



CINEMA  
THEATRE  
ASSOCIATION

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

# BULLETIN

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The former Elite Ashbourne (Derbys) to which film may return; photo taken July 2011



The nine-screen Odeon Silverlink (North Tyneside) which has recently added an IMAX screen; photo taken September 2009



## FROM YOUR EDITOR

As I write this at the beginning of March, the editorial premises – and most of the rest of the country – is blanketed under several inches of snow. Being unable to go out did have an advantage in that I could stay at home and work on the Bulletin. The modern miracle of electronic communications and the Internet means that I can do research from my desk, without having to go to the library. I can also send messages and get replies the same day. The proof of the Bulletin also goes to the printers electronically. We wonder how we used to manage without this modern technology. However, we still rely on the postie to deliver the printed version through our letterboxes.

I had several messages expressing surprise at finding the Odeon in London's Leicester Square closed and asking if I had any more information. We were surprised too. Although the closure had been trailed last summer and reported on p5 of Bulletin 51/4, no date had been assigned. It closed suddenly at the beginning of January and very little further information has been given.



I had more messages enquiring if I knew which cinema doubled for the Roxy in Oxford in an episode of the ITV series *Endeavour* transmitted on 11 February. Within a few days, several members emailed me to say the the exterior and foyer scenes were filmed at the Carlton/ABC in Essex Road, Islington, North London. The auditorium used was the **Broadway Theatre**, Catford, South London. An electronic organ and an illuminated orchestra rail were installed for the production. The **Broadway** still retains its original Compton theatre organ but this wasn't used. The CTA has arranged a visit here on 12 May – see opposite. The projection equipment for the filming was provided by our friends in the PPT – it looked to me like a GK21 with President arc [above].

In my last editorial I asked if anyone could write us a feature on modern projection and sound systems. Well, I've had a volunteer and an article is in preparation. We hope to include this in the next Bulletin.

From time to time, I get sent what look like photos taken off a computer screen. Often they are distorted and have colour aberrations. Did you know that, if you are using a Windows PC, the button marked "Print Screen", usually at the top right of your keyboard, will copy the contents of your screen into the Windows clipboard? You can then paste this into a Word document (or any program that supports the clipboard) and send that to me as an attachment, or even paste it into an email message. Don't worry about the taskbar or anything else on your screen as I can easily crop them off. It all helps to improve the quality of your Bulletin. I suspect there is a similar feature on Apple Mac computers but I don't know what it is – can anyone tell me?

*Harry Rigby, CTA Bulletin Editor*



## DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE FRIDAY 20 APRIL

## CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

(Founded January 1967)

promoting serious interest in all aspects of cinema buildings

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### CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

**BULLETIN:** Members are invited to submit items for possible publication to the Bulletin Editor. However, it is stressed that the publication of an item does not necessarily imply that it reflects the views of the

Cinema Theatre Association, its Committee or its Bulletin Editor.

It is assumed that submissions are for publication, unless stated otherwise; items may be shortened or edited at the discretion of the Editor.

Please enclose SAE and state if you require items to be returned, otherwise everything will be passed on to the CTA Archive.

**VISITS:** Members and non-members are reminded that they attend visits entirely at their own risk and no responsibility can be accepted by the Cinema Theatre Association or the owners of the buildings for any accidents or injury sustained during the course of any visit.

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

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## VISITS AND EVENTS

### Double Feature: a visit to Catford and Eltham.

**Saturday 12 May – organised by Ray Ritmeester.**

We have arranged a tour of the **Broadway Theatre**, Catford and then a visit to the **Mecca Bingo**, former **Odeon Eltham Hill** later in the afternoon.



The Broadway Theatre Catford in September 2004

The Broadway Theatre opened as the Catford Public Halls in June 1932 as part of the Town Hall and was designed by Bradshaw, Gass and Hope for multi-purpose use. It was initially equipped for screening silent films only in the main hall. It was later re-named the Lewisham Theatre, becoming the Broadway in the 1980s.



The Odeon/Gaumont Eltham Hill in July 2006

The second venue we shall visit is the former Odeon Eltham Hill, located on Eltham Hill at the corner of Kingsground. The Odeon opened on 14 April 1938. It was later renamed the Gaumont as it was very close to the other Odeon in Eltham at Well Hall. It was closed by the Rank Organisation on 19 June 1967 and converted into a Top Rank Club, operating today as a Mecca Bingo Club.

**Most visits are for members only**  
**Details in the full Bulletin**



## CASEWORK

By Tim Hatcher

### Listed Grade II\*

Planning and Listed Building Consent applications have been submitted relating to the proposed conversion of the **State** in Grays to a hostelry in the Wetherspoon chain of such establishments. These plans, largely similar to the pre-applications, are supported in general by the CTA, with some reservations, in order to assure a secure future for the cinema. Photographs recently taken from an unmanned aerial vehicle demonstrate that the roof of the building is currently in a parlous state of repair. {1837}

Detailed plans for refurbishment of the **Granada** at Walthamstow as a performing arts centre have now been prepared. Despite inculcating predictable unease about certain aspects of the scheme, these proposals appear to be largely sympathetic to the historic fabric of the venue. Various concerns are to be raised with the appointed architectural partnership, including advocacy of provision for restoration of the organ conjointly with its long-disused pit console and preservation of the surviving stage lighting control. {9397}

At the **Dreamland Cinema** in Margate, removal is proposed of the temporary structures introduced for bingo, of the safety curtain installed in the nineteen seventies and of the bingo seating, which latter will require listed building consent. Plasterwork is to be restored and a more sympathetic colour scheme introduced. It is to be hoped that the auditorium may have its latter day partitioning removed and that access to the organ chambers may be upgraded in compliance with current safety standards in order to permit restoration of the instrument. {15123}

### Listed Grade II



The Gaumont Palace at Taunton is currently marketed at a price of almost two million pounds. This is an extremely impressive cinema, both internally and externally, by WT Benslyn. {13953}

**More Casework in the full Bulletin**



# PUBLICATIONS

## Back Numbers Available

### 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.

|   |       |   |
|---|-------|---|
| No 6  | £1.50 | Television in the Cinema; <b>Atherley</b> Southampton; Hippodrome, Blackpool.   |
| No 8  | £1.50 | Sol Levy; Reginald Cooper; ABC in NW London.  |
| No 17   | £3.00 | <b>Special Issue</b> featuring the Cinemas of George Coles with 26 original photographs reproduced in sepia.  |
| No 18   | £3.00 | Sydney Colwyn Foulkes; United Picture Theatres; Tivoli Wimborne.  |
| No 19   | £3.50 | Co-operative Cinemas; <b>Ideal</b> Lambeth; Dursley; Alister Macdonald; <b>Granada</b> Tooting.   |
| No 21   | £3.50 | 100 Years On; Travelling Shows; Reggie Rea; <b>Albert Hall</b> Sheffield; <b>Regal</b> Wells; West End Adverts; Scotland.   |
| all issues below have colour cover and inside pages |       |   |
| No 25   | £4.50 | Oldest Cinema (Brighton); FE Bromige; Gaumont Managers; <b>Carlton</b> Swansea; Committee's Choice.   |
| No 26   | £4.50 | <b>Paramount</b> Newcastle; Edward Stone; <b>Granada</b> Men; E de Wilde Holding; <b>Electric</b> Portobello Road.  |
| No 27   | £4.50 | New Victoria/ <b>Apollo</b> ; <b>Whiteladies</b> Bristol; Clark & Fenn; Compton Organs; Tim Foster Associates.  |
| No 28   | £4.50 | James McKissack; WJ King; <b>Torbay</b> Cinema; Tabs.   |
| No 29   | £4.50 | Cinerama in Britain; Braziers the Builders; John Fernée; Waller Jeffs; John Duffin's paintings.   |
| No 30   | £5.00 | The Davis Family, Croydon; <b>Apollo</b> Hammersmith Organ; Norwich Roadshows.  |
| No 31   | £7.50 | Special 84-page edition: <b>Essoldo</b> – A Family Business: Sol Sheckman and the <b>Essoldo</b> Circuit.   |
| No 32   | £5.00 | Harry Myers Photographs; Cinemas at the Coalface; Shaws of Darwen; Edward A Stone.  |
| No 33   | £5.00 | Theodore Komisarjevsky; Circuit & other releases of 1956; The case for saving the New Victoria Bradford.  |
| No 34   | £5.00 | <b>Beaufort</b> Birmingham; <b>Granada</b> Tooting in 1934; Rank in post-war Scotland; J Braddon's Cinema life.   |
| No 35   | £5.00 | Holophane lighting; Imitations of <b>Odeon</b> ; Cradley Records; 1909 Cinematograph Act; Kingston Showmanship.   |
| No 36   | £6.00 | Leslie Kemp; <b>The Clifton</b> Circuit; Jeremy Perkins on Brighton; Circuit Releases of 1960.  |
| No 37   | £8.50 | Special 92-page issue; saving the <b>Electric Palace</b> Harwich.   |
| No 38   | £6.00 | Northern Morris Associated Cinemas; <b>Point</b> Milton Keynes; Going to the Cinema in Birmingham; <b>Palace</b> Conwy; <b>Carlton</b> Haymarket; Military Cinemas; Cinema Murders. |
| No 39   | £6.00 | WWI and the Film Trade; Tale of Two <b>Regals</b> ; <b>Odeon</b> North Finchley; <b>Majestic</b> Oxford; Films at the <b>Royal Albert Hall</b> .                                    |
| No 40   | £6.00 | <b>Tolmer</b> Euston; Michael Stringer memories; West End in the 1950s; Stafford Entertainments; Will Onda & James Atroy; Stephen Waddingham – a <b>Granada</b> man.                |
| No 41   | £6.00 | CTA's 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary; <b>Plaza</b> Stockport; <b>Grosvenor</b> Rayners Lane; <b>Majestic</b> Leeds; Pascal J Stienlet.  |
| No 42   | £6.00 | <b>Odeon</b> Elephant & Castle, <b>Plaza</b> Crosby; <b>Depot</b> Lewes; <b>Cineworld</b> Chelsea; Gaumont Sheffield Figures.   |

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 9     | Preservation Matters; Ritz Seaford; County Cinemas; Archive report.   |
| No 10    | Montagu Pyke; <b>Regent</b> , Brighton; Preservation Matters; Theatre Organs.   |
| No 14/15 | <b>Double Issue</b> : Julian Leathart; Orion Burgess Hill; Our Cinema Heritage; Leeds in the 1950s  |
| No 16    | Where space matters; Circuit releases of 1952; Leeds in the 50s/60s; 3,000 plus.  |
| No 20    | <b>Academy</b> London; <b>Electric</b> Portobello Road; Everyman Hampstead; John D Sharp photographs; <b>Gaiety</b> Birmingham; Listing the <b>Regal</b> Wells. |
| No 22    | <b>Palace</b> Theatre London; Alone in the Dark; David Nye. Burrell, Foley, Fischer.  |
| No 23    | Mollo & Egan; A Gaumont Miscellany; Associated GP Cinemas; New Cinema Design; <b>New Victoria</b> London.   |
| No 24    | Oldest Cinema (Harringay); Holloway Gaumont; <b>Odeon</b> Miscellany; Cardiff Round-Up; Preservation Matters.   |

### BULLETINS

We can supply back numbers of most Bulletins from Volume 21 (1987) to date. Prices for issues from 1987 to 2016 are £4.00 per year (6 issues); individual issues are £1.00 each. Prices for issues in 2017 and 2018 are £4.00 per copy. All prices include postage. There are some issues available from earlier years, 1967 to 1986 – please send enquiries to the Sales Officer.

### AND WHERE TO KEEP THOSE PICTURE HOUSE MAGAZINES?

'Cordex' binders, in red leather-look effect with the magazine name embossed on the spine, are available for £4.30 + £3.00 postage; they are sent in a special postal carton. Each binder holds twelve copies and will not harm or mark your magazines, which may be taken out later if desired.

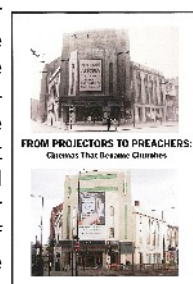
## New Publications

### From Projectors to Preachers

*Cinemas that became Churches* by Gavin McGrath.

32 pages, A4 card covers, illustrated. £4.50 plus postage.

After covering pubs and supermarkets, the author turns his attention to churches, of which there are a great number. Over 110 former cinemas are featured here, arranged alphabetically from Abergavenny to Woolwich. There are details of the buildings' history, film presentations, architect and subsequent use after cinema closure and most are illustrated in colour. Appendices cover Proposed Churches, In Memoriam and a brief history of the religious organisations that operate the former cinemas.



Still available by the same author:

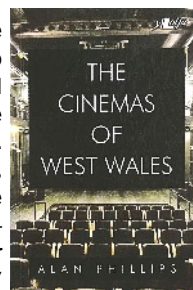
From Celluloid to Cereal – Cinemas that became Supermarkets: £4.00  
The Cinemas and Theatres of Tower Hamlets: £6.99. Both plus postage.

### The Cinemas of West Wales

by Alan Phillips. 130 pages, A5 paperback, illustrated.

£6.99 plus postage.

This book covers the history of cinemas on the West Wales coast, from Barmouth in Gwynedd to Llanelli in Carmarthenshire, as well as inland towns. Amongst the larger towns featured are Aberystwyth, Cardigan, Carmarthen and Tenby. There are a good number of illustrations and, although many of the buildings described have been demolished, there are several success stories too, including Cross Hands Public Hall, Theatr Gwaun at Fishguard and the Picture House / Neuadd Dyffi in Aberdovey, to name just three.



### After The Final Curtain

*The Fall of the American Movie Theater* by Matt Lambros

208 pages, hardback landscape, fully illustrated in colour

£29.99 plus postage.

Matt Lambros travelled especially from the USA to speak to the CTA in February and, if you missed this event, copies of his book are still available. There are around 200 stunning colour photographs of American Movie Places that have fallen on hard times, waiting for someone to come along and rescue them!



## 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.



## 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 50<sup>th</sup> 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.

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

## HOLIDAY SNAPS

### CINEMAS OF THE AUVERGNE (France)

Top to bottom: Le Paris, Brioude; Le Monaco, Thiers; Le Foyer Besse; Six-screen Ciné Dyke, Le Puy en Velay.

Photos taken June 2017

Sent in by Anthony Wills





# CINEMAS BY NIGHT

By Gavin McGrath

In this feature I'll take a look at a handful of our beloved buildings, often brightly lit up when we visit them but we don't normally see a picture of them. All are still operating as cinemas apart from the **Regal**, which until recently has mainly been in theatre use and the former Odeon in Blackpool, seen opposite as the *Funny Girls* showbar.



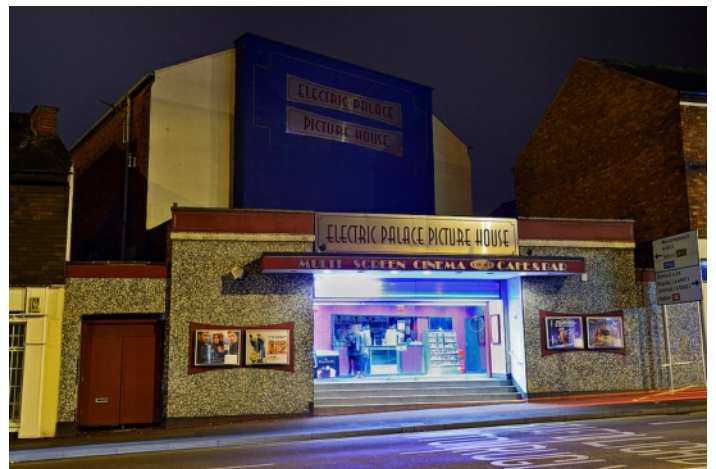
The Art Deco-style **Regal** in North Bridge Street, Bathgate opened in July 1938 and was designed by Andrew Haxton. It was divided in two during the 1970s with the cinema in the circle and the stalls going over to retail use. It was later acquired by the local authority, which closed it at the end of 1992 but another operator reopened it shortly after, closing it again in September 1993. It reopened as the **Regal Community Theatre** in 1995 providing an eclectic mix of theatre, music, comedy and children's events, with a film society hiring the space and showing films twice a month. In the summer of 2017 however, the charity running the venue went into voluntary liquidation, leaving the **Regal's** future in doubt. Reconnect Events staged *Snow White* over Christmas with a benefit held at **Cottiers Theatre** in Glasgow to raise funds for the theatre. Regal Radio, a community station for West Lothian, broadcasts from the theatre. The building was itself was given Grade C(s) status in 1999 and the entrance foyer still has the original terrazzo floor in place.



The **Strand Arts Centre** on Hollywood Road in Belfast is the only one of John McBride Neill's cinemas still in operation and the oldest cinema still in operation in Northern Ireland. It was built on the site of Strandtown House, home of a shipping magnate and opened as the **Strand** in December 1935. Originally a Union cinema, the company was taken over by ABC in 1937, although the cinema was not renamed. It closed in November 1983 but was reopened in 1984 by Ronnie Rutherford and used for live entertainment, with stars such as Little and Large and The Drifters appearing. This didn't last long however and films were again being screened following the creation of a four-screen cinema in 1988. The cinema had a restoration project carried out on it in 1999 and continues to survive, despite Northern Ireland being land of the multiplex. It ceased operating as a commercial cinema in 2013 and is now run as a not-for-profit charitable venture. Monthly heritage tours are available.



The massive Odeon on Dickson Road in Blackpool is unmistakable and was the largest of the original Odeons in the circuit, with a total of 3,088 seats. The Harry Weedon and W Calder Robson designed building opened in May 1939 and was tripled in October 1975, creating two small screens in the rear of the stalls. It closed in December 1998, having been replaced by a new multiplex on Rigby Road. Businessman Basil Newby has created an entertainment complex in the building with the *Funny Girls* showbar in the stalls from April 2002, Flamingo's nightclub in the former circle and Bar B, later Buzz, in the circle foyer. The Grade II listed building sometimes opens to the general public on Heritage weekends in September.



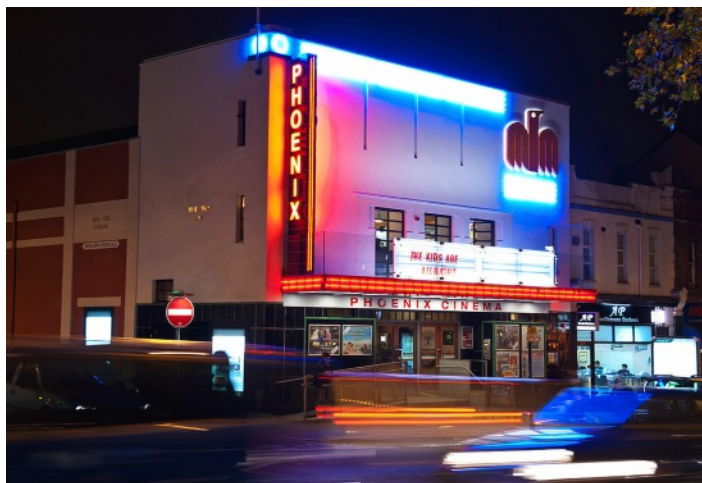
The **Cannock Cinema** on Walsall Road, Cannock opened as the **Picture Palace** in April 1914. It was designed by CW Joynson and was originally a single-floor cinema, although a balcony was added five years later. It was acquired from the McDonald family by Essoldo and fully modernised, reopening in September 1969 as the **Essoldo**. The Tigon Group took over the cinema in April 1972 and renamed it **Classic**, adding a second screen six years later using an adjacent building. The company was acquired by **Cannon** and it was renamed again in 1981. Peter Walker took over the cinema in April 1995 renaming it the **Picturedrome** with another operator, Mike Vickers, later taking charge and calling it the **Picture House**. It closed in February 2005 when plans were announced to replace it with a new development including a cinema. It was reopened however as the **Electric Palace Picture House** in February 2009 with local actor Ben Wilby making an appearance. A third screen was created but does not appear to have had much use over the years. It was revealed in March 2017 that the building had been sold, reputedly to manager Graham Cotton and that a £100,000 facelift would be taking place. This would include new seats and toilets, digital projection and the possibility of another screen in the balcony area. It is now known as the **Cannock Cinema**.







The Rio Cinema in Kingsland High Street in Dalston [London] opened in April 1915 as the Kingsland Empire with the original design by Adams & Coles. In the 1930s, when in the hands of Capital & Provincial News Theatres, the building was reconstructed to a design by FE Bromige and reopened in December 1937. It was then renamed the Classic and was also the Classic Cartoon Cinema and Classic Continental for a period in the mid-1950s. Another change of name to the Tatler in May 1970 brought [X]-certificate films until it was bought by a businessman in 1976, who named it the Rio. It was then managed by a co-operative and relaunched in 1982. In the mid-1990s the building underwent a much-needed facelift. In recent years the 430-seat community cinema has been struggling financially but is still going against all the odds. The basement was used for a promenade production of an immersive play in December 2015 and a pop-up bar was also created in the same space in the summer of 2016. It was then announced there were plans for a second screen using the basement and a fundraising campaign was started in order to raise the £150,000 necessary. This was achieved sooner than expected and the screen was open by December 2017. There is a possibility of a third screen by 2021. The building is Grade II listed.



The Phoenix on High Road in East Finchley [London] opened as the East Finchley Picturedrome in May 1912, a single-floor cinema with a barrel-vaulted ceiling. The screen was at the front end of the building behind the foyer. New owners renamed it the Coliseum and reopened it after a refurbishment in January 1926. It was renamed the Rex twelve years later, having been taken over and was given a further makeover, which included switching the screen to the other end. It reopened in September 1938 and over time had a series of operators before coming under the control of Contemporary Films in 1975. It was then renamed Phoenix and became an arthouse cinema, before being purchased by the Phoenix Trust in 1985. It went through restoration in 2010 to ensure its capability of serving the public for many years to come. Its patrons include Benedict Cumberbatch, Maureen Lipman and Mike Leigh. It was given a Grade II listing in 1999 and prominently appeared in the British comedy *Mr Love*.



The Ultimate Picture Palace in Jeune Street, Oxford first opened in February 1911 as the Picture Palace and was run by Frank Stuart, landlord of the Elm Tree Tavern next door. It closed in 1917, owing to the manager being called up for war duties and lay unused until being turned into a furniture warehouse. It was 'rediscovered' in the mid-1970s and reopened by Bill Heine and Pablo Butcher as the Penultimate Picture Palace in July 1976. It closed for a second time 18 years later, with debts estimated at £350,000 and was squatted by the Oxford Freedom Network, who screened free films during its occupation of the building. In 1996 the Marham brothers reopened the cinema as the Ultimate Picture Palace but it was taken over in 2009 by Jane Derricott and Philippa Farrow, who are remembered for installing the bar. Two years later it was bought by current owner Becky Hallsmith, whose tenure has seen the installation of new seats, new lighting and a general redecoration of the auditorium. The reopening in September 2013 included a performance by musician Roger Eno to the silent film *The Passion of Joan of Arc*. It currently has seating for 121 people and remains a unique addition to the cinema scene in Oxford.



The Odeon Luxe in Panton Street in the West End of London opened as the Cinecenta 1234 in January 1969. It was designed by Nigel Farrington for the Compton Group as a four-screen cinema from the outset and screened mainly independent and arthouse films. Over the years a series of operators ran the cinema including the Star group and Classic and, following the acquisition by Cannon, it became the Cannon Panton Street. It was later an MGM and an ABC but eventually ended up in the hands of Odeon. More recently it closed for refurbishment in October 2017, when reclining chairs were installed and it reopened under its current guise two months later. The screens are quite small with all having a capacity of less than 50 seats.

Photos courtesy of: James Deans, [www.JamesPDDeans.co.uk] (Regal); SJ Dunphy (Strand)\*\*; Gavin McGrath (Odeon Blackpool and Odeon Luxe); Gary S Crutchley (Cannock Cinema); Rio Cinema (Rio)\*; Basil Jadeh (Phoenix Cinema)\* and Ian Wallman (Ultimate Picture Palace). \*\* Indicates image has been used under the Creative Commons Licence 2.0 and \* under the Creative Commons Licence 3.0. See [creativecommons.org/licences].



# NEWSREEL

The items in this section are taken mainly from press cuttings from local newspapers. Although their factual accuracy has been checked by Allen Eyles, there may be minor errors in reporting dates or other detail. Allen has also provided additional comments, where indicated. Photos by Harry Rigby within entry, except where stated. A number in curly brackets {nnnnn} is the reference for the Cinema Treasures website. Go to: [cinematreasures.org/theaters/nnnnn]

## ALTRINCHAM (Greater Manchester)

Everyman is preparing to lodge a planning application for a four-screen cinema on George Street. The premises were previously occupied by JJB Sports.

*North West Place – 29 January; sent in by Carl Chesworth*

## ASHBOURNE (Derbys)

The Elite opened in 1930 with 550 seats and films ceased in 1976. It was converted into a shopping arcade downstairs and a nightclub upstairs. The nightclub closed a few years ago and now the building's owner has applied for permission to turn the area into a community hall for use as a wedding venue, ballroom, a performance space and possible even small cinema screenings.

*Derby Telegraph – 24 January; sent in by Peter Good; photo on front cover*

## AYR

A new seven-screen cinema could be part of the redeveloped Kyle Centre. It is understood that Odeon is being courted for a move from their current four-screen operation at Burns Statue Square.

*Ayrshire Post – 31 January, 7 February*

## BANBURY (Oxon)

The Council has taken over the Castle Quay shopping centre after the current owner pulled out of a major development. The project will now happen – it includes a multi-screen Light cinema.

*Oxfordshire Guardian – 21 December*

## BIRMINGHAM (Central)

Work started last September on a new Legoland at the Birmingham Arena. It will include a 4D cinema and is due to open this summer.

*Birmingham Post – 28 December*

The Old Rep has started theatre tours. Forthcoming dates are Saturday 19 May at 2pm and Saturday 7 July at 1pm and 3pm. Tickets are £8.

*Sent in by Gary Stevens*

## BIRMINGHAM (Kings Heath)



The former Kingsway is to be demolished, apart from the locally-listed façade, which will be incorporated in the new development. It opened in March 1925 and was taken over by Essoldo towards the end of its life; films ceased in May 1980. It became a bingo hall, which closed in 2007. Four years later, a fire largely destroyed the building.

*Birmingham Post – 18 January; photo taken August 2004*

## BISHOP AUCKLAND (Durham)

The former Kings closed in 1960 and became a supermarket. The auditorium and ballroom were later demolished but the frontage survives. Now an exploration by the most recent leaseholder reveals some upstairs rooms, including a wood-panelled lounge and the projection room. A paranormal investigator claims to have spoken recently to the ghost of Stan Laurel here. {26541}

*Northern Echo – 9 January; sent in by Gavin McGrath*

## BLACKBURN (Lancs)

A planning application has been submitted for an eight-screen cinema on the site of the former Waves Water Fun Centre; it will be operated by Reel. Subject to approval, construction should start late spring and opening is planned for the end of 2019.

*Lancashire Telegraph – 19 January*

## BLUEWATER (Kent)

On p21 of the last Bulletin we carried a report of the reopening of the Showcase de Lux, which has added four more screens. To prove the new seats had a luxurious amount of legroom, they invited Britain's tallest man to sit in them. Paul Sturgess is 7ft 7in [2.31m] tall. {24663}

*News Shopper – 17 January; sent in by John Kennet*

## BOGNOR REGIS (West Sussex)

Work is progressing to add a fourth screen to the Picturedrome. It will have 110 seats and should be open for the school summer holidays but not April, as previously announced. {14782}

*Bognor Regis Post – 2 February; sent in by Mike Whitcombe*

## BOURNEMOUTH

Bingo finished at the grade II listed Grand in Westbourne on 21 January. It opened in December 1922 and films ceased in October 1977. It is unlikely that films will return to the venue and it could be converted into a Wetherspoons; the building is virtually intact. {22430}

*Daily Echo, Bournemouth – 13, 23, 29 January; sent in by John R Forster, Sally McGrath & Philip Stevens*

## BRADFORD (West Yorks)

A 20-seat screen for private hire is to be added to the six-screen 780-seat Light cinema currently under construction in the extension to the Broadway Shopping Centre. Opening is scheduled for this spring.

*Telegraph & Argus, Bradford – 15 December*

## BRIGHTON

Hoardings have gone up around the grade II listed former Astoria, which is expected to be demolished imminently. It opened in December 1933 and films ceased in May 1977. It was a bingo hall until about 1996, since when it has been largely unused. An apartment block will be built on the site. {1844}

*The Argus, Brighton – 9 December; sent in by Barry Quinton*

The Cineworld at Brighton Marina held an autism-friendly screening of the new Star Wars on 7 January. The volume was turned down, the lights were left on low and there were no trailers. {24248}

*The Argus, Brighton – 6 January; sent in by Barry Quinton*

## BRUSSELS (Belgium)

The oldest cinema in Brussels, the Pathé Palace reopened as a three-screen cinema on 28 February following a major renovation. The building opened in 1913 and was converted into a 2,500-seat cinema after WWI. It closed in the late 1970s and reopened in 1999 but that didn't last long. Renovation work started in April 2013. {22251}

*Brussels Times – 22 January*

## A MUST for your collection CINEMAS IN BRITAIN

A History of Cinema Architecture

by Richard Gray

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

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### BRYNMAWR (Blaenau Gwent)

The trustees of the Market Hall Cinema say they are still waiting for the Community Asset Transfer of the building from the Council after 4½ years. The delay prevents them applying for crucial funding. They say that the transfer of other Council-owned buildings across Blaenau Gwent has been completed within twelve weeks. {26576}

*Western Mail, Cardiff – 3 February; Gwent Gazette – 8 February*

### BURY ST EDMUNDS (Suffolk)

The Abbeygate Cinema is to add two extra screens in the vacated bingo area in the former stalls. They will have 200 and 50 seats. It is hoped to have the new screens open by early 2019. {24294}

*East Anglian Daily Times – 3 January, 1 February*

### CARDIFF



The former Gala Pavilion is now a bar called Coyote Ugly. It opened as the Philharmonic Hall in 1876 and became a full-time cinema in c1917. Films ceased in 1968 and bingo took over. It is unclear when bingo ceased and the premises were used as a bar. {19818}

*Sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken August 2007*

### CHORLEY (Lancs)



25 January marked exactly 60 years since the Empire cinema closed with 20,000 *Leagues under the Sea*. The building is now the Little Theatre and the group marked the occasion by showing the same film. {43984}

*Chorley Guardian – 16 January; photo taken February 2006*

### CLEVEDON (North Somerset)

On 10 January the Curzon and its Christie organ were featured in *Great British Railway Journeys* on BBC2. Presenter Michael Portillo interviewed organist Bernie Brown at the console. There is a rare chance to hear the Christie in concert on 8 April with Simon Gledhill.

*Sent in by Jeremy Buck*

### COLCHESTER (Essex)

The new three-screen Curzon being built in Queen Street has been delayed. Curzon's fitting team could not get access until mid-January. Opening is expected in June or July.

*Daily Gazette – 24 January*

### DERBY

The freehold of the ten-screen Odeon has been sold for £19m. The sale will not affect the operation of the cinema, which is described as having "reliable and predictable income streams." {21128}

*UK Cinema Property Update – 10 January; sent in by Carl Chesworth*

### DOUGLAS (Isle of Man)

Plans have been unveiled for a £25m redevelopment of a large area of the Quayside. They include a seven-screen Omniplex cinema. No timescale has been given.

*Isle of Man Courier – 16 February*

### DOVER (Kent)

The new six-screen 909-seat Cineworld was due to open on 2 February but was put back to "mid-February". It is understood that Frankie and Benny's, which was to be next door to the cinema, has pulled out. The existing 77-seat Silver Screen cinema in the town has issued a press release saying it welcomes the competition and intends to stay open.

*Dover Express – 1 February; sent in by Martin Tapsell*

### DUBLIN (Ireland)

Work has started to split screen ① at the nine-screen Savoy. The screen is one of the largest in Ireland and is regularly host to film premières but last January owners IMC said that the screen size will not be affected. {11585}

*[thejournal.ie] – 12 January*

Plans (announced on p25 of Bulletin 51/6) to demolish the former Screen cinema have been approved. However, an appeal has been launched against the proposed development of the site, which is said to include a 520-seat venue – whether this would be a cinema is not stated.

*The Times, Ireland – 7 February*

### DUDLEY

The Council has started legal proceedings to reclaim the lease of the former Hippodrome from the campaign group wishing to reopen it. The Council says that the group have failed to achieve key milestones, despite an extension of time. The group said it was disappointed but it would not be the end of their fight.

*Dudley News – 14 February; sent in by Ivan Harris*

### EDINBURGH (Portobello)



Plans to demolish the auditorium of the C(s)-listed former George, retaining the façade and building flats behind, had been recommended for approval but were rejected by Councillors. Campaigners had objected and produced an alternative scheme to restore the building as an arts centre, including film. It opened in March 1939 and films ceased in June 1974. It was used for bingo until two years ago. The CTA visited in September 2008.

*Glasgow Herald – 16, 21 February; photo taken March 2004*

**Six More Pages of Newsreel  
in the full Bulletin**



# LETTERS

## FEEDBACK

The John Barry Theatre at Pinewood (p31 Bulletin Jan/Feb 2018) was originally called Theatre 7, so named because there were six existing preview theatres, all of them small. Theatre 7 was to enable films being made in the studio to be viewed in cinema conditions on a large screen at different stages of production, hence the range of projection equipment including 70mm, double-head and multi-track sound. The theatre was fully sound-proofed with a special entry door from the foyer of the building in which it was housed. Other rooms in the building were additional editing rooms. In the late 1970s it was realised that the theatre was invariably unused on Friday evenings and at the week-end so Club 7 was formed. This was to give people who lived near Pinewood Studios a local cinema of a very high quality and one with adjacent car parking. The Club had its own manager and clubroom, where drinks could be purchased. All seats were bookable by telephone and most performances were sold out. Films were arranged by Odeon. When I was heading Rank production I watched many films in working hours in Theatre 7 and it was a great place to see them

Tony Williams

I thoroughly enjoyed the Jan/Feb issue of the Bulletin and particularly Wilf Wanders West on the back page. It identified two cinemas that were previously unknown to me, the Electric Theatre and the Kings Hall – amazing! I might be mistaken but isn't the Palladium another guise of the original Pyke's? It became the New Palladium after rebuilding to the plans of J Stanley Beard in 1923; I have read this somewhere, perhaps in the *Amber Valley Gazetteer of Suburban Cinemas*. Regarding the search for a cinema on Goldhawk Road, I have discovered a book of postcards; this image from 1914 is simply captioned "Goldhawk Road". It shows the Seven Stars pub on the corner of Paddenswick Road; the pub is still there (under a different name) but the cinema next door is gone – the site appears to be a garage. At the time the photo was taken it may have been a 'Palace of Varieties' as the subjects depicted would suggest. The name at the time isn't clear – how annoying!

Simon Walker



Further to Wilf's Wanderings published in the last issue, he would have had to wander about three-quarters of a mile from Shepherd's Bush Green down Goldhawk Road to find the site of the New Park Cinema [above]. It would have been on the left hand side almost opposite the end of Askew Road. Formerly the silent Park Cinema of 1912, it opened in about 1930 and first appears in the 1931 KYB with 800 seats. Unfortunately it was a victim of WW2 and is marked on the LCC Bomb Damage map of the area as "Seriously damaged, doubtful if repairable". It last appears in KYB for 1942 as "closed". The site is now subsumed into a post-war extension of Ravenscourt Park.

Neville C Taylor

In the last Bulletin the New Tivoli in Edinburgh was on the birthday list. It is questionable as to whether it opened in 1938 as two sources state 1934, the year after it was rebuilt.

[[www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/building\\_full.php?id=216936](http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/building_full.php?id=216936)]  
[[www.scottishcinemas.org.uk/edinburgh/newtivoli/index.html](http://www.scottishcinemas.org.uk/edinburgh/newtivoli/index.html)]

*King of the Jungle* dates from 1933 although I don't suppose that's much help.

Gavin McGrath

The latest issue of *Picture House* (No42) has a fascinating feature on Commissionaires and Usherettes. I can add a few snippets of information. When usherettes wore fitted uniforms it was not unknown – or even quite usual – for new staff to be selected on the basis that they had to fit the uniform of an usherette who had left. Later life for the manager became easier when uniforms were wraps and therefore one size would fit most applicants. In its heyday Granada has the most elaborate usherette uniforms. Most people did not realise that they were made of silk. I was intrigued by John Broadley's comment that there could be male ushers as well as female usherettes and I wonder if this was in the 1930s. My cinema-going began in the 1940s and I never remember seeing an usher, the only male staff being commissionaires, plus of course the projectionists. In recent years, the advent of art and more specialised cinemas, plus 'equality' and a changing job market, has seen as many cinema roles filled by (usually young) men as by women. Allocated seating and separate performances has changed how audiences occupy an auditorium but an usherette with a torch is sadly missed. You realise this when people struggle to find their seat and navigate steps with difficulty. Auditorium staff always had to be quiet but in Paramount Cinemas they were forbidden to talk. All seating was done using a form of sign language. I never saw this but I imagine it was not unlike that used by race course bookies. Those were the days.

Tony Williams

## PROJECTION ISSUES

The latest issue of the *Journal of British Cinema and Television* (15 (1) 2018) is subtitled *The Projection Issue* and focuses on the work and experiences of cinema projectionists. Articles include 'Going digital: the experience of the transition to digital projection in UK cinemas', 'Women in the box: female projectionists in post-war British cinemas', 'Certificated operators versus 'handle-turners': the British film industry's first trade union' and 'Disabled operators: training disabled ex-servicemen as projectionists during the Great War.' Most of these are available in full on open access at:

[[www.euppublishing.com/toc/jbctv/15/1](http://www.euppublishing.com/toc/jbctv/15/1)]



The projection room staff of the Gaumont Chadwell Heath 1943

The issue editors are all involved in The Projection Project, a research project set up to investigate cinematic projection. Based at the University of Warwick and funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council it aims to document "... the projectionist's role as it passes into history, following the switch of most cinemas to digital projection between 2010 and 2012." It also looks at the contemporary expansion of projected images outside of the cinema. There's a Virtual Projection Box containing over 80 audio clips from projectionists and commentary from the research team. Further information at: [[projectionproject.warwick.ac.uk](http://projectionproject.warwick.ac.uk)].

Terry Hanstock

Two More Pages of Letters  
in the full Bulletin



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

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

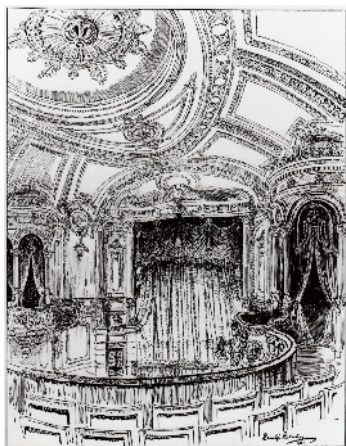


Illustration from the opening programme, 18 March 1913, held in the Archive.



### 105 years ago:

West End (Rialto) 3 Coventry Street, London. Opened 18 March 1913. Architect Hippolyte Blanc. Grade II listed. Above, left.

### 90 years ago:

Picture House (Cinema/Regal/Magic Lantern Theatre/Savoy) 18 Church Street, Monmouth. Opened 5 March 1928. Architect unknown. Grade II listed. Above, right.

### 80 years ago:



Odeon Clarence Place, Newport (Wales). Opened 12 March 1938. Architects Arthur J Price/Harry Weedon. Grade II listed.



Riddrie (Vogue) 726 Cumberland Street, Riddrie, Glasgow. Opened 20 March 1938. Architect James McKissock. B-listed.

## ARCHIVE

### ARCHIVE ENQUIRIES

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

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

### ARCHIVE OPPORTUNITIES

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

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

### HELP THE ARCHIVE IDENTIFY CINEMAS

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

### SENDING DONATIONS BY POST OR EMAIL

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

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

*Clive Polden, CTA Archivist*

## London's West End Cinemas

by Allen Eyles with Keith Skone.

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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.



# THE ODEON TEMPLE FORTUNE

## By Wilf Watters

The recent showing of my film of the Odeon Temple Fortune, near Golders Green in North London, on *Talking Pictures* brought back many memories of when I started to notice that cinemas were closing down. A friend, Mike Lewis, told me that the Odeon (opened as the Orpheum) was about to stage its last show, a pantomime and, after a few weeks of films, would close down and be demolished. He worked part-time as the electrician so I could come back stage to get some shots. This I did using my clockwork 16mm camera and using a cassette recorder for the sound. An assistant apprentice, John, also appeared. Barbara Windsor and Ed 'Stewpot' Stewart were in the cast; this all took place in 1973. Films continued for several years however.

Eventually Mike informed me that the cinema would close after the film *Digby, the Biggest Dog in the World* with Jim Dale and Spike Milligan. So back I went and filmed the last night and, after a couple of years, the demolition finally happened. So I spent quite some time filming this – it was a big cinema and the huge car park with it made the whole site very valuable indeed. The CTA visited it back in November 1971 and I am grateful to Rachel Marks for finding the visit notes and some pictures. They stated that the cinema opened in October 1930. It did have an organ – a Compton – and the opening show included Charles Allen's 25 dancing girls. The projection box was reached by crossing the huge flat roof and had projectors that were set at extreme angles. The proscenium width was 35ft and the stage was 40ft deep, with 13 dressing rooms.

Some people thought the outside was rather crude, with two bulky towers dominating the front elevation; a far cry from the new Odeons then being built around the country. It took so long being demolished that John the apprentice had now become an adult stage hand working in London's theatres. He was asked to come along to see the great cinema being knocked down and was filmed on the remains of the stage looking at the scribbled names of previous shows still on the wall. I am glad that the TV people didn't cut anything or insert any adverts! It's good that the cinema film was shown recently. It brings to the attention that these fine old buildings are still in danger of disappearing.

*B/W photos from the CTA archive; colour frames from 16mm film [26429]*

