



CINEMA
THEATRE
ASSOCIATION

www.cta-uk.org

BULLETIN

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January / February 2018



The Playhouse Alnwick (Northumberland) which is to have a £2.5m revamp – see Newsreel p21; photo taken March 2016



The three-screen Stafford Cinema [ex Odeon/Apollo] which closed in mid-December – see Newsreel p27; photo taken August 2004



ABC & Gaumont Circuit history books available again – see Publications p4



FROM YOUR EDITOR

On p8 Hugh Sykes gives us the latest instalment of his 'wanderings', this time around the north of Scotland and Orkney in summer 2017. In a strange coincidence, we had travelled many parts of his route only a few weeks earlier. We too had done the tour of the Castle of Mey, the late Queen Mother's residence and noted that in her 'snug' she had a small TV and DVD player with box sets of *Keeping Up Appearances*, *Dad's Army* and many similar. We wondered if they had been 'planted'. I also noted that, although Thurso and Wick railway stations have only four trains a day, each has a manned ticket office. We took the catamaran *Pentalina* from Gills Bay to Orkney – it was a very smooth and quick crossing.



At the end of last November we travelled the 47 miles down the M1 to the Parkway cinema in Barnsley to see *Murder on the Orient Express* in 70mm. Operator Rob Younger and his assistant put on an excellent presentation with tabs and lights. Rob came on stage before the feature to explain what 70mm was and show a sample to the [sadly small] matinée audience. The staff were very friendly and even the guy who was waiting to clean the auditorium after the show thanked us for coming. We were invited into the box to see the equipment; here is a picture of the gear, showing the 70mm print on the platter. {6208}

Just a little reminder about Internet and email addresses. When printed in the Bulletin, I enclose them in square brackets [] just to make them stand out. When typing them into your browser or email program, don't type the square brackets. I had an note from someone who said an address I printed didn't work – that's probably why! Also it isn't easy to tell the difference between a capital 'I' and a lower-case 'l' and also a capital 'O' and the number zero '0'. If one doesn't work, then simply try the other!

In our euphoria to celebrate the CTA's golden anniversary, we completely forgot about the index to Volume 50 [2016] – apologies. I had a very nice wooden postcard of Dover Castle from Gerry Wood, which reminded me. I am pleased to include that index and also the one for Volume 51 [2017] in this issue; I have put it in the centre pages so you can detach it if required.

In further celebration of our 50th anniversary, we have updated the cumulative index we published on our 40th birthday. Details of how you can get hold of this are in the Membership report on p35.

I have had a letter from Trevor Williams asking if we could have a feature on the various projection and sound systems now in use – eg 4DX, Real-3D (versus the other 3D systems), iSense, X-Plus, Dolby Atmos, one or two projectors, etc. Could you write it for us? If you could also source some pictures, it would live on a page of otherwise black text – look at p28 in this issue to see what I mean!

I am pleased to say that I have found space for holiday snaps this time and some of the other items I held over. My stock of such things is running down so please keep them coming.

I'm still looking to retire from the post of Bulletin Editor, so if you would like to take on the job, please let me know. Happy New Year.

**DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE
TUESDAY 20 FEBRUARY**

CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

(Founded January 1967)

promoting serious interest in all aspects of cinema buildings

Company limited by guarantee. Reg. No. 04428776.

Registered address: 59 Harrowdene Gardens, Teddington, TW11 0DJ.

Registered Charity No. 1100702. Directors are marked † in list below.

PATRONS: Allen Eyles; Carol Gibbons; Lucinda Lambton

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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.

Typeset in Franklin Gothic Book by Harry Rigby

Printed by The Ludo Press Ltd, 18 Wimbledon Stadium Business Centre,
Riverside Road, London, SW17 0BA [www.ludo.co.uk]

VISITS AND EVENTS

A Wander around North Warwickshire and Beyond – Saturday 3 March

Organised by Peter Lea and Richard Norman



The interior of the Grand bingo club, Chapel End, Nuneaton
exterior photo on p28 last Bulletin

Based on CTA member Peter Lea's researches for his recent publication *The Auditorium: A Historical Look at Cinemas in and around North Warwickshire*, he has organised a day out for members to visit some existing and former cinemas. Venues planned to be visited are located in Nuneaton, Chapel End, Bedworth, Hinckley, Ibstock and Coalville; the latter is from Peter's forthcoming book *The Auditorium2: Cinemas of North West Leicestershire* (due out February 2018). A coach will be arranged to take us around the various locations. The itinerary is arranged to include lunch and refreshment breaks at member's own expense.

Members should obtain their own train tickets, arriving at Nuneaton station, or if travelling by car, parking is available at the adjacent car park by the 'Empire Gym Studio' (former Vint's Picturedrome). A coach will meet us at the station and depart at 10:15hrs. Suggested train departure times from London Euston to Nuneaton are at 07:46 (arrive 08:54) and 08:46 (arrive 09:53), both services are direct with no changes. Our visit will be organised to catch the return train service to London Euston departing Nuneaton at 18:36hrs (arrive 19:50). (Note: train times quoted are advertised at the time of going to press; these should be checked prior to booking/departure).

The cost: £14.00 per member (inclusive of coach and visit notes)
Closing date: 17 February 2018; Advance booking only:
Please send your cheque made payable to 'Cinema Theatre Association' enclosing SAE to Richard Norman, 4 Oakhill Lodge, Reedham Drive, Purley, CR8 4DT. Enquiries tel: 020 8668 6077, email: [RichardNormanCTA@aol.com].

Northern Region Presentation: Brief Encounters on Film

By Richard Norman – Saturday 3 February



It is regretted that due to unforeseen circumstances, the previously advertised presentation has been postponed. Should any members have made prior arrangements, the Theatre Organ Heritage Centre at Peel Green, Eccles will be open on the afternoon for an inspection and demonstration of their cinema organ collection.

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



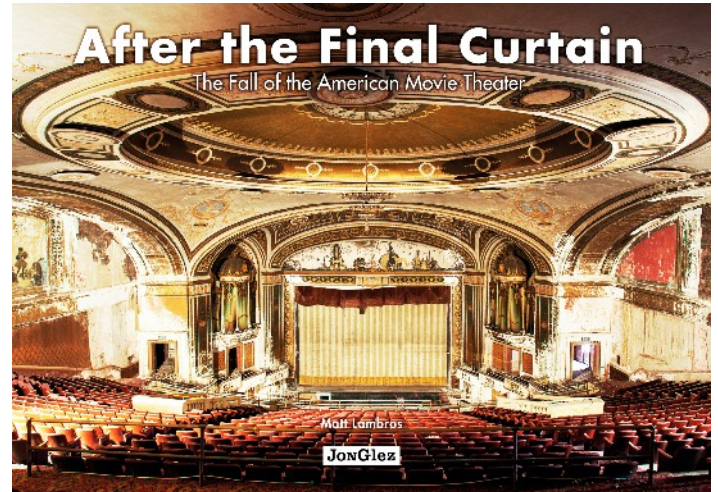
After The Final Curtain

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 USA 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 20th 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 below for travel directions).

Admittance: £10.00 on the door. Guests welcome.
(Includes wine and light refreshments)

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!

CTA Bookstall: The CTA Bookstall will be at the event. Limited copies of Matt's book will be on sale at a reduced price and available for signing.

Ken Roe writes: The photo on the cover of Matt's book [above] is the 3,642-seat Loew's Poli Theatre, Bridgeport, Connecticut (architect: Thomas W Lamb, 1922) (1453)



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

Sunday 11 February Sing-a-long *Beauty and the Beast* (2017) [PG] 2pm
Wednesday 14 February Valentine's Day *Casablanca* (1942) [U] 7:30pm
Saturday 24 February *Organ Coffee Morning* 10am admission free
Friday 2 March *Tea With Mussolini* (1999) [PG] 11am
The Warriors (1979) [X] 7:30pm

Behind the Scenes tours at 11am on Mondays 29 January,
19 February & 26 March; £7 – 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.feckenodeon.co.uk] or by phone through TicketSource on 0333 666 3366 (local call rate) – or you can contact the Society directly on [films@feckenodeon.co.uk].

27 January *All The President's Men* (1976) [15]
24 February *Their Finest* (2017) [12A]
24 March *Death at a Funeral* (2007) [15]

Shows on Saturdays at 7:30pm. Licensed bar at all performances.

THE REGAL EXPERIENCE, WYMONDHAM

18 March *Alfred Hitchcock's Stage Fright* (1950) [A]
+ *Every Sunday* (an MGM musical featurette with Judy Garland)
Shows on Sundays at 2:30pm at the Wymondham Ex-Service's Club (former Regal cinema) NR18 0AT [tinyurl.com/zddvkq4].
Further information from Michael Armstrong [01953 603246]

16MM FILM SHOW

I'm All Right Jack – the classic 1959 Boulting Brothers comedy starring Peter Sellers, Ian Carmichael and Terry Thomas.
Plus supporting programme.

Friday 9 February at 7:30pm, Burnt Ash Methodist Church Hall, Burnt Ash Hill, Lee, London SE12 0QD. Adults £5.00, Children £2.00; admission by programme, available on the day. Space is limited so please phone or text Martin Cleave on 020 8658 3319 / 07958 063711 if you would like to attend, or for further details.

THE FOURTH RENOWN FILM FESTIVAL

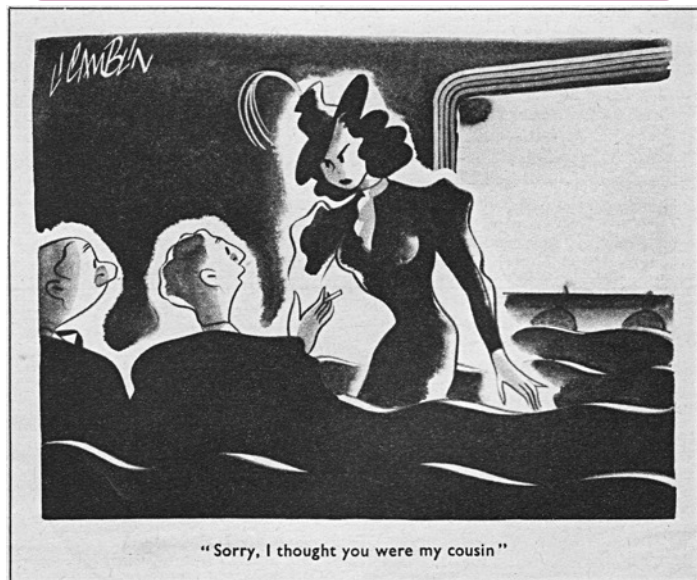
Sunday 11 February. Open from 9am to 6pm. Tickets £15.00.
Watersmeet Leisure Centre, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire, WD3 1EH.

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.

CARTOON CORNER



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

Available Again – Two of the CTA's Most Popular Circuit Histories

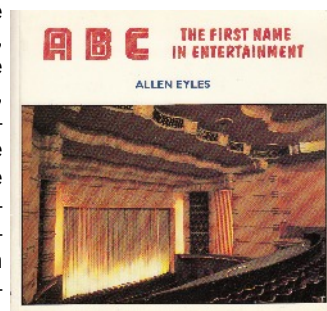
ABC: The First Name in Entertainment and Gaumont British Cinemas.

Both written by Allen Eyles

To celebrate our 50th anniversary year, we have arranged limited-edition reprints of these two popular books, giving members who didn't purchase them originally the chance to add them to their collection at reasonable prices. The books sold out soon after they were published and do not often come up on the second-hand market at an affordable price. These reprints are only available from the CTA Sales Officer.

ABC: The First Name in Entertainment

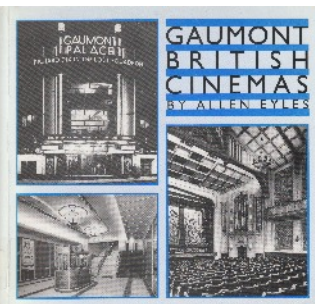
First published in 1993, this is the story of how Associated British Cinemas became the largest single chain of picture houses in the UK, selling some 6 million tickets a week at its peak. The book examines the creation of the circuit, describes the cinemas, which were purpose-built to the designs of WR Glen and others, acquisitions of existing cinemas, the booking policy, live shows and organ interludes, the response to 3-D and CinemaScope, the decline in attendances leading to subdivision and the first step into the multiplex era. There is a detailed listing of more than 600 cinemas that were part of the ABC chain and the titles of all the main films given an ABC release from 1937 to 1979, plus an array of rare illustrations of cinemas and company advertising. PLUS – a newly written introduction by Allen Eyles, highlighting developments since the book was written, including the short-lived return of the ABC name.



164 pages, paperback, fully illustrated
£17.50 plus £3 postage.

Gaumont British Cinemas

First published in 1996 and reprinted in 1999, this book tells the story of how Gaumont cinemas formed one of the three national circuits in Britain during the boom years of picture-going. Generously illustrated with photographs of the cinemas, as well as examples of advertising and publicity, this book recalls the history of the circuit as well as the formation and often turbulent life of its parent company, Gaumont-British. Besides the style of the cinemas it describes how they were operated, how the chain became part of the J Arthur Rank Empire and how its identity was slowly whittled away until its name in Britain was consigned to memory. Included is a detailed listing of more than 400 cinemas that were part of the circuit and the titles of all the films given a Gaumont release from 1932 onwards.



224 pages, paperback, fully illustrated,
£17.50 plus £3 postage.

SPECIAL OFFER

buy both ABC and Gaumont together for £30.00.

Please add £3.00 to your order for post and packing

To Order: Please send cheque/postal order payable to Cinema Theatre Association to the Sales Officer, Jeremy Buck, 34 Pelham Road, London, N22 6LN, OR send credit/debit card details, including number, expiry date and security code, OR order online through the CTA website: [www.cta-uk.org/shop] where you can order using Paypal.

*** ONLY A LIMITED NUMBER OF COPIES ARE AVAILABLE! ***

PUBLICATIONS

Back Numbers Available

BULLETINS

We can supply back numbers of most Bulletins from Volume 21 (1987) to date. Prices for issues from 1987 to 2015 are £4.00 per year (6 issues); individual issues are £1.00 each. Prices for issues in 2016 and 2017 are £4.00 per copy. All prices include postage. There are some issues available from earlier years, 1970 to 1986 – please send enquiries to the Sales Officer.

PICTURE HOUSE MAGAZINE

Listed below are the back numbers of Picture House that are still available, along with the main articles the particular issue contains. There are also available a few second-hand copies of out-of-print issues 9, 10, 14/15, 16, 20, 22, 23 & 24, priced £5.00 each, plus postage.

No 6	£1.50	Television in the Cinema; Atherley Southampton; Hippodrome, Blackpool.
No 8	£1.50	Sol Levy; Reginald Cooper; ABC in NW London.
No 17	£3.00	Special Issue featuring the Cinemas of George Coles with 26 original photographs reproduced in sepia.
No 18	£3.00	Sydney Colwyn Foulkes; United Picture Theatres; Tivoli Wimborne.
No 19	£3.50	Co-operative Cinemas; Ideal Lambeth; Dursley; Alister Macdonald; Granada Tooting.
No 21	£3.50	100 Years On; Travelling Shows; Reggie Rea; Albert Hall Sheffield; Regal Wells; West End Adverts; Scotland.
all issues below have colour cover and inside pages		
No 25	£4.50	Oldest Cinema (Brighton); FE Bromige; Gaumont Managers; Carlton Swansea; Committee's Choice.
No 26	£4.50	Paramount Newcastle; Edward Stone; Granada Men; E de Wilde Holding; Electric Portobello Road.
No 27	£4.50	New Victoria/ Apollo ; Whiteladies Bristol; Clark & Fenn; Compton Organs; Tim Foster Associates.
No 28	£4.50	James McKissack; WJ King; Torbay Cinema; Tabs.
No 29	£4.50	Cinerama in Britain; Braziers the Builders; John Fernée; Waller Jeffs; John Duffin's paintings.
No 30	£5.00	The Davis Family, Croydon; Apollo Hammersmith Organ; Norwich Roadshows.
No 31	£7.50	Special 84-page edition: Essoldo – A Family Business: Sol Sheckman and the Essoldo Circuit.
No 32	£5.00	Harry Myers Photographs; Cinemas at the Coalface; Shaws of Darwen: Edward A Stone.
No 33	£5.00	Theodore Komisarjevsky; Circuit & other releases of 1956; The case for saving the New Victoria Bradford.
No 34	£5.00	Beaufort Birmingham; Granada Tooting in 1934; Rank in post-war Scotland; J Braddon's Cinema life.
No 35	£5.00	Holophone lighting; Imitations of Odeon ; Cradley Records; 1909 Cinematograph Act; Kingston Showmanship.
No 36	£6.00	Leslie Kemp; The Clifton Circuit; Jeremy Perkins on Brighton; Circuit Releases of 1960.
No 37	£8.50	Special 92-page issue; saving the Electric Palace Harwich.
No 38	£6.00	Northern Morris Associated; Point Milton Keynes; Going to the Cinema in Birmingham; Palace Conwy; Carlton Haymarket; Military Cinemas; Cinema Murders.
No 39	£6.00	WWI and the Film Trade; Tale of Two Regals ; Odeon North Finchley; Majestic Oxford; Films at the Royal Albert Hall .
No 40	£6.00	Tolmer Euston; Michael Stringer memories; West End in the 1950s; Stafford Entertainments; Will Onda & James Atroy; Stephen Waddingham – a Granada man.
No 41	£6.00	CTA's 50th Anniversary; Plaza Stockport; Grosvenor Rayners Lane; Majestic Leeds; Pascal J Stienlet.

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.



CINEMAS IN BRITAIN

A MUST for your collection

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

Still Available (reviewed in previous issues)

Electric Pictures

Film makers and cinemas of Worthing & Shoreham

£12.99 plus postage.

Off to t'Flicks in old Aireborough

Guisley, Rawdon & Yeadon – £9.95 plus postage.

Screen Stories – Lewes

£8.99 plus postage.

Ordering

For books and other items please add £3.00 for post and packing for orders up to £30.00 in value; £6.00 for orders from £30.01 to £40.00 and £11.00 for orders above £40.01.

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.



Your annual magazine is repeating the lamentable example of last year's lateness and the 2017 edition will be appearing in January 2018 as a result of the delayed arrival of sufficient material. We can reveal that it will include articles on the **Odeon** Elephant and Castle by Elain Harwood, the **Cineworld** Chelsea by Spencer P Hobbs and Martin Tapsell, the **Depot** Lewes by David Trevor-Jones, the **Plaza** Community Cinema by the Plaza Crosby, plus eight new cinema paintings by John Duffin and Gaumont Sheffield programming 1947-1958, analysed by Sheldon Hall.

CIRCUIT HISTORIES AVAILABLE

by Allen Eyles – all fully illustrated with gazetteers

ODEON 1 – Oscar Deutsch Entertains Our Nation – £19.99

ODEON 2 – From J Arthur Rank to the Multiplex – £19.99

THE GRANADA THEATRES – £18.99

All available from the Sales Officer – address above.
please add £3.00 for postage.

CAMPAIGNING TO SAVE YOUR HISTORIC CINEMAS

By Tim Hatcher

Grade I Listed



The façade of the Granada Tooting in March 2004; there is evidence of vegetation back then

The Conservation Officer of Wandsworth Council has been advised of vegetation growing from the exterior of the Granada in Tooting; this has resulted in an investigation by a freelance surveyor. {9424}

Grade II* Listed

The Council local to Dreamland at Margate has affirmed that the objective remains of refurbishing the interior in order to permit film exhibition to be reinstated. {15123}

Grade II Listed



The Hyde Park Picture House Leeds in June 2005

The architectural organisation responsible for the proposed alterations to The Hyde Park Picture House in Leeds has been extremely forthcoming in forwarding its initial plans to the Association for comment. Certain aspects thereof require clarification and response, which will be requested and presented respectively during a site visit, which has been suggested by the practice. {1836}

A partnership has been established between a new university appellation UA92 and the area Council into whose remit the Longford at Stretford falls. A plan has been published that reveals an aspiration to utilise the cinema building as a 'student hub' and to integrate a library within the venue. The auditorium currently retains its spatial integrity as a single volume entity; thus concern arises over possible proposals to destroy its unity by subdivision. Representations relating to this issue will therefore be advanced. See p28 Bulletin 51/5. {13796}

Listed building consent for refurbishment work at the Odeon in York has been granted, gratifyingly with conditions including reinstatement of the foyer mural and removal of a false ceiling. {2788}

Although it is reported that the Ritz at Nuneaton has been made watertight, new owners have expressed an interest in subdivision of the cinema. Unfortunately Historic England is taking no interest in its future status as it now involves itself with Grade II Listed Buildings only in cases of proposed total demolition or ownership by the planning authority. It also transpires that threatened Grade II Buildings appear on its 'Heritage at Risk Register' only if they are located within the London area. These two principles of practice by Historic England might be construed as an abject abrogation of its responsibilities. See p6&28 last Bulletin. {25909}

Despite lobbying of the local authority by campaigners to improve security at the Royalty in Harborne, the interior was recently affected by fire. This was, however, reported to be approximately the size of a bonfire and confined to the ground floor. See Newsreel p21. {33866}

Unlisted

Encouragingly, the application for housing proposed for the site of the Westover/ABC in Bournemouth was rejected under officer delegation on grounds of its impact upon nearby heritage buildings. The possibility of appeal against this decision remains. See Newsreel p21. {24207}

A planning application to restore the façade of the Odeon / Picturehouse in Bromley has been submitted, which also solicits permission for a fifth screen. The CTA has commented in largely positive tone. {14116}

It is reported that a cinema operator has expressed interest in the Rialto in Upper Norwood and has communicated with the campaign that is pressing for the building's return to its intended purpose. However, the venue is currently on the market at a price of five million pounds and thus may attract purchase by a housing developer. {28989}



The Carlton Haymarket as the UGC in March 2004

The foyer of the Carlton in London's Haymarket has received attention to its paintwork, alongside the installation of upgraded lighting fixtures. It is to be hoped that this augurs well for its current usage into the medium term. See Newsreel p26. {1838}

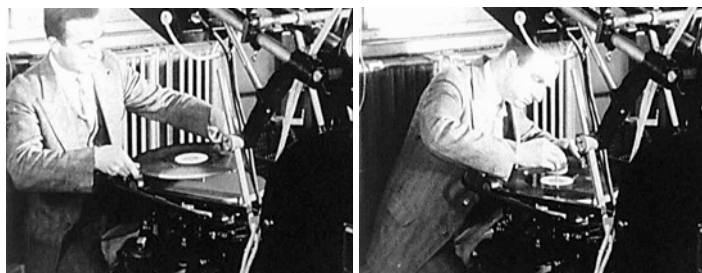
A Freedom of Information Request has revealed that the photographic survey undertaken to record the Kensington Kinema prior to its demolition was thorough, although the supporting documentation reveals certain inaccuracies. Meanwhile, legal opinion has been sought by a third party to determine if any liability can be established on the part of the various agencies and entities involved in its demolition. Options for redress unfortunately appear somewhat limited. {13801}



MORE TALKING PICTURES

By Kevin Wheelan

I would like to add a few details to the most interesting article *Now Showing – The New Talking Films* in the last Bulletin.



Loading a disc on a Western Electric Universal base

The original Western Electric system was Vitaphone sound-on-disc, as used for *The Jazz Singer*. Sound discs were 16 inches in diameter, ran at $33\frac{1}{3}$ rpm and, as the article mentions, played from the inside outwards. An old cinema engineer, who had installed early sound equipment, explained why. The needle travels a much shorter distance per revolution at the centre of the disc than it does at the outside, because the circumference of the inner groove of a disc is much smaller than that of the outer groove. This means that the modulations in the inner groove are more compressed than those in the outer one, requiring a sharp needle to track them to give optimum sound. As the steel needle wears down the circumference of the groove increases and the modulations are not so compressed so the needle is still able to track them satisfactorily. Because of wear from the heavy pickups the discs had a limited life. Printed around the disc label were numbers from 1 to 30 or 40. Each time a disc was played, a number was ticked off and when the last number was reached the disc was replaced.



Sound disc for *Redskin* (1929)

To ensure synchronisation the projector was laced up so that a start mark on the film leader was in the gate. The pickup needle was then placed on the start mark on the disc. As both film and disc were driven by the same motor, synchronisation was maintained. Should damage occur to the film, any frames removed had to be replaced by black spacing in order to preserve synchronisation. Some early 16mm reduction prints such as *Flip the Frog* cartoons were made from 35mm sound-on-disc release prints and black spacing can be found printed into the film.

The discs were double-sided, with sides 1 and 3 on one disc, 2 and 4 on another and so on. When reel 1 was finished the disc was flipped over, ready to start when reel 2 on the other machine had finished. The short running time of the discs, 10 or 11 minutes, meant frequent changeovers for the projectionists. To make matters worse, sound levels on the discs could be rather flat and projectionists were issued with cue sheets telling them the level at which the fader (volume control) should be set for each scene. These sheets also told the projectionist when to start the motor on the incoming machine (SM) and when to effect the changeover (CO).

According to the 1932 Kinematograph Yearbook, 1931 saw “the gradual passing of the disc method of reproduction” with most renters having already abandoned it and the rest set to follow in the near future. No doubt projectionists breathed a sigh of relief when sound-on-disc finally became obsolete

The Blattnerphone, mentioned in the article, was an early tape recorder, using steel tape. One intended use was to synchronise it with film as an alternative to discs but it proved unsatisfactory, so was never used as a cinema sound system. It did, however, make an appearance at the Savoy Brighton in 1932 and possibly at other theatres. There is a short film in which Manager AJ Sadler announces that the Blattnerphone will be coming to the cinema the following week and that members of the audience will be invited to talk to it, then listen to it talking back to them.

According to Operating Instructions for Synchronous Reproducing Equipment issued by Western Electric on 1 December 1928, Western Electric pioneered the Movietone variable density sound-on-film system, rather than having a system of their own. In fact, the sound sprocket on the Western Electric Universal Base (pictured in the article), which pulls the film through the soundhead at a constant speed, was referred to in contemporary literature as the “Movietone sprocket”. However, the Universal base could also play RCA variable area tracks. Variable density was considered superior but could not be adapted to produce stereo sound, so eventually fell into disuse.

There was one slight error in the article. Mirrophonic, which first appeared in 1937, was a Western Electric system, not RCA.

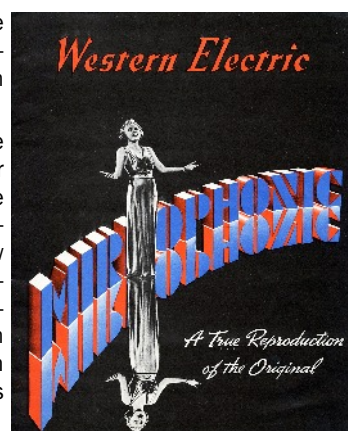
There is very little literature on the subject of early soundtracks, other than basic details of the three main types – variable area, variable density and push-pull. The now defunct Henderson Film Laboratory, which specialised in film restoration, produced a hand-drawn chart for the use of staff, which illustrates over twenty variations of these three main types.

At the coming of sound there was a bewildering array of sound reproducing equipment on the market as dozens of engineering firms with no experience of talking pictures endeavoured to get in on the act. By far the best equipment was that manufactured by American companies Western Electric and RCA, followed by British Acoustic, British Talking Pictures and British Thomson-Houston. Amongst the ‘also rans’ were the more modestly priced AWH, British Cinephone, Brown, Celebritone, Challenger, Echo, Edibell, Electrocord, Film Industries, Gramo-Radio, Kamm, Kinematograph Engineering Apparatus, Magnetorque, Marshall, Melotone, Mihaly, Morrison, Musikon, Orchorsol, Pictoretone, Roth, Synchrosan, Ultramonic and Will Day-Wilson systems, to name but a few. These cheaper alternatives proved false economy, being unreliable, giving poor quality sound and sold in such small numbers as to be unviable as regards servicing and spare parts. The Kinematograph Yearbooks show that within a few years virtually all had been replaced with one of the top five systems, Western Electric and RCA predominating.

Sadly, digital technology has swept away 35mm and few cinemas are now capable of projecting film. What equipment does survive is now in museums, in collections such as that of the Projected Picture Trust and in the hands of enthusiasts. It is a tribute to the quality of the engineering that examples of the Western Electric Universal Base, pictured in the article, are still going strong after nearly 90 years.

SONNY BOY				
ALL RECORDS MUST BE HEARD ONE HALF A TURN AFTER THROUGHING FILM AND LISTENING RECORD AT START WORD.				
S.N.	Start Motor	C.O.	Change Over	FOOTAGE 6000 Feet. TIME 56 Mins.
No.	No.	No.	No.	No.
1.	1.	OPEN		Se. 10
RECORD	2.	As Betty Brunson leaves taxi		Se.
W.SOUND.	3.	As two girls walk towards couch		Se.
	4.	STAND BY. Exit of Horton from room		
	5.	FINAL SHOT of Betty Brunson kneeling at laundry basket with Sonny Boy		S.N.
	6.	On following scene after man takes off hat and scratches head		C.O.
	7.	Change fader with N/S.		
	8.	OPEN		Se. 9
RECORD	9.	On fade out of man speaking with wife		Se.
W.SOUND.	10.	On title - "SON IN THIS GAME" etc.		S.N.
	11.	Following scene fade out		C.O.
	12.	Change fader with N/S.		
	13.	OPEN		Se. 9
	14.	Sonny Boy says his prayers		Se.
	15.	Scene of two men in club		Se.
	16.	As Sonny Boy leaves over both men's heads		C.O.
	17.	ON CLOSE UP of other man (after Horton leaves room)		C.O.
	18.	Change fader with N/S.		

Cue Sheet for *Sonny Boy* (1929)



SCOTTISH WANDERINGS

By Hugh Sykes



The Prize Gretna [2]

We travelled many miles with Johnson's of Henley-in-Arden, 25 June to 1 July. Our first proper stop was at Gretna Green, at the 'wedding' place. Sadly it would have been a rather long walk down into Gretna itself, so here is a photo of the Prize taken in August 2009. The coach continued to Cumbernauld for an overnight stay.



The former Regal Pitlochry [1]

26 June and northwards, pausing briefly at Pitlochry. Time for just a quick visit to the grade B listed station with a short walk to the Regal in West Moulin Road. It is now part of the Atholl Fitness Centre with a new building and entrance on the left hand side. The former cinema still retains its doors c1950 with Parmeko sound, 500 seats, prices 9d to 2/3, pros width 24ft. We were unable to view the Festival Theatre.



The former Palace Inverness in September 2008 [2]

We were then promised a visit to Inverness, so we left the coach north of the river for a walk over the Ness, viewing the Premier Inn hotel built in 2010 on the site of the Palace c1950 BTH sound, 1,021 seats, pros width 28ft, prices 1/- to 3/-! It was open 1939-1963 then bingo to 2006, empty to demolition. Up into the shops for Ann and the station for me, we walked part of Academy Street; alas the Empire, La Scala and Playhouse are no more. I believe part of the upper frontage and façade of the La Scala survive – Estate Agents? Current films are

shown at the seven-screen Vue some way out of town. The Eden Court Theatre over by the Cathedral was staging *The Railway Children* in its 800-seat main auditorium with two screens for films. From the *Oban Times* a heart-warming advert for the Screen Machine, Scotland's Mobile Cinema, an 80-seat digital cinema touring many communities, some on the Western Isles. Good luck and best wishes to the team.



The remains of the Pavilion Wick [1]

Still northbound for our two-night stay in Wick but not before a comfort stop in Helmsdale; a very quick visit to the station (grade B listed) and the local shop. Since found, in the 1950 KYB, a 16mm static cinema, the Drill Hall run by John Smith of Dornoch (more later). Unfortunately the coach driver took us round the back of the town; I did look but nothing was located, except for a superb colonnaded Freemasons Hall – a gem. After settling in and a meal in Wick, Ann and I went on a walkabout. Wick has suffered from out-of-town stores so the centre is now quiet. I regret to advise that the burnt-out shell of the former Pavilion still stands on the High Street after a fire in 1996! Part of the frontage is painted blue with a banner from 2008 promising a new future – leisure, disco etc – but there it remains.



The former Breadalbane Wick in September 2008 [2]

Now Wick had a second cinema, the Breadalbane¹, which we found off the Main Street, being situated amongst housing, a school and an RC Church in Breadalbane Terrace, Pultneytown. It too is still there but derelict. In c1950 BA sound, 460 seats, prices 10d to 2/6, stage depth 12ft, two dressing rooms, pros width 34ft! It is built on the side of a hill, with a natural slope down to the stage. It closed as the Dounreay Social Club in 2007 and is boarded-up at ground level with upper windows intact; holes in the roof can be seen. I did venture down the left hand side of the building past two very derelict fire exits (which were not entered), the steps lead to a rear fenced yard. A great shame this venue has been allowed to go into dereliction; it might/could have been an asset to the town, ie theatre, cinema, civic or community usage.

¹ Breadalbane is a region of the southern/central Scottish Highlands, traditionally comprising the watershed of Loch Tay (ie Glen Dochart, Glen Lochay and the banks of Loch Tay itself). The *Atholl and Breadalbane Gathering* is a popular 2/4 March tune for the Great Highland Bagpipes.



The former Picture House Thurso [2]

On the next day (27 June) with a local 'Pentland' coach, we toured the Castle of Mey and John-O'Groats with only a few pre-school-holidays people about and no midges the day was memorable. We also did some walking, including Wick station. On 28 June, leaving Wick for Scrabster Harbour, we passed through Thurso. On the left lay the former Picture House on St George's Street c1950 BA sound, 484 seats, continuous Mon-Fri, 3 shows Sat, prices 6d to 2/9, pros width 29ft. Is the nightclub therein still open? It could do with some TLC as some guttering is blocked. I did buy (in Wick) two local papers, being very pleased to find the Merlin Cinema Thurso advertising in both papers; two screens, 152 & 88 seats, ex All Star Factory. Sadly on this occasion we did not see either this cinema or the most northerly station in Great Britain.

We crossed the Pentland Firth on a lovely calm day on board the MV Hamnavoe, heading for Orkney and Stromness Harbour. The previous Saturday evening arrival at 8:30pm had not docked until 11pm due to heavy seas!



The Skara Brae Coffee Cart [1]



The Neolithic settlement at Skara Brae [2]

A grand tour of ancient and historic sites was organised for us, including Skara Brae, which we enjoyed. I noted a local service, the Skara Brae Coffee Cart, where a young lady was kept very busy serving hot drinks.

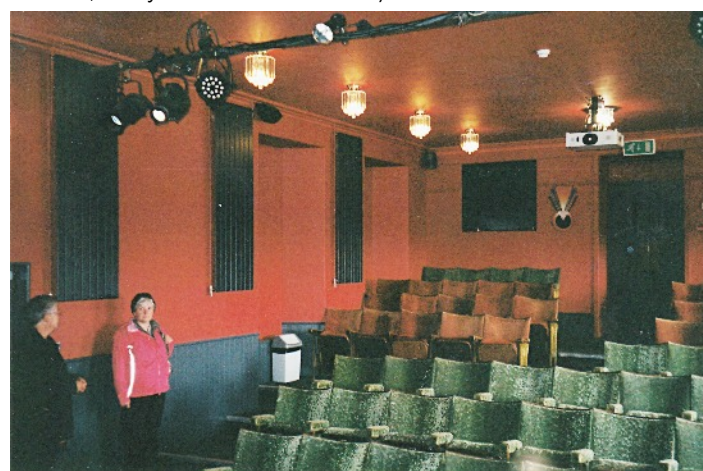
We stayed at the Stromness Hotel by the Harbour – an excellent venue, rooms, food and service were the best. After our evening meal Ann and I went for a walk in this very interesting town. Starting in Victoria Street, we noted along the way some very high shop doorways – must be over 10ft – were the Vikings that tall? Turning right into Church Road, on the left is the former Free Church, labelled Stromness Town Hall. The Town Hall hosts all kinds of events, show, recitals and West Side Cinema. The screen is attached to the organ case (not known if organ is in working order) and rolls down for presentations. At the top of Church Road is the Community Centre. Now Victoria Place leads into Graham Place then Dundas Street; we were aware of how narrow these streets were – two-way with a 20mph speed limit. Right into Heellie-hole Road where in 1950 the KYB lists the Stromness Town Hall Cinema (pop 1,612, Kalee sound, 282 seats, prices 6d to 2/-, pros width 20ft, one house two days a week. Unfortunately our walk did not go here – but more on this later (photos in Orkney archive at Kirkwall).



Stromness Town Hall [1]

Next day (29 June) we elected to do our own itinerary for the island of Hoy. Local bus 5 from Stromness to Houton Ferry for the MV Hoyhead ferry to Lyness on Hoy (£4.30 each return) with a two minute walk to the Scapa Flow Visitor Centre and Museum. This was the former naval base of WWI and WWII; as well as the site I wanted to see the most northerly preserved narrow-gauge locos preserved in Great Britain, with hopefully a former cinema on the island. Well, after a thorough search we found track, wagons and steam crane but no locos. We entered their shop, explaining my interest and a letter sent prior. The lady behind the counter told us, "About three weeks ago the locos were moved to storage in Kirkwall before going down to South Wales for a new railway at a Fire Museum." Well, I nearly sank through the floor!

Somewhat shaken, I asked her for directions on foot to the Gable End Theatre, which she gave. We paid her compliments and started walking. We had not gone ¼ mile when a car appeared. It was the lady from the shop. Feeling very sorry for us, she offered not only to take us the 1½ miles to the theatre but she was also the keyholder and a full visit was on. Ms Jude Callister is also the theatre secretary. Conversion of a small school into a fine 75-seat raked venue for cinema (roll-down screen, digital projector on ceiling), theatre, plays, choirs, recitals etc. It has quite a deep stage (no flytower) lighting rigs, two dressing rooms. There is a welcoming bar/lounge on arrival. Doors and tip-up seating are from the lamented Phoenix cinema in Kirkwall, sadly demolished in 1998/9.



The interior and a door in the Gable End Theatre on Hoy [1]



The exterior of the Gable End Theatre on Hoy ^[1]

We gave our thanks and a donation to the theatre. The lady then gave us a lift to the Naval Cemetery where I had a few moments – very moving. Afterwards we walked back to the centre and onto the ferry. It was a flat crossing back to Houton then a bus to Stromness. I later learnt that the former RN Cinema, which we saw clad in corrugated iron and steel girders on the left as we left Lyness, had a stage with tabs but a flat floor and stacking chairs for multi-use.



The interior of the New Phoenix Kirkwall ^[2]

The present New Phoenix cinema is located within the Picaquoy Leisure Center in Kirkwall. We had a good walk around the town, finding some sites of interest. The former garage of D Pearce in Burnmouth Road has the roof from Flotta's cinema, which was removed leaving the projection room end and two side walls. On Junction Road next door to the Post Office are some flats, which I was told have a cinematic connection, although very much rebuilt. Between the front door and windows is a plaque to James Petrie Chalmers Jnr 1866-1912, who was a figure in the early American film industry.



Walking down Albert Street, we came upon a Launderama shop. A lady in a bookshop advised me this was the site of the former Albert cinema; 300 seats, 8 June 1931 to 8 May 1947, when it was destroyed by fire. We couldn't find the former Arts Centre / Temperance Hall. Ann and I ventured into the library and upstairs to the archive. Wow – they have got a lot of cinema material; lots on the Phoenix (1955-1998), some Stromness and Naval Cinema photographs plus two school projects done by pupils about Orkney Cinemas. I was allowed to view both – they are excellent but copyright does not permit copying in any form. We got the bus back to Stromness for our final night on Orkney. Crossing the again calm Pentland Firth en-route to Scrabster, a past friend from Leamington Spa was also on board – small world!

Heading south, now on 30 June, we went through Brora, which I have since found on *Cinema Treasures* had a Drill Hall with 350 seats in Gower Street. But we did stop at Dornoch, which until 1960 had a light railway with an ex-BRWR 16xx 0-6-0 PT's working; the station buildings and platform are intact. As at Helmsdale earlier, here too we had a 16mm cinema in the Cathedral Hall. Time did not allow any further wanderings – has any member got details please?



The Victoria Hall / Picture House Kingussie ^[1]

So further south we got to Kingussie and our last hotel and overnight stay. We soon found the former Victoria Hall / Picture House in Spey Street, very close to the railway station, ex CAC, 309 seats, 9d to 2/-, pros 20ft. Both the Scottish Episcopal Church next door and the former cinema were gutted by fire in 1999, leaving the original entrance and walls of the cinema. They have now been joined with the walls of the church and re-roofed with a modern structure. It reopened in 2003 as the Badenoch Library and Sports Centre, being very popular.



The Town Hall Moffat ^[1]

On Saturday 1 July we departed for home, with a short stop at Moffat, where I photographed the Town Hall. We departed Kingussie at 9:30am and after three comfort stops arrived home for 8:30pm. It had been well worth the long journey.

Photos by ^[1] the author, ^[2] Harry Rigby



An early postcard [date unknown] of the Pavilion Wick

FROM CELLULOID TO CEREAL: EXTRA STAMPS

By Gavin McGrath

Details of conversions are still coming in prompting me to conjure up an article for those that I missed in compiling the booklet on cinemas that became supermarkets.



The Palace on North Road in Boldon Colliery opened in August 1914 and was a 700-seater on a single level. It survived until April 1959 when the last film to be screened was *The Long Haul*. Subsequent uses included a fruit wholesaler and a bingo hall. In 2011 councillors proposed turning the empty building into retail and it is now home to a Heron Foods store flanked by a Post Office and barber shop. The supermarket has a 15-year lease, which commenced in June 2013.



The Electric Theatre opened in Fore Street Brixham in 1935, on the site of an earlier cinema and closed in 1966. In more recent years it housed a Somerfield supermarket, which became a Co-operative Food store as a result of the takeover.



The Olympia in the Gorton area of Manchester was active as a cinema between 1920 and 1959. It was later a Kwik Save supermarket and a Fair Price Furniture Store but is now a cash-and-carry called Gorton Superstore open for both retail and wholesale customers.



The lofty-looking Princess Theatre in West Street Hoyland [South Yorks] was built as a theatre in 1893 and converted to a cinema in 1920. The majority of the work was in the auditorium where the stage was removed but a projection box was created over the entrance at the front of the building. It is believed to have closed in 1962 and was a bingo hall for a number of years, notably under the Walkers name and also a snooker hall and a dance studio. Plans for the redevelopment of the site in 2011 involved demolishing the building and creating new apartments but this never went ahead. Since at least 2014 it has been home to the Family Shopper supermarket, with the name of the theatre still intact over the entrance.



The Priory Cinema on Spring Bank West in Hull was designed by Pennington Hyster and Taylor and opened in October 1938. It closed as a cinema in February 1959 and, following a fire in 1973, the auditorium had to be rebuilt. Later life saw it operating as various supermarkets such as Dee Discount, Gateway and Kwik Save. A home improvement centre occupied the upstairs with various shops along the frontage, including a bakery and a butcher. In 2010 an indoor market run by Sue and John Davies graced the ground floor, with a Haus and Home store arriving a couple of years later, while the upstairs was home to a gym. In April 2016 a Heron Foods store opened in the building, the company's largest store yet and in the City where it opened its first store in 1979. The gym upstairs has remained in situ.



The Cinema in Jedburgh – see next page

The Cinema on Canongate in Jedburgh [photo bottom previous page] is now a Co-operative Food store. It first appeared in the listings in 1935 and is last listed in 1970. It was originally operated by AC Pindar but run by the Roxy at Kelso by the mid-1950s. Prior to its Co-op days it is also remembered as an Alldays store.



The Lochinvar Cinema in Netherby Street, Longtown started life as Benson's Picture Palace around 1912 and was owned by W Benson. It was simply known as the Picture Hall in the 1920s, still run by Benson but was renamed the Lochinvar about 1942 when run by AB Coghlan. It originally had in the region of 350 seats but this was reduced to 225 by 1959. The *Cumberland News* reported it was due to close in April 1961 but it had a last minute reprieve following the news and eventually closed in October 1965. Bingo was tried for a couple of months but the building was empty as of April 1966. It has been a Spar supermarket for a number of years with the space between the hall and corner property expanded to offer more floor space.

Dooner's Empire & Bioscope opened in 1910 in John Street Porthcawl and was renamed the Coliseum in 1912. It was mainly a variety hall but did exhibit early film shows. It became a full-time cinema after the advent of talkies and remained as one until around 1960. By 2006 the premises were in business as a Spar supermarket with Post Office. A distinctive feature of the frontage is the small protruding balcony. [R]



In Sacriston, County Durham, the New Cinema in Front Street opened in September 1957. At a time when many were thinking of closing their doors, it was never destined to last long and became a bingo hall in 1962. It also killed off screenings at the Memorial Institute next door, which ended in February 1961. By 2005 it was operating as the Beechville Discount Furniture store and by 2015 had become a Heron Foods supermarket. The company has a 15-year lease on the building.

The Odeon in the High Street Southall opened in August 1936 with the film *The Amateur Gentleman*. The 1,580-seater with balcony was another cinema designed by George Coles in the Art Deco style. It closed in February 1961 and was converted into a Top Rank Bowl. That closed about 1970 and it was later an MFI but is now a Queen-style furniture store occupying the first floor only. The ground floor of the building is a Lidl supermarket. [Photo top next column.]



The Odeon Southall



The Gaiety Cinema in Bute Street, Treherbert opened around 1912 and had a small stage on which concerts were held. The 500-seater closed about 1970 and the building was heavily altered to include demolition of the frontage. Today it operates a branch of Spar.

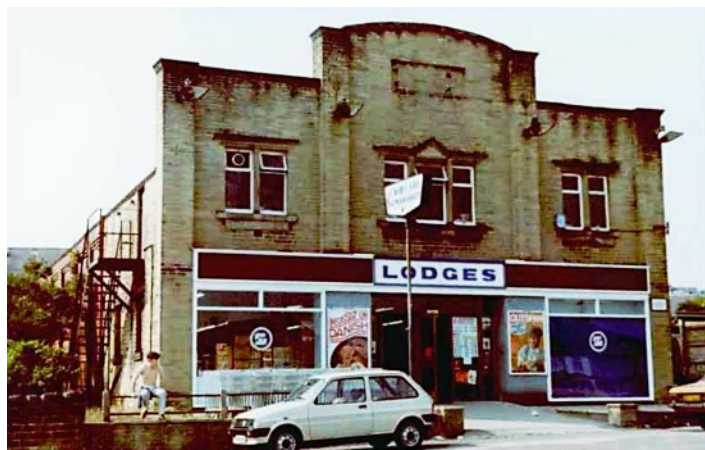
SORRY! CHECKOUT CLOSED

All of the following examples are where the supermarket has subsequently closed and the building has either gone over to other usage or in some cases been demolished.



The Castle on Castlereagh Road Belfast [above] opened in 1934 and was a single-floor cinema. It had not one but two nicknames, 'Old Gold' owing to its interior colour scheme and 'The Ranch' as it screened many a western. It closed in 1966 and the frontage was modified. It later became a supermarket under the Mace franchise and is currently an S & L Furniture store. Also in Belfast the Shankill Picturedrome on the Shankill Road opened in 1910 in a former grocery store belonging to Joe McKibben. It closed in 1958 and was later converted into a Spar Foodliner but was eventually demolished for a road widening scheme. The Alhambra in High Street Bilston opened around 1912 and by the 1960s was resorting to bingo and Asian films to keep its head above the water. It became a clothes shop after closure and later a Kwik Save supermarket but is now home to a furniture shop. The auditorium has been demolished. In Carrickfergus, the former Ideal Cinema in West Street was active from the early 1930s to the 1970s. It later had a variety of uses including the Hot Gossip nightclub and a snooker hall but was also a Frostfayre supermarket. The Royalty on Birmingham Road, Cowes on the Isle of Wight opened in 1921. It was the first purpose-built cinema on the Island

and lasted until 1961. In later life it was a Lipton supermarket, followed by a sports and social club but the building was demolished in 2000. The Broadway Theatre in Church Street Eccles was a ciné-variety operation completed in 1932 for the Emery circuit and designed by Joseph Gomersall. Gene Pitney and The Kinks appeared here. It later became an ABC and closed in 1974. A Kwik Save supermarket occupied the building for a number of years but it was demolished in 2001 for a new superstore development.



In the Marsh area of Huddersfield, the Savoy [above] on Westbourne Road opened in 1920 and presented variety in the early days as well as films. It closed in 1961 and went over to bingo. Later life saw it occupied by a branch of the Lodges supermarket chain and also a hardware store. Today it is an indoor play centre called Playworld, which also features roller skating. Also in Huddersfield was the Waterloo Cinema on Wakefield Road, situated at the old tram terminus. The 1,000-seater with balcony opened in 1931 and was designed by CE Mallinson. It was on bingo from about 1964 to 1968 and it too was later occupied by a Lodges supermarket, which closed in 1977. Since then it has operated as a retail outlet. The Cinema House in Ledbury opened in 1914 and was originally operated by Mr LP Hoult, although under Craven Cinemas in later life. It closed as a cinema in 1961 and was a Vivo supermarket in the early 1970s. Today the premises are occupied by a hardware store. The Plaza cinema in the Wellingborough Road suburbs of Northampton was known in the early days as the Abington Picture Palace and seems to have had more owners than you could shake a stick at. It closed in 1969 and initially went over to bingo but then emerged as a House of Holland store. Sometime later it was reportedly a Budgens store but is now a branch of Lloyds Bank and has a brand new frontage. The Bijou in Pendleton, Greater Manchester was a small cinema opened in 1912 in a former club. It was later an Adsega and a Tesco but was demolished in the 1970s. Finally the Whitstable Electric Picture Theatre, run by the Horton Brothers, was based at the Assembly Rooms in the town and screened films in the 1910s. The hall was built in 1867 and also used for concerts, lectures and as a HQ for the emergency services. It was in use as a Tesco supermarket in the 1970s and later as a bingo hall. It is now the Re-Assembly Rooms, occupied by the Whitstable Community Arts Centre.

Photos courtesy of: Allsop (Boldon Colliery); Yell (Brixham); Local Data Company (Gorton and Hull); Chemical Engineer (Hoyland); David Simpson (Jedburgh and Porthcawl); Rose and Trevor Clough (Longtown); Jaggery (Treherbert); Acuitus (Sacriston); Ken Roe (Southall) and Philip McAlpine (Belfast Castle).

UPDATE ON THE ORIGINAL BOOK

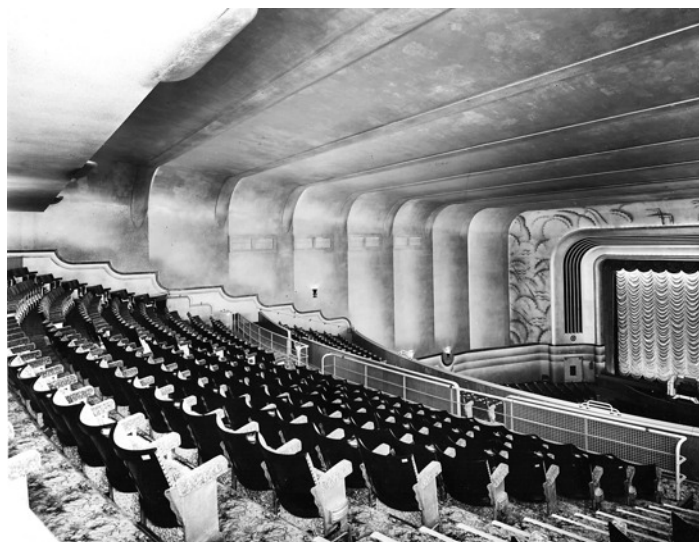
The Castle Cinema in Homerton has been brought back to life nearly 60 years after it closed. The area behind the upstairs bistro has been converted into an 80-seat boutique cinema showing all the latest releases. It opened in February 2017 and is a venture from the founder of Hot Tub Cinema. The bistro and supermarket downstairs remain in situ. The supermarket occupying the former Regal cinema in High Street, Whitstable is now a Sainsbury's, having previously been a Budgens. The Co-op have now re-imaged the frontage of its stores with a grey fascia to replace the green one, with the old-style name reappearing but in blue letters rather than white letters on a blue background.

Copies of *From Celluloid to Cereal: Cinemas That Became Supermarkets* are still available from me at Flat E, 4 Meadow Close, London, E9 5NZ at a cost of £3.50 plus £1.40 post and packing (p&p £1.80 for two).

THE MAYFAIR, AIGBURTH

By David A Ellis

The Mayfair cinema Aigburth Road was one of Liverpool's large super cinemas and was designed by A Alfred Shennon. Owned by Bedford Cinemas (1928) Ltd and run by a Mr JF Wood, it opened on 1 May 1937 with the Max Miller film *Educating Evans*. This film is now missing and believed lost. The mayor William Denton performed the opening ceremony. Next to the Mayfair was the Rivoli cinema, a much smaller hall, which closed a lot earlier than the Mayfair. Apart from the Mayfair, the circuit owned several others, including the Bedford, the Plaza Birkenhead, the Empire Garston and the Abbey Wavertree.



The Mayfair had a large foyer area and waiting rooms, down and upstairs with couches. It could seat 1,750 and in the heyday of cinema was often full. There were two staircases to the left and right and the entrance to the operating box was at the back of the balcony. The projection room was large and housed two Kalee eleven projectors, which were still in use at the time of closure. There was also a slide lantern that was sometimes used to alert people of situations, such as leaving lights on a car. There was a large free car park at the back of the building, which was manned and the entrance was off St Michael's Road.

The cinema ran 3D in the 1950s and was equipped with four-track magnetic sound when CinemaScope arrived, which was only used occasionally; most scope films were in the normal optical sound. One film screened in the four-track system was *Oliver*. The chief operator would change the sprockets to Fox-hole ones, which were smaller. In 1969 a new screen was installed, known as a floating screen because it appeared to be suspended in mid-air. The tabs (curtains) were no longer required and were taken out. Screen masking was also absent. Most cinemas screened sound trailers but in its last few years the cinema only ran silent titles, advertising future presentations. A record accompanied these.

The cinema closed on 23 June 1973 with the film *The Last Picture Show* plus *Bullitt*. Sadly, only a small audience was present. The manager at the time of closing was a Mr Sam Bennett. Before him was a Mr Tom Barnes, who had also managed the Abbey in Wavertree. The hall housed a Compton organ, which occasionally had the cobwebs blown away, when a Mr Ian Hamilton, who worked for the circuit gave it a blast. A schoolteacher would also play it and once he played when the theatre staged a carol concert.

Apart from Saturdays, school and bank holidays, the cinema only screened evening performances. The main feature would be shown twice and the second feature once. About a year or so before closure, both films were only screened once. The chief operator for many years was a Mr Brian Cubbon and from 1969 until closure I was the second operator. Other staff included Gloria Holdroyd, who was in the sweet kiosk, Sylvia Kelly and Margaret Long, usherettes, Joe O'Connell, the handyman, Beryl Sayle, the cashier and relief manager Barry Stead. After closure, it became a Mecca bingo club until 1984. The building was eventually demolished and a supermarket built on the site, which is now Home Bargains.

REWINDING BACK

Sent in by David A Ellis

NEW SUPER CINEMA FOR MANCHESTER CENTRE

Plans are now complete for a new super cinema in Manchester on the important island site in Oxford Street facing St Peter's Square. The whole of the ground has been bought by Associated British Cinemas, who have for some years owned the site of the former Prince's Theatre. When the cinema is built, it will mean that within 150 yards each of the 'big three' cinema circuits – Odeon, Gaumont and ABC will each have a theatre. Until permission to build is granted the site, which is now being levelled, will be used as a car park. It is expected to be ready for use this weekend.

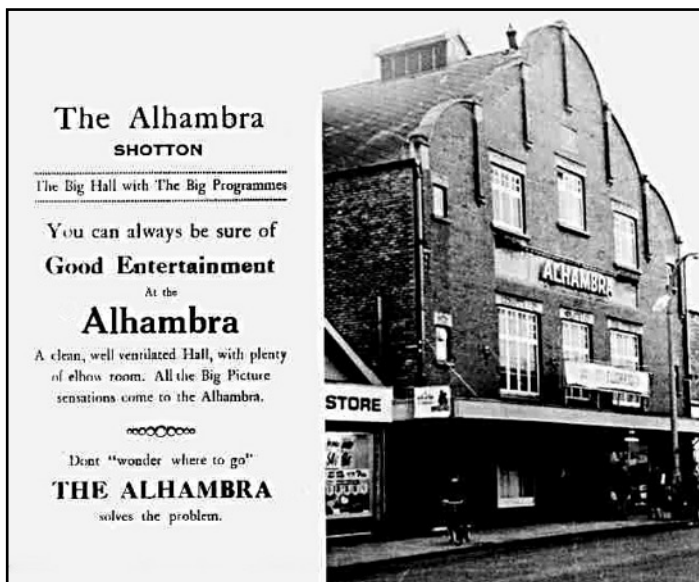
The Prince's Theatre was demolished and not destroyed by bombs, as were other buildings on the site. Plans for an L-shaped cinema on the Prince's site were passed before the war but Mr WR Glen, ABC's architect in London, said today: "We now own the whole island site and the block plan has been submitted to the Town Clerk so that the building line on Oxford Street can be approved. Before we can go ahead, the plans must be passed by the Corporation and the Ministry of Works. I think it will be some time before we begin work but the site is an eyesore in the centre and the Corporation will probably want to begin building with as little delay as possible.

Manchester Evening News – 8 November 1945

Editor's Note: This cinema was never built.

SHOTTON'S NEW THEATRE BUILT BY ONE FAMILY.

During the present housing shortage, we have heard from time to time accounts of men who have built their own cottages or bungalows but such feats have been eclipsed at Shotton, where a theatre has been built by one man, assisted by his two sons. We refer to the *Alhambra*, a spacious place of entertainment, which is to be opened on Christmas day. This large and substantially built edifice will stand as a permanent monument to the energy and hard work of one man and his two sons. It has been created almost entirely by them. The man who has this remarkable achievement to his credit is well known in Shotton, where he has resided eleven years. He is Mr John Jones, builder and contractor and his two sons who assisted him are Harold and John. His daughter, May, also has done her part in the work, having sewn all the window curtains and upholstered many of the chairs.



About five years ago Mr Jones conceived the idea of erecting the *Alhambra* and drew up plans of the proposed building but was not able to proceed with the work on account of the war. In August 1919 a start was made. A piece of land abutting on Chester Road, Shotton, 175 feet long by 66 feet wide was bought. The next thing was to dig out the ground for the foundations but, as the ground was very hard, they did not have to go deep. Reinforced concrete foundations were laid for the hall, which is 97 feet long by 66 feet wide. The outer walls are built of ordinary brick, two feet thick and rise to a height of thirty-four feet. For three weeks Mr Jones employed a labourer but the

latter gave up at the end of that time and Mr Jones then brought his sons into the work. Speaking of the great assistance they had rendered him, he remarked to an *Observer* representative the other day, "Talk about work – they are a treat." The building has a circular roof, supported by steel trusses. These trusses, of which there are nine, are all about two tons in weight and Mr Jones and his sons alone hoisted them into place. There is a large balcony of concrete, supported by steel girders, with seating accommodation there for five hundred people. The well of the hall will hold six hundred people, so, that altogether the theatre will easily contain a gathering of 1,200 people.

People can better realise the immensity of the task, which has been performed by the erection of this building, when it is known that altogether the material used weighs over 2,500 tons. All the girders and other steel parts were bought in the raw state and put together on the premises by Mr Jones. A large lounge has been provided for patrons and there are nine dressing rooms. There are eighteen exits.

Mr Jones's eldest son Harold has done most of the woodwork, which is chiefly mahogany. Even the window frames are of that wood and the front of the circle and boxes are of polished mahogany panels. The stage itself is forty feet by forty feet, with an opening to the auditorium 28 feet wide by 24 feet high. It will accommodate the largest company travelling, including *The Whip* and *The Still Alarm*.¹

The whole building is lighted by electricity made on the premises by a Cromley crude oil engine, which supplies seven hundred lamps. A few weeks ago, in order to complete the work in time for the opening on Christmas day, Mr Jones employed a few joiners but, apart from them, there has been no work done outside the family. The first performance will be variety turns. Pictures will also be shown.

Mr Jones came to Shotton eleven years ago from Silverdale in North Staffs to start in business as a building contractor. After twelve months residence he built the *Shotton Picture Palace*, which is at present owned by himself and relatives. He is a man who neither smokes nor drinks and during the whole of the time he has been engaged on the *Alhambra* he has not missed a day at work, except when away buying material. Now, the job having been completed, Mr Jones finds himself famous, for the whole country has read of his achievement and marvelled at it. {51443}

Cheshire Observer – 1922

Editor's Note: The cinema closed in 1967 and was demolished.

CHESTER TATLER THEATRES ENTERPRISE:

LOCAL EVENTS SCREENED WITHIN AN HOUR OF HAPPENING.

Chester people have now the opportunity of seeing local events filmed and shown on the screen within an hour of their happening. This is due to the enterprise of the management of the *Tatler Theatre*, Foregate Street, Chester, who have inaugurated a news-filming unit under the direct supervision of Mr Frank Chilton. The unit has the most up-to-date equipment, which includes three 16mm cameras of American and English make, capable of holding 100ft of film and a battery of telephoto lenses. One of the cameras is fitted with sound apparatus and, in view of successful experiments, it is hoped it will be in use within a month.

To give some idea of the rapid and efficient way in which the strip of film is handled an *Observer* reporter was invited to see the process from the actual shooting of the event to its projection on the screen. He writes: "After the film has been exposed, it is developed and then placed on a wooden frame and rotated over an electric drying machine. This stage of the preparation over, the film is taken to the editing department, where every section is carefully scrutinised for flaws, scratches, etc. It is here that the film is put in order before projected on the screen. The whole of this process takes about fifty minutes and thus patrons may have a surprise of having something thrown on the screen, which has taken place while they were sitting in the theatre."

Although the film that our reporter saw was not an actual news item but that showing his entry to the theatre, it proved how quickly happenings can be brought to the screen by local news enterprise. {24782}

Cheshire Observer – 9 April 1938

¹ *The Whip* and *The Still Alarm* were melodramas of the late 19th and early 20th Century – look them up on *Wikipedia*.

HOLIDAY SNAPS



Top: Cinemas, is in the centre of Valence, a large town in the south east of France with a population of 62,000. Behind the historic façade is a modern five-screen cinema.

Middle: Le Palace in Romorantin-Lanthenay in the Loire. This is a small town with a population of 17,000. The three-screen cinema is a conversion of an original single screen with a new entrance on the side.

Bottom: Cinema Rex in Sees, a commune (village/small town) with a cathedral in Normandy. The cinema is privately run by some passionate people and its survival is remarkable for a population of 4,500. It appeared to be largely unaltered since from when it opened and was probably a conversion of a public hall.

Tony Williams



I was in Stockholm last May and just around the corner from the hotel I was staying at, I came upon this cinema. I was quite pleased with the way it was fronted with a nice use of neon – rare nowadays. Bulletin 43/4 (2009) has a report of the CTA's visit to the City doesn't seem to have been to the Sture cinema. I didn't go inside but I do like its outside appearance.

Les Bull



We were in Oudenaarde in Belgium last October when we came across this Bistro. In a conversation about the name with the waiter it transpired that the building was an early cinema. The only remaining clue is that the interior is very deep for a high street building. The Bistro keeps the cinema memory by having its menu on stereoscopic views that you click through to see the various courses and the specials are on a clapper board.

Roger Fox

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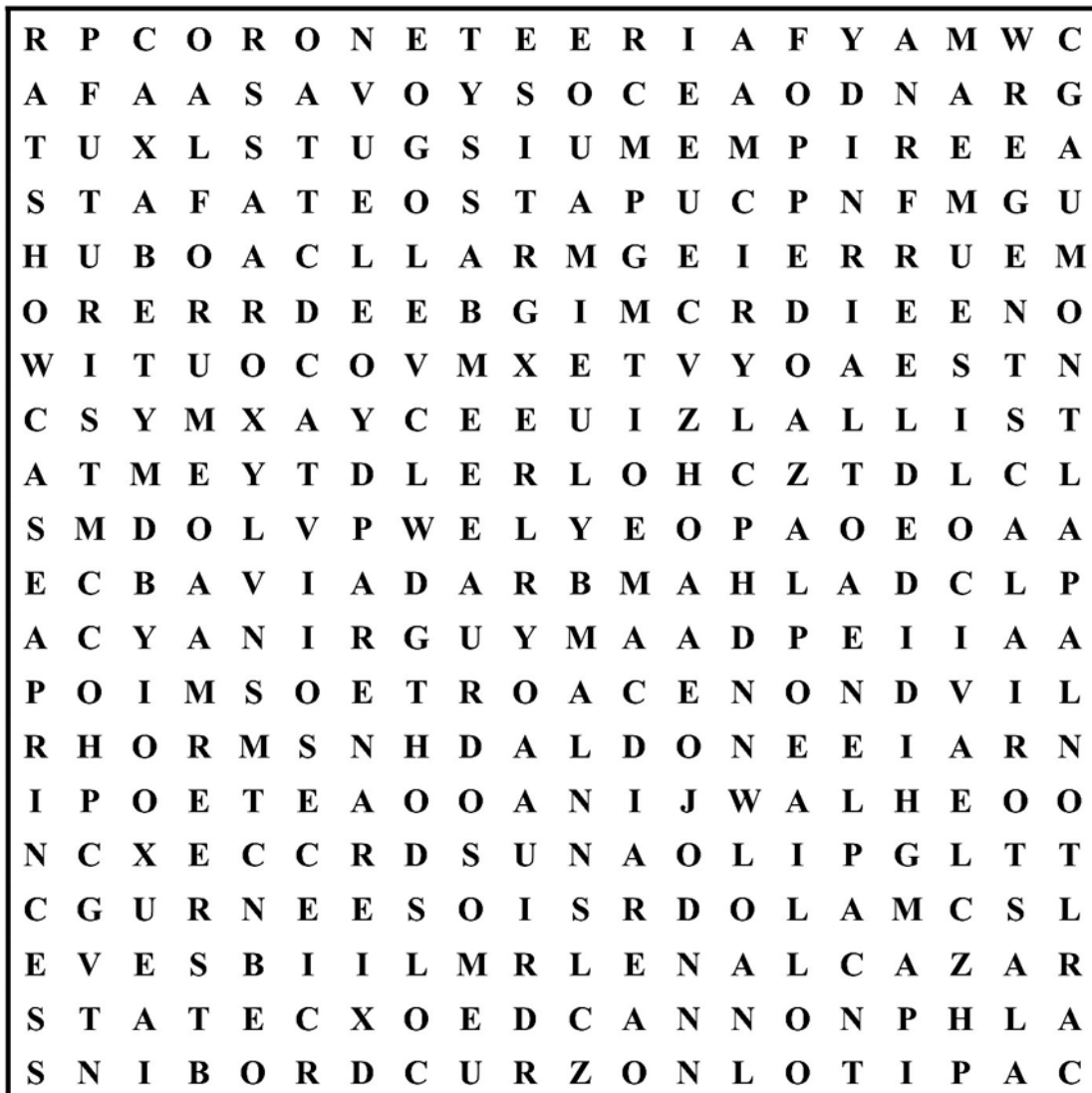
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CINEMA WORD SEARCH



By Gavin McGrath

ABC	IMC
Ace	Lyric
Adelphi	Mayfair
Alcazar	MGM
Alhambra	Movie House
Alpha	Odeon
Ambassador	Omniplex
AMC	Palace
Astoria	Palladium
Astra	Pavilion
Broadway	Phoenix
Cameo	Picturedrome
Cannon	Plaza
Capitol	Princess
Carlton	Reel
Castle	Regal
Cineworld	Regent
Classic	Rex
Coliseum	Rialto
Commodore	Ritz
Coronet	Robins
Cosy	Roxy
Curzon	Royalty
Dominion	Savoy
Electric	Scala
Embassy	Showcase
Empire	Star
Empress	State
Essoldo	Ster Century
Everyman	Super
Excelsior	UCI
Forum	UGC
Futurist	Vue
Gaumont	Warner Village
Gem	72 total
Granada	
Grand	Answers
Ideal	next time

NECROLOGY

ROY DOTRICE OBE 94

Best known as a stage actor, Roy received many Tony and BAFTA awards. His few film appearances included *The Heroes of Telemark* (1965), *Nicholas and Alexandra* (1971) and Leopold Mozart, father of the composer, in *Amadeus* (1984). His last TV appearance was in *Game of Thrones*.



ROBERT HARDY CBE 91

Robert made his professional debut with the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre in 1949. He appeared in 90 episodes of the BBC's *All Creatures Great and Small* over a dozen years from 1978. On the big screen he was in three of the *Harry Potter* films.



JERRY LEWIS 91

A comedian who was a self-confessed nightmare to work with, Jerry had a hugely successful double act with Dean Martin; they made 16 films together. His solo films included *The Bellboy* and *The Nutty Professor*. In his charity work he raised huge amounts for muscular dystrophy.



SIR PETER HALL 86

Peter founded the Royal Shakespeare Company at Stratford and was director of the National Theatre for 15 years. He will be remembered as a champion for public funding of the arts.



If you don't want to spoil your Bulletin and haven't access to a photocopier, a copy can be obtained by email only from the author at: cinema_business@aol.co.uk

TONY BOOTH 85

Tony's big TV break was as Alf Garnett's "scouse git" son-in-law in *Till Death Us Do Part*. He also appeared in more than 20 films, including *The L-Shaped Room* in 1962 and five of the 1970s sex-comedy *Confessions Of...* series. He was the father of Cherie Blair.



RODNEY BEWES 79

Rodney will be best remembered as the ever-amiable Bob to James Bolan's always abrasive Terry in the TV series *The Likely Lads*. He also appeared in the sequel and the 1976 film. His few film appearances also included *Billy Liar* (1963) and *Jabberwocky* (1977).



LIZ DAWN MBE 77

Liz Dawn's 34 years as Vera Duckworth in *Coronation Street* made her one of the most familiar faces on TV. In 2000 the Lord Mayor of Leeds, her native town, chose her as one of several Mayoresses to accompany him on Civic duties.



KEITH CHEGWIN 60

For more than a decade, Keith was one of the biggest stars on children's television; his Saturday morning hits included *Multi Coloured Swap Shop*. As a child actor, he made several appearances with the Children's Film Foundation.



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compiled by Harry Rigby

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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 {nnnn} is the reference for the Cinema Treasures website. Go to: cinematreasures.org/theaters/nnnn

ABERDEEN

Screen ② at the ten-screen Cineworld Union Square has become a 4DX screen at a cost of £450,000. It is only the second in Scotland. {44719}

Evening Express, Aberdeen – 3 November

ALNWICK (Northumberland)

The future of the Playhouse has been secured as it prepares for a £2.5m refurbishment. Work will start in summer 2018 and is due for completion in May 2019. A section of the ground floor will be converted into a community hub, including a library, tourist information and customer service facilities. The contracts include an agreement that the local authority will grant a new 50-year lease to the Playhouse Trust, allowing it to continue. {47495}

The Chronicle, Newcastle – 15 December; photo on front cover

ASHFORD (Kent)

The new six-screen Picturehouse being built at Eldwick Place is set to open at Christmas 2018.

Kent Messenger – 30 November

BANGOR (Gwynedd)

An unknown operator has signed up for a new ten-screen cinema to be built at Parc Bryn Cegin.

Daily Post, Wales – 2 December

BASILDON (Essex)

Planning permission has been granted for a ten-screen cinema at East Square. No operator has been named.

Basildon Echo – 11 December

BIRMINGHAM (Harborne)

There was a small fire at the grade II listed Royalty on 15 November. The venue opened in October 1930 and films ceased in November 1963. It was latterly used for bingo, which closed around 2012; the building has been empty since. See Casework p6. {33866}

Birmingham Mail – 15 November; sent in by Ken Roe

BISHOPS STORTFORD (Herts)

The Council has unveiled plans for a new cultural centre in Old River Lane. If approved, it would include a 500-seat theatre, a three or four-screen cinema and a café/bar.

Hertfordshire Mercury – 23 November; sent in by Terry Hanstock

BLACKPOOL (Lancs)



A self-storage facility is planned for part of the building that used to be the Princess cinema. Peter Bowden, a director of owners Worldwide Clubs Ltd claimed the business has been affected by a decline in Blackpool's night-time economy. The Princess originally opened in December

1912. It was taken over by ABC in April 1929 and closed in December 1981. After brief periods as a music venue and an indoor market it was converted into a nightclub, opening in October 1992. {6550}

Sent in by Raymond Dolling; photo taken June 2009

BLUEWATER (Kent)

The Showcase Cinema de Lux has added four more screens to the existing 13. All have recliner seats, one having a wall-to-wall format XPlus screen measuring 64 foot wide by 27 foot high. The extra capacity was timed to open concurrently with the release of *Star Wars* on 14 December. PS: The Vue at Westwood Cross (Thanet) is showing *Star Wars* 33 times a day, beginning at 06.30!

Kent Messenger, advertising; sent in by Martin Tapsell

BOURNEMOUTH

Twenty more jobs will be created at the new ten-screen Odeon BH2, thanks to its continuing success. Since it opened last February, more than 600,000 people have been through the doors. {55149}

Daily Echo, Bournemouth – 25, 26 October; sent in by John Forster

Plans to demolish the bulk of the former ABC (but leaving the façade) and build a block of 62 flats have been rejected by the Council.

Daily Echo, Bournemouth – 31 October; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Philip Stevens

BRIDGWATER (Somerset)

The new town centre leisure complex, which includes a four to six-screen cinema, should be complete by 2020. Scott Cinemas, which has a two-screen operation in the former Odeon is involved in the discussions.

Bridgwater Mercury – 21 November

BRIGHTON



The grade II* listed Hippodrome has been sold to a developer, Aized Sheikh, who also owns the Teville Gate development in Worthing. He has written publicly of his intention to turn the Hippodrome into a luxury hotel and apartment block “with a concert, theatre and banqueting venue”. It opened in August 1901 with 1,981 seats, a Frank Matcham conversion of a former skating rink. It closed as a theatre in early 1964 and was used for bingo until the early 2000s. The previous owners were the Academy Music Group. {36884}

The Stage – 9 November; The Argus, Brighton – 10, 11, 16 November; sent in by Barry Quinton & R David Simpson; photo taken March 2009

A group of deaf people said they had no choice but to leave an advertised subtitled screening of the new *Star Wars* film after subtitles were turned off at the Odeon. According to Odeon, a technical fault meant the film could not continue with captions and offered refunds. The film was restarted with subtitles but some members of the audience complained about them.

BBC News website – 19 December; sent in by Geoff Gill

BROADSTAIRS (Kent)

The Palace cinema has begun a monthly series of Sunday silents, accompanied by silent film pianist Lillian Henley. The opening film on 17 December was *The General* starring Buster Keaton.

Sent in by Martin Tapsell

CAMPBELTOWN (Argyll & Bute)

The £3.5m renovation of the A-listed Picture House has been completed. The doors were opened to allow the public to view the venue before the official opening. The restoration has been based on detailed archival research. Amongst the elements of the 1935 design that have been reinstated are the repainted ceiling, the colour scheme for the 'wee houses' either side of the proscenium and the return of the popular 'love seats'. The main screen now seats 193 in stalls and circle and there is a 52-seat second screen to the rear of the main building. The Society of Antiquaries (Scotland) has listed the Picture House as one of Scotland's Six Hidden Gems: [www.campbeltownpicturehouse.co.uk] {16090}

The Scotsman – 15, 24 November; *Metro*, *Campbeltown Courier* – 24 November; sent in by Carl Chesworth; also sent in by Stewart Kidd

CHIPPENHAM (Wilts)



At about 1:30pm on Boxing Day a fire broke out in the battery room and wiring at the Astoria – fire crews attended and had the fire under control quickly. I visited the cinema on Wednesday 27 December; a large sign on the door said that due "to a major electrical problem" the cinema was closed until further notice. I was told that the cinema would not open for the "rest of the year" and that the extent of the damage was unknown.

The Astoria is long overdue for a full refurbishment. The old Angel Bingo club in the stalls area has been empty for years. I was told that refurbishment had been planned for January (2018?). This had been proposed in 2015 but with the fire the plans could now be moved forward. I was a projectionist there for several years and the battery room formed part of the box area (enclosed behind a 1930s fire door) so I have no idea if the projectors/sound equipment have suffered as a result of the fire. There were engineers on site assessing the extent of the damage so a fuller report will be forthcoming. Sadly for the foreseeable future Chippenham is without a cinema since 1914! {24537}

Sent in by David Reeves; photo taken March 2006

CHRISTCHURCH (Dorset)

Major repair works to the Regent Centre will cost around £500,000 and take four months to complete. The defects in the south wall are likely to be remedied in summer 2019. Scaffolding was due to be put up before Christmas with work to install restraints carried out in January. The Council owners are being urged by management to schedule the works carefully or "risk crippling the theatre". {24540}

Daily Echo, Bournemouth – 1 December; sent in by Philip Stevens

FROM PROJECTORS TO PREACHERS; Cinemas That Became Churches

A 32-page Newsreel-style brochure featuring
over 110 buildings with colour photographs.

£3.50 per copy plus £1.40 postage (£1.80 for two).

Gavin McGrath, Flat E, 4 Meadow Close
LONDON E9 5NZ

CIRENCESTER (Glos)

Planning permission for a new Everyman cinema was due to expire in November but demolition at the site started just in time to retain the consent. Completion is expected "within 15 months".

Wilts & Glos Standard – 2, 30 November

COALVILLE (Leics)



Flutters Bingo in the former Regal closed suddenly on 1 November. The cinema opened in November 1933 with 1,200 seats in stalls and circle. It had a fully-equipped stage and Holophone lighting. Films ceased in May 1960 and it has been a bingo club since April 1963. The CTA visited in April 2007, when the above picture was taken.

BBC news website, Nottingham; sent in by Terry Hanstock & Ken Roe

COLCHESTER (Essex)

Another legal battle has been launched against the proposed development at Stanway, which includes a multiplex cinema. The news comes only a week after a High Court judge threw out a previous challenge.

East Anglian Daily Times – 23 November

DARLINGTON

The Hippodrome has reopened after a £13.7m restoration. The venue had been dark for 18 months. The CTA visited this during the works last April as the Civic Theatre – see p16 Bulletin 51/4. {26574}

The Stage – 30 November; sent in by R David Simpson

DARTFORD (Kent)

A six-screen cinema is being proposed as part of a development of the Westgate area in the town centre. Permission is expected to be applied for in summer 2018 and, if granted, construction could start in spring 2019. No operator has been named.

News Shopper, Greenwich & Charlton – 16 October;
Sheerness Times Guardian – 18 October

DOVER (Kent)

The new six-screen 909-seat Cineworld at the St Lames Leisure Park is scheduled to open on 2 February. Special rates of £2.50 will apply to children at weekends and school holidays.

Dover Mercury – 29 November; *Kent-on-Line* – 14 December; sent in by Martin Tapsell

DOWNPATRICK (Co Down, Northern Ireland)



The six-screen Eclipse cinema has been taken over by Omniplex. It opened in June 2009. {43860}

Down Recorder – 8 November; photo taken September 2014

DUDLEY

Vandals have attacked the former Hippodrome, forcing campaigners hoping to restore the theatre to hire security guards. They say the vandals could put the project being schedule as unnecessary resources are being spent on the problem. The Council leader had previously said that he believed "not much progress" had been made by campaigners, who are requesting a 20-year extension to their existing five-year lease. {41631}

Express & Star – 25 October, 4, 10 December; Stourbridge Chronicle – 7 December; sent in by Carl Chesworth, Ivan Harris & Chris Ingram

EASTBOURNE (East Sussex)

The Council owners have granted the lease of the Royal Hippodrome Theatre to Alex and Debbie Adams. The couple have been producing summer shows at the grade II listed Hippodrome for the past five years and run a theatre school for children. The CTA held their AGM there in 2010. {46239}

The Argus, Brighton – 23 October; sent in by Barry Quinton

EDINBURGH (Leith)



The grade B listed former State could reopen as the Leith Theatre. A fundraising campaign hopes to realise between £8m and £10m. It opened in December 1936 with 1,700 seats and films ceased in May 1972. It became a bingo hall and latterly a nightclub. Plans for a residential development on the site retain and refurbish the cinema. A planning application has been submitted. {23261}

The Herald, Glasgow – 3 November; The Scotsman – 30 November; Scottish Daily Express – 8 December; photo taken November 2006

The twelve-screen Vue at Ocean Terminal has been upgraded with fully reclining seats in all auditoria. Prices have not been increased. {27068}

Edinburgh Evening News – 2 November

EDINBURGH (Wester Hailes)

The eight-screen Odeon reopened on 3 November as an Odeon Luxe. All eight screens have been enlarged and the seating capacity reduced from 2,125 to 800. {27067}

Edinburgh Evening News – 2 November

GALWAY (Ireland)

The much-delayed art house cinema the Palas (Irish for Palace) is now recruiting key staff but no opening date for this project, which has been in gestation since 2009, with cost overruns and building work stoppages, has been made public.

Sent in by Bob Bradshaw

GORLESTON-ON-SEA (Norfolk)

The Palace reopened as a four-screen cinema on 23 October, although the official opening was on 2 November. There are two 125-seat screens downstairs, both equipped for 3D. A further two screens upstairs takes the total capacity to 450. There is luxury seating in all screens. There are plans to install a clock from the old library on the cinema building. See p26 Bulletin 51/5. {6289}

Great Yarmouth Mercury – 20, 27 October; Eastern Daily Press – 21 October; East Anglian Daily Times – 2 November

GRAYS (Essex)

JD Wetherspoon has released plans showing how they wish to convert the grade II* listed State into a pub. The circle lounge is to be changed into toilets, some changing rooms and roofs are to be demolished and converted into a beer garden. The organ is to be restored and left to sit on the stage. The plans have been generally well received by local residents. Article & pictures at tinyurl.com/yb87fakw. {1837}

Thurrock Gazette – 13 December; sent in by Margaret Burgoine

GREAT YARMOUTH (Norfolk)

The five-screen Hollywood Royalty reopened on 30 November after a "five-figure investment". Almost all the 800 seats have been renewed and a 70ft wide screen fitted in screen ①. {17924}

Eastern Daily Press – 23 November

GRIMSBY (Lincs)

The new multiplex at Riverhead Square has been granted planning permission. No operator or number of screens have been given.

Grimsby Telegraph – 14, 23 November

The Whitgift Cinema inside the John Whitgift Academy is to open up to the public, initially on Friday evenings and Sunday afternoons, as well as in the holidays. It is equipped for both 35mm and digital and will continue to be used by the Whitgift Film Theatre, which paid half the £50,000 investment to install digital four years ago. Students from the Academy will own the refreshment side of the business. It is hoped to refurbish the cinema within a couple of years.

Sent in by Carl Chesworth

HAMWORTHY (Dorset)

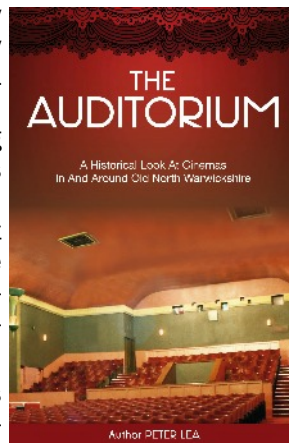


Proposals have been agreed by the Council to redevelop part of the Liberal Club site. This was the former 400-seat Empire, which opened in August 1935 and closed in 1959. {27383} *photo taken May 2006*

Daily Echo, Bournemouth – 13 November; sent in by Philip Stevens;

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, address on p2.

HARTLEPOOL

A six-screen cinema is to be built at the Marina; no operator has been named. Construction was expected to start by the time you read this.

Hartlepool Mail – 2 December

HARWICH (Essex)

The second round bid for Heritage Lottery funding for the **Electric Palace** has now been submitted and if successful the project will start in mid-spring 2018 and run for approximately nine months. When the time scale becomes clearer, the date of a Grand Reopening Gala in 2019 will be announced. There are plans for some events to take place in other venues during the cinema's closure, the most unusual being film shows etc in a replica of Charles Thurston's Travelling Bioscope, in which he used to put on moving pictures shows on many village green sites in East Anglia and further afield in the first decade of the 20th Century, before it all changed when the Cinematograph Act was passed in 1910. A CTA visit is being planned for Sunday 1 July when we hope to have an exciting silent classics programme.

Sent in by Chris Strachan

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD (Herts)

A £13m scheme to redevelop the Marlowes Shopping Centre has been approved by the Council. It will include a nine-screen cinema. The town had a 1960s Odeon, which is now a Wetherspoons. There is a seventeen-screen Cineworld [ex Odeon & Empire] out-of-town at Jarman Square; is there room for another nine screens?

Hemel Hempstead Gazette – 18 October

HEXHAM (Northumberland)

We have recently received the accounts for the community-owned Forum Cinema for the year ending 31 March 2017. The Chairman reported another successful year and stated that the cinema is in good financial health. After building cash reserves over recent years, they started an extensive programme of refurbishment, beginning with work in the café and box office area, which was completed in May 2017. The film programme and attendances have been very strong, with a 2% increase in sales over a very successful previous year; this compensated for a slight fall in live events admissions. Turnover for the year was some £10,000 up on the previous year at nearly £414,673, which produced a gross profit of £93,661. {3148}

David & Margaret Williams

IPSWICH (Suffolk)

Talks are taking place between a church group and the owners of the former five-screen Odeon that could see the building becoming a church. The building was only 14 years old when it closed in 2005. {13679}

East Anglian Daily Times – 10 November

KEIGHLEY (West Yorks)



JD Wetherspoon has applied to create a beer garden for their *Livery Rooms* [on the left in the photo] by demolishing the adjacent former pub/nightclub at 101 North Street. However the building was previously the **Regent Picture House** and ended up receiving some ugly metal cladding under Star. The **Regent** closed around 1967 and its original appearance, as shown on Cinema Treasures, should reappear as the cladding is removed. {47626}

Telegraph and Argus – 7 December; sent in by Martin Tapsell; photo taken February 2006

KINGS LYNN (Norfolk)

Plans, announced on p26 of the last Bulletin, to expand the **Majestic** by an additional 220 seats were withdrawn. An adapted plan has now been re-submitted.

Lynn News – 10 November, 8 December; Eastern Daily Press – 5 December

KIRKBY LONSDALE (Cumbria)

The Royal Barn pub is hosting film screenings every Sunday. The first show was *Die Hard* in early December. The owner's grandfather was a projectionist at the town's former cinema, which operated between 1937 and 1958. Article at [tinyurl.com/y717w6vv] includes some vintage photos.

Westmorland Gazette – 4 December; sent in by Terry Hanstock

KIRKCALDY (Fife)

Plans for a development on the former swimming pool site, which includes an eight-screen cinema, have been submitted to the Council.

Dundee Courier – 7 December

LANCING (West Sussex)

Planning permission has been granted to turn what remains of the former **Luxor** into flats – see p27 Bulletin 51/5. This was on the condition that the building's façade and the **LUXOR** name are retained.

The Argus, Brighton -18, 21 October; sent in by Barry Quinton

LEEDS (West Yorks)

The new eleven-screen Cineworld opened at the White Rose Centre on 17 November. It features an IMAX screen. {56805}

Yorkshire Evening Post – 28 October



The thirteen-screen Odeon Leeds/Bradford has become an Odeon Luxe. 1,117 new handmade seats have been fitted, reducing the capacity from just over 3,000. The largest auditorium now has 147 seats and an iSense screen. {24240}

Telegraph & Argus, Bradford – 10 November; sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken June 2005

LEICESTER

A £7m project has been announced to expand the **Phoenix** by adding two further 70-seat cinema screens, a larger digital art gallery and a bigger café/bar and kitchen. Subject to planning permission, construction is expected to start in 2019 and be complete by 2020. {35252}

[www.phoenix.org.uk/phoenix2020] – sent in by Terry Hanstock

LEWES (East Sussex)

The new **Depot** not only opened as an alternative attraction on the town's huge festive bonfire night, 5 November, when local cinemas used to close but also had a special showing of Buster Keaton's *Sherlock Jr* on New Year's Eve at 8pm followed by a party with buffet, DJ and dancing and midnight toast, all for £25. The cinema was visited by the CTA in August and is featured in the next edition of *Picture House*.

Sent in by Allen Eyles

LINCOLN

A new four-screen **Everyman** "boutique" cinema is to open in the Cornhill Quarter in spring 2019. Full planning permission is already in place.

Lincolnshire Echo – 30 November; sent in by Terry Hanstock

A ballroom in a former asylum has been turned into a 150-seat theatre and events space for the local community. The Georgian design of the room, which dates from 1815, has been retained.

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

LIVERPOOL (Dingle)



The former Gaumont was due to be auctioned on 13 December but this was postponed; the guide price was £75,000. It opened in March 1937 with 1,503 seats and a Wurlitzer organ. Films ceased in September 1966 and it was immediately converted into a bingo hall. That closed in 1998 and it has been largely unused since. The auditorium walls are covered in graffiti and there are mobile phone masts on the roof. There are some interior videos on YouTube – search “Gaumont Dingle”. The auctioneers opened the doors to allow potential buyers to view the property. {29447}

Liverpool Echo – 3 December; sent in by Mike Taylor; photo taken July 2007

LIVERPOOL (Tuebrook)

The former Carlton has finally been demolished. It opened in June 1932 with 1,948 seats. In 1962 it was converted into a *Painted Wagon* pub in the stalls and a 636-seat cinema in the circle. Films finally ceased in December 1982. The building had been derelict since and badly vandalised. The actual Tue Brook still flows around the rear of the site! {22279}

Liverpool Echo – 24, 29 October; sent in by Andy Richardson & Mike Taylor

LIVERPOOL (Woolton)



The Woolton Picture House celebrated its 90th birthday on Boxing Day. It opened in 1927 as a silent cinema. It closed in September 2006 due to the death of its owner but was bought by a group of local businessmen and reopened in March 2007. It is one of only two suburban cinemas in Liverpool to survive from a list of 143 – the other is the *Plaza* in Crosby. {17451}

Sent in by Mike Taylor

LONDON (Bromley)

Plans, announced on p26 of the last Bulletin, to add two more screens to the Picturehouse (ex Odeon/Empire) have been approved by the Council. Work is expected to start early in 2018 and will include restoration of some of the building's art deco features. See photo on p6 Bulletin 51/5. {14116}

Bromley Times – 19 October

LONDON (Camden)

The Koko nightclub in the grade II listed former Hippodrome has bought the adjacent Hope and Anchor pub. They have applied for planning permission to put up a five-storey building with the façades retained and to erect a fourth floor canopy and extension above the roof in Camden High Street. The building has not been externally painted or repaired for some years and is in need of some TLC. It opened on Boxing Day 1900 as a 1,641-seat theatre on three levels



with 793 standing spaces. Theatre use ceased in 1913 and it became a full-time cinema. This closed in April 1940 and after the war the building was taken over by the BBC. It was converted to a nightclub in the 1970s. {14486}

Camden Journal – 3 November; sent in by Tom Laughlan; photo taken September 2004

LONDON (Croydon)

Curzon has been named as the operator of a new four-screen cinema in the Bentall Centre. Planning permission was granted last September. Construction is expected to start in summer 2018 with the cinema due to open in autumn 2019.

Surrey Comet – 15 December; sent in by Trevor Williams

LONDON (Dalston)

The Rio marked World Aids Day on 1 December when the Mayor of Hackney switched on a Christmas Tree above the main entrance. Proceeds from the evening were donated to causes to help fight the illness and the stigma that comes with it. The cinema opened a second 31-seat screen in the basement in December. {10557}

Hackney Gazette – 30 November; sent in by Philip Stevens

LONDON (Elephant & Castle)

The last gig at the Coronet was held on 24 November; it had been previously announced that the venue would close on 5 January 2018. It opened with seats on three levels as the *Elephant & Castle Theatre* in May 1897, designed by Frank Matcham. Live theatre use ceased in 1928 and after a couple of years it was taken over by ABC and redesigned by house architect WR Glen with 2,315 seats in stalls and circle. It was ‘modernised’ in October 1967 and the façade covered over in blue metal sheeting. It was tripled in May 1981 and taken over by Coronet in June 1986; it closed in September 1999. After laying unused for almost four years, it was de-tripled and the stalls seats removed for a standing audience for concerts. The 560-seat circle was occasionally used for films. {27019}

Time Out – 21 November; sent in by R David Simpson & Tom Laughlan

LONDON (Eltham)

The Council has agreed to pump an extra £6.8m into the project for a six-screen cinema, which is expected to open in March 2019. This is in addition to the £14m already earmarked. It will be on the site of the former Co-op, which was demolished.

News Shopper, Bexleyheath & Welling – 18 October

LONDON (Golders Green)

Thousands of residents have signed a petition against the grade II listed former Hippodrome being turned into a place of worship. It has been bought by an Islamic charity – see p27 last Bulletin. Barnet Council has removed all comments about the proposal on its website, because of racist language.

Evening Standard – 16 October; sent in by Tom Laughlan

LONDON (Lewisham)

On 15 November, Labour mayor of Lewisham Steve Bullock announced that the grade II listed *Ladywell Playtower*, a Victorian bath house that opened in 1884 and closed in 2004, is to be redeveloped with a three-screen cinema taking centre stage. Four separate companies submitted plans to Lewisham Council to renovate the building, including three cinema chains. The front runner was Picturehouse but

their application was dismissed after it was subject to an on-line petition that ran under the banner 'Do Not Give Our Ladywell Playtower To The Union-busting Picturehouse/Cineworld Chain'. 6,000 people signed it, including the mayor of Lewisham. The successful bidder was Curzon along with construction company Guildmore. Their plans include three cinema screens with a total of 220 seats, a foyer large enough to hold public events, a cafe, bar and restaurant. Also included are the construction of around 20 new homes that will be sold to part fund the development of the cinema as well as a nursery, supported living facilities and 27 new jobs for the area. RJK Properties and Goldsmith University were the other unsuccessful bidders. The cinema is scheduled to open in August 2020.

News Shopper – 16 November; East London Lines – 17 November; [Change.org]; sent in by Carl Chesworth, Chris Ingram, Gavin McGrath & Mike Whitcombe

LONDON (Putney)



The three-screen Odeon has been converted into an Odeon Luxe, which opened on 13 December. The seating capacity has been reduced from 943 to 333. The building opened as the three-screen ABC in September 1975, a replacement for the former Odeon and adjacent ABC, which were demolished in 1972. {14970}

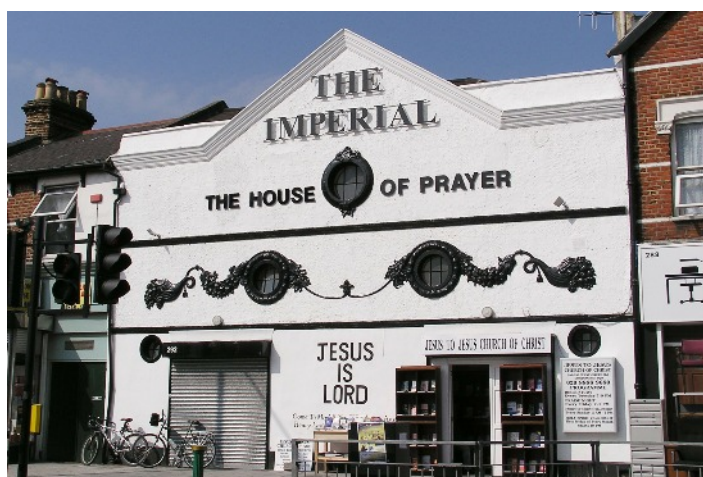
Wandsworth Guardian – 7 December; photo taken April 2006

LONDON (Swiss Cottage)

The five-screen Odeon reopened as an Odeon Luxe on 9 November. The 307-seat IMAX screen in the former circle has been retained. Screens ②–⑤ have been upgraded with reduced seating capacities of 71, 50, 53 & 49. {13786}

Camden News Journal – 2 November

LONDON (Tottenham)



The church that had occupied the former Imperial/Essoldo since 2004 has moved out and the building is being converted into a restaurant. It opened in November 1913 and became the Essoldo in 1949. Films ceased in May 1958 and it was then used as a carpet store for about 40 years. {15245}

Sent in by John Pilblad & Ken Roe; photo taken September 2004

LONDON (Victoria)

The grade II listed Victoria Palace Theatre reopened on 21 December after being closed since April 2016 for a £50m major refurbishment. The façade has been retained. The motifs from the stained glass windows, put in by original architect Frank Matcham, have been echoed in the new carpet design. {52115}

Daily Mail – 1 December; sent in by Tom Laughlan

LONDON (West End)

The Odeon Luxe Haymarket [ex Cinecenta etc in Panton Street] reopened on 14 December – see p27 last Bulletin. Total seating capacity has been reduced from 587 to 185 across four screens. {12787}

Time Out – 7 December; sent in by Jeremy Buck & Geoff Gill

The Cineworld [ex Empire] in Leicester Square was due to close from 10 January until early February for work to the foyer and the reported installation of a 4DX screen.

Sent in by Ken Roe

The stage production of *Brief Encounter* will play in screen ① at the Empire Haymarket [ex Carlton/Cineworld] from 2 March until 2 September. It is the same live show that was performed here in 2008. {1838}

The Stage – 23 November; sent in by Jeremy Buck & R David Simpson

MACCLESFIELD (Cheshire)

The company behind the proposed six-screen multiplex has been taken over. The scheme is still likely to go ahead. An operator has been appointed but not named.

Macclesfield Express – 8 November

MANCHESTER (Sale)

Outline plans have been put forward to demolish some buildings on Sibson Road and put up a development incorporating a cinema.

Manchester Weekly News – 19 October

MARLBOROUGH (Wilts)

Plans have been revealed to transform a disused chapel in The Parade into a 108-seat cinema.

Wiltshire Star – 23 November

MARSHLAND ST JAMES (Norfolk)

A lottery grant of £700,000 has been awarded towards Marshland Hall, which will feature a 200-seat main hall with a cinema screen. The £1.1m project is currently nearing completion.

Cambs Times – 8 December

NORTHALLERTON (North Yorks)

A new cinema could be built on the former prison site.

Darlington & Stockton Times, Northern Echo – 27 October

NOTTINGHAM

The former Screen 22 / The Screen Room, which once held the Guinness World Record for the smallest commercial cinema, has become the new HQ of ticketing software company Savoy Systems, which provides software to 110 independent venues across the UK. The 22-seat cinema will be retained for private hire.

Insider Media – 19 December

OMAGH (Co Tyrone, Northern Ireland)

The IMC has opened an extension, adding another two screens seating 126 and 76, making nine in all. The relaunch was on 10 November. A new seven-screen Omniplex is under construction in the town. {26732}

Ulster Herald – 9 November

OSWESTRY (Shropshire)

Planning permission has been granted to turn the former Salvation Army premises into a 112-seat cinema – see p28 last Bulletin. No starting date has been given for the work.

Shropshire Star – 9 December

OXTED (Surrey)

The Everyman reopened on 14 December after conversion to three screens. The capacities are 104, 60 & 48. Dame Judi Dench performed the official opening. Photos on the Get Surrey website at [tinyurl.com/ycxmwfsq]. {25231}

Sent in by Tim McCullen

PAISLEY (Renfrew)

The Baker Street proposals to create a new cinema in Paisley have won the Future Town Design Competition. See p29 last Bulletin and Letters p32 this Bulletin.

Paisley Daily Express, The Scotsman – 1 December

PLYMOUTH

A new cinema is being proposed for Millbay at the Pavilions site. It would be an arthouse-type cinema with more cultural showings. Plymouth already has a fifteen-screen Vue and a twelve-screen 2,143-seat Cineworld is under construction, set to open in autumn 2019.

The Herald, Plymouth – 10, 29, 30 November; sent in by Carl Chesworth

PORTSMOUTH



On a recent visit to Portsmouth, I noticed that the Crown Bingo in Kingston Road had closed. Enquiries at the amusement arcade next door revealed that it closed in January 2017. The building was formerly the **Shaftesbury Hall**, rebuilt in 1910 from a former chapel. The cinema closed in 1959 to become a bingo hall. However in 1969 the balcony was converted into a small cinema, operating under several different names such as the **Tatler**, **Vogue**, **Classic** and **Mecca**. It finally closed in 1975 and became a full-time bingo hall. There were rumours a couple of years ago that it was due to close – there was even a short mention of it on television but it remained open. It is a beautiful building in excellent condition; I hope a new use is soon found for it. {46972}

Sent in by Ian Patterson; photo taken May 2006

REDHILL (Surrey)

The façade of the former Odeon has been pulled down. It had been supported on scaffolding after the auditorium was demolished in 2013; it was hoped it could be incorporated in any future development. Flats will now be built on the site. {33941}

Get Surrey – 18 December

SCARBOROUGH (North Yorks)

The *Save the Futurist* campaign has launched a fundraising campaign to pay the legal fees and damages for their unsuccessful High Court hearing for a judicial review against the Council's decision to demolish the theatre. {1842}

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

Construction of the new seven-screen **Light** cinema at North Bay has been delayed [again]. Completion has now been put back from autumn 2018 to Easter 2019.

Yorkshire Coast Radio – 20 December

SETTLE (North Yorks)



The grade II listed **Victoria Hall** has secured £50,000 to install a new digital projector, 5.3m screen and surround sound. They were hoping to have it installed in time for a live relay of Stephen Sondheim's *Follies* on 16 November.

Craven Herald – 24 August

Editor's Note: The venue was latterly operated by Northern Morris Cinemas but films had ceased by 1994. I'm sorry I misfiled this cutting and so didn't put it in the last Bulletin and also forgot who sent it in!

STAFFORD

The **Stafford Cinema** closed in mid-December and their website announcement [www.thestaffordcinema.com] thanks patrons for their support over the years. The three-screen venue was put on the market in January 2016 within weeks of planning permission being granted for a six-screen 400-seat **Odeon**; it is thought the asking price is £750,000. It is reported that four cinema operators are interested in keeping it as a cinema with two having made formal offers. The building opened in October 1936, one of the smallest of the original **Odeons**. It was sold by Rank in July 1981 and tripled in December that year. {22874}

Express & Star – 10, 14 December;

sent in by Carl Chesworth, Chris Ingram & Allan Pointon; photo on front cover

STOCKPORT

The new ten-screen **Light** cinema at Redrock in the town centre opened on 24 November. The ten-screen **Cineworld** on the other side of town closed on 17 November; the Council has bought the site for redevelopment.

Manchester Evening News – 23 October, 18 November;

Stockport Express – 22 November; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Ken Roe

STONE (Staffs)

A theatre and cinema are on the cards for **Crown Wharf**; plans are set to be revealed early in 2018. This means that £100,000 raised by the Town Council through a 50% tax hike nine years ago can finally be spent. The last cinema in the town, the **Picture House**, closed in 1977.

Staffordshire Newsletter – 13 December

TONBRIDGE (Kent)

The 300-seat cinema in the **Medway Hall** at the **Angel Centre** closed on 28 November after 30 years. The operator said he could not afford to install digital equipment and has recently been showing films on DVD. However, these are not available until a while after the film's initial release and this has seen audiences drop by two-thirds.

East Grinstead Courier and Observer – 17 November

TUNBRIDGE WELLS (Kent)

Plans have been approved to develop the site of the former **ABC** (etc) into flats. As three-screen **Everyman** cinema is included in the plans. Construction is expected to start in late 2018.

Kent & Sussex Courier – 27 October

The Council has backed plans for a £41m 1,200-seat theatre at the entrance to **Calverly Grounds Park** in the town centre. When it is finished, the **Assembly Hall Theatre**, which was declared unfit for purpose in 2014, will close. A planning application is expected to be submitted in spring 2018.

The Stage – 14 December; sent in by R David Simpson

WAKEFIELD (West Yorks)

Fresh talks are being held over the future of the former **Regal/ABC**, which closed 20 years ago. Planning permission to turn it into flats had been approved but has now expired. {3787}

Wakefield Express – 1 December

WESTON-SUPER-MARE (Somerset)

The opening of the new eight-screen **Cineworld** has been delayed and is now scheduled for 26 January.

Weston Mercury – 26 October, 7 December

YORK

Work started just before Christmas on the new **Cineworld** multiplex at **Monks Cross**. It will have an **IMAX** screen.

The Press, York – 18 November

The **Everyman** opened on 30 December. The firm has revamped the grade II listed former **Odeon/Reel**, which now features comfy sofas with tables attached. It has reduced the number of screens from five to four and cut each screen's seating capacity. The main screen ① has 144 seats where there used to be 820! Screens ② and ③ have 53 seats each and screen ④ has just 20. The old screen ⑤, to the right of the entrance will become a **Spielburger** restaurant. {2788}

The Press, York – 23 December



ADVERTS IN THEATRES

I had a huge postbag following my comments on p31 of the last Bulletin about showing adverts in theatres, following the news that certain French theatres were about to introduce the practice. Neil Kelly was the first to get in touch, to say he remembered adverts at the Grand Theatre in Leeds in the 1970s. I decided to separate the replies from the normal letters and print them here.

Harry Rigby, CTA Bulletin Editor

The editorial memory is not erroneous in its recall of projected advertising during live theatrical performances. In Folkestone, the iron of the **Pleasure Gardens Theatre** displayed a painted frame into which images of three-and-one-quarter inch square glass slides were exhibited during intervals. These advertised local businesses and events, proprietary products and, of course, the house's own forthcoming productions. I retain a selection of examples from this venue in my collection of such slides; many of them emanated from the prodigious output of Morgan's Projected Publicity.

At the nearby **Leas Pavillion**, a screen was dropped in downstage of the tabs to receive projections from a somewhat 'Heath Robinson' and temperamental semi-automatic projector mounted on the balcony front. This unit consisted of a steel box with front and rear faces about three feet square and with a depth of approximately eighteen inches. It contained an intermittently driven metal disc pierced by two concentric rings of apertures with holders to accept two-inch square glass slides supplied by advertising contractor Stilwell Darby. One circle of slides was projected through a lens at top centre, the other through a lens at side centre, with both active slides simultaneously lighted and focused onto the same screen area. Thus each complete image was formed as a composite of the two slides, which, for example, may have comprised a photograph on one, with a blacked-out space to fit a cartouche containing text projected from the other. This apparently unnecessary complication held a purpose: the combined images remained stationary for several seconds then, as they changed, one section moved off the screen vertically as the other simultaneously shifted off horizontally, with the following image forming in like fashion. This animation was successful in attracting and maintaining the audience's interest and attention. The machine demanded careful manual resetting after each performance to prevent it from showing a few images and then stopping unpredictably during the next house's showing. Needless to say, when changing the slides it was imperative to check the results carefully prior to presentation: loading in the wrong sequence led to peculiar, at times humorous, results!

Taking interval advertising to another level, a well-known theatre operator in the south subsequently initiated projection of a reel of cinema advertising film onto the iron during intervals, complete with sound. Vociferous protest from both the performing company and the regular audience led to local and national publicity for the venture, which was discontinued.

Tim Hatcher

Regarding your question in Bulletin 51/6 p31 on UK theatres projecting adverts on to the safety curtain at the obligatory lowering during an interval. I clearly recall this happening at the **Harrogate Theatre** in the early to mid-1960s, when I was a fairly regular attendee at their rep seasons. As far as my memory goes the adverts were single shot slides advertising local businesses. **Harrogate Theatre** was the only theatre I visited regularly so cannot say whether it happened elsewhere though, as you surmise, it would have been the case.

John Flanagan

I remember projected 'still' (slide) ads at the **London Palladium** during my time there as Assistant Manager (1967/69). If my memory serves correctly, these came from Stilwell Darby, a specialist and well-known theatre advertising agent at the time. Later, I remember being horrified to find Pearl & Dean cinema-style ads projected onto a small screen during intervals at the **Palladium**. They just didn't look or sound right in a live theatre. The earlier 'still' ads were, I think, common in the business at the time and probably featured in intervals across the Moss Empires' circuit. Unlike Pearl & Dean, they were watchable but not intrusive and therefore probably the more effective for advertisers.

Tom Pate

For many years during the twentieth century, traditional live theatres in the UK had potentially two ways of presenting advertisements in front of their audiences. All proscenium arch theatres were required by their licences to demonstrate to every audience that their safety curtains were in good working order by lowering and raising them at each performance. Safety curtains ranged from being completely plain to having sometimes quite complex decoration painted on them, the only stipulation was that the words, "SAFETY CURTAIN" must appear on them. Theatre owners soon saw the opportunity to paste posters for local businesses onto the safety curtains as a means of adding what we would call an extra revenue stream. In many theatres, slide projectors were installed to replace the posters so that more and larger adverts could be shown – each advert appearing for a given number of seconds. The 'screen' was either a plain safety curtain or a white, painted square central on the artwork. As technology advanced, more modern slide projectors would often be fixed to the front of theatres' first balconies and operated remotely and automatically. In the case of the **London Palladium**, the safety curtain bore a large, striking painting of the Theatre's façade when the building housed an indoor circus, so when the slides were shown, the swag house curtains would open just sufficiently to reveal a suspended white screen within an ornamental frame while a set of curtains would be closed behind it.

'Curtain' is a misnomer as a safety curtain is a heavy iron frame containing canvas sections incorporating an asbestos layer and being completely flat on the front surface. To completely seal off the stage, where fires usually started and protect the audience, there were vertical steel slots at either side of the stage in which the safety curtain was laterally contained. Because of the construction, a safety curtain will often be referred to as the 'iron'.

The older and alternative means of on-stage advertising was by means of an ordinary painted cloth onto which posters were attached, much as they had been on the safety curtain and the background illustration on such cloths was often very attractively painted. The advert cloths were normally hung on the first flying bar behind the house curtain and, during an interval, the house curtain would rise to reveal the advert cloth until it was almost time for the production to recommence, when the curtain would fall to allow the cloth to be flown out of sight behind it. Advert cloths would sometimes be on show before the performance so, again, the curtain would fall before the start of the show.

These means of advertising were, of course, silent. During the early seventies, some theatres – including those owned by Moss Empires Ltd – experimented with installing a cinema projector to show sound advertising films exactly as in cinemas. This was not a good idea. At the time I was the manager of Moss Empires' **Bristol Hippodrome**, a large house presenting all kinds of live production from ex **London Palladium** pantomimes to opera, ballet, variety, rock concerts and, occasionally, plays. Rank Advertising Films supplied the ten-minute reels of adverts to be shown on our largely white safety curtain and the sound was routed via the theatre's public address system, producing a dire sound quality as our theatres had none of the sophisticated sound reproduction systems used in cinemas. House lights were not lowered for the films as many patrons would be moving around the auditorium. The projector provided for my theatre was a well-used Gaumont Kalee 21, the light source being carbon arcs (as were our principal follow spots back then). In order for the dialogue to be heard, a certain sound level was necessary and the raucous noise and flashing pictures of the adverts were a very unwelcome intrusion to intervals during most types of production, when patrons would be used to chatting, reading their programmes or studying opera librettos. Soon after the practice began, I had a two week season of opera by Sadler's Wells Opera Co (now English National Opera) and after several nights of literally queues of irate music lovers complaining to me about the noise and distraction of such "dreadful" adverts, I took it upon myself to tell my chief electrician not to use the projector any longer. I advised the Company's General Manager in London of my action and heard nothing more about the wretched idea! I believe other theatres in the circuit, including **Manchester Palace** and **Birmingham Hippodrome**, had done much the same.

James Bettley



A photo from the 1938 opening programme of the Savoy Kettering, showing the plain safety curtain

Referring to the item in Bulletin 51/6 concerning the showing of adverts in theatres. I remember these quite clearly. In my earlier years, visits to theatres were rare due to there being few such venues in the area in which I lived and then the cost of the tickets. However I did go occasionally and I do remember that slides were shown on the 'iron' when brought in at the intermission. The safety curtain at one of these theatres, I forget which one, had static local adverts painted on the surface with a big plain square in the centre on which the slides were projected. In my home town, Kettering, there was a cinema/theatre, the *Savoy*, which opened in 1938, built on the site of its predecessor the *Coliseum* destroyed by fire. It was a modern structure (for the time) and had a large deep stage, fly-tower and full lighting and of course a flown safety curtain. Of its structure I know not though I am sure it was not iron. It had an off-white plain surface ideal for projection.



Rear view of the Savoy Kettering showing the imposing fly tower

The *Savoy* was built as a cinema/theatre with a full cinema programme intermixed with stage productions. During the years of WW2 and after, many big West-End shows were performed on its stage, mainly due to the shortage of stages in the capital and those on tour and many famous artistes performed on its stage.

The safety curtain was usually brought in prior to the performance, a regulatory requirement and of course for the intermission. Adverts on slides were projected on to the curtain during this period. The adverts were mostly for local businesses and shops. Many of these slides were manufactured professionally. Others would be locally made usually by the *Savoy* and would advertise the theatre facilities and future programmes etc. Some slides were from the Ministry of Information decreeing war time matters such as 'digging for victory' and the war effort.

The *Savoy* projection room was well equipped and had a Premier slide projector, which had carbon-arc light source giving powerful illumination. The *Savoy* also utilised its projectors during these intermissions projecting future programmes and trailers. There were also filmlets supplied by the Ministry of Information, which were projected on to the safety curtain.

This continued for many years after the War and I can still remember the practice at the *Savoy* in the mid-1950s. Kettering benefited by

having such a fine theatre facility. The stage was large enough to accommodate the biggest of shows and, before its demise, the Moller Organ toured by Reginald Foote was one such attraction. The organ arrived at the theatre in three large pantechinons and when assembled filled the stage completely, the console being installed across the orchestra pit. I don't think the safety curtain could have been brought in on that occasion.

I am sure many theatres throughout the land adopted this style of advertising and possibly before motion-pictures.

Maurice Thornton.

In response to your request in the latest Bulletin for information regarding theatres that showed adverts. I can vouch for two such venues. In the 1950s and early 60s the Bristol Hippodrome did show static slide adverts before each performance. These were projected onto the safety curtain with an area painted white. Very often though the stage was also set up with a dedicated screen located at the front of the stage, which was then flown. The projector was located in the arc spotlight gallery at the back of the upper circle. I have often wondered if these are still used. I cannot comment after the sixties as I left Bristol.

In the early 1970s I attended a show called *Carry on London* at the *Victoria Palace* in London. The start of the show was a short film showing the sights of London, ending up at Buckingham Palace, at which time the stage lights were brought up behind the screen and the *Carry on* Team were on the Buckingham Palace balcony. I am guessing that because a projector was installed it made economic sense to screen 'Pearl and Dean' adverts. I remember this well because it was so unusual to see adverts at live theatre; this may be a one-off installation. A pity the rest of the show was not as memorable. I did not know quite what to expect but it was basically a variety show of jugglers, acrobats, roller skaters and singers and pretty tedious at that.

Alan Hodson

In answer to the Editor's Note on p31 of the last Bulletin, theatres certainly did project adverts onto the safety curtain. Slides were used to advertise local businesses as well as the forthcoming attractions.

In the early days of the music hall performers often had to work in front of backcloths covered with advertisements. This led to the story, probably apocryphal but nonetheless told by Tommy Trinder and others, about the comic who was told to keep moving about the stage as if he stood in front of a particular advertisement for too long, the business that had bought the space would refuse to pay for it!

Stilwell, Darby and Co produced particularly ingenious cloths at their scenic workshop in Camden, north London, which depicted for example a seaside or street scene. This would include a plane towing an advertising banner, a bus with the name of a local store in place of its destination board and so on. Stilwell Darby developed their business to include programmes and, in time, advertising slides shown in the interval. The firm remained the market leader for many years and I remember seeing their advertising slides still being shown on the safety curtains of the *Winter Gardens* and the *Royal Hippodrome* Eastbourne in the early sixties. An automatic system seemed to be in use, similar to the ones used by Pearl and Dean in the intervals of those ABC cinemas converted to bingo in 1968, although then using the familiar P&D reel and a roller screen.

I also recall seeing ads from Rank Advertising Films projected (badly) on the safety curtain of the *Victoria Palace* in the late seventies. Rank's contract also covered the programmes sold at the *VP* and *Moss Empires'* other theatres in Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham.

It was interesting to read about the scheme to show advertisements in theatres in France. Richard M Mills – Bernard Delfont's Chief Executive – described what happened when James Stewart arrived to star in the play *Harvey* at London's *Prince of Wales* theatre. "In those days we had a projection box at the back of the circle and to earn extra money we had a contract with a screen advertising company to project adverts onto the iron curtain during the interval of shows. I was in my office one evening and after the interval the internal phone went. It was James Stewart. "I hear you're showing film adverts during the interval. I'm supposed to be playing a theatre, not a cinema and I consider film advertisements out of place in the middle of my play. Either they go – or I go". I didn't argue. They went". Let's hope the French theatre managements don't encounter similar objections!

Ray Dolling

LETTERS

REGAL FRAMLINGHAM



J. COLLINS
(LATE SIMMONS STORES)
6, Bridge St., Framlingham
Hardware, Toys, Fancy Goods, Floor Coverings, Wallpapers, Paints, etc. in fact most of your Domestic Requirements at Competitive Prices
Delivery Service in the District. Tel: 274

REGAL CINEMA
Phone **FRAMLINGHAM 454**
Manager: MR. SMYE Chief Operator: H. NURSE

NIGHTLY 7 p.m.
PRICES OF ADMISSION: 2/-, 2/6, 3/6
CHILDREN'S MATINEE SATURDAY 2.15 p.m. Adm. 1/-, 1/6

PROGRAMMES FOR APRIL 1962

THE ELMS DRUG STORES
(Proprietors: H. G. & P. S. PECK)
Patent Medicines, Tailorty, Fancy Goods, Handbags
BRIDGE STREET, FRAMLINGHAM.
Telephone 296
Corn Chandler, Pet Foods, Seeds, Pet Requisites, etc.

Tel: Badmington 6-4-6
R. LEES
THE STORES, DENNINGTON
GROCERIES - CONFECTIONERY - PROVISIONS
ELECTRICAL GOODS
PAINTS - OFF LICENCE - TOBACCONIST
We shall be pleased to Serve You.

SUNDAY PROGRAMMES
SUNDAY, APRIL 1st. for One Day only
"NIGHT OF THE BLOOD BEASTS"
SUNDAY, APRIL 8th. for One Day only
"QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT" "BRIDE OF THE MONSTER"
SUNDAY, APRIL 15th. for One Day only
"TOMAHAWK TRAIL" "THIRD PARTY RISK"
SUNDAY, APRIL 22nd. for One Day only
"RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE" "BLACK ROOM"
SUNDAY, APRIL 29th. for One Day only
"PRINCESS AND THE PIRATE" "THREE OUTLAWS"

Tel: Badmington 646
THE DENNINGTON GARAGE
and B.P. SERVICE STATION
(Proprietor: R. LEES)
TYRES PETROL OILS BATTERIES
EXPERT REPAIR SERVICE





Re Hugh Sykes' wanderings in Framlingham (p16 last Bulletin). The Regal Cinema was situated at 15 New Road, Framlingham and was still showing films as late as 1962 – see programme above. However, in February 1963 planning permission was granted for change of use from a cinema to light industrial use. In December 1963 planning permission was also granted for alterations to form workshops and a storeroom. By 1975 it was a commercial vehicle workshop possibly operated by AG Potter. In 1992 planning permission was granted for change of use to a hard-play area for the adjacent primary school. According to *Cinema Treasures* the building was demolished c2011 and is now occupied by housing. It can be seen top centre in this aerial photo. {56683}

Terry Hanstock

VOLUME LEVELS

I was really interested to read David A Ellis' letter in the last Bulletin about sound levels – it would be a lot of fun going to the cinema with him, as I like my sound LOUD and I positively welcome being blasted out of my seat! So, depending on the sound level at the time, he would be covering his ears while I would be straining to hear!! To me, it's all part of the 'immersive' cinema experience but there is a rather more serious side, as I was once told by a cinema manager that the two most frequent complaints he received were that the soundtrack is too loud – or it's too quiet! Mostly, of course, this is a matter of personal taste but, leaving that aside, David's letter made me wonder whether there is an 'official' level? I vaguely recall being told some time ago that auditoria are checked by some scientific method and the sound level is set specifically for each one. Is this correct? Will a multi-screen cinema have different settings, calculated for each auditorium, or does 'one size fit all'? Or are the settings left up to the judgement of the projectionists/managers? (Surely one thing is for certain: I can't imagine nowadays that the volume is adjusted according to the number of patrons!) I would welcome comments from projectionists / audio technicians, especially as this can be such a controversial issue – as demonstrated by the reactions of David and me to current sound levels!

David Simpson

KALEE PROJECTOR



Regards the article by Hugh Sykes on page 16 of the last CTA Bulletin on his visit to Rundle at New Bolingbroke, the Kalee 12 projector in question was a 1931 model, which I got through the Projected Picture Trust. I understand it came from cinema at Bexleyheath in Kent. For about five years I visited some of our local steam fairs here in Lincolnshire with the projector and other cinema memorabilia on display. The projector was in full working order apart from the sound system and was always the star attraction of the exhibition. After finishing with the display, I donated it to Alan Rundle for safe keeping, as I didn't want it to go to the scrapyard.

Maurice Brader (photo)

TOWER ARTS HELENSBURGH

Further to Mike Whitcombe's letter in the last Bulletin, the Tower Digital Arts Centre in Helensburgh is almost certainly unique in the annals of UK theatrical exhibition, as it grew out of a submarine trust! As Mike says, the town is very close to the nuclear submarine base at Faslane. Local social entrepreneur Brian Keating had the idea of commemorating this by founding a submarine museum. Having set up the Scottish Submarine Trust, he acquired the former St Columba church complex in 2014. (Designed by architect William Spence, responsible for Glasgow's City Theatre and Theatre Royal, this had been built in 1831 but was converted into a community hall as early as 1861.) Then, having acquired this fairly substantial set of buildings, Brian set up a further charity, the Tower Arts Centre and Digital Academy. Live performances were accompanied by occasional film shows. However, I gather the live shows were not that well supported, so the decision was made to upgrade the projection equipment to full digital cinema quality. The Tower Digital Arts Centre duly opened on 15 April 2016, with the two screens Mike mentioned. When I visited, in June 2017, I was fortunate to meet Brian Keating. He showed me the museum-in-progress, which has as its centrepiece midget submarine X-51 HMS Stickleback, built in 1954 and on loan from the MoD. He also told me about his ambitious plans to open a further two cinema screens, one on top of the other on vacant land and to create a base for digital creative workshops. I wished him well in this fascinating endeavour. The submarine museum is in a building to the rear of the former main church.

David Simpson

GLIMPSES OF HISTORY

Members and film buffs will be delighted to know that a new 3 DVD box set titled *Glimpses Collection* has just been released by Renown Pictures and contains no less than nine hours of 40s and 50s travel, documentaries and home movies, totalling sixty films in all. The films have been transferred from 8, 16 and 35mm film and I'm sure that collectors will remember the days of Walton, GB Moviepacs and Castle Films, amongst others that are included in this collection. Several have the BBFC certificate attached and therefore will have had a cinema release. All titles are listed on the Renown Films website. Noel from Renown tells me that a second volume will be released in the New Year and one can't imagine what titles will be included. All highly recommended.

John R Forster

JOHN BARRY THEATRE

Iver Heath seems an unlikely place for a single-screen, luxury cinema but a private cinema there is now open to the public, screening the latest releases. It has 150 seats, stereophonic surround sound, 35mm, 70mm and digital projection facilities plus a café. The projectors are Cinemeccanica Victoria 8 35/70mm dual gauge and Christie Digital. It has been there for many years, unknown to the public. It still does traditional reel changes every 2,000 feet, when the projectors change-over on 35mm films. It is now only open to the public at weekends, the rest of the time it is in commercial use by the film industry. The cinema has fully adjustable screen masking and red house tabs (screen curtains). These are used for every performance for the film industry, when the audience remains seated, until the last of the credits roll and the curtains close. The audience then applauds. It is the John Barry Theatre at Pinewood Studios. Details on [www.pinewoodcinema.com].

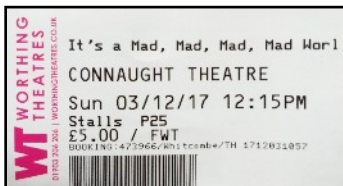
John West (photo)



ROADSHOW MADNESS

I was born in April 1967, three months after the CTA was founded. This means I was too young to experience the 'roadshow presentations' of certain big films that seemed popular during the post war period and which CTA members have often fondly reflected upon in issues of this Bulletin. The whole idea of showing a movie with a certain pomp – including an initial limited release, overture music, an intermission and a souvenir programme – has always appealed to me, particularly nowadays when even a hint of presentation is absent from films shown by the major cinema chains, no matter how hyped the release is. Imagine my delight, then, when on a Sunday in December 2017 the Connaught Theatre in Worthing, West Sussex, hosted a roadshow presentation of the 1963 comedy *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*. The Connaught is a traditional single-screen venue that still uses festoons at each performance and this screening was proceeded with a short talk by Dave Norris, known for Mark Kermode's *The Last Projectionist Standing*, as well as the overture. The intermission was even true to director Stanley Kramer's original roadshow vision. Not wanting the audience to lose the momentum of this fast-moving comedy, Kramer insisted on playing police radio reports updating patrons on how the characters were faring during the interval. These audio interludes were as entertaining as the film itself that featured lead roles by Spencer Tracy, Ethel Merman and Sid Caesar as well as blink-and-you-miss-them cameos from comedy legends Buster Keaton, Edward Everett Horton and the Three Stooges. More than fifty patrons bought tickets for this one-off screening and that number included teenagers as well as older folk who could remember the original release. It was a thoroughly enjoyable experience and one that my wife and I were pleased we attended. CTA members should check out the Connaught website as the staff hinted that there was a possibility of another roadshow presentation if there was enough public interest.

Mike Whitcombe



TIME FOR A SMOKE

My favourite journalist is Alistair Cooke, famous, of course, for *Letter From America*, his BBC radio broadcast that ran for fifty-eight years. Cooke, though, was also a respected film critic and Hollywood observer who first wrote about the movies in the early 1930s when the studio system held sway and MGM, for instance, could boast more stars than there are in heaven! I recently purchased *Alistair Cooke at the Movies*, edited by Geoff Brown and printed by Allen Lane, which includes work from both print and radio that had been unpublished or unheard since its original publication. One of the pieces is a reprinted radio talk for the BBC that he recorded on 11 October 1936 and which reflects his views on MGM's 1936 version of *Romeo and Juliet* starring Leslie Howard and Norma Shearer. In his usual debonair style, Cooke reveals to English listeners how American movie theaters were non-smoking:

"I could have gone out for a smoke and done nobody any harm, for when I came back the film would be biding its time, quietly building up to a crisis that never comes. Maybe that smoking restriction in American theatres has more to do with my feeling than I know. That still and crystal-clear atmosphere that you find in any American cinema does add to the impression of coldness. Here I felt I was assisting at a nice orderly funeral. Possibly, if you saw *Romeo and Juliet* in the ribald, friendly smoky fog of the Empire in Leicester Square, you would find the movie so dangerously warm-blooded that you'd feel that all John Barrymore's part should be cut out."

I had always assumed that smoking was as common in American movie houses as it was in English ones, until it was sensibly banned in 1987. In fact, I'm sure I've even read articles saying as much. But Alistair Cooke's piece has intrigued me. Perhaps smoking was only banned in big city movie houses? Perhaps the ban only existed pre-WWII? I'm sure there's a Bulletin reader somewhere who can reveal when American cinemas forbade smoking in their auditoria.

Mike Whitcombe

GLOBE STOCKTON



I did a hard hat tour round the Globe/ABC in Stockton last week to see the work that is going on. There is a video and photos on the Stockton Gazette website at [tinyurl.com/y9boh4jj]. At the moment the building has been made safe, all asbestos, pigeons and muck have been removed and it is now watertight. As from early 2018 the main contractors will arrive to do the restoration work. The theatre hopes to open in 2019 and will have a 3,000 capacity. They also hope to show films too. I managed to get a look round the projection box and rooms; however everything has been removed. I am trying to establish what make of projectors would have been used up to its closure in 1973. I am unable to find out anything at the moment. Would someone in the CTA have any info? {1835}

Malcolm Crow [crowontour@gmail.com]

VIEW OF A VUE



Here is a photo of the new seven-screen Vue in Bedford, which opened on 29 July 2017. {56206}

Margaret Burgoiné

ANOTHER GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY?

First of all well done for the excellent work on the 50 years pages in all the issues of the 2017 Bulletins. I believe you could carry this on to 1968 – 2018, so here goes. So when 1968 came round I looked at it and found I had been to the cinema 109 times that year, a record. This cinema-going effort has never been matched and never will be. One must remember in 1967 there were no VHS, DVDs, on-line and only BBC1, BBC2 and ITV showing films and they had to be at least five years old before viewing on TV. The cinema was still king. I went to many of the now-closed cinemas, perhaps not knowing they would be closed over the next decade or two. The movies I went to see would not be seen on TV so I'm glad I did it.

Looking back, here's a long sample. *Metropole, For Whom the Bell Tolls; Empire Leicester Square, Doctor Zhivago; Odeon Marble Arch, The Long Duel; Warner, The Shuttered Room; Royal Festival Hall, The Mikado; Odeon St Martins Lane, Thoroughly Modern Millie; Rialto, In Like Flint; Leicester Square Theatre, Hombre; Plaza, Eldorado; ABC Holloway, The Naked Runner; Odeon Camden Town, In the Heat of the Night; ABC Elephant & Castle, Lady in a Cage; Classic Notting Hill Gate, Judgment At Nuremberg; Classic Baker Street, Casablanca, The Maltese Falcon; Cinerama Cinema, Khartoum, Custer of the West; Classic Waterloo Station, Young Lions; Gaumont Richmond, East of Eden, Giant; The Old Kinema Kingston, King Kong* – as you watched the film you could hear the traffic outside.

Noverre Norwich, *The Bank Dick* and then there was the National Film Theatre, 21 times; films like *Air Mail, The Prisoner of Shark Island, The Island of Lost Souls, The Phantom of the Opera, Upturned Glass, Odd Man Out, My Darling Clementine, The Jazz Singer, Scarface, Things to Come, Seconds, Birth of a Nation* but the best one I remember was *The Big Sleep*. The NFT was packed and I mean full. They were sitting up the aisles, gangways and all this could happen in 1967, not in 2017. So a good cinema trip was had in 1967

PS: I did go elsewhere, eg Hammersmith Palais, Eel Pie Island, Folk Barge Kingston, Spurs v Everton, Roaring 20s club, Dolphin Kingston, Marquee Club, plus Georgie Fame, Cardinal Club, Empire Ballroom etc – the list goes on. If there are any members that can say "I was there, that week, that year" please put your hand up.

John Popey

TEN YEARS AFTER

Chester's old Odeon cinema, now called Storyhouse, houses the library, a small cinema, bar and café. Some of the original décor remains and the job has been tastefully done. At the rear of the building is a new building, which is the theatre. It was said that the Odeon was going to be the theatre, which wasn't the case.

The Odeon opened on 3 October 1936 with the film *Two's Company*. Those in attendance included Oscar Deutsch, the Odeon founder and Douglas Fairbanks's Junior. Deutsch's first Odeon was in Perry Bar. He went on to have Odeons constructed across the UK, many with their trademark tower.

After Deutsch passed away with cancer, the chain was run by J Arthur Rank and became part of the Rank Organisation. Apart from cinemas they were in film production and made many films at Pinewood Studios. J Arthur was originally in the flour business before moving over to films.

The Chester Odeon was converted in 1976 to a three-screen complex and into a five screen one in 1991. Originally the Odeon circuit was equipped with BTH (British Thomson Houston) projectors, moving on to Cinemeccanica in the 1960s. The Odeon Chester had several changes. They installed the Kalee 21 machines from the closed Gaumont in 1962 and then installed Cinemeccanica in 1966.

On 14 June 2007 the cinema closed its doors, remaining shut for nearly ten years. After a lot of work and several million pounds later, the new theatre for Chester was opened behind the Odeon building. The old Odeon was transformed at great expense. Let us hope Storyhouse becomes a great success.

David A Ellis

OBITUARY

Peter S Haig has died at the age of 92. He joined ABC's advertising agents Rex Publicity in 1954 as a writer for the circuit's magazine *ABC Film Review*, later becoming the Assistant Editor and then Editor until 1985. He was also Assistant Editor of the house magazine *ABC News* until its demise in 1972.

Ray Dolling

FEEDBACK

A couple of points from the last Bulletin that may be of interest to members. Wilf wonders on p12 regarding Gainsborough Studios on New North Road, Islington. One hundred yards further to the north, visitors will come to a pub called *North by Northwest* containing a small museum of artefacts from Alfred Hitchcock films, including props, posters, etc, many of which have come from Hitchcock's time in America. It is well worth a visit.

Regarding Paisley (Renfrewshire) on p29. Arnotts department store was previously Cochran's department store, which took over the Astoria cinema when it closed in the 1950s. The cinema was a metal and wood type, a former roller skating rink of c1900. It was behind the department store and the entrance was round the corner in Lawn Street. Access to the cinema was through turnstiles via a small central paybox. You then had to walk about 100ft through a corrugated metal and wood tunnel to reach the entrance to the auditorium. The Astoria seated 1,400 as a stadium type and had a screen of approximately 25ft. It was a bit like a giant Nissen hut, as you could hear the rain on the roof. In the early 1950s it was known as the Rink and also the Ranch House, as it featured Westerns three times a week. It had Sunday shows only every seven weeks, as only one cinema in the town was allowed to open on a Sunday, owing to the 'Lords Day Observance Law'. Greens were running it near the end and it became run-down and known as the 'bug hut'. Cochran's (Arnotts) took it over on closure and used it for a furniture store; the entrance then became Gauze Street.

Tom Laughlan

I was surprised to see a recent comment in the Bulletin to the NFT as "arty tarty" as the NFT has excellent facilities. NFT1 is a superb cinema with comfortable seating, programme notes, wide screen and a curtain. It is certainly not a suitable description of the cinema today. I was also interested in the article about the former Holloway Film Studios in North London. The other claim to fame they had was that ATV made the puppet film about Noddy around 1960. The film had a large number of strings in it and there appears to have been no attempt to clean it up. The 1930s film of *The Invisible Man* with Claude Rains used extensive wire work (as well stop motion and supervision) but was extensively cleaned up before release. *Flash Gordon* serials in the late 1930s used wirework and models but the wires were clearly shown. I imagine that wire work has now been superseded by CGI.

Ian Patterson

INTERNET CORNER

- ★ [tinyurl.com/y9zo6on7] A page on the British Theatre website: The Historical Importance of Britain's Old Theatres as Bingo Halls.
- ★ [www.youtube.com/user/in70mm] Videos and discussion about wide-format film, including some Cinerama trailers.
- ★ [www.in70mm.com/news/2004/2001_presentation] A page on the *in70mm* website about a bad experience with 2001.
- ★ [www.youtube.com/watch?v=LrFdsupe_zc] A 2-minute video from LuneTube on the cinemas of Morecambe.
- ★ [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bve8wGAPhlg] The CinemaScope story.
- ★ [www.youtube.com/watch?v=3CgrMsjGk7k] The History of the Aspect Ratio.
- ★ [www.theroyaltyharborne.co.uk] The website of the Harborne [Birmingham] Royalty trust – lots of history, information & pictures.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/y77q693d] A page on a website by Luke McKernn, where he lists lots of cinema websites he has found.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/ycby2wzr] A *Glasgow Herald* page on the former Cambridge cinema, demolished 1964. *Sent in by Terry Hanstock.*
- ★ [www.salfordstar.com/article.asp?id=4252] Urban explorers have been inside the grade II listed Victoria Theatre. {2056}
- ★ [tinyurl.com/y95sdlj8] A report from the *Leicester Mercury* that police found four "trespassers" [urban explorers?] inside the former Danilo (etc) Hinckley. Has a sad current picture of the interior. See p6 last Bulletin. {14982} *Sent in by Alan Jones.*
- ★ [tinyurl.com/y7ayynja] An article from the *Phnom Penh Post* (Cambodia) about the demolition of the 1938 Ciné Lux. A couple of nice photos. {21682} *Sent in by Bob Bradshaw.*

CINEMA BUSINESS

CINEMA OF THE YEAR

The shortlist was on p31 of the last Bulletin. And the winners are...



24 screens or under – Zeffirellis and Fellinis, Ambleside [above]
highly commended – Jam Jar Cinema Whitley Bay
25 screens or over – Vue West End [ex Warner]

Screen Daily – 1 December; sent in by Terry Hanstock; photo taken July 2010

CINEWORLD TAKEOVER

Cineworld has agreed a £2.7bn takeover of the US's second biggest cinema chain, Regal. The latter owns 7,300 screens in 531 theaters across the USA and the former 2,049 screens across 221 sites. This will make Cineworld the second biggest cinema chain in the world by number of screens, with 9,542 in Europe and the USA. The announcement spooked investors and Cineworld shares closed down almost 20% at 557p. Cineworld's second biggest shareholder, Royal London Asset Management, which has a 3.9% stake, said the deal was "a bit of a surprise".

Daily Telegraph, Evening Standard, The Independent – 30 November;
Daily Mail, Metro – 6 December; *City AM* – 13 December; sent in by David Alexander,
Carl Chesworth, Tom Laughlan, Barry Quinton & Martin Tapsell

CINEWORLD SLOW DOWN

Cineworld saw sales growth in the UK and Ireland slow to 5.9% between January and November 2017. They opened seven new cinemas with a total of 83 screens in the second half of 2017 but delayed the opening of four new cinemas until early 2018. They also opened six new 4DX screens, bringing their total to 34. The company needs a 26% increase in sales in the run-up to 2017 year end to meet its targets.

Daily Mirror, Daily Mail, Daily Telegraph – 24 November;
sent in by Carl Chesworth, Barry Quinton & Mike Whitcombe

VUE TO AN ODEON

AMC Entertainment, the US owner of Odeon has dismissed reports that rival cinema chain Vue is poised for a takeover. AMC, which paid £920m for Odeon last year, suffered a £32m loss in the three months to September.

Daily Mail, Daily Telegraph, The Times – 27 November;
sent in by Carl Chesworth, Geoff Gill & Barry Quinton

KOREAN VUE

South Korea's biggest cinema owner, CJ-GCV is gearing up for a \$2bn takeover of Vue International.

Daily Mail – 15 November; sent in by Barry Quinton

DISNEY BID FOR FOX

Disney is set to buy almost all of Rupert Murdoch's 21st Century Fox Empire for \$50-60bn [£38-45bn]. It includes Fox's stake in Sky, which has 23m European viewers. Disney will also take over £10.2bn of Fox debt!

Daily Mail – 6, 15 December; *Evening Standard* – 13 December; *Metro* – 15 December;
sent in by Tom Laughlan & Barry Quinton

PARAMOUNT RESORT

The Kuwaiti backers of the planned £3.2bn theme park in Kent, billed as Britain's answer to Disneyland, will pull out of the project if it doesn't get planning permission in 2018. The launch date has been out back several times and is now scheduled for 2023.

Evening Standard – 6 November; sent in by Tom Laughlan

MISCELLANY

SAUDI CINEMA BAN LIFTED

Saudi Arabia is to lift a 35-year ban on cinemas and allow films to be screened from March 2018. The Kingdom said there will be 300 cinemas by 2030 although it was not clear whether major Hollywood, Bollywood and Arabic releases would be shown and how heavily edited the content would be. A ban on women driving is also expected to be lifted this year.

Evening Standard, Metro – 11, 12 December;
sent in by Tom Laughlan, Gavin McGrath, Barry Quinton & Martin Tapsell

LEICESTER SQUARE FACELIFT

A fresh campaign is to be launched to smarten up the image of Leicester Square after research revealed "lingering perceptions" that it is a scruffy and rowdy area. A heart-shaped logo bearing the letters LSQ will be launched and roads around the Square, such as Orange Street and Whitcombe Street will be made more pedestrian-friendly by widening pavements and improving lighting. The Square attracts 250,000 visitors a day. It had a makeover in the run-up to the 2012 Olympics, when a total of £17m was spent on a 7-month revamp.

Evening Standard – 11 December; sent in by Tom Laughlan

PICTURE PERFECT HOMES

A former factory in London's Camden, where the world's first electric movie camera was made, has been turned into homes. Ernest F Moy's patented the Kine camera that was used for some of Hollywood's first films, saw duty in WWI trenches and captured Scott's ill-fated Antarctic expedition in 1912. The flats start at £600,000.

Evening Standard – 25 October – sent in by Tom Laughlan

WETHERSPOON

The latest *Wetherspoon News* has three pages of photos of their pubs in former cinemas. Pick up a copy from your local Wetherspoons or download from their website.

Sent in by Martin Tapsell

ALMA PLAQUE

Lionel Blair [89] unveiled a plaque to 1950s and 60s singing star Alma Cogan at her childhood home in Worthing on 22 September. She died in October 1966, aged only 34.

Worthing Herald – 31 August, 28 September; *The Argus, Worthing* – 13 September;
sent in by Barry Quinton

ROYAL VISIT

The Queen visited the Festival Theatre in Chichester (West Sussex) on 30 November. She watched a performance by the Youth Theatre and was entertained to lunch in the restaurant with guests including Dame Patricia Routledge,

The Argus, Worthing – 22 November; sent in by Barry Quinton

MORE PICTUREHOUSE STRIKES

Workers at London Picturehouse cinemas walked out on 13 December and planned two more strike days on Christmas Eve and Boxing Day. BECTU the union demand the London living wage of £10.20 per hour along with sickness, maternity, paternity and adoption pay. Picturehouse has offered £9.30 per hour, worth £9.92 with paid breaks.

Morning Star – 14 December; sent in by Martin Tapsell

ORCHESTRAS RETURN TO CINEMAS

Film studios have cottoned on to a new market for their productions. An increasing number are being stripped of their music and repackaged for use with live orchestras in concert halls. The Royal Albert Hall has presented *Interstellar* and *Beauty and the Beast* (as well as hosting premières). Others to have received the treatment are *La La Land*, *Jaws*, *2001* and *The Wizard of Oz*. For older films there are often difficulties in tracking down the scores; some were just thrown away!

Sent in by Jon Williams

END OF CINEMA PROJECTION?

Samsung and Sony are developing LED cinema screens. They claim high resolution [4k-16k], low power consumption [they're off when showing 'black'] and a 15-year life, twice that of most digital projectors. A screen 40ft-50ft wide would cost around \$700,000 but costs are expected to fall. When the total cost of ownership gets close to projectors, changes will be imminent; this is expected by 2030.

Red Shark – 12 October; sent in by Carl Chesworth

Carl adds: Where do the speakers go?

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

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

95 years



Picturedrome / Ritz / New Olympus, 162 Barton Street, Gloucester.
Opened 15 January 1923. Architect unknown. Grade II listed.

85 years



Capitol, 431 Union Street, Aberdeen. Opened 4 February 1933.
Architects George Clement / AGR Mackenzie. B-listed.

80 years



New Tivoli, 52 Gorgie Road, Edinburgh. Opened 1 January 1938.
Architect James Mckissack. B-listed.



Dominion, 18 Newbattle Terrace, Morningside, Edinburgh.
Opened 31 January 1938. Architect T Bowhill Gibson. B-listed.



Clifton, 564 Walsall Road, Great Barr, Birmingham.
Opened 21 February 1938. Architect Ernest S Roberts. Grade II listed.



The Projected Picture Trust

Dean Clough Mills, HALIFAX, HX3 5AX

The Projected Picture Trust exists to locate and preserve projectors and related film equipment, both professional and domestic. Since 1978 enthusiastic volunteers have been happy to help restore these items and so preserve THE MAGIC OF CINEMA.

The Trust provides help and assistance to non-commercial community cinemas and museums exhibiting film related artefacts.

The Museum of Cinema Technology has perhaps the largest collection of all types of film equipment in the UK. The Data Archive holds over 3,000 items including press cuttings, manuals and film related technical documents. We are presently looking to strengthen our management team...

PLEASE CONTACT US IF YOU ARE ABLE TO HELP
or if you would like to become a member only.

contact@ppttrust.org

www.ppttrust.org

ARCHIVE

ARCHIVE ENQUIRIES

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

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

ARCHIVE OPPORTUNITIES

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

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

HELP THE ARCHIVE IDENTIFY CINEMAS

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

SENDING DONATIONS BY POST OR EMAIL

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

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

Clive Polden, CTA Archivist

London's West End Cinemas

by Allen Eyles with Keith Skone.

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

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



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

Published in collaboration with English Heritage.

MEMBERSHIP

NEW MEMBERS

We are pleased to be able to send a warm greeting to the following new member of the CTA. They are listed here in the order in which they joined: Neil Faulkner, Roger Walling, John Adams, David Matson, Andrew Biggs, Dave A Riddett and Peter England.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Philip Hooker, who joined the CTA in 2006, recently converted his annual membership to become a Life Member.

DONATIONS

The generosity of our members is again demonstrated by the following who added a donation to their annual subscriptions when renewing. Grateful thanks go to: JCS Altman, RS Anderson, M Armstrong, CJ Barbier, MJ Bigham, DC Bishop, EG Bottle, DMH Bovey, RNR Charlesworth, BF Collins, G Collins, R Duerden, KS Ebsworth, L Essex, DW Faircloth, H Fisher, DJ Gardiner, WG Gilbert, PJ Goff, AE Grant, PW Hake, VF Harvey, HJ Hill, GE Hooper, JL Howarth, AF Hughes, PD Jennings, J Kennett, S Kieley, P King, B Lampert, N Mirza, MD Moratti, IC Nichol, HW Patching, T Pate, AJ Peel, PR Phillips, WR Pratt, JM Pritchard, DM Riches, FRA Rosen, JG Rumble, C Sanders, RJR Shaw, JD Simmonds, CA Simmons, RD Simpson, SD Simpson, BR Stevenson, RJ Stovell, TW Swoffer, GJ Waglan, KM Wakefield, WE Watters, MW Weston, JWH White and RW Woodin.

IN MEMORIAM

Sincere condolences are sent to families and friends of the following members who sadly have passed away recently. Peter J Adams of Westcliff-on-Sea died on 14 October 2017 at the age of 76; he joined the CTA in 2003. Barry Sharp of Gosford, New South Wales, Australia died of a stroke on 27 September 2017, aged 79; he joined CTA in 2015.

CUMULATIVE BULLETIN INDEXES

Members who recall the Association's 40th Anniversary may still have their copy of a booklet called *Cinema Theatre Indexes 1967-2006* containing indexes to issues of the *CTA Bulletin* and *Picture House* that had been published since the formation of the CTA. The indexing of the ensuing ten years, 2007-2016, of the *CTA Bulletin* only has now been completed. Both it and the Bulletin section only of the previous 40-year index will be available to download as a PDF from the Bulletin page of the CTA website: [cinema-theatre.org.uk/publishing/bulletin]. Those members who do not have access to the Internet may apply to the Bulletin Editor or Membership Secretary for a printed copy of the latest ten-year index. You must please send a stamped, self-addressed C5 size envelope.

Neville C Taylor, Membership Secretary

SAVE THE CINEMA MUSEUM

By the time you read this it may be too late to sign the petition to save the Cinema Museum but please check at [tinyurl.com/y7n8z9om]. The family of Charlie Chaplin has sent an open letter of support. Please see p7 last Bulletin.

SMALL ADS

The rate for small ads from members is £3 for 25 words with name and address free, plus 15p for each extra word. Non-members rates: £5 & 25p respectively.

Please send cheque or postal order (payable to the Cinema Theatre Association) to the Bulletin Editor, address on p2. Please quote membership number.

Advertisers are requested to reply to all respondents who supply SAE for that purpose.

Display rates: eighth page – £15; quarter page – £25;
half page (horizontal or vertical) – £45; full page – £80

FOR SALE: 3 Kinematograph Year Books 1948/49 & 1959 – £20 each plus £3.50 P&P. Also Boston Odeon Cinema Opening Ceremony Programme – £50 or nearest offer.

Maurice Brader 55 Parthian Ave, Wyberton, Boston, PE21 7DH
Tel: (01205) 350921 or Email: [lawncinema@hotmail.co.uk]

FOR SALE: Kinematograph Year Books: 1920, 21, 22, 25 and complete run from 1928. Also Complete Projectionist 3rd Edition and three other technical books. SAE for list.

C Morris, Eller How Farm, Lindale, Cumbria, LA11 6NA
or email [charlesmorris@nm-cinemas.co.uk]

WILF WANDERS WEST

By Wilf Watters



Shepherd's Bush in 1927 with [L-R] the Empire, Pyke's and Pavilion

Taking once more a ramble to find old cinemas, I started in West London with a look at Shepherd's Bush Green, which at one time must have provided a variety alternative to Leicester Square with its many places of entertainment. With the excellent aid of Rachel Marks, who spends a lot of time helping out at the CTA archives and finding photographs for me, I stepped out West. The Green did at one time have a quite a number of cinemas open. The music hall, the Empire, is still there (where 50 years ago I was a stage electrician!). Then next door is a Pyke's original cinema, going through many owners over the years (including as an Australian theme pub not so long ago) and since semi-derelict due to planning arguments. Then there was the huge Pavilion, a Gaumont Super Palace, this has been turned into a hotel and private apartments.



The Shepherd's Bush Empire [L] and Pavilion [R] in November 2017

But there had been other cinemas on the Green. Almost next door at number 57A was the Palladium. The BKS year book quotes it was open in 1918. The block was redeveloped many years ago. Across the Green at 92 Uxbridge Road was the Kings Hall, open in 1918 in a building constructed in 1910 and is now a 'Superdrug' store, where I got some strange looks from the manager when lurking around the door to establish the street number that wasn't there – how the postman manages, I don't know. There had been a Park cinema in Goldhawk Road but no information where it had been. Of course much rebuilding had gone on in this area. Before leaving the 'Bush' I should mention that for over twenty years in a shopping precinct a multiplex has operated; it's nowadays a Vue with eleven screens, seemingly operated by a man in the sweet counter.

Moving on to Chiswick High Road, where can be found a little row of four shops that were the Electric Theatre on the corner of Duke Road. It had opened in 1911 changed to the Coliseum and closed in 1933 as the Tatler. Then it was turned into four shops, which still exist today.



The Electric Chiswick today



The Electric Theatre of 1911 on Chiswick High Road



The Royal Chiswick as a furniture store [L] and antique shop [R]

Moving on, at 160 Chiswick High road can be found the 'Old Cinema' a new name for an antique store. This was the Royal and had a most original first floor contraption, which to my mind didn't look like any early movie-house. It had been a second-hand furniture store, now it's a posh antique establishment. Some of the original cinema features have been retained, such a splendid skylight but the old auditorium seems to have gone and just displays occupy the space.

I could have spent many more days searching out old cinemas but finish with an Odeon at Isleworth. Just the frontage has been retained and it has the 1930s look about it. Many thanks to Rachel for finding the pictures at the CTA Archive.



The former Odeon Isleworth