Led by Sarah Cronin-Stanley, her husband and also her father [pictured below], they run the programmes at the same time they issue old feature films on DVDs at a very cheap rate. The stars maybe unknown but the stories are there. You can get complete box sets of stars of the past such as Alistair Sim, Laurel and Hardy to say nothing about Westerns, Crime and Comedy films – even Old Mother Riley can be seen.



To resist making this a giant commercial, I take a close look at the old film studios instead; they are being demolished at an alarming rate. Riverside (which the CTA visited) then Teddington went recently. As Lady Bracknell might have said "To lose one studio is unfortunate but to lose two is disgusting!"

I have been logging these films and made a note of the studios they were made at, where stated. The names come back through time, such as Welwyn Garden City Studio; this was where Associated-British Films were made during the last War, as their main facility at Elstree was taken over for war work. Welwyn made the very excellent original *Brighton Rock*.

Denham Studios – Alexander Korda's magnificent, huge studios only made films for 17 years. It was bought by the ever-expanding JA Rank empire and became simply P&D studios (the P =Pinewood) but the sound stage became Anvil Films and continued to serve the industry for much longer. Shepperton, originally Sound City, has survived many years and as many owners. London Films, Korda's company occupied their stages for a long time. He started up in Britain, after his Hollywood wartime period, at the little Isleworth Studios, which later went on to make such films as *The African Queen*.



MGM Studios Elstree in the mid-1960s [since demolished]

Smaller concerns like Bray eventually made many horror films before they transferred to ABPC at Elstree. While here, quite a lot of films came from British National Films, one of the first 'Dark' studios to use artificial light instead of glass-walled stages like Gaumont at Shepherd's Bush. British National is today the BBC's Elstree centre (*Holby City*, *East Enders*). [See letters p33.]



The backlot at MGM Studios

A collection of tin huts seems to be Merton Park studios, their name proudly and boldly features at the end of such gems as the Edgar Lustgarten crime second features.

An award-winning short featuring Jewish Tailors, called *The Overcoat* has been seen twice and was made at Marylebone Studios – I don't know that one.



Gainsborough Studios

Gainsborough Studios was home to many British films; it was originally a power station to serve a nearby Underground railway. Paramount used it for some time but it was Michael Balcon's company that made it famous with people like Hitchcock, Will Hay, Margaret Lockwood and her 'Regency Melodramas'. It has all gone except for a fragment of the front wall incorporated into a block of apartments. A big bust of Hitchcock is sitting in the garden on the site.



The bust of Hitchcock on the site of Gainsborough Studios

I could go on, but not in these pages. *Talking Pictures* is to be congratulated for bringing these old films back to life, including well-made American classics.

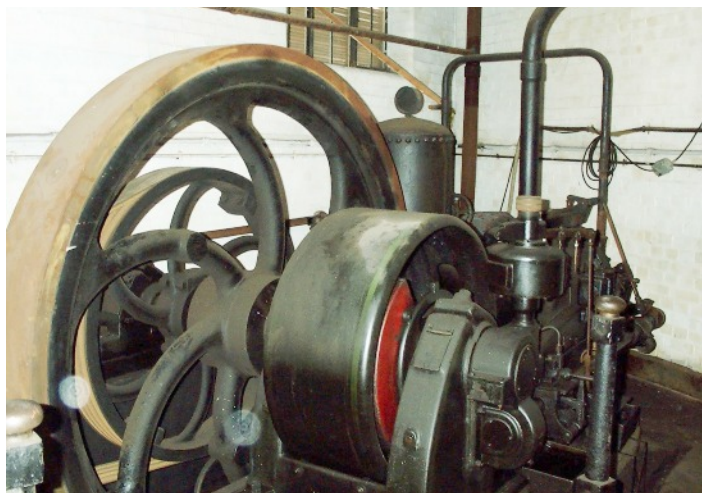


# NOW SHOWING – THE NEW TALKING FILMS

By Paul Collenette from *Talking Machine Review*, 1983; text version prepared by Hector Hill.

The introduction of sound films created one of the most sudden and traumatic revolutions ever effected on a major industry by a new technology. The changeover from silent to sound pictures meant important, risky and expensive decisions on the part of cinema owners, as much as studio executives. One of the most remarkable aspects of this revolution was its speed; whereas at the end of 1928 very few cinemas were wired for sound, in the space of a mere two years, most cinemas were equipped with the apparatus.

This is an account taken from the reminiscences of a pioneer projectionist who told me the problems and excitements of showing early sound films. Mr John Ward was born in York in 1903 and soon became fascinated by films. He remembers the first open-air film show in York in 1916. It used an acetylene projector, which must have been a lethal fire hazard in conjunction with nitrate film then in use. By the time he entered the industry, electric projectors were universally used. On leaving school in 1919, Ward, very much against his parents' wishes, obtained a job as a rewind boy in a local cinema. Though the job was menial, the wages were good at 15/- per week. Later on he became a projectionist and was earning £2/10/- per week. Occasionally he helped out at country cinemas in the circuit; some of the villages had no mains electricity, so the cinemas used oil engine generators for current. These machines were also part of the projectionist's responsibility. One day, at one such village cinema in Yorkshire, Ward's manager said, "Come over, I've someone in the car you'd like to meet". It was Jack Buchanan.



An engine driving an electricity generator [Empire Wisbech]

By the end of the 1920s, Ward was working in Scarborough; business was bad since the other cinemas were wiring up, whereas his, the Tower Cinema<sup>1</sup>, was still silent. Indeed, the house-slogan was "The House of Silent Pictures". The management thought that people would still wish to see silent pictures; anyway, why spend thousands of pounds equipping the cinema for the talkies, which might turn out to be just a passing craze? (It should be recalled that there had been talking pictures before, of a kind, all of which systems had been unsuccessful). The cinema had even shown the silent edition of the famous Al Jolson picture *The Singing Fool* and had advertised "See the silent version here before seeing the talking version in London!"

<sup>1</sup> The KYB has no such cinema. Associated Tower Cinemas (of Leeds) didn't have a hall in Scarborough, as far as I can ascertain. They had the Tower cinema in York (which KYB shows was slow to wire for sound), otherwise it was the Tower at Hull or Goole. The original author says, "I don't know whether all the information from John Ward related to the Tower cinema Scarborough (I remember the Hull one) - he was talking about 50+ years previously and my article is 30+ years old. I probably took down my notes in shorthand but there again Ward worked in various cinemas over the years and might have confused them. So I am afraid the answer is, we don't know."

**Editor's Note:** There was [and still is] also a Tower cinema in Skegness, which had a Western Electric sound system.

Ward and his colleagues eventually persuaded the management that they had to switch to talkies. The cinema was wired with the Western Electric system (the best and most popular) by Gaumont-British Equipments, in December 1930. The apparatus was bought outright (many cinemas leased it as the cost was so high) for £2,500. Gaumont maintained it for a charge of £28 per month and the system gave excellent service for many years. The equipment, being American, was 110-volt and so the mains supply had to be stepped down. The chief problem they experienced was the shrill tone of the Wilson exponential horn loudspeakers. One day the projectionists were visited by a G-B salesman who said he had some excellent new-style speakers, eighteen-inch diameter with heavy baffles, which gave a much better bass response. Would they like to come over to a cinema in Leeds where they had just been installed and hear them? Ward and his friends were keen but pointed out that they could not come while the Leeds cinema was playing, as they themselves were on duty in Scarborough. So the salesman arranged a special demonstration on a Sunday when they were off duty. Ward managed to talk his directors into buying them.

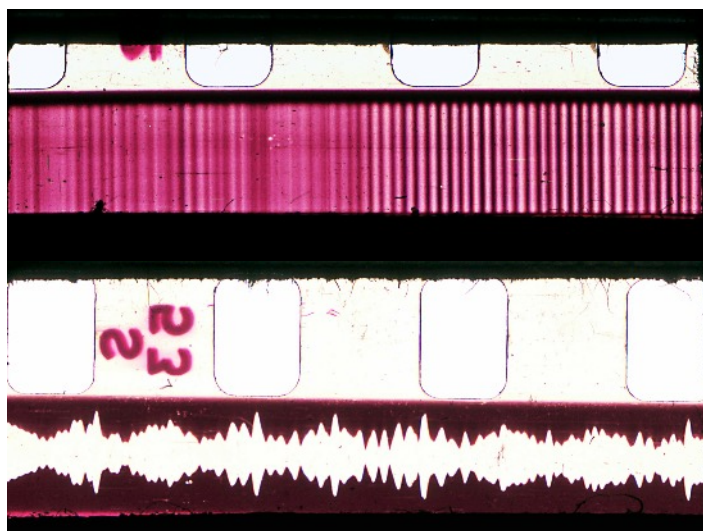
Thousands of musicians were put out of work by talking pictures and the Tower Cinema was no exception. The orchestra was sacked, except for the Musical Director, who was kept on for the onerous job of playing gramophone records in the intervals. One can imagine his feelings on his change of duties but at least he still had a job, unlike his colleagues! Even the elderly pianist who had accompanied the films between 4 and 6pm while the orchestra was at tea, was fired too. And she had only been paid 5/- a week.



Of the various sound-on-film recording systems, Western Electric gave the best results, followed by (Fox) Movietone and then by RCA Photophone - although the latter was later much improved with the "Mirrophonic" process. The British systems - eg British Acoustic (Gaumont), Marconi-Visatone, Ambiphone, Blattnerphone - were a long way behind. The Tower Cinema was fitted with apparatus for playing both the optical and the disc sound systems [example illustrated above]. The Vitaphone discs gave the best quality sound of all. They were a colossal size, 16 or 18 inches in diameter, pressed into the ordinary shellac.

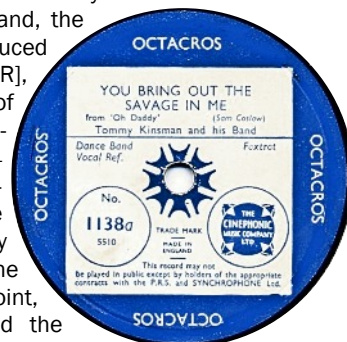


They played from the centre outwards with a heavy 7-ounce pickup, at a speed of  $33\frac{1}{3}$  rpm. The turntable was connected to the projector by a rubber friction gear. Synchronisation was not too such of a problem because this theatre only showed Vitaphone shorts, which had just one disc per film. The discs had a cueing mark at the beginning and, barring breaks in the film, remained in unison with the pictures. These Vitaphone discs were as fragile as normal records and to allow for accidents the distributors always sent two copies of each disc, packed in wooden crates. Once they arrived all broken and Ward had to get a fresh set hurriedly put on the next train from Leeds! On the very last Vitaphone show they did, a spanner fell onto the turntable and smashed a disc. At least optical sound was free of these hazards but the different systems had slightly different picture widths, sometimes causing part of the soundtrack to be shown upon the screen. Various masks had to be used to prevent this. There were variable density, variable area, bilateral and push-pull soundtracks.



A variable density [top] and a variable area [bottom] soundtrack

As for non-synchronised sound, Ward built a turntable and amplifier for playing gramophone records between shows. It was connected to the loudspeaker system. On discovering this, the sales manager from Gaumont-British objected, until he was reminded that the sound equipment had been bought from the firm rather than rented. The directors of the cinema were pleased with Ward's experimental gramophone apparatus and paid him £15 for it. Naturally the gramophone needed plenty of 'feeding' and so the musical director borrowed records from a friendly nearby music shop and changed them each week. Then the shop's customers found out about this and complained that they were being sold used records – often quite worn through repetition in the cinema – so the cinema had to buy them. Next there was a row from the Performing Rights Society, who discovered that cinemas were using records but not paying any royalties for public performance. So the use of ordinary records in cinemas was banned. In order to fill the demand, the PRS and Synchronophone Ltd produced the Octacros records [example R], which could be used instead of commercial discs. These were produced by Piccadilly Records Ltd<sup>1</sup> and recorded at their Highbury studios, often with their house dance band directed by Jack Leon. They also used old matrices from the Metropole catalogue. The eight-point, or Maltese cross, which formed the trademark, is of course a reference to the intermittent mechanism of the film projectors. After about a year after this, the PRS developed a licensing system that enabled cinemas to use commercial records. As in broadcasting studios, each record had to be listed and a return sent in. The licence cost £4/10/- annually.



It can be seen that these were hectic times for the cinema industry; for a projectionist who was also a radio and electrical enthusiast there was plenty of experimentation, interest and opportunity available at that historic period.

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<sup>1</sup> See letters p33.

## WE CALEY LOVED IT

By Mike Whitcombe



Edinburgh is a truly beautiful capital City. Amid a wealth of neo-classical grandeur it boasts an almost endless list of famous attractions including Edinburgh Castle, the Royal Mile, Princess Street, Waverley Station, the Scott Monument and the new Scottish Parliament. But it's thirsty work wandering these impressive attractions and for movie enthusiasts there's no better place to stop and grab a meal and a drink than the Caley Picture House, a former cinema and a newly-opened Wetherspoons pub, situated at the foot of Lothian Road.

The Caley was built in 1922, just three years after the end of the Great War. Scotland, like Europe in general, was then gripped by recession and high unemployment as returning soldiers tried to make sense of the slaughter they had endured on the western front. Most families in the City were mourning at least one family member – whether it was a son, father, brother or uncle – killed in a conflict caused, as one historian tellingly remarked, by the vanity of kings. For many, cinema really was an escape from a war in which, on average, six thousand men were killed every day.

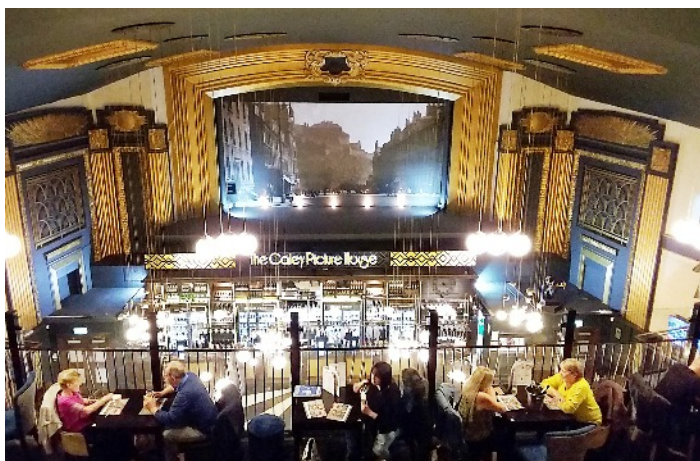
The architects were local men called James S Richardson and John R McKay, who designed it in a Beaux-Arts style with a renaissance style facade of Craigleith stone. They were hired by a syndicate headed by Edinburgh businessmen Robert McLaughlin and Captain WM Cameron. It originally seated 900 customers in a lofty auditorium. Opening night was on New Year's Day 1923 with a now long-lost film called *Game of Life*. Business was good from the beginning and after just four years of trade the decision to enlarge the Caley was made. A row of shops was purchased to the left of the building and the auditorium was turned ninety degrees so it ran parallel to Lothian Road. The existing auditorium was incorporated to form the back section of the new one. The capacity was doubled to 1,800. A mansard roof was constructed and the proscenium was increased to a width of fifty feet. The architect was Robert McKissack of the John McKissack and Sons architectural firm. He designed the splendid new entrance to the right of the building, which contains a beautiful stained glass window, as



well as the updated art deco treatment of the auditorium. Many cinemas were being extended during this time and there was much competition to be awarded the work. Pressure to complete the build was enormous. A closed cinema meant a loss of revenue and many cinema owners insisted on penalty clauses to recoup losses suffered by building delays. Robert McKissack was obviously a man at the top of his game, for after this job he went on to design a whole series of suburban cinemas for the firm during the 1930s.

By the 1950s the average Scot went to the cinema 36 times a year. Television, though, was beginning to make a dent in cinema audiences so in February 1954 the Caley became the first cinema in Edinburgh to be equipped with CinemaScope. The already fifty-foot wide proscenium was the reason for this and the first film to be shown was *The Robe*. Boasting the tagline 'The First Picture on the New Miracle Curved Screen!' it was a huge success and ran for a season. It starred the great Richard Burton who, despite receiving an Academy Award nomination for his portrayal of Marcellus, hated making the film so much that he turned down a seven-year contract from 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox. Burton was an atheist who did not care for the film's religious theme and during production he also upset Hollywood by condemning the blacklisting of communists.

On 12 December 1974, Historic Scotland designated the Caley Picture House a Grade B listed building. In 1983 the building was sold and when it showed its last film the following year it was still a single-screen auditorium. In 1986 it reopened as a nightclub called the Caley Palais. The club was renamed Century 2000 and Revolution before closing again for several years. It was then bought and renovated by the MAMA Group as a 1,500 capacity concert venue, opening as the HMV Picture House in 2008 and closing with a farewell gig on New Year's Eve 2013.



The announcement that the building had been purchased by Wetherspoon was not welcomed by local live music lovers, despite the fact that the pub chain said they would spend a considerable amount of money on restoring a faded local landmark to its former glory. An online petition opposing Wetherspoon's plans collected 13,000 signatures, 3,000 in a matter of minutes. Politicians, including the then Edinburgh Central SNP MSP Marco Biagi, publicly supported the campaign. Health campaigners also backed it. Alcohol Focus Scotland stated there were 285 alcohol outlets within a ten minute walk of nearby Tollcross and that the opening of a 'super pub' would force down the price of liquor and decrease life expectancy. But in April 2015 Edinburgh's Planning Department thought otherwise. Voting 6 to 4 in favour they gave Wetherspoon the green light. On 13 December 2016, the Caley Picture House finally opened as a JD Wetherspoon pub.

The refurbishment cost £2.5 million but it was money wisely spent. From the moment you leave the hustle and bustle of Lothian Road and enter the McKissack-designed lobby, it's as if you're going back in time. The original polished timber wall panelling has been restored and proves a dignified backdrop to a slide lantern that was recovered from the projec-



tion box and which sits under a lavish gold ceiling mould. But it's the former auditorium, accessed by staircases lined by further dark panelling as well as the original radiators, that really grabs your attention. The original proscenium that made the former cinema so suitable for CinemaScope still dominates. Now painted gold it rises above the stalls bar, which protrudes from it. A large sepia streetscape of Lothian Road occupies the area where the old screen once sat. The kitchen area is at the rear of the auditorium under the former circle, which is reached by two symmetrical open staircases on opposite sides of the auditorium (or the main customer area as Wetherspoon depressively terms it).

The former circle has been redeveloped into three levels with another bar situated tight under the projection box portholes. At the front of the circle a wrought iron balustrade, faced by a slightly taller sheet of toughened glass, has been installed to prevent those consuming too many wee drams from taking a tumble into the former stalls! Film stills and posters decorate corridors and intimate eating booths while many of the original decorative details on walls or the front of the circle have been retained to highlight period authenticity. The greatest compliment that can be paid to the Caley Picture House is that it still feels like a cinema. Sat in the old circle on a quiet midweek afternoon, you can almost believe that at any moment the lights will dim, the tabs will swish open and the silver screen will once again show Clark Gable kissing Jean Harlow. That feeling is a tribute to the Wetherspoon architects. Despite having to realise the place as a money-making drinking and eating venue, they have somehow still managed to retain the picture palace magic that made the Caley so loved. Nearly a century after the Caley first began welcoming the Edinburgh public and providing them with an escape from the harsh reality of life, it continues to do so.

*All photos by the author*

## The Auditorium

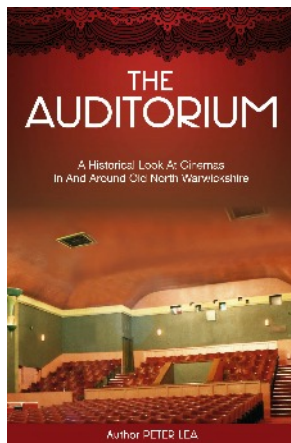
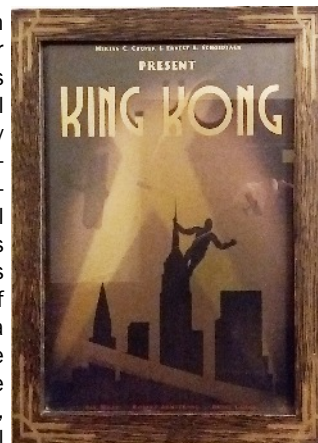
This book has been many years in the making. I originally set pen to paper back in 1991 and have met some wonderful people along the way during my research, one of which was the late President of the CTA, Tony Moss. He was a great help with his vast knowledge and letting me use some photographs from his private collection in the book.

The book covers all cinemas that operated in North Warwickshire between 1900 and 1990, with photographs of all the cinemas featured both externally and internal shots. With staff memories and some funny stories I have been told along the way too. Towns and villages covered in this publication are, in alphabetical order, Atherstone, Attleborough, Bedworth, Bulkington, Chapel End, Coleshill, Dordon, Nuneaton and Stockingford.

I hope you will add this to your collection through the CTA shop and that you enjoy reading it as much as I enjoyed writing it!

*Peter Lea*

Price £12.95 + £3.10 p&p;  
available from the CTA Sales Officer, details on p2.

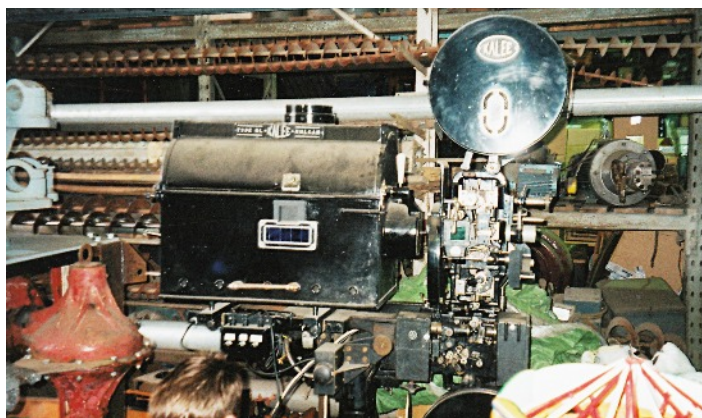




# YET MORE WANDERINGS

By Hugh Sykes

May I first thank both Richard Gray and David Simpson for their kind notes on Chepstow and Northern Ireland with corrections to my last 'wanderings' – I do appreciate their replies.



A Kalee projector at Rundles of New Bolingbroke

5 October 2016 saw me at New Bolingbroke in Lincolnshire for an annual Open Day of Messers Rundle Ltd [Amusement Park Spares Specialists] and next door of Mr H Epton [Road Haulage Services]. The theme was Steam made by Savage of Kings Lynn. Plenty of Galloper Centre Engines (and organ ones too) plus fairground organs, showman's engines etc. Savages made electric light engines for Bioscope shows. In Rundle's workshop I found a vintage Kalee 35mm projector, origin unknown.



The Playhouse Louth



The Electric Palace Louth

Calling by Louth, I found three venues in use. The three-screen Playhouse is fully open; the Town Hall is home to the 3m Compton from the Queens Grimsby and the former Electric Palace (1909-1937) is in use for Heron Foods. The local papers all carry good cinema advertising.

23 October 2016: Another long distance journey into Suffolk. Stopping for a break in Framlingham I found the old terminus station but not the former cinema, the Regal. I may need help here. Was it converted in the 1960s into a garage and/or workshops? The 1950 KYB lists the Regal Framlingham (pop

2,100) props Bostock Cinema Circuit, Ipswich, 390 seats priced 10d to 2/6, films by road transport. I noticed whilst having a good walk around there were posters for 'Film@Fram' – first Wednesday of each month, Conservative Club Church Street, "The sound system has been improved with a pair of state of the art big speakers; also an additional 30 soft chairs have been acquired to add to your comfort." £5 for members, £6 for guests, first-timers and visitors. The Club is primarily for members @ £6 annual subscription.



The Leiston Film Theatre

On the road again for Leiston to view the Film Theatre, which I believe has been open since 1914. I also visited the town's 'Long Shop' museum; they were having an end-of-season steam weekend with traction railway loco and road steam.



The Aldeburgh Cinema

Then my last visit of the day, to Aldeburgh. The town was very busy but I managed to find a parking spot and just up the road was the lovely Aldeburgh Cinema. Built behind a mock Tudor front, it was showing the latest releases and live digital as well.

29 October 2016: A family visit to Wells-next-the-Sea. The Screen next the Sea has moved to Alderman Peel High School whilst The Maltings has a big extension and revamp. Local papers give good coverage of Kings Lynn, Fakenham, Wisbech and Hunstanton. I like the Thornham Village Hall – live ballet from Covent Garden!

1 November 2016: Our first visit to Hay-on-Wye, the town of books. Out via Leominster we passed by the reopened Clifton bingo club, which had closed under Top Ten in May 2014. It was reopened by Roger Witnall of the Ritz Belper bingo club in late July 2014. There are some nice photos on their website [leominsterbingo.co.uk/gallery.html].

Hay-on-Wye currently has a small cinema within Richard Booth's Bookshop in Brook Street; unfortunately it was closed on our visit. The original building at the top of the hill is the Hay Cinema Bookshop [photo top next column]. It is full of publications from floor to ceiling; sadly I did not see any items of its past life but I did purchase a few railway books.

Whilst briefly down in the Cotswolds in February I came across an article in the Evesham Journal about the Regal doors restored. Burglars smashed the original 1932 doors last year but they have now been restored at a cost of £10,000. The hooded burglars also stole money from collection boxes that were to fund an extension.



Bookshop Cinema





The Hay-on-Wye Cinema bookshop

Back to the *Wrexham Leader* for an advert for the **Stiwt**. The team at this restored venue are having a try (sorry) with live rugby on the cinema screen, choirs on stage, film club etc. The full name of the town is Rhosllanerchrugog or Rhos for short.

Whilst down in South Wales over 23-25 April this year we managed a few visits: Llandovery c1950 **Castle Cinema** (Imperial Sound) Props E Taylor, Castle Cinema, Builth Wells, 230 seats, Prices 6d to 2/3, pros width 14ft, once nightly, twice Sat & Wes. Could I ask for help here as I couldn't find anything? Llandeilo c1950 **Cinema** (Imperial) Props HM Simonton, 26 New Road, 248 seats, priced 9d to 2/3, once nightly, twice Sat, pros width 24ft (?). Again could I ask for help as nothing found. LLanybie (not in KYB) but a modernised building noted as we passed by, formerly a Miners' Welfare Hall.

In Ammanford the **Palace** was demolished after a fire for a car park. The cinema was located behind a shopping arcade, which still exists, although now as a walkway from the High Street to the car park. There is a nice arched entrance to the arcade, which must have had cinema advertising thereon. It seated 847, at one time a Union house, then ABC and latterly an independent until closure in June 1977. Round the corner and into Wind Street is the **Miners' Welfare Hall**, used by community groups. The CTA visited here a few years ago but found alterations therein.



The nine-screen Odeon multiplex Bridgend

Needing some food, we pulled in to Bridgend Retail Park for a pub meal, which was excellent. Across the road was the Odeon multiplex. After our food, I duly ventured therein. It is massive – large enough to have more screens in the foyer. The above photo was taken from the footbridge that links the pub to the cinema and retail.

The next day (25 April) we journeyed home via Chepstow for a visit. This photo was taken of what remains of the **Gaumont** [photo top next column] although the third window rather spoils the original work. Films are occasionally shown in the **Drill Hall**, which is behind the main street. 30 April saw a visit to Ann's sister in Llay, Wrexham so with apologies after lunch, I was off to Flint and the reopened **Plaza**. I'd just missed the end of the matinée but I did see 12-15 patrons come out. Advertising is minimal on the front. Screenings are in the stalls with some cinema seats plus armchairs and settees (very popular, I was told). There is digital projection from a home-made 'box' in the centre of the stalls onto a screen inside the proscenium arch on the stage. The



The former Gaumont Chepstow



The Gaumont Plaza Flint

circle, which is blocked off, may have some additional screens in the future. A local gentleman, who was very keen on the **Plaza** reopening gave me some details, plus more off the Internet.



The Miners' Institute Llanhilleth

Our AGM in South Wales was very enjoyable, especially the **Memo** and the **Maxime**, really superb restorations, a great honour to see inside. Unfortunately I was unable to secure some decent priced accommodation so the car came in handy: home – CTA Sat/meal – home – CTA Sun/lunch – Blaenavon – home via steam train rides at the local P&BR by Big Pit. Whilst on tour on 14 May I visited the Llanhilleth **Miners' Institute**, a tall and massive building that recently has had some restoration work and extensions at the rear, used for and by the community, with occasional events on stage and sports/leisure.

Further up the valley into Blaina; sadly I couldn't find the **Gaiety** cinema on the High Street, c1950 BTH sound, 599 seats, props Blaina Cinematograph Co Ltd, prices 6d to 9d, once nightly. I believe this was demolished some time ago and the site remains unused. There is a fine Institute within the town but it was never a cinema.

8 May: Finally to mid-Wales for the gala at the Fairbourne Railway. The local *Cambrian News* is always good for cinema advertising. The **Magic Lantern** at Tywyn is open seven days a week showing latest releases. The **Aberystwyth Arts Centre** has a selection on most days. The **Criccieth Memorial Hall** (ex cinema) advert for Eryri Builders. Lastly the **Neuadd Buddug** in Bala was advertising a mixed bag, including live. This cinema will soon be having a narrow-gauge station built behind it for the future terminus of the Bala Lake Railway. Sounds familiar of a place in Devon – cinema and steam trains.

All photos by the author



# FROM PICTURES TO PINTS – ANOTHER ROUND

By Gavin McGrath

Details of conversions are still coming in following the book on cinemas that became pubs, prompting me to conjure up an article for those that I missed plus a few of the new ones that have opened since.



Plans for the Queen's Picture House on Wigan Road, Ashton-in-Makerfield were submitted by Curran and Sons in 1912 and the hall was opened by 1914. Not the most pleasing of buildings on the eye, it closed around 1960 and was on bingo two years later. In 1988 permission was given for a change of use whereby the property would be divided into five shops at ground floor level with a licensed wine bar and bistro on the first floor. This was later varied to allow for an extension of the wine bar into the ground floor. It was later the Queen's nightclub and Jack's Bar run by Roseberry Taverns. The bar is now Plantation with a cosy theme of distressed wood and feature lighting with seating arranged in various zones. This can be removed to open up a dance floor when the DJs come to play. Food includes steaks, burgers, hot dogs and peanut butter cheesecake and there is also a students' night. The opening times at this bar are restricted but it is open until the early hours at weekends.



JD Wetherspoon's plans for a pub in the former Curzon Picture House in Western Road, Bexhill were approved in May 2015. The pub, called The Picture Playhouse and named after the original cinema, opened on 18 July 2017. The cinema itself was opened by the Duchess of Norfolk on 8 July 1921 adjacent to the Cinema de Luxe. It was acquired by the Classic circuit and renamed **Classic** but when the chairman Eric Rhodes retired in 1974 he was given the cinema to operate and renamed it again, this time the **Curzon Playhouse**. From this time it was a joint bingo-cinema operation with a 320-seat cinema in the balcony, which became a 200-seater following the recommendations of the Fire Inspector in 1986. It first closed when Rhodes decided to sell up, after which a young businessman, who was 22 at the time, stepped in to run it in May 1991. Unfortunately in April 1994 bailiffs seized it following mounting debts. Ray Sutton acquired it in

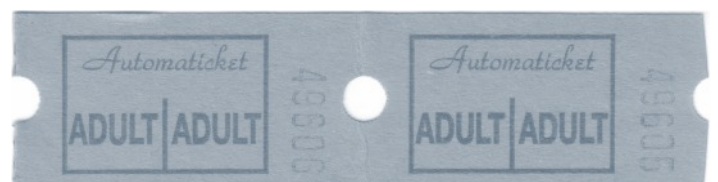
November of that year, reopening it the following February with a screening of *Killing Zoe*. It finally closed as a cinema in October 2004. In November the following year it had a final lease of life as a place of entertainment when it became the **The Redstack Playhouse** with live shows and films lasting until 2008. A shop called The Cane Tree occupied the front of the cinema for a number of years.



The Falcon Mews bar in Pump Street, Bromyard is situated behind the Falcon Hotel and was once the **Plaza Talkie Theatre**. Although in operation by the early 1930s it had closed during the war and was reopened in August 1949 as the **Plaza** with just 216 seats. It suffered a fire in 1971 but was repaired and reopened on Boxing Day that year. It was latterly run by Mike Blakemore, reportedly as more of a hobby than a business and closed in July 1975. Subsequent uses included a nightclub and reports also suggest there were proposals for bingo and a pool hall. The building became quite dilapidated over the years but was restored in order to facilitate its current use. In April 2017 the pub hosted a model car and railway event as part of the Bromyard Speed Festival.



The **Palladium** in Church Street, Darwen opened in 1920 and became part of the Moorhouse circuit, although in later life it was operated by Cheshire County Cinemas who renamed it the **Plaza**. The Star group acquired the cinema in the 1950s and ran it until closure in November 1971, when the last film to be screened was *Soldier Blue*. It was later a supermarket under the guises of Kwik Save and Somerfield but has been The Bridgewater pub since 2006. The pub, which is run by the Stonegate Pub Company, closed in March 2014 for a £230,000 refit and a special ale called Industry was created for the re-launch.







Tower Street in Ipswich is where you will find the town's number one live music venue, according to reports. The Rep is a reference to the venue's use as the **Ipswich Arts Theatre** between 1947 and 1979. The opening production was Terrence Rattigan's *While the Sun Shines* but the 328-seat theatre closed following the opening of the *Wolsey Theatre* which subsequently used the space for rehearsals. The building was originally a lecture hall for the Ipswich Institute but the town's first cinema opened here in March 1909. It was named **Poole's Picture Palace** after its proprietors, with seats in stalls and a small balcony. It closed during the War in January 1940. The pub itself is operated by Greene King and has undergone a recent refurbishment with an extended bar, new seating and an improved lighting and sound system.



The **Caley Picture House** on Lothian Road, Edinburgh was designed by JS Richardson and JR McKay, using part of an existing building and opened in January 1923. In 1928 the building was enlarged by James McKissack, following the demolition of the County Hotel, allowing the auditorium to double its capacity to 1,800 seats. The Edinburgh Film Guild held private screenings here on Sunday nights from 1931 and the cinema was the first in the City to be equipped for CinemaScope in 1954. In the late 1960s the Caley became a venue for rock concerts including gigs by Status Quo in 1973, AC/DC in 1976, The Smiths in 1984 and New Order in 1985. When the venue closed it was converted into a discotheque and operated under various guises such as Revolution and The Amphitheatre. The building was later reopened as a concert venue by the MAMA Group in September 2008 but this closed on New Year's Eve 2013. It was acquired by JD Wetherspoon for conversion to a pub, which opened as the **Caley Picture House** in December 2016. There are two bars, one at balcony level and a pavement café-style area. Real ales and craft world beers are served along with the usual food menu. The project cost £2.5 million and created a reported 124 jobs. The operator already has four other pubs in the City. The property was designated a Grade B listed building in 1974. See article on p14.

The **Regal** in Church Street, Kingsbridge [photo on p21] opened in February 1933 and was designed by JJ Perrott. It had 287 seats and a small balcony but no toilets. It was run by the Noyce family for its entire life and closed in October 1973 with 86-year-old Emily Wood having served as an usherette for most of this time. It later opened as a bingo hall with shops on the ground floor that included a fish and chip shop. Part of the building is now the Regal Bar, which hosts pool night on a Wednesday and euchre night on a Thursday, with the South Hams Bingo Club upstairs three times a week.



The Tower Cinema in New Briggate, Leeds was a conversion of part of the Grand Arcade of 1897 and was designed by JP Crawford. It opened in April 1920 and closed in March 1985. Mrs Joyce Stooks, the manageress, is on record as saying that she felt a deep sorrow that Leeds was losing its oldest City centre cinema. At the time it employed four full-time and eight part-time staff. The operator, Associated Tower Cinemas, still exists today as a property investment and development company but ceased to be involved in cinema operation in 2005. The former cinema went on to become a nightclub including spells as the BED club and Gatecrasher. Today it is home to The Brotherhood of Pursuits and Happiness pub, which opened in November 2014. The centrepiece is an exposed section of the old Victorian shopping arcade with a first-floor balcony that serves as a cocktail bar and pool space. Stripped brick walls, decorated with golf clubs and stags heads and parquet and weathered wood-panelled flooring combine with beamed ceilings and an arched window to form a place of character. Food includes pies, Scotch eggs and sausage rolls, which can be topped with peas, mash and gravy. The pub is the brainchild of Demon Leisure, set up by hospitality specialists Seema Dhiman and Dirk Mischendahl.



The **King's Cinema** in Hume Street, Montrose opened in 1919 and was a conversion of a theatre. At one time it was part of the SCVT empire, although it was later run by the Banff Picture House Company and the Milne circuit before closing in 1963. The 1,000-seater ended up going over to bingo, which it remained on for many years, ending as a branch of Gala. It is now **The Picture House** pub run by Belhaven Pubs and is decorated with film memorabilia such as clapper boards and movie reels. Live music is provided during the Montrose Music Festival and there are DJs on Saturdays with a rock covers band once a month. There are also a number of screens on which football, rugby and Formula One can be viewed. The balcony seats, totalling about 200, are reported to be still intact. A local film group were planning to reopen this area as a cinema but focus now seems to be on a site elsewhere in the town.

The picture on p2 shows the 'other' ABC Southport. This cinema was a prominent feature in a model village on the promenade fifty years ago and the management of the real ABC (ex Regal) attached the ABC name and changed the details of the films showing to advertise their actual programmes. It made the showmanship pages of the *Kine Weekly*.

ANSWER TO EDITORIAL QUIZ





The Royal Victoria Pavilion on Harbour Parade in Ramsgate, which at 16,500 sq ft is Wetherspoon's largest pub, opened on 29 August 2017 with the Mayor and Mayoress of Ramsgate doing the honours. Over £4 million has been spent on the project to revitalise the building since planning permission was submitted in January 2015. The pub features the history of the building along with prints from local artists and has nearly 350 tables. It provides jobs for around 150 workers. The Pavilion itself was designed by Stanley Davenport Adshead in the style of a Robert Adam Orangery and opened in 1904. It was converted to a cinema in 1929 showing films until 1951. Rank took out a 75-year lease in 1969 and the building became a casino, last rolling the dice in 2008. A fire caused substantial damage in 2011 but in 2013 owners Thanet District Council sought new tenants for the building and what we now have is this fascinating result.

The Oxford Picture House in Duke Street, St Helens opened as the Picturedrome in 1912 and was instantly recognisable by its distinctive tower. It survived until the mid-1950s after which it became the Plaza Theatre Club. More recently it was a pub called the Orange Tree but has since been divided up and now includes a hair salon, pharmacy and the Cinema Bar [R], which opened in July 2013. Set up by former soldier Andy Reid, along with business partners Kev Armstrong and Darren O'Neal, the bar's specialties are cocktails and gin-tasting sessions but it is only open in the evenings.



The former Roxy Cinema in Ashby High Street, Scunthorpe is now The Malt Shovel pub. The cinema opened as the Globe in October 1920 but was renamed following its acquisition by the Star group in the 1950s. It closed in January 1962 and went over to bingo, later becoming a snooker club. The pub was opened in 1992 by Mick Pogson but changed hands in 2006 when Rupert Abbott purchased it. He put the pub on the market in 2014 with an asking price of £1.5 million. The pub incorporates the former snooker hall and has a large dining area and pool area. It hosts quiz nights and live music and has a selection of real ales.



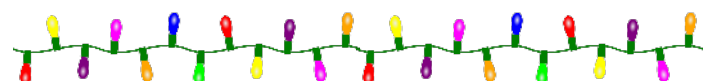
The Roxy in Wharf Street, Sowerby Bridge opened as the Electric Theatre in November 1915 with seating in stalls and balcony. Later under Gaumont, it passed to Star in the 1950s and was renamed before closing in February 1963. It operated as a bingo hall but not until the 1970s and was in use as a café only when pictured in 2011. It is now the Roxy Venue pub, with a room on the left for pool, TVs showing various sports and live music on the stage at weekends. Real ale is available at this pub.



The Victoria pub in the restaurant area of the former Granada / Cannon / EMD Cinema in Hoe Street, Walthamstow, now has a partner in the Mirth Marvel and Maud pub, which opened in the foyer area in December 2015. There is a main bar at the rear with a cocktail bar in the kiosk and food is served in the upper foyer. The odd film is screened now and again, *Sex Drugs and Rock 'n' Roll* being an example but it is not a regular feature of the pub. It is operated by the Antic Pub Company, who wish to retain the auditorium, working in partnership with Soho Theatre but this is likely to be a long-winded and drawn-out process owing to the capital involved.

The cinema itself was the second in the Granada circuit to be built and was designed by Cecil Masey in a Moorish style with interior decoration in Spanish Baroque by Theodore Komisarjevsky. It stands on a site previously occupied by the Victoria Hall and it opened on 15 September 1930. It was tripled in 1973 to provide a main screen in the front stalls and balcony and two smaller screens in the rear of the stalls. It was renamed Cannon in 1989, MGM following the next takeover and later ABC when the name returned in 1996. Following the merger with Odeon it was disposed of and sold to Mr Mohan Sharma in 2000 who named it the EMD. It screened just Bollywood films at first owing to a covenant but returned to mainstream flicks a year later. It closed on 3 January 2003 and was sold to the UCKG religious organisation but the Church failed to get planning permission to convert it into a place of worship and eventually parted with it in 2014. The building has been listed since 1987.

**Editor's Note:** The CTA Christmas party is to be held at Mirth on Wednesday 20 December – see p3 for how to obtain tickets.







The Palladium Cinema in St Thomas Street, Weymouth opened in July 1912 and was originally operated by Albany Ward presenting a mixture of shows and films. The cinema was considered to be too small for conversion to talkies and it closed in January 1931. It was later a motor cycle showroom and a discotheque but had become the Rendezvous pub by the 1990s. Today it is a three-floor venue with downstairs bar, the middle Anchor bar and the Dao nightclub and is run by the Stone-gate Pub Company. Highlights include a traditional Sunday Roast, Wrestlemania on the big screens and a 20% discount for NHS personnel. The pub benefits from being at a prominent quayside location.



The Picture House in High Street, Yeadon opened in August 1925 and had 830 seats. It was taken over by Star and later twinned as Studio 1&2. It closed in October 1986 when *Cinderella* and *Poltergeist 2 - The Other Side* were the last films to be screened. It turned its hand to bingo, which lasted until 2004 but it had become The Aviator pub by 2006. The pub closed in February 2016 following a series of brawls but reopened two months later as The Yard after a £180,000 refurbishment. It is managed by Graham and Barbara Yellow and now features a wood-burning pizza oven.

### PROPOSED PUBS

In September 2015 JD Wetherspoon bought the former State cinema in Grays [R] and although very little work seems to have taken place the company states that it is still committed to the site and have been working closely with the likes of Historic England to bring the building back to life. A formal planning application was expected to be submitted in Autumn 2017. The project is expected to top £3 million but will provide a 100 or so jobs in the town. The cinema opened in March 1938 and was designed by Frank Chancellor, with 2,200 seats in stalls and balcony and a fully-equipped stage for shows. It originally closed in January 1985 but was reopened by Roy Roberts the following December. It closed again in September 1988 and has only screened a handful of films ever since. The foyer was in use as Charleston's nightclub but the rest of the building has had little use with occasional organ concerts providing the entertainment. The Compton, however, was stripped of its pipes in 2011 following a break-in. The Morrison's supermarket chain later purchased the building, perhaps with the sole idea of using the car park for its customers. The building is Grade II\* listed.

### UPDATE ON THE ORIGINAL BOOK

Plans to convert the former Corn Exchange in Alnwick [R] into a pub by JD Wetherspoon have been scrapped for commercial reasons. Planning permission was approved in February 2014 but wrangles over land ownership and other issues caused the company to lose interest in the plan in early 2017. In Cambridge the Tivoli pub at the former Tivoli cinema went up in smoke overnight on 14 March 2015 with part of the building collapsing. JD Wetherspoon claimed at the time that it would be rebuilt but in July 2016 stated that it would not reopen. The Capitol in Forest Hill was put on the For Sale list the same year with closure appearing to be imminent but the hostelry remains open and still in the company's hands at the time of writing. The Picture Palace in Ponders End was put up for sale in November 2015 and is now run by Hawthorn Leisure. The bar at the former Odeon in Stoke-on-Trent is now Boston Brothers; it includes the Burger 'n' Bibs grill and was previously Revolution. The Imperial in the former Imperial Picture House in Walsall closed as a pub in March 2016, despite Wetherspoon having a 50-year lease and is currently on the market. Unfortunately my book *From Pictures to Pints: Cinemas That Became Pubs* has long since sold out and is thus out of print.



COMING IN 2018  
FROM PICTURES TO PINTS GOES INTERNATIONAL

### PICTURE CREDITS:

Plantation Bar (Plantation Bar); Dr-Mx (The Picture Playhouse)\*; Harry Rigby (Falcon Mews, The Bridgewater, The Brotherhood, Regal, State, The Yard, Corn Exchange, Roxy); Stagedoor (The Rep); Hospitality and Catering News (The Caley Picture House); Robbo2010 (Cinema Bar); J Thomas (The Picture House); Pippa Hudson (The Royal Victoria Pavilion); Gavin McGrath (Mirth Marvel and Maud); Neil Owen (Rendevous)\*.

\* Symbol indicates picture has been used in accordance with the Creative Commons Licence, see [creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0]; images may have been modified.



The State Grays in April 2004



The Regal Kingsbridge in June 2008



# REWINDING BACK

## THREE OF LONDON'S SUPER CINEMAS SOLD TODAY FOR £700,000

A £700,000 London cinema deal was concluded today. It brings the Trocadero at the Elephant and Castle, (4,000 seats), the Troxy Commercial Road (3,500 seats) and the Trocette in Tower Bridge Road, under the entire control of the Gaumont-British Picture Corporation, which already has nearly 400 theatres throughout the country. These theatres were built during recent years and controlled by H and G Cinemas Ltd of which Messrs Phil S and Sydney Hyams and Major Arthur Gale are directors. A new company, Gaumont British Super Cinemas Ltd, has been formed with a capital of £400,000 to operate the three cinemas. Other theatres are to be added to the new company's properties later on.



The Troxy Commercial Road in September 2004 (3775)

Messrs Hyams and the Gaumont-British were recently in dispute with the Kinematograph Renters' Society over these theatres. In February, as reported in *The Evening News* at the time, Gaumont-British took up a financial interest in the whole of the Hyams theatres with a view to strengthening the booking powers of both parties. But the Renters' Society declared that it was not satisfied that the interest was big enough to justify Gaumont-British booking for the Hyams theatres. The Society has always objected to booking agreements between cinema owners and it informed Gaumont-British that its members would not book films to the Corporation for the Hyams theatres. Temporarily defeated, Gaumont-British have now met the difficulty by buying three of the theatres outright.

The Hyams brothers and Major Gale will be directors of the new company and representing Gaumont-British will be Mr Mark Ostrer (chairman), Mr Maurice Ostrer and Mr Arthur W Jarratt, the GB theatre chief. Mr Mark Ostrer is the chairman and managing director of the Gaumont-British Corporation. The Hyams brothers, who have concluded this big deal, were once sons of an East End baker and rose to be among the most important cinema proprietors in London. They retain their interest in the other H and G cinemas.

*Evening News, Tuesday 20 August 1935; sent in by Joyce Braddon*

## POSTMEN CAN'T GO TO CINEMA

Bury postmen are complaining that because of their working hours they have no opportunity of attending cinemas or other places of entertainment. Though they work a 48-hour week, duties are arranged so that they start work at 5:15am and finish at 5:15pm and thus cannot attend the first performance at the cinemas. Because of their early start in the morning, they also cannot visit the second house.

They have asked Bury Town Council to alter the last Saturday delivery from 3-o'clock to 12:45 so that they can have the Saturday evening free but the Council, after discussing the matter in private, turned it down. Now the Trades Council, representing 7,000 trade unionists in the town, is supporting the postmen's request and are seeking an interview with the Town Clerk to ask for the question to be discussed again. They claim that an early Saturday delivery will not inconvenience the public.

*Manchester Evening News - 27 April 1944; sent in by David A Ellis*

## ON THE TOWN BY BILL HALL: DEATH OF A CINEMA



A cinema died in Brighton last week. It was called the Odeon Kemp Town. And the manager, Mr Reg Thynne told me, "The whole thing is heartbreaking." On Monday I stood at the back of the circle while the seats were removed to play a part in the resurrection of the Odeon Lewes, the cinema that had been four-feet underwater only two days before. Said Mr Thynne, "At least part of the theatre will not be wasted. In fact we have closed just in time to help the Odeon." But the cinema itself presented a pathetic sight. Tough and brawny workers pulled the heart out of it while Mr Thynne made up the books. Row by row the circle was emptied - the stalls were due for later excavation. And all the time Mr Thynne - who is to be a mobile manager based at the Regent Brighton - sorrowed. "I have been here nearly 15 years, ever since I returned from the Royal Navy during the war. There are 23 on the staff and we have been very happy bunch."

In the history of the cinema the chief and saddest event was the war-time bombing when 50 people, mostly children, were killed. "I wasn't here then, of course but I know that none of the staff were killed" he said. More important is the fate of the Odeon now. The Rank Organisation says it is to be sold. The most likely future for the place is that of a storehouse or a warehouse - and in my view both will be a waste. Last week the Circuit Management Association - the Rank Organisation - announced that they were considering the Odeon Hove, as a bowling alley. But this doesn't make sense. Why wasn't the Odeon Kemp Town considered for the same purpose? Look at it this way. The King Alfred Hove already supplies Hove's need for such a service - a service that is very popular. Brighton does not yet have such an amenity for the community. And from the number of Brighton people who go to the King Alfred, Brighton obviously needs it. So Mr Thynne and 22 members of his staff must either be moved around or look for other jobs, while some firm buys his cinema and uses it for a purpose that will neither benefit the public nor find jobs for former employees.

*The Odeon Kemp Town closed on Saturday 5 November 1960 so this item is likely to be from the Brighton and Hove Gazette of 12 November 1960. In the event, the building returned to entertainment use with bingo from early 1962. It was finally demolished in 1986. (9856)*

*Sent in by Jeremy Perkins*

ODEON KEMP TOWN			
TEL: BRIGHTON 680792			
Sunday, October 30th, 1 Day			
Doors Open 1.30	For 3 Days	Thursday, November 3rd	
Errol Flynn, Cornell Borchers - ISTANBUL	Last Perf. 6.50	Doors Open 1.30	Last Perf. 7.25
Rory Calhoun - THE BIG CAPER	(a) 2.5 5.25 8.40	CLARK GABLE SOPHIA LOREN	
	(a) 3.45 7.0	IT STARTED IN NAPLES	
Monday, Oct. 31st		1.35 5.10 8.45 (a)	
Doors Open 1.30		Jack Lord - WALK LIKE A DRAGON	
		3.15 6.55 (a)	
		2.50 5.50 8.50 (a)	
		Donald Pleasence - THE BIG DAY	
		1.40 4.35 7.35 (a)	
The Management announce that this Theatre will be CLOSED from SUNDAY, 6th NOV., 1960. Patrons are reminded that a welcome awaits them at ODEON, REGENT AND ACADEMY, BRIGHTON			





### BABY FOUND IN WEST END CINEMA

This baby boy was found crying bitterly on the steps of the Regal Marble Arch last night. Police officers were today trying to locate the mother, as the baby lay in a cot at the St Marylebone home in Northumberland Street. The only clue to the child's identity is a tag tied around his ankle.

*Evening News, Tuesday 20 August 1935;  
sent in by Joyce Braddon*



### ODEON MANAGER FOR BLACKPOOL

Mr Ronald J Brunt, who has been manager of the Odeon Chester, since August 1939, has received a similar post at the Odeon Blackpool. A notable characteristic of his period in Chester was the number of times that his cinema was used for big charity concerts and Ministry of Information film shows. His programmes always gave the utmost satisfaction owing to his unerring judgement of what was good 'box office'. It was his contention that it was the film that mattered, not the stars. Modern productions have since proved him correct.

Mr Brunt is a native of Staffordshire and for the past three years has lived in Upton. During fourteen years in the film world he has also held a post in Birmingham where he opened the City's second talkie cinema. Of late he has not been in the best of health but it is hoped that his transfer to Blackpool will contribute towards complete recovery. In a farewell letter he thanks the civic authorities, the press and the patrons who have helped to make his period in Chester so happy.

*Chester Chronicle - 2 January 1943; sent in by David A Ellis*

### THE BERKELEY CINEMA, HULL



Erection of the Berkeley cinema, just off Holderness Road at Bilton Grange, provides a further amenity to a large and growing community in East Hull and in addition it is well placed for serving the outlying districts of Holderness - particularly as a large car park has been provided to the rear of the cinema. This new cinema seats approximately 1,200; 800 in the stalls and 400 in the balcony and incorporates screen and sound facilities suitable for anamorphic and wide-screen film presentation. Siting was determined by the Hull Corporation and, owing to the poor nature of the sub-soil, piling was necessary. The foundations are carried out in reinforced concrete beams and pile caps and the structural framework is of steel, fully protected against fire in accordance with modern practice. The steel bracket framing and metal lathing for the flat and shaped suspended plaster ceilings was installed by Steel Bracketing and Lathing Ltd of Thornton Heath, Surrey.

The main entrance, canopy and internal foyers face the main road and the large foyers give considerable queueing and waiting space. The auditorium has been designed to ensure that comfort and good acoustics will allow patrons to see and hear films in pleasant surroundings. Main scheme of decoration and internal finishings is similar to that used in the Cecil cinema, recently erected for Hull Cinemas Limited (Brinley Evans, managing director) and which was also designed by Gelder and Kitchen F/A/LRIBA, the architects for the Berkeley. Externally the building has been treated in a simple and straightforward manner and it was decided that comfort, internal finishings and decoration should be given first priority rather than an elaborate external elevation.

The main screen to the auditorium is 44ft wide so that CinemaScope and other large screen techniques can be exploited. The auditorium is equipped with facilities for stereophonic sound. Colour-change sequences on the screen curtains also give a pleasant and restful effect.



The lighting scheme internally, particularly in the auditorium, is one of the main features of the decoration and consists of direct and indirect fittings to give the right effect and atmosphere for a building designed solely as a place of entertainment. The ventilation system comprises a filtered and warmed fresh air supply with the necessary air changes per hour to ensure a healthy, warm and clean atmosphere at all times. It was installed by Rosser and Russell Ltd. The architects have introduced varied colours into the internal decoration scheme in accordance with modern practice and, for speed, emulsion paint has been used throughout to walls and ceilings with gloss paint to the woodwork.

*Ideal Kinema - January 1958; sent in by Ben Doman; see p8 last Bulletin*

### LONDON WATCHERS

Elaborate precautions for safeguarding the public have been taken in London. When cinemas there reopened, watchers were posted outside to give instant warning of air raids and firefighting and ARP squads were on constant duty. During the daytime the flickering coloured lights were resumed and the whole West End took on a new appearance.

There have been no queues to buy the first war-time cinema admission tickets. London cinema managers had been ready for a lightning decision. Commissionaires have given way to watchers, complete with gas mask and first aid kit. The manager of the Odeon in Leicester Square said that in the event of anything happening the watcher would tell them.

*Manchester Evening News - 15 September 1939; sent in by David A Ellis*

## INTERNET CORNER

- ★ [[blackcountryhistory.org](http://blackcountryhistory.org)] The historic objects and documents cared for by Museums and Archives in the Black Country. A search for "cinema" produced 645 results.
- ★ [[tinyurl.com/yd2354xk](http://tinyurl.com/yd2354xk)] A page from the Royal Institute of British Architects [RIBA] image archive of drawings by John Alexander (1888-1974) of proposals for cinema interiors. If you clear this search term and enter "cinema" it produces 947 results.
- ★ [[www.youtube.com/watch?v=sLg5ESj3CTY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sLg5ESj3CTY)] A 7 minute documentary about the cinema in Berkeley, Gloucestershire. {45490}  
*Sent in by Tony Williams.*
- ★ [[www.southlakes-uk.co.uk/cinemas.html](http://www.southlakes-uk.co.uk/cinemas.html)] A list of Barrow-in-Furness dance halls, cinemas and theatres with links to photographs. *Sent in by Gavin McGrath.*
- ★ [[www.mcsparron.talktalk.net/cinemas.htm](http://www.mcsparron.talktalk.net/cinemas.htm)] A page on Coventry cinemas with links to photographs. *Sent in by Gavin McGrath.*
- ★ [[tinyurl.com/ycrymfmc](http://tinyurl.com/ycrymfmc)] A blog from the USA of a cinema-going experience in California. A bit OTT. *Sent in by Terry Hanstock.*
- ★ [[tinyurl.com/y9f4l8ac](http://tinyurl.com/y9f4l8ac)] A page from developer *intu* with a 2:40m video about the redevelopment of the Broadmarsh Centre in Nottingham. There's a glimpse of the entrance to the new Light cinema about 2 minutes in. *Sent in by Terry Hanstock.*
- ★ [[tinyurl.com/y8ydf5ar](http://tinyurl.com/y8ydf5ar)] A *Newcastle Chronicle* page with some lovely images of the Paramount in September 1931.
- ★ [[tinyurl.com/yb842fcr](http://tinyurl.com/yb842fcr)] *Time Out's* Guide to Film-going in London.
- ★ [[www.lfexaminer.com](http://www.lfexaminer.com)] The website of Large Format film. There are links on the left that list theatres in the USA and the rest of the world. I was amazed how many IMAX screens are in China!
- ★ [[www.giantscreencinema.com](http://www.giantscreencinema.com)] The website of the Giant Screen Cinema Association.



# 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](http://cinematreasures.org/theaters/nnnnn)

## ABINGDON (Oxon)

The Friends of Abingdon have been working with the Regal Evesham to show films this winter at the 92-seat Unicorn Theatre. This will be a temporary arrangement; it is hoped a permanent home can be found. A cinema plan for the Guildhall was scrapped last January when the Council decided the scheme was unviable.

*Wantage and Grove Herald – 11 October*

## BATHGATE (West Lothian)

The charity that runs the Regal Theatre has gone into voluntary liquidation and cancelled all future performances at the venue. The charity leased the art-deco former cinema building from West Lothian Council to run as an arts and community venue. In June this year, the Council approved additional one-off funding of £35,000 to enable the theatre to continue to operate over the summer, on the understanding that a “robust business plan that will deliver a sustainable future for the Regal” would be produced. A consultation will be carried out with the local community and user groups to search for a viable community use for the property. It opened in July 1938 with 1,067 seats but was subdivided in the 1970s. There is a 120-seat cinema located in the former circle, whilst the main floor is in live performance and community use with 206 removable seats. It is unclear whether the cinema element is still operating. The CTA visited in September 2008. {23052}

*The Stage – 4, 7 September; sent in by R David Simpson; photo on front cover*

**Late News:** Their website [[www.bathgateregal.org](http://www.bathgateregal.org)] says that the 2017 panto is “back on” and is taking bookings “to save the theatre”.

## BEDWORTH (Warks)



The former Star / Plaza was reported to be due for demolition some time ago. However when passing by last week it's still there and awaiting its future. This cinema, a converted chapel, was opened in 1921 as the Star by the Wallace brothers who went on to own the town's other cinema, the Palace. It was renamed Plaza in 1952 following a refurbishment. The Plaza showed its last film in 1960 and closed its doors to become a furniture storage warehouse. The site has stood empty for over ten years now and its future is uncertain. {46953}

*Sent in by Peter Lea; photo taken June 2015*

## BLACKPOOL (Lancs)

Plans (described on p24 of the last Bulletin) for a nine-screen Light cinema at the Houndshill Centre have been approved. Work is due to commence early next year.

*Blackpool Gazette – 28 September; Lancashire Evening Post – 30 September*

## BOSTON (Lincs)

The five-screen West End cinema is to be refurbished by owners Savoy Cinemas and rebranded Savoy. Screen ① will have new seats and a Dolby Atmos sound system. The frontage and foyer will also be refurbished. This phase one should be completed by 24 November; screens ② to ⑤ will be refurbished over the next few years. {24206}

*Boston Standard, Boston Target – 30 August; photo top next column*



The West End Boston in July 2007

## BOURNEMOUTH

Bournemouth Civic Society has unveiled plans to convert the former Gaumont / Odeon and turn the downstairs cinema into a performance space with its original name, the Regent. The upper auditorium would show films and Curzon Cinemas has expressed an interest in operating it. However, there is a covenant placed by Odeon that precludes reuse of the site by a cinema operator and this would have to be negotiated. The public have welcomed the proposals, saying how great it is to see a scheme that doesn't include flats. Two previous proposals to demolish the building and build 10 and 14 storey tower blocks have been rejected. The site, along with the nearby ABC, was sold to Libra Homes for £6.15m. See Casework p6. {20081}

*Daily Echo (Bournemouth) – 26 August, 5 September; sent in by Carl Chesworth, John Forster & Philip Stevens*

## BRADFORD (West Yorks)

NEC Group International is to be the operator of the restored New Victoria / Gaumont / Odeon. They will invest £2m to convert it into a 4,000 capacity music venue, due to open in 2020. Following the news, the West Yorkshire Combined Authority announced a £325,000 grant. There are some short videos at: [tinyurl.com/yb7875qf](http://tinyurl.com/yb7875qf) {3677}

*Telegraph & Argus (Bradford) – 25 August; Yorkshire Post – 7, 14 September; BBC News website; sent in by John West*

Construction of the new six-screen 780-seat Light cinema at The Broadway should be completed in late November. Opening is now scheduled for spring 2018.

*Telegraph & Argus (Bradford) – 16 October*

## BRIDGWATER (Somerset)

Sedgmoor District Council is looking to develop a new leisure complex in the town centre, which could include a cinema.

*[somersetlive.co.uk] – 12 October*

## BRISTOL

The former Gaumont is set to be demolished and replaced with student flats. The façade will be retained. It originally opened as a music hall in 1892 and became a cinema in 1912. In 1927 the auditorium was reconstructed behind the original façade. It became the Gaumont in 1952 and films ceased in March 1980. It became a succession of nightclubs. See p6 Bulletin 51/3. {20707}

*Bristol Post – 23 August*

## BUTLEY (Suffolk)

The Oyster Inn has built a 21-seat cinema in a converted barn. Though small, the cinema is fitted with genuine velvet seats, which the owner bought on eBay from the Science Museum in London as part of changes to its auditorium. They were collected in a horsebox from Felixstowe before Andrew Stowe, the pub's builder, created mini tiers. The cinema's programme is advertised in the pub. People can also email [[filmclub@butleyoyster.com](mailto:filmclub@butleyoyster.com)] to join a mailing list or reserve tickets, which are free.

*East Anglian Daily Times – 1 September; sent in by Terry Hanstock*

## BUXTON (Derbys)

The grade II listed Pavilion Arts Centre is to become a 350-seat cinema showing the latest releases. A new screen, sound system and projector have been installed. It will open in December. Buxton has not has a full-time cinema since 1979.

*Buxton Advertiser – 14 September*



### CANTERBURY (Kent)

Plans for a cinema in the Kingsmead development have had the number of screens reduced from ten to five or six. The bowling alley part of the plan has been scrapped completely and the number of homes almost trebled from 70 to 189.

*Kentish Gazette – 14 September*

### CARDIFF

The Wetherspoons pub the Prince of Wales has had a £1m refurbishment. The grade II listed building had live theatre use until 1957 when film shows were introduced. It ended its cinematic life in June 1984 showing 'erotic' films. Subsequent uses included bingo, laserzone, nightclub and retail. It became a pub in July 1999 and was sympathetically restored. {20810}

*South Wales Echo – 29 August; sent in by Jon Williams*

### CASTLEFORD (West Yorks)



The former Picture House was auctioned on 18 October. It opened in 1921 and closed in 1964. It has since been a bingo hall, café/bar and most recently a pub, which was destroyed in a fire last January, believed to be arson. The guide price was £150,000 but it sold for £252,500. The identity of the buyer is unknown. {6292}

*Yorkshire Evening Post – 30 September; photo taken August 2005*

### CHRISTCHURCH (Dorset)

As reported on p25 of the last Bulletin, the Regent has been having structural problems. The circle has reopened but more work is scheduled. A charity première of *Victoria and Abdul* raised over £8,000 for the Dorset Blind Association.

*Daily Echo – 19, 21 September; sent in by John Forster & Philip Stevens*

### CLIPSTONE (Notts)

The former Ritz has been demolished. It opened in 1936 and closed around 1959/1960. It became a function room, which the CTA visited in 2008. That closed a few years ago and the building had been boarded-up since. {45063}

*Sent in by Ken Roe; photo on front cover*

### COLCHESTER (Essex)

The fitting out of the new three-screen Curzon began in late August. The opening is expected early next year.

*East Anglian Daily Times – 31 August*

Plans to convert the former Odeon in Crouch Street into apartments look set to receive approval. {17575}

*Essex County Standard – 13 October*

Work can now start on a multiplex cinema at the Northern Gateway after the Secretary of State decided not to call in the plans, which were approved by the Council last July.

*East Anglian Daily Times – 3 October; Essex County Standard – 6 October*

### CREWE (Cheshire)

The Royal Arcade site is expected to be bulldozed next summer and work on transforming it into a leisure and retail scheme should be completed by Christmas 2020. The plans include an eight-screen cinema. The town already has a five-screen Odeon (ex Reel).

*Crewe Chronicle – 6 September*

### DERBY

The Roundhouse was used as a cinema on 14 October to screen *Dirty Dancing* on the film's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The grade II listed building is thought to be the world's oldest railway roundhouse, built in 1839.

*Derby Telegraph – 5 September*

### DONEGAL (Ireland)

An application has been made for a five-screen 714-seat cinema on the outskirts of the town near the Drumlonagher roundabout. No operator has been named. The last cinema in the town closed 20 years ago.

*Donegal Post – 6 September*

### DUBLIN (Ireland)



Permission has been applied for to demolish the former Screen cinema. It opened in 1964 and closed in February 2016. {11607}

*The Times (Ireland) – 19 August; photo taken November 2002*



The former Stella in Rathmines is to reopen as a boutique cinema. It was Dublin's largest cinema when it opened in January 1923 with 1,283 seats in stalls and circle. It was subdivided in 1981 and closed in 2004. Following the redevelopment, an audience of 220 will sit "in big leather armchairs with ottomans and blankets". Food will be brought to customers' tables. The developers have removed the cladding and revealed the original façade and claim to have "replicated every missing moulding, cornice and piece of panelling". {22364}

*Sunday Times (Ireland) – 10 September; photo by David Simpson*

### DUDLEY

An appeal for £10,000 has been launched to pay for an asbestos survey and removal at the Hippodrome. In recent months volunteers have carried out a major clean-up both inside and out. The campaign group must raise about £5m before the full restoration can go ahead. They say a 25-year lease is needed to make the project viable.

*Stourbridge Chronicle – 31 August; sent in by Ivan Harris*

### EAST KILBRIDE (South Lanark)

The nine-screen Odeon (ex UCI) has become an Odeon Luxe. The seating capacity has been reduced by over half from 2,084 to 652 reclining leather seats giving triple legroom and foldaway tables for drinks and snacks. One auditorium has an iSense screen. {27066}

*Glasgow Evening Times – 3 October*



## GLASGOW



Further to the announcement on p26 of the last Bulletin that Vue is to operate a new cinema in the St Enoch Centre, the centre wants to expand to accommodate three flagship stores. This will involve demolition of some adjacent buildings, one of which was the former St Enoch Picture Theatre, which closed in 1935. It is currently in retail use. {44079}

*Glasgow Evening Times – 24 August; photo taken November 2006*

## GREENOCK (Inverclyde)

Rumours that the four-screen Waterfront Cinema is to be relocated have been totally denied by the Council owners. It is operated on lease by the independent West Coast Cinema Company. {27086}

*Greenock Telegraph – 11 September; photo taken September 2008*



## HAVERFORDWEST (Pembroke)

Reel is to be the operator of the new five-screen cinema, reported on p26 of the last Bulletin.

*Western Telegraph – 30 August; Pembrokeshire Herald – 8 September*

## HEXHAM (Northumberland)

Further to the report in the last Bulletin of the 80<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Forum, at the celebratory events it was pointed out that this was also the tenth anniversary of Hexham Community Partnership taking over the lease of the cinema and that in those ten years £150,000 has been contributed to the benefit of the community. There was also a screening of a ten-minute film celebrating the work of the cinema, made by the present staff with contributions from several of them and with a soundtrack comprised of music composed by one of them and played by their friends. {3148}

*Sent in by David & Margaret Williams*

## HORSHAM (West Sussex)

Work on the redevelopment of Piries Place is expected to start "shortly". It will include a three-screen Everyman cinema.

*West Sussex County Times – 12 October*

## IPSWICH (Suffolk)

The twelve-screen Cineworld has cut its adult prices by £2 and children's prices by £3, starting at £8.20 and £5.70 respectively. One of the reasons given is to show off the recent refurbishment – see p27 last Bulletin. A fourteen-screen Empire opened nearby last March.

*East Anglian Daily Times – 11 September; sent in by Terry Hanstock*

## KINGS LYNN (Norfolk)



The Majestic has submitted a planning application for a new 120-seat auditorium in a new extension and to adapt the existing main screen to accommodate a further 100 patrons. The application also includes improvements to the fabric of the grade II listed building and an additional entrance from an adjoining shop unit. {3262}

*Lynn News – 15 September; photo taken July 2007*

## LINCOLN

The volunteer-run cinema operation in the circle of the former Ritz has closed after five years as they could not afford to renew the lease. They have had to cancel three events and say all monies will be refunded but one customer says she is £110 out of pocket. There is a Wetherspoons pub in the foyer and rear stalls. {25899}

*Lincolnshire Echo – 7 September; sent in by Carl Chesworth*

## LONDON (Bethnal Green)

Planning permission has been granted for a £45m development at the Rex / Essoldo. It will feature a boutique hotel, rooftop bar and cinema behind the retained façade. {16512}

*Evening Standard – 12 October; sent in by Tom Laughlan & R David Simpson*

## LONDON (Bromley)

The four-screen Cineworld (ex Odeon / Empire) is to have two more screens added and its name changed to Bromley Picturehouse. The new capacity will be 916 seats, up from the present 889. It will use former office space to create a new café/bar. Access will be improved and a lift installed. See p6 last Bulletin. {14116}

*Bromley Times – 14 September*

## LONDON (Crofton Park)

The Rivoli Ballroom, a cinema under the same name until 1957, screened *Some Like it Hot* on Thursday 21 September as one of its regular film screenings.

*Metro - 21 September; sent in by Allen Eyles*

**AE writes:** This is also known as the Rivoli Brockley but I believe it advertised as the Rivoli Crofton Park when a cinema.

## LONDON (Dalston)

The Rio Cinema has smashed its fundraising target of £125,000 to pay for a second screen. A 28-seater can now be built in the basement, thanks to the contributions, which include £40,000 from the Mayor of London. The Rio also hopes to renovate the exterior next year, which it admits is looking rather shabby. {10557}

*Hackney Gazette – 19 September; sent in by Gavin McGrath*

## LONDON (Ealing)

St George, the owners of the former Empire (ex-Forum, ABC, UGC, Virgin etc), received consent to their detailed plans for a £100m redevelopment of the Ealing Filmworks site, including an eight-screen cinema to be run by Picturehouse, in September. The ex-Forum's facade, which was retained following demolition of the rest of the cinema in 2008/9, will be incorporated but only as an organic food store with flats above. The new cinema screens will be at the rear of the site accessed off a small public square. The CTA's wish that the Walpole Picture Theatre façade be incorporated more meaningfully into the development was not adopted but the plans envisage landscaping and improving the setting of the retained arched façade.



The CTA had proposed that possible enhancements to the façade should include a trompe d'oeil effect showing how the original **Walpole** façade looked and explanatory panels explaining the history of both cinemas (both designed by J Stanley Beard).

It is hoped that salvaged artefacts from the old cinema, in particular interior light fittings, can be incorporated into the new scheme. Although construction work on the site started in December 2016 the new screens are not expected to open until 2019, a full ten years after the original cinema was demolished. During this time, Ealing, the home of Ealing Film Studios – arguably one of the oldest in the world – has been without a commercial cinema except for occasional visits from a travelling cinema operated by Picturehouse.

*Sent in by Robert Gurd & Tom Laughlan; CGI image of proposed façade*

#### LONDON (Finsbury Park)

A plaque to the former Finsbury Park Empire has been unveiled at Vaudeville Court, the block of flats that now occupies the site. The theatre opened in September 1910, designed by Frank Matcham, with 2,200 seats on three levels. Shows came here directly after the London Palladium, before setting off on a tour of other Moss Empire theatres. The last show was in May 1960. In 1961, scenes for the Cliff Richard film *The Young Ones* were shot here. It was demolished in April 1965. {34164}

*Islington Tribune – 13 October; sent in by Tom Laughlan*

#### LONDON (Golders Green)

The Hippodrome has been bought by an Islamic charity for £5.2m; it will become a community centre. See p28 last Bulletin. {29969}

*The Stage – 21 September; sent in by Barry Quinton & R David Simpson*

#### LONDON (Kingston upon Thames)

The Council has approved a planning application for a four-screen “boutique” cinema in the Bentall Centre. No operator has been named.

*Surrey Comet – 15 September*

#### LONDON (Muswell Hill)

The Everyman, the former Odeon, is now a five-screen operation with the opening of the two “pods” in the rear of the circle, screens ④ and ⑤. Three rows of seating have been retained at the front of the circle. Everyman’s website gives the seating capacities as: Screen ① (the front stalls and front circle) – 251; Screen ② – 59; Screen ③ – 68; (these are the two original “mini screens” under the circle); Screen ④ – 46 and Screen ⑤ – 46. {13783}

*Sent in by Jeremy Buck*

#### LONDON (Notting Hill)

An application to demolish a family-run Italian restaurant to extend the foyer of the Gate Cinema has been refused by the Council. The restaurant’s owners launched an on-line petition that attracted 3,561 signatures.

*The Caterer – 13 October*

#### LONDON (South Woodford)



Sainsbury’s has published an investment proposal to sell more than 59,000 square feet of land in South Woodford – including the Odeon. The report states: “The policy does not afford any direct protection to the Sainsbury’s Supermarket or Odeon Cinema.” The proposal, called “prime London retail investment”, puts an area including Sainsbury’s foodstore and five high street retail units, including Boots and Lizard

Lounge, on the market. However, despite the report, Sainsbury’s vowed that the proposal was for a change of landlord only. It insisted it would be staying in the area. A spokesman for Odeon confirmed there are no plans to close the site, where a cinema has stood since 1934. They added: “We’re very proud of our fantastic cinema in South Woodford and look forward to continuing to provide great service and all the latest and best entertainment for years to come.”

*East London & West Essex Guardian – 18 October;  
sent in by Geoff Gill & Nigel Pitt; photo taken August 2015*

#### LONDON (Walthamstow)



The former Dominion has a sign on it saying ‘Sold for 48 flats’. Asbestos abatement is currently in progress and it is likely the building will be demolished. It opened in December 1930 and films ceased in March 1961. It became a bingo club, which closed in 1996 and the building has been boarded-up since. {13802}

*Sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken September 2004*

#### LONDON (West End)



The four-screen Odeon Panton Street (ex CineCenta etc) closed on 23 October. It will be converted into the Odeon Luxe Haymarket, due to open in December. {12787}

*Odeon Website; sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken April 2008*

The former Moulin Cinema on Great Windmill Street is to become a restaurant and bar complex called Sophie’s Soho from 1 November after building works that include exposing and restoring the original vaulted ceiling of the picture house.

*Evening Standard – 8 September;  
sent in by Allen Eyles, Tom Laughlan, Barry Quinton & R David Simpson*

Soho Business owners dressed as witches and wizards to protest outside the Palace Theatre, which is playing *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*. They claim work to waterproof the theatre’s grade II listed basement bar is disrupting their businesses.

*Evening Standard – 6 October; sent in by Barry Quinton*

The grade I listed Theatre Royal Drury Lane has applied for planning permission for a “spectacular” £35m redevelopment. The plans would restore the public areas to their former glory, reduce the number of seats in the auditorium by 200, improve access and create a new restaurant. Building work would start in 2019 and the theatre would be dark for 18 months.

*The Stage, Evening Standard – 5 October;  
sent in by Tom Laughlan, Barry Quinton & R David Simpson*



The Aldwych Theatre is undergoing a multi-million pound restoration. It includes redecoration of the auditorium and foyer as well as the retouching of ornate plasterwork. Seating in the auditorium and carpets throughout the building will be replaced and the toilets will be redone. Three bars will be refurbished and the glass dome above the dress circle will be replaced. A new surround sound system will be installed. The project is being funded by a £1.25 levy on ticket sales. The theatre was closed for 15 weeks and will reopen on 24 November.

*The Stage* – 14 September; sent in by Barry Quinton & R David Simpson

### LONDON (Woolwich)

Plans have been approved for a development on the corner of General Gordon Square. It will include a cinema. No operator has been given.

*News Shopper* – 11 October

### LONG EATON (Derbys)



The former Galaxy cinema is likely to be sold to a developer who wants to convert it into flats. It failed to reach its reserve price of £295,000 when it was auctioned on 12 September; the highest bid was £291,000. The owner has now agreed to drop the asking price to conclude a deal. The CTA visited in May 2008, when it was operating with three small cinemas on the ground floor only; they closed around April 2012. {24984}

*Derby Telegraph* – 18 September; sent in by Terry Hanstock; photo taken May 2008

### MONTROSE (Angus)

The public was given a final chance to look around the former swimming pool before it is transformed into a cinema. The Montrose Playhouse project has finally been given the keys to the building after signing a deal with the Council for just £1. A team of local tradesmen and DIY enthusiasts have volunteered to strip the building back to a shell so that the £2.5m project can start. The target opening is December 2009.

*Dundee Courier* – 9 October

### NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

Plans by Everyman to open a four-screen 221-seat boutique cinema have been given the green light. It will spend £3m converting the former Legends nightclub in Grey Street. See p28 last Bulletin.

*Evening Chronicle (Newcastle)* – 4 October

### NORTHAMPTON

Vue has said that it will not upgrade or expand its operation at Sol Central until the Council blocks the building of another seven-screen multiplex at the Greyfriars site, which Light Cinemas would operate. There is local opposition to the proposals.

*Northampton Chronicle & Echo* – 7 September, 5, 12 October



The out-of-town Cineworld at Sixfields has reopened after a six-month renovation. A 400-seat Superscreen has been installed; there are 1,816 seats across nine auditoria. {25184}

*Northampton Chronicle & Echo* – 12 October; photo taken April 2007

### NUNEATON (Warks)



The grade II listed Ritz is back on the market for offers in the region of £500,000. A local 'Save the Ritz' campaign has been started by Peter Lea and a number of local prominent people. However to date this has not been successful and the site is currently under offer for use as a dance studio. The current owners are in the process of repairing the roof; however due to water ingress the interior has been damaged quite badly as these photos, taken in October, show. See Casework p6 for exterior picture. {25909}

*Sent in by Peter Lea [above photos]*



The site of the former Grand Cinema of 1924 and latterly Grand Bingo club in Chapel End has been sold by the Deeming family to Majestic Bingo Ltd of Spalding. This site once had Holophane lighting, the remains of which are still present within the roof void. The Grand showed its last film in 1961 and has operated as a Bingo club from that point on. {44305}

*Sent in by Peter Lea; photo taken August 2004*

Patrons at the eight-screen Odeon multiplex at Bermuda Park were 'locked in' following an incident with a gunman at the adjacent bowling alley. When the films ceased, guests gathered together as the staff locked all exits under police advice. A man was later arrested. {25227}

*BBC News; sent in by Martin Tapsell*

### OMAGH (Co Tyrone, Northern Ireland)

Work is underway on a new seven-screen cinema on the former Desmond's Factory site. Opening was scheduled for Christmas but is now likely to be pushed back until next spring. The town already has a seven-screen IMC cinema.

*Ulster Herald* – 17 August

### OSWESTRY (Shropshire)

A planning application has been lodged to convert the former Salvation Army headquarters [pictured R] in King Street into a single-screen cinema. Trevor Harris, who used to run the Regal in the town, is acting as consultant for the project. It is expected that the cinema would have around 130 seats and show latest releases. The former Regal is now a Factory Shop.

*Shropshire & Border Counties Advertiser* – 17 October; sent in by John Powell [photo]





## OXFORD

Work to refurbish the Phoenix Picturehouse has been too noisy for its neighbours. One resident said she was woken at 6:45am, despite management confirming work was due to begin at 7:30am. Workmen have been parking on the pavement and blocking fire exits from a nearby pub. The work was due to last two months from 7 August – see p29 last Bulletin.

*Oxford Mail – 12 September; sent in by Raymond Dolling*

Curzon is to open a new five-screen cinema in the Westgate Shopping Centre in November. Spread over two floors, it will also have a café/bar and a virtual reality centre but film-related rather than gaming. Capacities will be 144, 172, 134, 82 & 82 with a mixture of single and double seats. All screens will have 7.1 surround sound and Barco projectors with screen ③ equipped for 3D. Screens ①, ② & ③ will have motorised side masking; screens ④ & ⑤ will have top and bottom masking. The 172-seat screen ② will also have a Cinemecanica Victoria 5 projector and 35mm will be a regular feature of programming. They are looking for semi-retired 35mm projectionists in the area to assist on these occasions. If you can help, please contact Rob Kenny at [rob.kenny@curzon.com] or 020 7438 9519.

*Curzon Cinemas Website*

## PAISLEY (Renfrew)

Paisley Community Trust wants to open an arts centre in the grounds of the former Arnotts department store. It would have a 500-seat theatre, studio, rehearsal rooms and five cinema screens with 170, 120 and three 70 seats. It will be called 'Baker Street' after the Gerry Rafferty song and would cost £24.7m. Paisley's last cinema, the Kelburne, closed in 1997 and was destroyed by fire the following year.

*Paisley Daily Express – 4, 30 September*

## PENZANCE (Cornwall)



The Savoy closed on 4 September for a two-month upgrade. The first phase will see the existing screen ① receive new seats and projection equipment. The current screens ② and ③ are to be amalgamated to form a new screen ②, after which the cinema will reopen. Two new screens will be constructed in the former brewery building next door; this work should be completed by next summer. The CTA visited in June 2013, when the above picture was taken. {25235}

*The Cornishman – 7 September; sent in by Carl Chesworth*

## PETERBOROUGH (Cambs)

The Broadway Theatre reopened on 2 September, 80 years to the day after it first opened as an Odeon. Peter Dawe, representing the new leaseholder, the Dawe Charitable Trust, unveiled a plaque in the foyer. The packed house then enjoyed a concert of film music by the BBC Concert Orchestra. See Casework p6. {19950}

*Evening Telegraph (Peterborough) – 7 September*

## PLYMOUTH

Following the news on p29 of the last Bulletin that plans for a cinema at the football stadium have been dropped, plans for the redevelopment of the water works on Tavistock Road include a cinema. Can Plymouth support three multiplexes?

*The Herald (Plymouth) – 4 September*



## PONTEFRAC (West Yorkshire)



The Crescent Project was set up in August 2015 in a bid to reopen the former Crescent cinema. They opened the building as part of the Heritage Open Days weekend; large crowds were expected, as last year. {3786}

*Pontefract & Castleford Express – 31 August; photo taken August 2005*

## POOLE (Dorset)

A nine-screen Empire cinema is to be built in the former Argos store in the Dolphin Shopping Centre. It will include an open-air rooftop screen and a large IMPACT screen. It is due to open at the end of 2018. Seems strange that Empire want to return to Poole after they sold their former UCI multiplex to Cineworld.

*Daily Echo (Bournemouth) – 12, 14 September; sent in by John Forster*

## PORTHURNO (Cornwall)



The open-air Minack Theatre was used as an outdoor cinema for the first time on 6/7 October. A 4k restoration of Alfred Hitchcock's 1939 *Jamaica Inn* was shown. The CTA visited in June 2013, when this picture was taken.

*Cornwall Live – 18 September*

## PRESTWICK (Ayrshire)

A group bidding to revive the former Broadway have been told their ambitious plans are no pipe dream. Architects Page\Park are preparing to publish a feasibility study for the site, which is currently on the market for £350,000. It opened in April 1935 and films had ceased by 1966. It had bingo use then reopened as a cinema in the 1970s. The front stalls were converted into squash courts with an amusement arcade in the foyer and rear stalls. It is C(s) listed. {23022}

*Daily Record – 6 October*

## ROSTREVOR (Co Down, Northern Ireland)

The Aurora cinema opened in 1955 and closed in the mid-1980s. Now its name is to be revived for a special showing of John Wayne's *The Quiet Man*. It is part of a now-annual celebration of the silver screen. The Rostrevor Aurora Community Cinema is based in the Parish Meeting Rooms.

*Belfast Telegraph – 26 August*



## SANDOWN (Isle of Wight)

The former Rivoli was demolished in September. It opened in March 1921 and films ceased in 1965. It went over to bingo, which closed in 1993. It then became a warehouse for theatrical costumes. A campaign group had been trying to save it. {40200}

*Sent in by Ken Roe*

## SCARBOROUGH (North Yorks)



The Council has approved plans to demolish the Futurist by 11 votes to 3. The 2,393-seat theatre, which opened in June 1921, has been boarded-up since it closed in January 2014. The demolition will be carried out using “high-reach mechanical plant fitted with demolition attachments and water hoses to suppress any dust generated.” Part of the King Street car park will also be dug away to allow a 10m wall to be put in place as part of the stabilisation process. Asbestos will be removed prior to the demolition, which will cost £3.91m. Flamingo Land has already been announced as the Council’s preferred bidder for the site – on which the company wants to build a coastal attraction with rides and space shot tower. {1842}

*Scarborough News – 20 October; photo taken August 2007*

Work on the new Light multiplex at North Bay was expected to start in October.

*Scarborough News – 7 September*

## SHEFFIELD

CADS – the charity that runs the Abbeydale Picture House – is seeking a £3m lottery grant to restore the building. CADS took a 25-year lease on the grade II listed building. It originally opened in December 1920; films ceased in July 1975. {22681}

*Yorkshire Post, The Star – 16 September; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Stuart Smith*

A search is on to find a replacement for the 260-seat Library Theatre if it is demolished to build a five-star hotel. The venue used to house the Sheffield Film Theatre some years ago – there was a projection room at the back and quite a reasonable sized screen.

*Sheffield Telegraph – 24 August; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Terry Hanstock*

## STAFFORD

Construction has started on the new six-screen Odeon at Bridge Street. It is understood that the number of seats has been halved from 800 to 400. Opening is scheduled for summer 2018.

*Sent in by Chris Ingram & Carl Chesworth*

## STRATFORD-UPON-AVON (Warks)



The two-screen Picturehouse has said it will not renew its lease when it expires in 2020 and could even move out before then. There are proposals to build a hotel on the site. A new four-screen Everyman recently opened in the town. {21199}

*Stratford-upon-Avon Herald – 31 August*

## TEIGNMOUTH (Devon)

Restoration by the Mars Hill Church of the grade II listed Riviera continues. They also plan to bring the restaurant back to art deco style. The auditorium will remain as much as possible as it is now but will be rewired for sound and light and a new cinema screen will be installed. They have plans to repair and recover the seats, put new carpets on the stairs and replace the lift. {22755}

*Express & Echo (Exeter) – 17 August*

## TUNBRIDGE WELLS (Kent)

Plans to erect a seven-storey building on the site of the former ABC [etc] have been labelled as “boring”. There are calls for the Council to reject the application. These plans may have included a boutique cinema.

*Kent & Sussex Courier – 1 September*

## WELLINGTON (Shropshire)

Plans have been unveiled to demolish the former Clifton, except for the façade and build 52 apartments and retail space. It opened in January 1937 and films ceased in April 1981. It was used as a retail outlet by Dunelm but they moved out in September 2012. A local group has been trying to save the building. {37745}

*Express & Star (Wolverhampton) – 13 October*

## WINDSOR (Berks)

The 633-seat Theatre Royal closed for two weeks in the summer for decorators to refresh the auditorium and Circle Bar. The grade II listed building was a full-time cinema in the 1930s. {34983}

*Slough & Windsor Express – 1 September; sent in by R David Simpson*

## WISBECH (Cambs)



The 70-seat Luxe has been bought by the Picturedrome Electric Theatre Co. Managing Director Adam Cunard said they would not make any changes to the independent nature of the cinema. A new screen and seats will be fitted and the foyer and toilets refurbished. Prices will be reduced and the privilege card retained. The previous owner has declined to take on the position of manager. {28926}

*Cambs Times – 25 August; photo taken September 2009*

## WOLVERHAMPTON

The two-screen Lighthouse Media Centre has been saved from closure by a partnership with health insurance firm Paycare. To operate long-term they will have to rely on customer donations. {25862}

*Express & Star – 25 September; sent in by Ivan Harris*

## Late News

### DORCHESTER (Dorset)

Eleven lounge seats have been installed in screen ① (the former circle) of the Plaza, increasing the seating capacity of the auditorium to 188. The black and red leather, high back seats, complete with cup holders have been installed at the rear of the auditorium and tilt back when sat in. {15143}

*Sent in by Mike Whitcombe*

### CAMBUSLANG (South Lanark)

20 year old architect student Josh Burnett has recreated a scale version of the grade C listed former Savoy Cinema, now a Wetherspoon pub, for his final year university project. Josh built the John Fairweather pub, named after the Glasgow-born architect who designed it as a cinema in the 1920s, completely from Lego! {25853}

*Wetherspoon News, August 2017; sent in by Mike Whitcombe*





## CINEMA BUSINESS

### EVERYMAN TO OPEN MORE CINEMAS

Everyman Media Group said it was expecting to accelerate its growth and open more cinemas than planned, having raised £17m in a placing of 10m shares at 170p each. Revenues rose 55% to £18.8m over the six months to 29 June. The group posted a £783,000 profit, up from £295,000 a year ago. Shares closed up at 178.5p. Boss Crispin Lilly said that film fans have no qualms about forking out for a trip to one of the chain's 21 venues, where they can expect to pay on average £13.49 for a ticket and £3.90 for a pack of chocolate buttons.

*Evening Standard* – 1 September; *Daily Telegraph (Business)* – 2, 19 September; sent in by Carl Chesworth, Peter Goff & Barry Quinton

### SMALL SCREEN TO BIG SCREEN

Adam Crozier, the former ITV chief executive has become chairman of Vue. Vue now ranks as the sixth biggest cinema group in the world and there is talk it might be sold or listed.

*Sky News* – 18 July, *Metro*, *Daily Mail* – 14 September; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Barry Quinton

### BINGO NUMBERS FALL SHORT

Profits from Mecca Bingo operator Rank Group in the 12 months to 30 June fell 7% to £79.7m. Revenue slipped slightly from £709m to £707m. Mecca venues saw “reduced visits” with revenues falling 4% and operating profit slipping 9%. However their digital business delivered 63% growth in operating profit.

*Daily Mail* – 18 August; sent in by Barry Quinton

### BOYCOTT CINEWORLD AND PICTUREHOUSE

Entertainment union BECTU is supporting further strikes by staff at Picturehouse over payment of the London living wage and conditions. The industrial action is now entering its second year and BECTU is also demanding the reinstatement of several union representatives who were sacked after previous industrial action this year. The campaign is supported by legendary director Ken Loach and 25 other actors and screenwriters who are urging the public to boycott the Picturehouse chain and its parent company Cineworld. In Britain, around 70% of Cineworld's front-of-house staff, including 700 at Picturehouse, are on zero hours contracts without parental leave or sick pay. Yet Cineworld reported a £98.2 million pre-tax profit for 2016, a figure that prompted BECTU official Naomi Taylor to say: “Cineworld's chief executive earned £2.5 million last year. Picturehouse can afford to pay their staff a living wage – they just choose not to.” Socialist Ken Loach added the firm's bosses “make fortunes. The idea they pay starvation wages because they can get people who are desperate for work is absolutely shocking. Victory to the Picturehouse strikers!”

*Westminster Extra* – 6 October; sent in by Barry Quinton, R David Simpson & Mike Whitcombe

### CINEMA OF THE YEAR AWARDS SHORTLIST

**Cinema of the Year (24 screens or under):** Curzon Cinema and Arts, Clevedon; Edinburgh Filmhouse Cinema; Genesis Cinema, Mile End; Jam Jar Cinema; Parkway Cinema & Theatre, Beverley; Phoenix Cinema Trust; Regal Movieplex, Cromer; Saffron Screen; Screen Machine mobile cinema; Showroom Cinema; The Sussex Exchange; Tyneside Cinema; Zeffirellis and Fellinis, Ambleside.

**Cinema of the Year (25 screens or over):** Cineworld at the Empire Theatre Leicester Square; Cineworld Birmingham Broad Street; Crouch End Picturehouse; Curzon Aldgate; Duke of York's Picturehouse; Everyman Bristol; Odeon Bournemouth; Picturehouse Central; Reel Cinema Burnley; Showcase Cinema de Lux, Leeds; Vue West End.

The awards will be presented in London on 30 November.

[[www.screenawards.co.uk](http://www.screenawards.co.uk)]

### FRENCH THEATRES TO SHOW ADVERTS

Twelve Paris theatres and five in the provinces are to start projecting advertisements and previews of plays onto screens in front of the stage in November. Another 30 theatres across France are expected to follow suit. Audiences who have paid high prices for tickets may not applaud the move but cash-strapped theatres are having to seek new ways of increasing revenue.

*Sunday Telegraph* – 17 September; sent in by Carl Chesworth

**Editor's Note:** I'm sure that some UK theatres used to project adverts onto the safety curtain that was flown down, either from slides or – if the theatre had projectors – from film. Does anyone else remember this?

## MISCELLANY

### POSTER SALE



Film posters spanning eight decades were expected to sell for £1m at a Sotheby's auction. A rare British poster for *The Wizard of Oz* has an estimate of £20,000 and one for the 1962 James Bond movie *Dr No* [pictured] is set to sell for £15,000.

*Metro* – 7 September; sent in by Barry Quinton & R David Simpson

### SUBTERRANEAN SCREENING

In October, the London Transport Museum hosted screenings of a bespoke WWII film in the deep-level shelters at Clapham South Underground Station. Patrons had to descend 180 steps then wrap up in a blanket for the one-hour film about the realities of being a Londoner during wartime. Tickets cost a whopping £46.50!

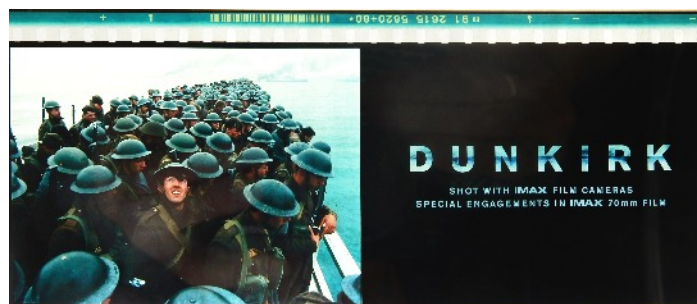
*Metro* – 13 October; sent in by Tom Laughlan

### LONDON'S SUBLIMEST SCREENS

*Time Out* magazine had a spread about twelve of London's best cinemas in their edition at the end of September. BFI Southbank [NFT], Prince Charles Leicester Square, Castle Homerton, Arthouse Crouch End, Screen on the Green Islington, Rio Dalston, Regent Street Cinema, Electric Portobello Road, Odeon Leicester Square, Curzon Soho, Picturehouse Central Piccadilly Circus and Phoenix Finchley.

Sent in by Tom Laughlan & Barry Quinton

### REAL IMAX



During the recent screening of *Dunkirk* in [rare!] 15/70mm IMAX at the Vue [ex Odeon Printworks] in Manchester, patrons were given a souvenir sample of IMAX film. There were three different examples, each in its own plastic wallet. On the first day of the film's release, a T-shirt was also given out, reading “I've seen Dunkirk in IMAX.” With only one IMAX-trained projectionist left on the staff since digitisation, IMAX brought out of retirement two additional projectionists to ensure all performances were shown in IMAX format. I think there are only three genuine 15/70mm IMAX cinemas left in the country that can play true IMAX film – Vue Manchester, BFI IMAX London and Cineworld Glasgow Science Centre.

Carl Chesworth

**Editor's Note:** I have been unable to confirm that Glasgow can still show 15/70 IMAX. Does anyone know? I have also found that the Science Museum in London is advertising 15/70 IMAX. See *Internet Corner* p23 for a link to a page that lists all the IMAX theatres in the world.



# LETTERS

## OBSERVATIONS

Many thanks for the latest Bulletin. Several items caught my eye. I hope to visit the Everyman at Kings Cross later in the October when I go to the V&A talk. I usually have a coffee in St Pancras station – a splendid place. Page 6 mentions the Grand in Bournemouth. I remember going there in the 1970s when it was part-time films and part time bingo. They showed some strange films – one showed a snake being decapitated and another a man drowning in quicksand! The exterior is in excellent condition, both back and front.

Page 21 mentions the Picture Playhouse in Bexhill. I went to junior school in Bexhill in the 1950s and well remember going there with my late father on Saturday afternoons. I saw a number of Ealing comedies and war films there. There were two other cinemas there in the 1950s; one was the Ritz in Buckhurst Road, where I saw the film of the Coronation and The Conquest of Everest. It later turned over to bingo but was subsequently demolished. The other was the Savoy in Town Hall Square, which was closed in 1954 and was subsequently turned into a tobacco warehouse but was eventually demolished. I saw my first film there – the Robert Newton version of *Tom Brown's School-days*. Although my father passed by the cinema every day for twelve years on the way to work, he always denied that there was ever a cinema there. All memory of the cinema had gone! I believe that there was a cinema called Gaiety in Sideley in Bexhill before the war but this was destroyed by enemy bombing. A part of one of the walls was believed to exist in the 1950s. However this needs further research.

On page 22 *Rewinding Back* mentions the closure of the Electra in Royston in 1937 as the last silent cinema in the country. I have always wondered how long silent films lasted in cinemas after the introduction of sound in the late 1920s. Although the local Harbour Lights in Southampton has shown some silent films, they are normally American, Russian or German but never British. The only British silent film I remember being shown on television is *The Vortex*, during the middle of the night! I have seen about half a dozen British silent films but at the NFT in London

Page 33 mentions the Studio Cinemas and cartoon cinemas in London. The most famous of these was the Victoria Station cartoon cinema. These cinemas were an American invention, dating from 1928. The one at Victoria station was the first to open in 1934 and the last to close in 1981. Classic – the operator at the time of closure – is on record saying that they would have liked to have kept it going but British Rail refused to renew the lease as the site was needed for the Gatwick Express extension. In 1981 it was believed to be the last cinema of its kind in the country. It was still operating with its original projectors put in in 1934, which had operated without problems all through the years. However when closure was announced they started to play up as if they knew that the end was nigh! I hope they found a safe home somewhere. I paid a visit to the cinema in the 1970s and enjoyed the experience. A *Tom and Jerry* cartoon is a different experience on a large screen. In the 1960s there were at least half-a-dozen news theatres and cartoon cinemas in central London. There were at least two in Charing Cross Road, a Jacey at Trafalgar Square, one at Piccadilly Circus (which became a sex cinema in the 1970s!) one at Marble Arch and another at Baker Street Station. The cinema at Waterloo Station – formerly a news theatre – had turned over to normal films by 1963. The entrance to the cinema was direct from the station and the stairway went straight into the auditorium. It was an interesting experience going direct from the station into the cinema. The interior of the cinema is captured on film. The cinema, built over a roadway, lay empty for about twenty years after closure before being demolished. I do not know of a book that traces the development and closure of this type of cinemas in this country.

Ian Patterson

## MALICIOUS INTENT

May I add a little to the *Rewinding Back* article on p22 of the last Bulletin? The interesting account of “... the sudden outbreak of malicious damage to seats ...” prompted National Screen Services [NSS] to produce a *Malicious Cinema Damage* trailer in the 1940s – 30/- for immediate despatch – so the problem was widespread. Many years ago I saw a few frames of this title announcement and it was printed on nitrate film stock of the period.

Carl Chesworth

## CINEMA MANAGER PRAISE

I found your coverage of the Picture Playhouse Bexhill in the last Bulletin very interesting and it reminded me of the manager who used to work there, who later came to work for me at the Curzon Cinema, Eastbourne, until he retired in 2010. His name was Brian Hopper [R] and he started in 1969, having worked at the Cinema De Luxe in Hastings. He continued during the Eric Rhodes and Gerald Rhodes era until the cinema closed in 1990. I thought that maybe you might like to give him a mention as he was certainly a very dedicated and conscientious cinema manager.

Roy Galloway, Curzon Cinema, Eastbourne



## JARO

I enjoyed very much reading Ben Doman's excellent and informative article *JARO 1956 – The J Arthur Rank Organisation* in the September/October edition of the Bulletin. Regarding the last two paragraphs about film processing, I would like to mention that this was carried out not at Denham Studios but next door at Rank Film Laboratories, which had been built in the 1930s to serve the studios. The studios themselves closed in about 1952 and these beautiful art deco buildings were sadly demolished in 1981 and replaced by a bland business park. Rank Labs became Deluxe in the 1990s and I worked there for 12 years until they, too, closed in March 2014 due to digital technology. I think what may be confusing is that the Deluxe site has been turned into housing accommodation and re-named Denham Studios for marketing purposes.

There are videos on YouTube concerning Rank/Deluxe (and the studios) which may be of interest. Two of these are: [youtube.com/watch?v=tZ4tcX5wJ8k] Rank Film Labs Denham 1950s to 2000 and [youtube.com/watch?v=xXF99stVW4E] Visit of Rank Management to Rank Film Laboratories (Movietone News edition). Also, a short film was made about the studios in the 1930s called *A Day At Denham*, which is available to view on the BFI Player.

Peter Ferrari

## A TOWERING ACHIEVEMENT

In the early 1970s when my wife, Janice, was at junior school, she spent almost a year living in naval quarters at Helensburgh (Argyll and Bute) on the banks of the Firth of Clyde, while her father was stationed on nuclear submarines at Faslane. On a recent trip to Scotland we decided to revisit her childhood haunts and stumbled across the Tower Digital Cinema and Arts Centre, situated in an old church on Sinclair Street, Helensburgh. It's staffed by volunteers and boasts two screens, one in the church itself, the other in an adjoining hall. The latest releases are screened – *Kingsman* and *Victoria* and *Abdul* were showing at the time – as well as beamed live theatre, opera and ballet shows. The lady we spoke to at the box office was most enthusiastic about the venture, claiming it brought the community culturally together. She added that the cinema had been open for around a year now and that it was doing good business. Cinemas have always been considered as cathedrals of dreams but the Tower, in an old church, gives new meaning to that. Living almost five hundred miles from Helensburgh, I can't give any more details on the venue and was wondering if any CTA Scotland members could reveal more about this admirable enterprise. I wouldn't mind a few churches where I live being turned into community cinemas.

Mike Whitcombe





## ABANDONED CINEMAS

As senior projectionist at the Odeon Portsmouth when it closed in 2008, I can confirm that the photo of an auditorium at this Odeon, featured on p15 of the last Bulletin, is Screen ④ and not Screen ② as stated. Screen ④ was situated at the front of the old stalls and if you look carefully at the photo you can see the base of the original proscenium arch. This screen was prone to flooding from almost the day it opened in 1990, particularly after heavy rain. When I transferred to the Odeon Portsmouth in 2001, I joined forces with the newly-employed handyman to discover the reason for this. We eventually discovered that under the small stage on which the screen sat there was a broken pump, which helped discharge water from an underground spring. Once we replaced this pump we didn't have any more flooding. The water penetration the urban explorers discovered probably began after closure when the electricity was cut, causing the pump to stop working. The Odeon Portsmouth was a lovely cinema – it's sad to think what the inside of the building is now like, almost ten years after closure and eight years after the picture was taken.

Mike Whitcombe

## SOUND LEVELS

It seems that most cinemas and some theatres are happy to blast us out of our seat. People, as stated in the latest Bulletin newsreel, complain of high levels but nothing is done about it. In the old days, the volume was kept at a comfortable level. If there was a full house the levels would be increased and dropped if there weren't many in. The projectionist would go in the auditorium and check the level, or an attendant would press a buzzer to let the operator know if sound should go up or down. I have been in cinemas and have covered my ears on loud passages, because it was uncomfortable. Surely common sense should prevail, before we are all sent deaf.

David A Ellis

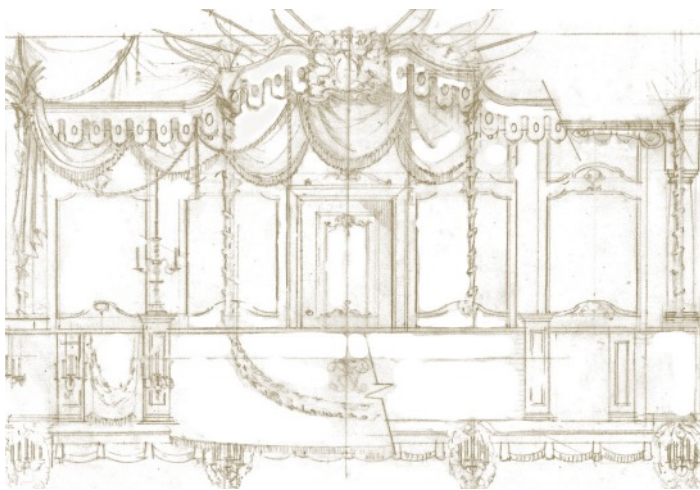
## MAJESTIC MEMORIES

Sports journalist Julie Welch remembers the Majestic Theatre, South Woodford (now the Odeon) in her memoir of life in a girls' boarding school during the early 1960s, *Too marvellous for words!* (London: Simon & Schuster, 2017, pp. 214-215.)

"The Majestic was cavernous, with red plush seats and an upper circle. Great things had obviously been planned for it when it was built before the war but, with the coming of television, audiences had declined and, in the foyer, mysterious signs announced 'Banqueting Suite' and 'Ballroom', although there didn't seem to be either now. At the end of every performance the national anthem was played, so during the closing credits there would be the sound of seats going up and people nipping out and, if they were too slow, they would be caught by the first strains and have to stand stock still in the aisle"

Terry Hanstock

## VICTORIA'S BOX



Some people may think that the art of designing Victorian theatres has been lost forever. Viewers watching the feature-length *Victoria Christmas Special* may wonder where we filmed the Royal Box. In fact, none of the local theatres were available, or suitable. The result was it was all built in the studio at the Yorkshire Film Studios; this is the elevation. I hope CTA members may enjoy seeing it. (All the gold is, in fact, gold leaf to give it brilliance.)

John West

## Join the CINEMA ORGAN SOCIETY

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or email [membership@cinema-organs.org.uk](mailto:membership@cinema-organs.org.uk)

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

## PICCADILLY RECORDS

The Highbury Studios of Piccadilly records, mentioned in my article on p13, may interest CTA readers. Highbury Athenaeum, at 65A Highbury New Park [Islington, north London], opened on 23 January 1882 as a music conservatoire with a large performance hall and a rehearsal hall. Around 1927 it became the recording studio for the new Metropole and Piccadilly record labels. They went the way of many others when the gramophone boom crashed in the early 1930s. The last recording session at the Athenaeum was in February 1932. The place was sold and converted into two film sound stages in 1933. These were leased by independent film companies and hosted Diana Churchill, William Hartnell, Stanley Holloway, Alastair Sim and others.

After WWII the Rank Organisation acquired the building for making low-budget / B-films and it famously was the home of the 'The Company of Youth', scathingly called 'The Rank Charm School', where Dirk Bogarde, Diana Dors, Donald Sinden and contemporaries learned their craft. In 1950 Rank sold it to a consortium, including Pye, lobbying for commercial television in the UK, who used it to develop equipment and produce demo-commercials etc for lobbying purposes. It was also used by High Definition Films Ltd, who employed multiple Pye television cameras running in excess of the UK's 405-lines to make programmes that were filmed, by the telerecording / kinescope process, for UK broadcast and overseas sales.

From around 1956 the studios were used by ATV. The company held the ITV franchises for the Midlands-weekdays and London-weekends and had developed from the Pye consortium. Early episodes of *Emergency Ward 10* are probably the best remembered Highbury productions. In 1960 ATV left Highbury for their new television studios created at the former British National Films studios at Borehamwood. The Highbury building was demolished and Athenaeum Court flats occupy the site. The BBC acquired the Borehamwood studios in 1984. It is home to *EastEnders* and *Holby City* [see p12].

Hector Hill

## 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](mailto:contact@ppttrust.org)

[www.ppttrust.org](http://www.ppttrust.org)



# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

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

## 105 years old

Picture House, 33 Long Row, Nottingham. Opened 5 November 1912.  
Architect unknown. Façade only. Grade II listed. (No photo)



Picture Palace, Tong Street, Dudley Hill, Bradford. Opened 9 December 1912. Architects: Howarth and Howarth. Grade II listed.



Angel / Odeon, 7 Islington High Street, Islington. Opened 31 December 1912. Architect: H Courtney-Constantine. Façade only. Grade II listed.

## 95 years old



Waverley / ABC, 18 Moss Side Road, Shawlands Cross, Glasgow. Opened 25 December 1922.  
Architects: Watson, Salmond and Gray. A listed.



Grand, 40 Poole Road, Westbourne, Bournemouth. Opened 18 December 1922. Architect unknown. Grade II listed.

## 85 years old



Empire, 1 Blackfriars Road, Wisbech. Opened 22 November 1932.  
Architects: FB Ward and CEA Woolnough. Grade II\* listed.



New Bedford / Bedford / Academy, 121 Eglington Street, Lauriston, Glasgow. Opened 31 December 1932.  
Architects: Lennox and McMath. B listed.



## 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.

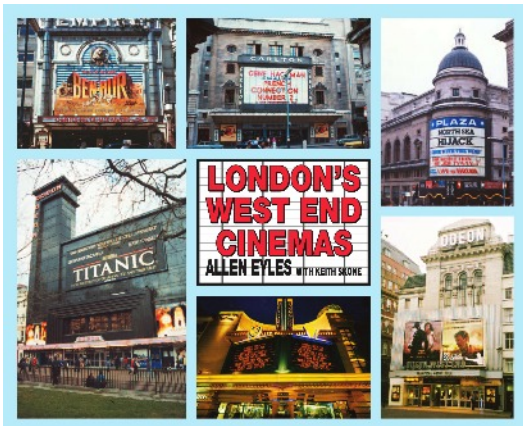
Please let me know before sending donations by post and do not send them directly to the archive as there is no facility to accept post securely. Please send items c/o 14 Ivychurch Gardens, Cliftonville, Margate, CT9 3YG. Small quantities of scanned material or digital photographs can be emailed to [archive@cta-uk.org].

*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

A warm welcome from all in the CTA to the following new members, who are listed in the order in which they joined: Leslie Willis, Rebecca Steed, R Jane Steed\*, Mark King, Robert Small, John Suriano, Julie Wakefield, John Assael, Stephen Willmore and Stephen Fenerty.

(\*Associate member)

### LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

In addition to the new members listed above, we are also pleased to send a warm welcome to Grace McCombie, who has joined as a Life Member. We also send warm greetings to a former annual member, James B Lindsay, who has become a Life Member.

### DEATHS

We were sorry to hear in late September that CTA member Anthony R Duggan (Tony) lost the battle with prostate cancer. Tony joined CTA in 1976 and was formerly employed at the Grosvenor / Odeon / Ace, Rayners Lane and he kept up his interest in the building in its later years, when it became the Zoroastrian Centre. Sincere condolences go to his family and friends.

### DONATIONS

Our grateful and sincere thanks are extended to these members who added a donation to their subscription renewals: JC Barnes, MA Bentley, CJ Bird, LS Bull, P Clements, MS Crowle, SJ Cusack, RD Dakin, PEW Day, RG Dolling, JS Downs, GB Fenwick, M Gambles, HW Gibbs, RE Heaven, DM Howarth, MF Jones, PL Kent, CP Kisicki, A Lazou, PJ Littler, A Lundgren, EL Marriage, MS Marsh, T McNamara, IP Nash, AJ North, NA Pithouse, MS Plews, L Pohani, DJ Prosser, G Reywer, JE Roberts, AS Rossiter, WA Simmons, VRE Simon, TJ Smith, FD Snart, JE Thornley and JP Vaux.

### CTA BULLETIN MAILING

We are sure that members agree that our printers do an excellent job in producing and mailing the CTA Bulletin. Of course, we are not their only customers and sometimes delays occur. However it is our and their intention that members should get each issue around the end of the third full week of each odd-numbered month. We would therefore beg members not to query non-receipt of their copy before the end of that month.

### A NEW YEAR RESOLUTION FOR ALL CTA MEMBERS

"I will make life a bit easier for the Membership Secretary by renewing promptly in 2018, on receipt of the reminder form".

*Neville C Taylor, Membership Secretary*



About 200 turned up for Tony's funeral, mainly work colleagues from TfL. This sign sums up his two roles as a family man and the CTA's most prolific filmgoer, indeed one who met director Tarantino face to face!

*Martin Tapsell*

## OBITUARY

### BOB MORGAN

Bob Morgan died on 15 August, aged 90. He was Granada Theatres film booking manager from 1968-1987. In his time he also booked stage shows, theatre hires, including organ concerts and live acts for their bingo clubs. Prior to Granada he was film booking manager for the Classic circuit. He also found time to book for some independents, such as the Haven (ex Odeon/Classic) in Boston.

He was present at the reopening concert of the Granada Tooting Wurlitzer on 22 April 2007 when organist Len Rawle asked him to say a few words to the audience. Bob recalled first going to the Granada Tooting when he was six to see a pantomime and thought he was going into a church. Bob was elected president of the British Cinema and Television Veterans 1996-1998. He contributed to Allen Eyles' book *The Granada Theatres* (1998), Bob was also a keen photographer and one of his photos of the Granada Tooting is featured on the cover of a CD in my collection.

*R David Simpson*





at your own children—or, if you have none of your own, at those of your friends and relatives. Have you ever known one who did not take every opportunity of "dressing-up"? In your own life, have you not always envied the other fellow and wished that you could only be in his shoes?

Again, modest though you may be of your own capabilities, have you not always had some nice little conceit hidden away in your heart that gives you a thrill when you fancy yourself filling the heroic part in some situation created in your own imagination?

Herein lies the secret of the kinema's success as the modern tonic for its hard-pressed clients. No emotion known to man lies outside its scope. Love, hate, humour, all lie within its province, and when woven into the form of a story, make an irresistible appeal.

The art of story-telling is the earliest form of entertainment known to man, but never before has the scope been so wide or the means of appealing to all the senses so exhaustive. But, like all story-telling, there is a glamour cast upon life that is lacking in our daily round.

Every event, good or bad, which falls to our lot in real life, has its repercussions and consequences, so many of which are painful. The vivid story of the film, though true to life, is exempt from these disadvantages—the experience is yours for a small cash payment whereby your debt is finally settled!

Lastly, the kinema is an education. It offers to all classes of the community, to all races and nationalities, all the drama of history and the literature of the world, the mysteries of science and a thousand and one other things, while, through its news reels, it keeps the public informed upon the important events of their time.

The programme which I and my friends witnessed showed films of widely varying type. Humour, travel and a "big picture" of a passionate love story. An atmosphere of make-believe sufficiently vivid to deceive the entire audience, held their attention fixed upon the screen. Worry and mental agitation vanished.

For two and a half hours the thoughts of all were concentrated upon that screen. New emotions crowded the mind to the exclusion of all other impulses.

A shadow-world where life, love and laughter pursues its way without fear of hurt or harm, replaces the stark realities of life and creates a detached but pleasurable outlook with the resultant tonic effect.

That night, over the fire, my friend, his wife and I sat till the early hours and discussed the "show." Differences of opinion, of course, we had, but we all recaptured the hilarity of the funny film and laughed again at the absurd situations.

We argued on the merits of the various actors. We criticised the characters as though they were actually living, and we recalled the brilliance of the photography and artistry of the "sets."

At long last and regretfully we retired for the night. All traces of the anxieties, which had obsessed my friend and which had prompted the visit to the kinema, had vanished. Mentally, we were all at peace with the world.

My friend's last words to me were: "That show was the best tonic I've ever known. I shall take another dose soon. Why don't you doctors recommend it instead of giving your rotten stuff?"

My answer was: "I do!"

## The KINEMA as a TONIC by a DOCTOR

*WHO asserts that in some cases the  
mental stimulus of the movies  
is more effective than medicine.*

"LET'S go to the 'flicks,' dear! I've had a perfectly poisonous day at business and I just want to get away from everything. I'm fed up!" This commonplace remark was made in my presence only a few days ago, when I was staying with some friends of mine.

The avidity with which the invitation was agreed to by my friend's wife left me in no doubt that she, too, had had a "perfectly poisonous day" in the house and was no less eager to find some solace for her frayed nerves.

After a hurried meal, we were soon on our way through the pouring rain to the kinema. The weather did little to relieve the disgruntled mood to which my friend had referred and we walked in an ominous silence, our boots squelching miserably on the sodden pavements.

Suddenly, around a bend in the road, we caught a glimpse of the red glow, cast by the neon lights of the Picture Palace, mirrored in the wet road. The effect was instantaneous. My friend spoke for the first time and there was an unmistakable excitement in his voice.

That bright glow was the first cheerful impulse to rouse him from his depression. I noticed that he slipped his arm through that of his wife and by the time he reached the vestibule he was garrulous beyond his wont.

"Those who look on see most of the game"—especially if one happens to be a doctor accustomed to observe the changes in human moods and who is interested in psychology. From this point of vantage, I took note of my surroundings and watched the arrival of the patrons of this kinema.

Every face revealed pleasure and there was an urgency to pass through those doors that led to the foyer as though within lay some prize that awaited them. There was much good-natured jostling as they surged through the doors. Quickly, we joined this merry throng and, to the strains of the organ playing invigorating music, were shown to our seats.

A hum of conversation filled the theatre and an "atmosphere" of comradeship impressed itself upon my consciousness. Never do I enter a kinema without this feeling being strong upon me. By this time, my friend and his wife seemed to have forgotten all their troubles and not until the

lights were dimmed and the organ ceased playing did our chatter stop.

The programme that followed was of a high order and held our attention throughout. But, as a doctor, my chief interest centred around the profound psychological effect of this form of entertainment upon the ordinary man and woman.

In this particular theatre, two performances a day were being given to almost full houses. People, weary with the anxieties and worries of everyday life, flocked to this place as a means of escape from their troubles and, as was abundantly evident, found it.

Similarly, up and down the country, hundreds of other picture houses were attracting their millions of souls per week. There must be some irresistible urge in this form of entertainment beyond the mere fact of its cheapness.

Why do people make it a habit to go twice or more times a week? Everyone wants value for money and the audiences do not comprise those who can afford to throw it away! The explanation was being enacted before my eyes by my friends. It was the tonic effect. What a magic word that is!

We doctors know so well the dramatic results of our nauseating mixtures—but they could scarcely be more effective than the mental tonic my friends were experiencing.

The film owes its success primarily to the fact that all human beings are actors at heart. Look