



CINEMA
THEATRE
ASSOCIATION

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BULLETIN

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The façade of the Odeon Corby, which will be retained when the auditorium is demolished; photo taken February 2004.



Charles Thurston's Bioscope, a replica of which is to be created in Harwich this summer.

FROM YOUR EDITOR

Firstly, may I apologise for getting the date of the AGM wrong in the announcement on p3 of the last Bulletin. The heading was correct but the body text gave the wrong month. The correct date is Saturday 28 July in Hull.

I also forgot to include *Cartoon Corner* last time – more apologies. The missing one is below and I'll continue with the series next time.

I'm sorry I have had no space for holiday snaps this issue. I was very tight for space, even after increasing the size to 36 pages. I have quite a few holiday snaps held over but would always welcome more. I would also welcome more contributions for the *Rewinding Back* page.

Talking of rewinding, I reported in my last Editorial where a projection box sequence in an episode of *Endeavour* was filmed. Someone pointed out that in those days [1960s] the rewind bench would have been in a separate room and not in the box!

Talking of TV series, the *Kinema in the Woods* in Woodhall Spa (Lincs) featured in an episode of *Village of the Year* with Penelope Keith. Unfortunately the village didn't win.

On the back page, I have reproduced a 1931 contract between National Screen Services and the Plaza Gillingham (Kent) to supply trailers. It was sent in by Carl Chesworth, who draws your attention to the column headed "film or disc" in the table near the bottom.

Finally, I was in York recently and I noticed that at the former Odeon, which has had to retain the **ODEON** sign as it is grade II listed, new owners Everyman have lit just the **E** of **ODEON** in neon. Clever!

Harry Rigby, CTA Bulletin Editor

CARTOON CORNER



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



Proposals for articles or features to appear in our annual publication should be made to the editor Allen Eyles at [picture.house@cta-uk.org] or by phoning 01444 455763.

A researcher is still required to document programming at the Paramount Manchester (before it became an Odeon) to accompany a mass of archive material.

**DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE
WEDNESDAY 20 JUNE**

CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

(Founded January 1967)

promoting serious interest in all aspects of cinema buildings

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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.

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Riverside Road, London, SW17 0BA [www.ludo.co.uk]

VISITS AND EVENTS

A Wander Around North Warwickshire and Beyond – Saturday 16 June

Organised by Peter Lea and Richard Norman

East is Best

Two Grade II and a Grade II* Treat

Wednesday 4 July 10:30am – 3:00pm

Organised by Ken Roe



London's East End is fast becoming 'the' place to be, as its recently found 'trendy & stylish' image continues to flourish. We begin our visit at 10:30am at the magnificent Grade II listed Shoreditch Town Hall. Built in 1866 to the plans of architect Caesar Augustus Long, it was described as "the grandest Vestry Hall in London". Following damage by a fire in 1902, a new larger Assembly Hall, which we will be visiting, was opened in 1907. It has been said that early Cinematograph performances were held in the hall.

CTA Annual General Meeting 2018 Saturday 28 July & Sunday 29 July

This year's AGM will be part of a visit to Hull, UK City of Culture 2017.

The AGM will be held at 1:30pm for 2pm on Saturday 28 July at Kardomah 94 on Alfred Gelder Street in Hull City centre. Nominations for committee members are invited and should be sent to the Secretary, Adam Unger (address on p2) to arrive seven days before the meeting. The minutes of last year's meeting will be distributed on the day and are available now in the members' area of the CTA website.

There is no charge for members attending just the AGM.



It is intended to have a walking tour of City centre venues on the Saturday morning prior to the meeting. On the Sunday it is planned to have a bus tour of the remaining suburban cinemas and a visit to the historic County Town of the East Riding, Beverley, where a new Parkway Cinema opened 2 or 3 years ago. [Pictured above in August 2017.]

**Most events are for members only
details in the full Bulletin**

CASEWORK

By Tim Hatcher

Grade II* Listed



Following enforcement action relating to unapproved building works at the Palace in Southall, the cinema was sold and the new owner is currently seeking conservation advice from various agencies, including the Association. Concern arises over any strategy involving subdivision of the auditorium; thus progression of the plans will be closely monitored. {8236} *Photo above taken April 2006.*

Waltham Forest Council is to purchase the Granada at Walthamstow from EMD Walthamstow LLP; this is potentially propitious news for advancement of the renovation programme. {9397}

Grade II Listed



Encouragingly, the Strategic Growth Manager involved in the scheme for repurposing the Longford at Stretford has stated that the core concept for the venue has changed from that of a student hub to a format encompassing an entertainment focus. In another positive change of intent, the public library will no longer relocate to the cinema. The CTA is campaigning for the auditorium to remain undivided and for the two noteworthy façades to be retained unaltered in form. {13796} *Photo above taken April 2003.*

Unlisted

Providentially the Rialto in Upper Norwood has not been sold to a developer as feared but instead to the Everyman Media Group, which intends to operate the venue as a four-screen cinema. Whilst this is welcome news, the Association is to request that the company respects the integrity of the auditorium during consideration of any conversion operations. See p21 last Bulletin. {28989}

A planning application has been approved for alterations, including installation of escalators, to the Odeon in London's Leicester Square; this appertains to the foyer areas, which have been drastically altered during several previous interventions. {841}

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; 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	Holophane lighting; Imitations of Odeon ; Cradley Records; 1909 Cinematograph Act; Kingston Showmanship.
No 36	£6.00	Leslie Kemp; The Clifton Circuit; Jeremy Perkins on Brighton; Circuit Releases of 1960.
No 37	£8.50	Special 92-page issue; saving the Electric Palace Harwich.
No 38	£6.00	Northern Morris Associated Cinemas; Point Milton Keynes; Going to the Cinema in Birmingham; Palace Conwy; Carlton Haymarket; Military Cinemas; Cinema Murders.
No 39	£6.00	WWI and the Film Trade; Tale of Two Regals ; Odeon North Finchley; Majestic Oxford; Films at the Royal Albert Hall .
No 40	£6.00	Tolmer Euston; Michael Stringer memories; West End in the 1950s; Stafford Entertainments; Will Onda & James Atroy; Stephen Waddingham – a Granada man.
No 41	£6.00	CTA's 50 th Anniversary; Plaza Stockport; Grosvenor Rayners Lane; Majestic Leeds; Pascal J Stienlet.
No 42	£6.00	Odeon Elephant & Castle, Plaza Crosby; Depot Lewes; Cineworld Chelsea; Gaumont Sheffield Figures.

CIRCUIT HISTORIES AVAILABLE

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by Allen Eyles – all fully illustrated with gazetteers
ODEON 1 – Oscar Deutsch Entertains Our Nation – £15.00
ODEON 2 – From J Arthur Rank to the Multiplex – £15.00
 Buy both **Odeon 1 & 2** together for £27 (plus postage)
THE GRANADA THEATRES – £18.99

All available from the Sales Officer – address on p4.
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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?

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Recently Published

(details in last Bulletin)

From Projectors to Preachers

Cinemas that became Churches by Gavin McGrath.
 32 pages, A4 card covers, illustrated. £4.50 plus postage.

The Cinemas of West Wales

by Alan Phillips. 130 pages, A5 paperback, illustrated.
 £6.99 plus postage.

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.

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.

Also Available (but not from the Sales Officer)

DVD – The Final Reel

The feature-length documentary *The Final Reel* (PG, 94 mins) directed by Norfolk-based film maker Jonathan Blagrove, which screened at the CTA's 50th birthday celebrations at the Regent Street Cinema back in January 2017, is having a UK wide DVD release from 30 April.

The film, narrated by the late Sir John Hurt CBE, tells the story of our nation's love affair with the cinema. From the days of travelling showmen to the era of the multiplex, the film uses the Norfolk area as a microcosm of the bigger picture. Featuring a mix of fascinating interviews, archive material and actuality, *The Final Reel* is an entertaining and sometimes moving portrait of cinema history in Norfolk and a snapshot of cinema-going in the UK today.

The trailer can be viewed at [vimeo.com/174196220]

The DVD is retailing at £11.99 from [Amazon.co.uk], HMV and direct from the website of distributor Time Reel [www.timereel.co.uk]. Alternatively copies can be purchased direct from Coda Films by sending a cheque for £13.39 (including £1.40 postage) made payable to Coda Films Ltd at 7 St Gregory's Alley, Norwich, NR2 1ER.



WILF REMEMBERS

By Wilf Watters



This is the third and last article about cinemas I attended closing down. This time it is the Ritz at Edgware in North London, which shut its doors in 1993. I asked if I could attend on the last performance and film the evening. By now the cinema was a part of the Cannon chain. It had been opened in May 1932 and designed by WJ King in a strange castle outline called 'Citadel'. Very unusual as it had been built in a new 1930s setting because the Underground had opened a tube station recently and as a result the surrounding shops were very much suburban. It soon became an ABC house and in recent years had received a new tin front, hiding the original outline. It had been subdivided in the last years and I met the second projectionist Keith [R] and saw him busy in a lower screen, built under the balcony. 'Cake-stand' equipment was in use and he told me that after he finishes here, he is going to be a gardener.

The chief, Bert Albert, [below R] ran the main screen and I was helping him taking down the letters from the front canopy display. In the foyer was an acting manager with the actual manager, who were joined by the lady cashier who had worked in the cinema from when it had been twinned in 1972. Nearby, behind closed grilles, were the girls who had been selling the usual sweets etc. All very sad as all the staff were to lose their jobs. The cinema closed and remained so until an Indian or far Eastern team ran the theatre for a while. I lost contact then as I moved away to Kent. On a recent visit a block of odd-looking flats had occupied the site. I say odd because I like to think that some inspiration had found its way to remind locals of 'The Citadel'.

Thanks to Rachel Marks for the CTA Archive photos and to Allen Eyles for his book ABC, The First Name in Entertainment. The cinema can be seen in the DVD Cinemas We Loved available from the Sales Officer frames below from 16mm film. {16557}



CINEMAS IN ART

By Gavin McGrath

We are normally used to seeing our beloved buildings as bricks and mortar, or preserved for posterity on glossy or matt finish photos or even a computer-held JPEG or PNG. In this article I have focused on those that have been turned into art and they look even more delightful. So sit back and enjoy with a bag of popcorn in one hand and a Dixie Cup in the other.



Bangor's jewel in the crown was surely the Tonic on Hamilton Road. The 2,250-seater was designed by John McBride Neill with a ballroom attached and opened in July 1936. A Compton 3-Manual/8-Rank organ was installed. The cinema's operators included Bangor Cinemas Ltd, Odeon Theatres (Ireland) Ltd and the Scott Brothers. Among the big names to have done concerts there were the Bay City Rollers, Glen Campbell and Van Morrison, the last entertainers being Cannon and Ball. The Grade II-listed building screened its last film in October 1983. It was damaged by fire in June 1992 and was later demolished, with a retirement home now occupying the site. The painting itself is by Gareth Hunter.



The Brockley Picture Theatre in Coulgate Street, Brockley opened in September 1913 and was designed by Drury, Gomersall & Parker. It changed its name to the Palladium in May 1915 and again in 1929 to the Giralda and was renovated in 1936. It was renamed the Ritz in 1942 and closed as a cinema in March 1956, the company having been voluntarily wound up. The building was demolished in 1960 and replaced with a garage but the site is now home to apartments.

The Forum on Highgate Road in Kentish Town was designed by J Stanley Beard with WR Bennett responsible for the interior design. It opened as a 2,175-seater in December 1934 with comedian Sydney Howard doing the honours. The frontage is of black stone and cream faience with a series of columns over the entrance and has a striking resemblance to that of its sister building in Ealing. There were Italian influences to the cinema with the safety curtain depicting a scene from a forum in Rome. It was taken over by ABC in 1935 and renamed in 1963. Following closure as a cinema in July 1970 it became a



bingo-hall and a ballroom and was famously the Town and Country Club for most of the eighties. In 1992 it survived a plan for redevelopment by the then landlords Folgate Estates but the Club closed in March 1993. Later that year Mean Fiddler took on the lease with films of a musical nature returning to the former cinema in 1995 under the Silver Screen Cinema Club banner. The MAMA group took over the lease in 2007, on whose watch was the weekly party event known as *The Church* and refurbished the building in 2009 when it became known as the HMV Forum. The current operator is Live Nation, part of the Academy Music Group, which has rebranded the venue the O2 Forum. Notable artists who have appeared there over the years include Chic featuring Nile Rodgers, Kasabian and the Manic Street Preachers. The building is Grade II listed.



The Savoy in Lower Cross Street, Larne was opened in October 1953 by Malcolm Wilson, although it is more commonly associated with the Penney family, who took over at the end of the 1950s. It was not purpose-built but a conversion of some sort of store. Following closure at the end of May 1970, a leisure centre with disco was proposed but it is not apparent whether this ever came to be. The building was later demolished for retail.

The former Grosvenor Picture Palace is a rather distinctive building at the corner of Grosvenor Street and Oxford Road near to Manchester City Centre. It was designed by Percy Hothersall and is decorated with green and cream tiles lined with porthole windows and crowned with a domed recess above the entrance. The cinema opened in May 1915 and was part of the Moorhouse circuit for some time. The Star circuit took it over in the 1960s but it was reduced to showing either sex or horror movies and closed in May 1968. It promptly opened for bingo the following week and was later a Riley's snooker club. In the 1990s it opened as the Footage and Firkin pub, although it is now just The Footage, run by



the Stonegate Pub Company. As it is within spitting distance of the University it is largely frequented by students who are attracted by the cheap beer, pool tables and Sky Sports on the large plasma screens. Much of the original interior survives today, despite the presence of a jovial atmosphere among the punters. In September 2014 it reopened after a £360,000 refurbishment to take it into the digital age. The building was designated a Grade II listed structure in 1974.



The Plaza in Talbot Road Port Talbot opened in March 1940 and has a cream-tiled faience rather like the appearance of a traditional Odeon. It was originally run by the Woodavon Cinema Company and had 1,467 seats. Films went part-time in 1980 owing to bingo and went off the menu completely in 1983 but after only two years on bingo, films returned in October 1985. The following few years saw it transformed into a four-screen picture house, which lasted until January 1999, when it closed as a result of the Apollo multiplex opening the month before. The building has remained empty ever since, despite being purchased by the local authority in 2009. It was Grade II listed in 2000.



Adjacent to the castle in Swansea is the former Castle Cinema in Worcester Place, situated on a steep hillside location. It opened in December 1913 and, apart from screening adult films in the 1960s, had a fairly insignificant life and was renamed the Filmcenta in 1982. It closed as a cinema in October 1991 and was turned into Jungle Jim's children's playground, which opened in March 1992. It later became a Laser Zone venue, which still occupies the building today. A redevelopment proposal for a shopping centre linked to Parc Tawe has been on the table for at least 20 years but one thing standing in its way is the fact that the building is Grade II listed.



John Burnet, Tait and Partners designed the former Columbia Cinema, which was part of the Wingate House development on Shaftesbury Avenue in London's West End. It opened in February 1959 with 735 seats and was situated underground with the bar one floor down and the auditorium on the following one. The film *Lolita* had a Gala Première here in 1962 and *The Competition* had a Royal Charity Première in June 1981 in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh. Columbia sold the lease to Cannon, who ran it as the Classic from August 1982 then briefly as the Premier in 1984 until its closure for refurbishment that November. It reopened as the Curzon West End in March 1985 and was divided into three screens during 1998, totalling 502 seats, reopening in October that year. It is now known as the Curzon Soho and appeared to be on firm footing until December 2014, when it was announced that the site was going to be earmarked as part of the Crossrail 2 project. A campaign to save the cinema was started, backed by Benedict Cumberbatch and Stephen Fry – and in the meantime it shows no signs of moving.

Photo credits where known: Ards and North Down Borough Council (Tonic); Lewisham Local History and Archives (Ritz); Chris Gilbert Art (Savoy); Peter Topping [www.paintingsfrompictures.co.uk] (Grosvenor Picture Palace); David Clark [www.painters-online.co.uk/artist/londinius] (Plaza), Nick Holly [www.nickholly.com] and John Duffin [www.johnduffin.co.uk] (Curzon Soho). The images are by the artists themselves except where stated.

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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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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

ABINGDON (Oxon)

The operators of the **Regal** in Evesham are trying to bring screenings to Abingdon's Abbey Hall. They would invest in projection equipment and a big retractable screen, which they would remove at the end of their tenancy. They would also install, at their expense, luxury seating. It follows the success of their temporary cinema in the Unicorn Theatre this winter. The Town Council announced it was to move ahead with the plans.

Oxford Mail – 12, 31 March

ADDLESTONE (Surrey)

A six-screen **Light** cinema will open in July 2018 as part of the town centre redevelopment.

Get Surrey – 19 April

AMBLESIDE (Cumbria)

The restaurants at **Zeffirellis** and **Fellinis** have won four top awards for food and hospitality by international magazine *Lux*. **Fellinis** was judged to be the best vegetarian restaurant and also took the excellence award for dinner entertainment. **Zeffirellis** was crowned best hospitality and entertainment group in the north along with the Lake District hospitality venture of the year.

Westmoreland Gazette – 21 February; sent in by Terry Hanstock

ASHFORD (Kent)



The Council has bought the former **Odeon**. **Mecca Bingo** announced they would not be renewing their lease due to a decline in business. It is thought the building will be demolished. {14785}

Kentish Express – 15 March; sent in by Martin Tapsell; photo taken April 2004

ASHINGTON (Northumberland)

Land at Portland Park had been earmarked for the Council's new HQ but the plans were scrapped. Now a multiplex and retail park is being proposed for the site and efforts are being made to find a cinema operator; two chains are said to be interested.

Evening Chronicle, The Journal, Newcastle – 19 February, 10 April

BASILDON (Essex)

The Council is to compulsory purchase properties in and around East Square to build a new cinema. An operator [un-named] has agreed terms to run the ten-screen multiplex. Planning permission is being applied for.

Basildon Echo – 9 March; Basildon Yellow Advertiser, Basildon Standard – 16 March

BIRKENHEAD (Wirral)

The **Super Cinema** opened in June 1916 but closed in September 1956, becoming the **Majestic Ballroom**, where the Beatles played in their early days. It spent a time as a furniture warehouse before its last use as a Chinese restaurant. This closed last year and the building



was sold at auction on 5 December last for the price of £170,000. Currently the building is boarded-up, awaiting a new use. {32706}

Daily Mail – 8 December; sent in by Alan Hodson; photo taken July 2007

Plans for more than 130 flats on the site of the former **Ritz/Essoldo** are set to be approved by the Council. The cinema was demolished in 2000 and the site is currently used as a car park. {35659}

Liverpool Echo – 13 April; Wirral Globe – 18 April; sent in by Alan Hodson & Mike Taylor

BIRMINGHAM (Longbridge)

Plans (announced on p24 of Bulletin 51/5) to build a nine-screen **Light** cinema on the former **MG Rover** site, have been scrapped in favour of a new supermarket.

Birmingham Post – 8 March

BIRMINGHAM (Star City)

A man has died after he was trapped under a seat at the **Vue** cinema. He dropped his phone and when looking for it he became trapped under the electric reclining seat's footrest. The footrest was broken free and he managed to get out but died a week later in hospital. The **Gold Class** seats were closed whilst a Health and Safety investigation was carried out.

Metro, The Times, Daily Mail, BBC News website – 21 March; sent in by Margaret Burgoine, Carl Chesworth, Allen Eyles, Tom Laughlan, Barry Quinton, R David Simpson, Martin Tapsell & Kevin Wheelan

BLACKBURN (Lancs)

Plans for a £6.5m eight-screen **Reel** cinema on the former **Waves** water fun park have been approved. However, Conservatives on Blackburn with Darwen Council have pledged to scrap the scheme if they gain control of the Council following local government elections in May. There are fears that Blackburn could not support two cinemas.

Lancashire Telegraph – 7, 17 March, 26 April; sent in by Philip Crompton

A woman was hit with a vodka bottle when she asked noisy patrons to be quiet during a screening of *50 Shades Freed* at the **Vue** cinema. The film was paused for 20 minutes whilst order was restored. Police attended but made no arrests.

Metro – 16 February; sent in by R David Simpson

BLYTH (Northumberland)

The current issue of *Wetherspoon News* has three pages of pictures of the **Wallaw**, an excellent conversion into one of their pubs. {1826}

Sent in by Carl Chesworth, Tom Laughlan, R David Simpson & Martin Tapsell

BOURNEMOUTH

A developer is appealing over the decision to reject two of its schemes to build flats on the site of the former **Odeon** and **ABC** in Westover Road.

Daily Echo, Bournemouth – 7 April; sent in by John R Forster

BRADFORD (West Yorks)

A government grant of £4m has been awarded to the project to transform the former **Odeon** into a 4,000 capacity music venue. The restoration scheme will also get a share of another £15m fund for cultural projects. This means most of the funding is now in place. No date for starting the work has been given. {3677}

Yorkshire Post – 24 March; Arts Professional – 29 March; sent in by John West

A six-screen 'boutique' Light cinema was due to open on 11 May at the Broadway shopping centre. It will be the firm's tenth cinema in the UK and the second in Yorkshire.

Telegraph & Argus, Bradford – 19 April; sent in by Terry Hanstock

BRYNMAWR (Blaenau Gwent)

The Market Hall Cinema was used as a temporary GCSE maths classroom when a local school asked for help after losing six days of teaching due to snow and frozen pipes. The cinema's town centre location made it easy for staff and year 11 pupils to get to.

BBC News website – 19 March; sent in by Philip Crompton

BURNLEY (Lancs)

Plans for a major town centre redevelopment include a new cinema. Under current proposals, Reel would move from its current site in Manchester Road into the new building; the old cinema would become a supermarket. No further details have been given.

Burnley Express – 23 March; Lancashire Evening Post – 24 March; sent in by Philp Crompton

Plans for a café in the former foyer of the grade II listed Empire have been approved for ten years, despite the planning officer recommending just a three-year lease. The news is seen as a blow to the future restoration of the building, which has been disused for 20 years. {36755}

The Stage – 22 March; sent in by Barry Quinton

CHORLEY (Lancs)

The six-screen Reel cinema, which will be part of the Market Walk Centre extension, is expected to open late in 2019.

Lancashire Telegraph – 16 March; Chorley Citizen – 21 March; sent in by Philip Crompton

The Little Theatre is to expand into a neighbouring former Indian restaurant for extra production and rehearsal space. The theatre took over the former Empire cinema 60 years ago – see p18 last Bulletin. {43984}

Lancashire Evening Post – 24 March

CLEVEDON (North Somerset)

The Curzon has cancelled its annual music festival due to poor ticket sales. The venue has been hosting the festival since 2016 but made a loss last year.

North Somerset Times – 21 March

The Curzon has applied for a £50,000 grant to create a business plan for a creative hub venue. Waverley House, which adjoins the cinema, has been earmarked as a possible location for the hub.

North Somerset Times – 11 April

COLCHESTER (Essex)

Planning permission has been granted to convert the former Odeon in Crouch Street into flats. The front of the building, including the façade, will be retained and cleaned up and converted into 11 flats. The auditorium will be demolished and a new building erected containing 46 flats. {17575}

Daily Gazette, Colchester – 9 April

CORBY (Northants)



The auditorium of the former Odeon could be demolished for 19 flats. The façade would be retained. It opened in March 1936 with 1,024 seats and closed as an independent in November 1969. There followed a spell on bingo, which ceased in 1991. From 1996 it was used as a furniture store. Many original features remain in the auditorium. {16655}

Northamptonshire Telegraph – 14 April; interior photo taken February 2004; façade photo on front cover

CROMARTY (Highland)

Novelist Ian Rankin has backed proposals to build a 30-seat cinema at a cost of £230,000. It is the brainchild of the Cromarty and Resolis Film Society, which has won praise for its annual film festival.

Press & Journal, Aberdeen – 6 April; Glasgow Herald – 7 April

DARTFORD (Kent)

A new six-screen cinema is to be built following Council approval.

Kent Messenger – 29 March

DEVONPORT (Plymouth)

The grade II listed Market Hall is to be transformed into Europe's first 360° cinema. Work is due to have started by the time you read this and it should be open by the end of 2019. Around 150 people will be able to watch sports matches, gigs and plays on an ultra-realistic screen that totally surrounds them. Movies are to be enhanced by smells, heat and light as part of the £7m project.

Western Daily Press – 19 February; City AM – 9 March; Western Morning News – 22 March; sent in by R David Simpson

DONEGAL (Ireland)

Plans for a new cinema complex in Donegal town have been turned down by the Council. The town has been without a cinema since the Four Masters closed down.

Donegal Democrat – 16 November; sent in by Gavin McGrath

DOUGLAS (Isle of Man)

A seven-screen cinema is proposed for the former bus station site in Lord Street. There are mixed views about the idea.

Isle of Man Examiner – 27 February; Galley (IOM) – 1 March

DOVER (Kent)



The new six-screen Cineworld opened on 9 March at the St James centre. It has a total of 909 seats with the largest screen seating 237. {57332}

Dover Mercury – 7 March; East Kent Mercury – 14 March; Dover Express – 15 March; sent in by Martin Tapsell and Wilf Watters [photo]

DUBLIN (Ireland)

The Tivoli Theatre, expected to be demolished and redeveloped, still seems to be operating as a music venue.

The Carlton Cinema in O'Connell St, closed since 1994, and the subject of many redevelopment plans, all of which came to nothing, is to be the subject of revised proposals to be drawn up by ACME Architects for UK developers Hammersons. Previous plans including actually moving the façade of the Carlton up the street as an entrance to a shopping mall. While shopping is also likely to be the focus of any new redevelopment, any future cinema development here seems unlikely.

The Screen Cinema is currently being demolished. {11607}

All above Dublin items sent in & photos by Bob Bradshaw

The Stella in Rathmines has reopened after an 18 month refurbishment. External cladding has been removed, revealing the original 1920s façade. Their website [stellatheatre.ie] has some nice pictures. See p25 Bulletin 51/6. {22364}

Sunday Times Ireland – 18 February

**Seven more pages of Cinema News
in the full Bulletin**

LETTERS

BACK TO THE LONDON PALLADIUM

I found Ron Knee's article *Memories of the London Palladium – Part 2* and the beautifully reproduced photographs that accompanied it, one of the most interesting and fascinating pieces I've enjoyed for a long time. The **Palladium** has been my favourite theatre for a very long time and Ron's vivid and detailed recollections of the building and his time there was a real tonic. It was the regular Sunday night TV broadcasts from the theatre which first attracted my interest as a youngster and my first visit to the **Palladium** was to see *London Laughs*, the twice-nightly spectacular review of 1966 with which Ron was heavily involved technically. For me it was love at first sight and everything about the huge and handsome theatre I'd only known through TV made for a memorable experience. Here was Frank Mat-cham's masterpiece 'in the flesh' and in all its crimson and gold and marble magnificence. The show was wonderful and starred Harry Secombe, Thora Hird and Freddie Frinton, Jimmy Tarbuck, Russ Conway and 'introduced' singer, Anita Harris but it was the theatre that made the experience so special for me. Stage lighting is an interest of mine and the rig at the **Palladium** was always going to be impressive as in many big theatres but the Argyll Street venue had a particularly marvellous installation – at Ron's hands – so as to provide the lighting for TV and, in the future, colour TV. I suspect Ron and I are 'fellow spirits' where the **Palladium** is concerned and his memories of working there made me somewhat envious but also evoked memories of so much about the place which, all these years later, I find conspicuous by their absence now that the **Palladium** has become, in the main, just another large London theatre for staging book musicals rather than the variety for which it was created. The burgundy velour swag house tabs with their deep, gold bullion fringe, the five riser micro-phones, the stage revolves and 'tapper boards' (tongue-in-groove stage floorboards several feet wide and set at right angles to the stage front for making the most of the once popular tap dancers in variety shows), all features long gone.

Although living in Yorkshire, I was back at the **Palladium** to enjoy the theatre's first book musical *Golden Boy* from a few rows back in the orchestra stalls. It was a packed matinée performance and I was lucky, Sammy Davis Junior did appear on that occasion! Not only was the show fantastic but, as the audience was leaving and I remained in my seat taking in the wonders of the auditorium, Sammy Davis came through the closed curtains, sat on the edge of the stage, unlit and unaccompanied and sang *What Kind Of Fool Am I* – what a bonus. Ron clearly remembers that troubled run. Several years later, I worked for Moss Empires as assistant manager of their other West End house, the **Victoria Palace**, later managing their **Bristol Hippodrome** and, although I never officially worked at the **Palladium**, I have spent a lot of time there and lost count of the number of shows and artists I've seen there since.

Times have changed; variety on the scale remembered has gone and technology has moved on. Moss Empires is no more and ownership has changed and, ridiculously, the annual Royal Variety Performance has even been held at the **Royal Albert Hall** some years, which is a concert hall, not a theatre. The same has happened with the Royal Film Performance of course when the two prestigious charity events never looked better than when presented at the **Palladium** and **Odeon Leicester Square** respectively. For all these reasons, to Ron, "Thank you for penning such an interesting and evocative article which I for one will cherish" and to Harry, "Thank you for so skilfully configuring Ron's article and photographs". The piece is a historically valuable document on the technicalities and operation of such an important theatre.

James Bettley

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

STATE GRAYS

I'm concerned we should get the story right on what is happening to the organ at the **State Grays** when it becomes a Wetherspoons, as the entry for it on page 23 of the Jan/Feb Bulletin is a bit misleading (not Margaret Burgoine's fault as she only sent you what the muddled *Thurrock Gazette* had reported) and unfortunately Tim in the March/April edition does not specifically mention the organ. Anyway, the console is not to be "left to sit on the stage" but will remain in the orchestra pit but most likely in the 'up' position on its lift and a new balustrade modelled on existing ones elsewhere in the building will run along the front of the stage to prevent people falling down.

Richard Gray

ODEON RELICS PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECT



I'm a new CTA member, although I'm not sure why it's taken me so long to join! I've been a keen admirer of historic cinemas for some years and regularly try to track down and photograph those from the inter-war years when visiting new areas of the country. Having received and thoroughly enjoyed, my first copies of your magazine, I thought I'd drop you a line to let you know about a project I'm currently undertaking.

I have (as I'm sure many other members do), a particular weakness for Odeons of the 1930s. Whilst many other cinemas from the period often display the hallmarks and charm of this ground-breaking period in architecture, the designs produced for Oscar were (to my eyes) the most astonishing. I consider the vast majority of cinemas built for the chain in the period 1935-39 to be masterpieces, the frontage of each offering a fascinating new slant on flamboyant English modernism. As such, last year, with the aid of Allen Eyles' indispensable pair of CTA books (bolstered with various websites), I found myself putting together a spreadsheet of the surviving structures built for Oscar during his lifetime. From this, I set myself the task of following in John Maltby's footsteps, visiting and photographing each.

The project, provisionally called 'Odeon Relics' is of an ongoing nature. Approaching the halfway mark (hopefully complete this time next year). I have identified 57 sites (including 3 hangovers from the 50s) that either survive, or have enough remaining elements to warrant a photograph. Obviously the condition and use for each varies dramatically but makes an interesting study, even when one often doesn't approve of what has come to pass. I'm focussing on producing one single vibrant colour exterior image from each location, often taken from the same aspect as John's original period shots. I'm only an amateur but I hope to display the final series as a small exhibition, in addition to producing a limited number of books. I've attached one of my favourite shots to date but a full set to date can be seen here... [artdecomagpie.com/portfolio/odeon-relics]

Philip Butler

Three more pages of letters
in the full Bulletin

MISCELLANY

THSA PURCHASE



The Theatre Historical Society of America (THS) has purchased the Hollywood Theater in the Dormont suburb of Pittsburgh, PA. The building dates from 1925 and THS aims to continue operating the theatre as a community resource by showing movies, hosting programmes and community events while “bringing showmanship back to Main Street!” {4730}

Sent in by Jeremy Buck

A SIGN OF THE TIMES

Queues for the ladies' at the theatre are a nightmare. Old-fashioned 19th Century theatres were not built with conveniences in mind. So it was to be hoped that the spanking new Bridge Theatre in London, which has just opened, would have dealt with that problem. But no. At a packed matinée I found myself in a long loo queue, anxiously counting the minutes. To make matters worse there was a sign – a circle with some arrows coming off it – that seemed to indicate that it was also open to anyone who “identified” as a woman. I think that's what it was. Or it could have been directions to the Old Street roundabout?



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.

CINEMA BUSINESS

EVERYMAN EXPANDS

Everyman revenues rose 37% to £40.6m in 2017 as the operator expanded to 22 venues. Pre-tax profits climbed from £540,000 to £1.6m. Their average ticket price increased by 3% to £11.28. The firm is to spend £3.2m transforming the former Rialto/Granada in London's Upper Norwood into a four-screen cinema, which is expected to open later this year – see p21 last Bulletin.

Evening Standard – 14 March

CINEWORLD SALES

Cineworld reported an 11.6% rise in revenues to £890.7m in the year to 31 December, with pre-tax profits growing 22.7% to £120.5m. Box office sales were up 6.4% to £553.7m and retail sales jumped 11.1% to £220.4m. The average ticket price was £6.51, compared to £6.25 the previous year. The company opened 109 new cinema screens in the UK and Ireland in 2017.

Evening Standard – 15 March; Daily Mail – 16 March; sent in by Margaret Burgoine, John R Forster, Tom Laughlan & Barry Quinton

VUE LOSSES

Blockbuster films such as *La La Land* and *Beauty and the Beast* could not stop Vue cinemas posting a fifth consecutive annual pre-tax loss. Sales rose to £790.2m in the year while the loss declined from £103.4m to £92.8m, according to accounts filed in April. The chain, which has 212 sites across Europe, blamed high interest payments.

The Sunday Times 15 April 2018; sent in by Allen Eyles

ODEON PLANS

Odeon is gearing up to make its debut on the London Stock Exchange in a £1.4bn listing. The cinema chain's US parent AMC Entertainment is said to have appointed bankers at Citi to work on an initial public offering. AMC chief Adam Aron said last year it was considering floating a minority stake in Odeon but planned majority ownership. AMC has been investing in Odeon, as well as fitting cinemas with reclining seats and selling alcohol. Bidders were said to be circling after AMC suffered a £32m loss in the three months to September.

Daily Mail – 22 March; sent in by Geoff Gill & Barry Quinton

ODEON MOVES

Odeon is moving its UK headquarters to #8 First Street in Manchester. The new offices are almost opposite the new HOME arts cinema complex. The chain has opened seven refurbished 'Luxe' cinemas since October 2017 and was placed 25 in the *Sunday Times* list of best places to work in the UK.

Sent in by Carl Chesworth

BINGO PROFITS WARNING

Mecca Bingo owner Rank has issued a profits warning. It now expects full-year operating profits of £76m-£78m, compared with previous analysts' estimates of £85m. The shares fell more than 15% to 180p on the news. Revenues at the bingo halls dropped 2%. Cold weather and squeezed wages have been blamed for the downturn.

Daily Telegraph – 6 April; sent in by Carl Chesworth

ALCOHOL BAN OVERTURNED

Showcase Cinemas was refused a licence to sell alcohol at its Coatbridge (North Lanark) multiplex after Police Scotland objected to the proposals. It is believed the ban was the first of its kind at a cinema anywhere in the UK. The chain's parent company, National Amusements, challenged the decision by North Lanarkshire Council's licensing board at Hamilton Sheriff Court, insisting that it was a draconian measure. The Sheriff ruled in the cinema firm's favour, stating that the licensing board was unable to justify the concerns that prompted the ban in the first place. The Sheriff ruled the cinema should be granted a licence to sell alcohol at all screenings after 7pm.

The Scotsman – 1 March; Daily Record – 2 March; sent in by Tom Laughlan

**More Business News and titbits
in the full Bulletin**

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Memorandum of Agreement made the 21st day of November, 19 31

BETWEEN NATIONAL SCREEN SERVICE LIMITED (hereinafter called
"the Renter" of the one part, and Messrs. H. & G. Croneen,
21-23, High Street, GILLINGHAM, Kent.

(hereinafter called the "Exhibitor" of the other part
WHEREBY IT IS AGREED: that the Renter shall let and the Exhibitor
shall hire subject to the conditions on the back hereof Synchronised Motion
Picture Screen Announcements (hereinafter referred to as "Trailers")
of Synchronised Motion Picture Feature Photoplays which the Exhibitor
shall accept at the PLAZA Theatre Duncan Road, Town
(or district) GILLINGHAM, Kent.

This agreement is for a period beginning on the 12th day of November 1931 and may be terminated by either party at
the end of the third month thereafter upon giving two weeks' prior notice
by registered post and unless so terminated shall continue from year to
year until terminated by not less than sixty days' notice by registered post
expiring on the 11th day of November in any year.

The Exhibitor shall accept not less than 52 Trailers per annum and shall
pay to the Renter weekly the following rentals:

£2. 0s. 0d per week for the Special Combined Service
as set out in our letter dated May 7th, 1931.

If during the currency of this agreement the Renter's Standard Contract
Price for Trailers shall be reduced the Exhibitor shall have the benefit of
such reduction from the date of its coming into force.

DATE SOUND TRAILERS REQUIRED	ACTUAL PLAY DATE OF PICTURE	NAME OF PICTURE	FILM OR DISC	RELEASED BY	OUR NUMBER
<u>Nov 9</u>	<u>Nov 12</u>	<u>The Sea God</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>Lasky</u>	
	<u>16</u>	<u>The Catissian</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>International Production</u>	
	<u>19</u>	<u>A Playboy of Hours</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>Lasky</u>	
	<u>" 23</u>	<u>Hells Angels (week)</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>United Artists</u>	
	<u>" 30</u>	<u>Mothers Millions</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>Universal</u>	
	<u>Dec 3</u>	<u>The Devil to Pay</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>United Artists</u>	

AS WITNESS, the hands of the parties hereto, the day and year first above written

A. H. Nye.

Renter's Representative.

Signature of Exhibitor.

Signature of Director on behalf of the Company.

(CONDITIONS OF HIRE SEE BACK)

Sent in by Carl Chesworth