



CINEMA
THEATRE
ASSOCIATION

www.cta-uk.org

BULLETIN

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The two-screen Tower Skegness, which has had a £500,000 refurbishment – see Newsreel p17; photo taken May 2004



The Regent at Redcar (Cleveland), which has been forced to close due to structural problems – see Newsreel p17; photo taken June 2006

FROM YOUR EDITOR

Thank you all for continuing to send items for the Bulletin. I have more room for holiday snaps this time. I still have a few in stock but I could always do with more – don't forget to photograph any fine-looking cinemas whilst you are on holiday, especially in interesting locations.

This Bulletin is a bit thinner than of late. I have a few small articles held over but I didn't want to put too many similar pieces together. As I write this, the heatwave is in full swing and I know we would all rather be outside than sitting in front of a word processor – although I know some of you still use manual typewriters or even quill pens. Still, an article or two would be welcome. Please try to include photos.

From time to time I get press cuttings about buildings that are purely theatres. I will put them in if I have space but please don't be disappointed if I'm unable to include them. Everything gets sent to the Archive after I'm finished with it, anyway.

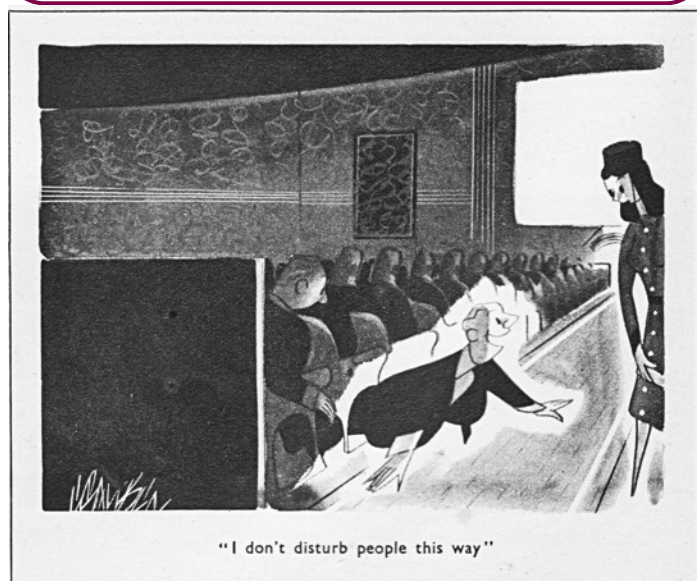


In May we went to Norfolk. We did the 'tour' of the Queen's house at Sandringham [above]. Not cheap but very interesting. The guide said that the ballroom spends much of its time as a cinema. Up in the Minstrels' Gallery is a curtained-off area, which we were told houses two projectors, "similar to those you would have found in a small town cinema", a gift of the Rank Organisation. Presumably they are a pair of Kalees. The guide didn't know any more – do any of you out there?

By the way, did you notice the seaside theme in the two photos I chose for the front cover? Talking of holidays, I am away for the whole of September. Therefore the deadline for the next edition [Sept/Oct] will have to be absolutely rigid. I'm afraid I won't be able to process anything that arrives after Wednesday 20 August. Happy holidays.

Harry Rigby, CTA Bulletin Editor

CARTOON CORNER



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

**DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE
WEDNESDAY 20 AUGUST**

CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

(Founded January 1967)

promoting serious interest in all aspects of cinema buildings

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MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Neville C Taylor [subs@cta-uk.org]

Flat One, 128 Gloucester Terrace, London, W2 6HP

Items for possible inclusion in the Bulletin should be sent to

BULLETIN EDITOR: Harry Rigby [bulletin@cta-uk.org]

65 Tennyson Avenue, Harrogate, North Yorks, HG1 3LE

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN: David Trevor-Jones † [chairman@cta-uk.org]

47 The Street, Old Basing, Basingstoke, RG24 7BX

VICE-CHAIRMAN: Ian Meyrick †

11 Tarrant Avenue, Witney, OX28 1EE

SECRETARY: Adam Unger † [honsec@cta-uk.org]

59 Harrowdene Gardens, Teddington, TW11 0DJ

TREASURER: Neville C Taylor † (details as membership secretary above)

CASEWORK COMMITTEE – Chairman: Richard Gray †

45 Arnold Road, Bow, London, E3 4NU [casework@cta-uk.org]

Members: as main committee plus Tim Hatcher,

Jane Jephcote, Mark Price, Vicky Simon, James Weir & Peter Wyld

ARCHIVIST: Clive Polden [archive@cta-uk.org]

14 Ivychurch Gardens, Cliftonville, Margate, CT9 3YG

ASSISTANT ARCHIVIST: Rachel Marks

73 Cressy House, Hannibal Road, London, E1 3JF

PUBLIC RELATIONS: Gerald Glover [publicity@cta-uk.org]

228 Malpas Road, Brockley, London, SE4 1DH

PUBLICATIONS & SALES OFFICER: Jeremy Buck †

34 Pelham Road, London, N22 6LN [sales@cta-uk.org]

WEBMASTER: Rachel Woodforde

69A Mill Street, Kidlington, Oxford, OX5 2EE [web@cta-uk.org]

VISITS CO-ORDINATOR: Ray Ritmeester [visits@cta-uk.org]

66 Woodside Road, High Wycombe, HP13 7JB

PICTURE HOUSE EDITOR: Allen Eyles [picture.house@cta-uk.org]

13 Tennyson Court, Paddockhall Road, Haywards Heath, RH16 1EZ

CTA SCOTLAND: Gordon Barr, Gary Painter [scotland@cta-uk.org]

11 Merker Terrace, Linlithgow, EH49 6DD

CTA CYMRU/WALES: John Skinner, Jon Williams [wales@cta-uk.org]

3 Swan Lane, Ystalyfera, Swansea, SA9 2JB

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Emma Beeston, Kevin Gooding, Lynda Hillman,

Tim McCullen, Sally McGrath, Ken Roe, David Simpson

Please use [info@cta-uk.org] if uncertain to whom to address an e-mail enquiry; this address will be monitored and e-mails redirected if necessary.

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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.

Typeset in Franklin Gothic Book by Harry Rigby

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

VISITS AND EVENTS

CTA Annual General Meeting 2018 Saturday 28 July

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

Getting there: The AGM venue in Alfred Gelder Street is about a 12 minute walk from Hull Paragon Station. There are direct train services to Hull from many parts of the country including London.

Apollo's Birthday Celebration and more... Mon 27 – Wed 29 August Organised by David Eve and Nick Taylor



I hope all members who kindly expressed an interest in this event have received a booking form, but there still may be room for those who wish to join us.

The Apollo Manchester staff are very enthusiastic about our visit on 29 August, but I'm still trying to get access to some other interesting venues on the 27th and 28th. I can confirm that we will be staying at our base hotel, the Holiday Inn Express, Stockport, a brand new hotel next door to Stockport train station on the main London Euston to Manchester rail line. Members booking a rail tickets should however book a return ticket to Manchester as we will end the trip there.

Monday 27 August is a Bank Holiday so we would ask members to get to Stockport by 15:00 and we will hopefully include a visit to the new Light Cinema there with an evening visit to the Plaza Stockport.

I'm planning a coach trip on Tuesday hopefully to Liverpool with stops on the way and we will be in Greater Manchester on Wednesday morning. Our visit to the Apollo will begin at 12:30 with a lunch and then we will have a few hours to explore the building, see some film and cut a celebration cake to mark this amazing old cinema's 80th birthday.

The trip will formally end at the Apollo, so members travelling by train will be able to depart Manchester Piccadilly by 16:00.

There is an option for local members to attend the Apollo visit on its own and this is included on the booking form. Although the Apollo Management have given us the building on the day there has been materials expense by the CTA in trying to get the projectors working, so there will be a charge for those who want to attend the Apollo visit only as well as an amount included in the fee for those attending the whole event.

Editor's Note: See *Happy Birthday* p23 for a period interior photo.

Coming Soon

BFI Poster Collection visit – Tuesday 16 October

It is hoped that a visit can be arranged to the British Film Institute film poster collection, which is housed at their archive centre in Berkhamsted. A visit to the Rex Berkhamsted is also planned on the same day. If the visit is going ahead, then further details will appear in the next Bulletin.

Adam Unger

Scala Cinema King's Cross London Free visit for CTA members, 17:00-18:00 Wednesday 26 September 2018



In recognition of the access and support given to author Jane Giles in researching her forthcoming book about the history of the Scala Cinema 1978-1993, she has kindly organised a free visit to the venue for CTA members only.

The King's Cross Cinema was first proposed in 1913 with designs by architect Harry Courtney Constantine. War intervened and the cinema finally opened in 1920 as a 1,390-seat picture palace. It became a Gaumont in 1929 and then an Odeon in 1962. By 1971 the cinema was in the hands of Cinecenta. It was briefly the London Primatium before being taken over as a repertory cinema in July 1981 when the Scala lost its Charlotte Street site to the new Channel 4. The Scala cinema closed in June 1993 and is now a music venue. The cinema is obviously much changed but has retained some of its original features including the marble staircases.

Jane Giles was programme manager of the Scala from 1988-92 and will lead a tour of the former box office, foyer, circle area... and possibly the roof!

Numbers are strictly limited to 10 on a first-come basis. Please note that there are lots of stairs and no lifts or disabled access, also that the venue will be setting up for the book launch event during the tour.

To book a place send an email to [r.ritmeester@sky.com] leaving your name and phone number. Closing date for applications is 31 August. All applicants will be contacted if they are successful or not. Jane Giles will try to arrange a further visit if possible at a later date for those unsuccessful on the first round. Please do not just turn up!

Double Bill of Presentations Saturday 29 September at 5:30pm (doors open 5:00pm).

FILM MAKING IN NORTH LONDON (1895-1915)

Illustrated talk by Gerry Turvey

The talk will be an account of the major contribution film-makers in the North London area made to early British cinema. It begins with the inventors and pioneers, Birt Acres and Robert Paul at Barchin and Muswell Hill, moves on to the successful commercial producers of the early teens, like British and Colonial at East Finchley and Big Ben at Alexandra Palace and concludes with Hubert von Herkomer at Bushey, who was beginning to think of film as an art form.



Birt Acres filming the Derby in 1895

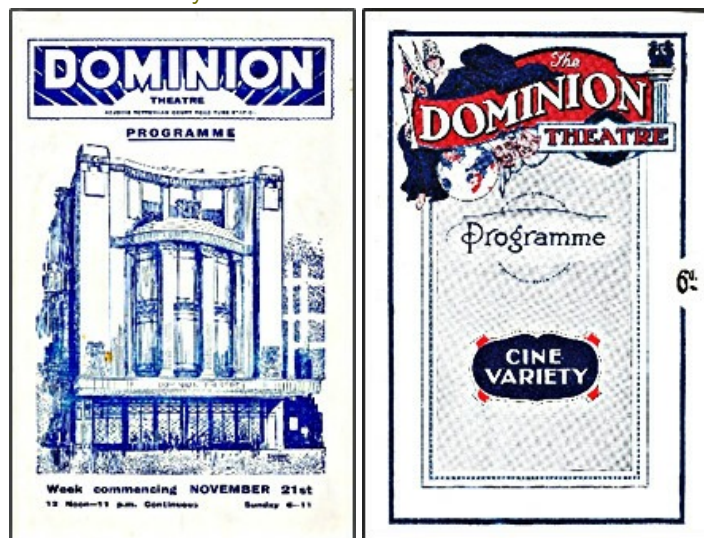
... continued overleaf

Gerry will examine the film genres these and other local producers worked in and the shift from short actualities to longer and increasingly sophisticated fiction productions.

****PLUS****

WEST END THEATRES THAT SOMETIMES SHOWED FILMS

Illustrated talk by David Smith



A programme example from the Dominion Theatre 1932

The growth of the new sensation of animated pictures ('cinema' had not been coined!) caused a revolution to the established theatre world. Some theatres were forced to diversify and include film shows, initially as a novelty turn on a variety bill and later some embraced film exhibition on a part-time or semi-permanent basis. Gradually theatre buildings evolved to suit the popular form of entertainment. By the mid-1920s this led to a new style of building designed and constructed as 'cinema-theatres' where stage shows could augment films, known as 'ciné-variety'!



The Piccadilly Theatre as the home of Vitaphone talking pictures 1929
Reproduced from the CTA Publication *London's West End Cinemas*

CTA member David Smith has researched the subject using his substantial collection of theatre programmes and postcards, supplemented with images from other collections. The talk will show a selection of London's West End theatres with examples of their use as a cinema and what films were shown.

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

Getting there: On leaving Farringdon Underground (old) station (not the Turnmill Street exit) turn left – or when leaving Farringdon Main Line (new) station, turn right – walk east 150 yards towards the 'SnappySnaps' shop. The entrance to the Gallery is opposite; walk through the large gates and across the courtyard to the far end, turn right down the steps and you're there!

Admission on the door: Members and Guests: £8 each. Includes wine, soft drinks and nibbles.

Organiser to contact: Richard Norman; tel: 0208 668 6077; Email: [RichardNormanCTA@aol.com]

Other Events of Interest [not organised by the CTA]

Details of these events are given in good faith but the editor or the CTA cannot be responsible for any inaccuracies; please check before travelling.

THE PLAZA STOCKPORT

- Friday 20 July *Book Club* (2018) [12A] at 11am
Bringing Up Baby (1938) [U] at 7:30pm
 - Saturday 21 July *Wings* (1927) [PG] with organ accompaniment 7:30pm
 - Friday 3 August *Wonder Wheel* (2017) [12A] at 11am
Moulin Rouge (1952) [PG] at 7:30pm in 35mm
 - Friday 24 August *The Leisure Seeker* (2017) [15] at 11am
For Me and My Gal (1942) [U] at 7:30pm
 - Friday 31 August *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* (2018) [12A] at 11am
Legend (2015) [18] at 7:30pm
 - Saturday 8 September *Another Fine Mess Family Day* at 2pm
Back to the Future (1985) [PG] at 6:30pm
 - Sunday 9 September *Heritage Open Day* from 10:30am free
 - Friday 14 September *Mamma Mia 2* (2018) [18 TBC] 11am & 7:30pm
 - Saturday 15 September *Organ Coffee Morning* from 10am free
- Behind the Scenes tours at 11am on Mondays 30 July & 20 August.
£7 – book or simply turn up.

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

THE REGAL EXPERIENCE, WYMONDHAM

- 2 September *Von Ryan's Express* (1965) [PG] plus
Frank Sinatra in *The House I Live In* [1945 short]

Shows on Sundays at 2:30pm at the Wymondham Ex-Service's Club (former Regal cinema) NR18 OAT [tinyurl.com/zddvkq4].

Further information from Michael Armstrong [01953 603246]

CINEMA MUSEUM OPEN DAYS

Calling all cinema enthusiasts! Step into a bygone era with a behind-the-scenes tour of the Regent Christchurch (Dorset) projection room. Enjoy a live demonstration of our 35mm projector, which has been lovingly restored by a team of loyal volunteers. The extensive collection includes countless photographic images, old cinema posters, antique cinema fixtures and more! Ideal for anyone with an appreciation for the pre-digital days.

Saturdays 11 Aug, 15 Sept, 13 Oct, 10 Nov at 10am & 11:15am.
Tickets: £5 per person. Spaces are limited to 6 per tour – book now to avoid disappointment! [tinyurl.com/y9c5r62m]

EXHIBITION: 15 September – 24 March 2019

Picture this! The 'reel' story of your local cinemas.

Discover the rise of Bexley's many cinemas since the first opened in 1912 and how the changing nature of Britain through the decades threatened their survival. You can even find out about Bexley's place on the silver screen.

At Hall Place, Bexley. Admission charged. [www.hallplace.org.uk]

INTERNET CORNER

- ★ [theregal.ac] The website of the Regal Evesham, which has an excellent 360° virtual tour
- ★ [vimeo.com/266574534] The trailer for the DVD release of *This is Cinerama* with links to others similar.
- ★ [www.letsgotothepictures.uk] A history of Doncaster cinemas.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/ycqhnaha] A *Screen Daily* feature: *Why Independent Cinemas are booming in the UK*. *Sent in by Philip Stevens*
- ★ [tinyurl.com/yzydowk] A *Nottinghamshire Live* page on the opening of the Picture House – Nottingham's most luxurious cinema – in November 1912. *Sent in by Terry Hanstock*
- ★ [tinyurl.com/yb46355h] A *Film Comment* interview with director Christopher Nolan. The *Dunkirk* director talks about the 70mm restoration of Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A Space Odyssey he oversaw and the life of celluloid. *Sent in by Terry Hanstock*
- ★ [tinyurl.com/ydaultzq] A page from the BBC: When Burnley was Britain's theatre capital. *Sent in by Philip Crompton*
- ★ [tinyurl.com/y7wcaak] About the \$75m project to restore the Uptown Theatre in Chicago. {69} *Sent in by Ken Roe*
- ★ [troxy.co.uk] The website of the Troxy in Commercial Road, East London. Has an extensive history section with many photos.

CAMPAIGNING TO SAVE YOUR HISTORIC CINEMAS

By Tim Hatcher

Grade II*

It was revealed in April that the **Electric Palace** in Harwich had been awarded £653,000 of National Lottery funding towards the cinema's repair and refurbishment. It was scheduled to close in May for a nine month period of rehabilitation. See p26 last Bulletin. {2597}

Historic England is engaging pro-actively in proposals for the future of the **Palace** in Southall; an assessor has inspected the property and agreed that its exterior requires essential maintenance. Another official of the body is to visit in order to ascertain if it merits inclusion on its Heritage at Risk Register. Concurrently a Design and Heritage Statement has been commissioned by the owner. See p5 last Bulletin.

Grade II

It has been disclosed that the **Grand** at Westbourne may become a hostelry in the JD Wetherspoon chain of such establishments. If this transpires it is to be hoped that the building is treated with the sympathetic approach accorded many of the company's earlier cinema conversions, which regrettably has been markedly lacking in certain of its recent projects. See p6 Bulletin 51/5. {22430}



The interior of the Hyde Park Picture House Leeds in June 2010

Concern arises apropos the latest set of design drawings relating to the proposed upgrade work to the **Hyde Park Picture House** in Leeds. A further site visit has been offered at which a further attempt to ameliorate the perceived injurious impact to the building will be made.

The drawings accompanying the planning and listed building consent applications regarding adaptation of the **Dominion** in Acton cause little disquiet as the intended new internal structures appear to be free-standing and thus reversible when this becomes necessary, with no impairment to the cinema's fabric. {13831}



The Savoy Burnt Oak in September 2006

The **Savoy** in Burnt oak is to be assessed for inclusion on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register. {13831}



The Curzon Mayfair in April 2009

Projected alterations to the **Curzon** in London's Mayfair envisage refurbishment of Screen ② and of the lavatorial facilities. The sole alteration advanced for Screen ① is the insertion of tables between individual seats; refreshingly, the screen tabs therein will continue to be utilised. {7507}

Unlisted

Everyman Media Group has published renderings of its proposals for the **Rialto** in Upper Norwood. The related planning application covers only the façade, alterations to which require Conservation Area Consent; the building is not listed and thus internal realignment is not subject to planning strictures. A fundamental aspiration is that the proscenium and ante-proscenium area escape modification; information has been requested from the company's chief designer. See p21 Bulletin 52/2. {28989}

The CTA has objected forcefully to the Crown Estate's application for a Certificate of Immunity from Listing pertaining to the **Carlton** in London's Haymarket. Discussions with that body are ongoing. See p32 last Bulletin and Newsreel p16 this Bulletin. {1838}

Somewhat inevitably, the development company whose planning applications for the **Regent** and **Westover** in Bournemouth were rejected, has appealed against this outcome. Objections to reversal of the original decision have been lodged by the local Civic Society and the Association.



The Regal/Odeon Rotherham in February 2005

Following cessation of bingo, the **Regal** in Rotherham is to be marketed at auction, with a guide price of £895,000. This is a distinguished building, both externally and internally, designed by Blackmore and Sykes and opened in 1934. See Newsreel p17. {18509}



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. |

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. A list of their contents was printed on p4 of Bulletin 52/2 or can be obtained by SAE or email from the Sales Officer or Bulletin Editor.

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.



ABC and Gaumont reprints

There are just a few copies left of these reprinted circuit histories, priced £17.50 each or £30 for the two. Postage £3.00 extra.

Recently Published (details in previous Bulletins)

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.

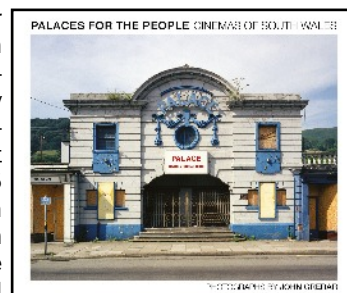
Also Available (but not from the Sales Officer)

Palaces for The People – Cinemas of South Wales

by John Crerar. 55 photographic plates, 80 pages paperback

£15 including postage from 2Ten Books (www.2tenbooks.com)

In 1996 documentary photographer John Crerar embarked on a project taking large format photographs of the cinema buildings of South Wales. He also interviewed some of the infinite numbers of people who passed through their doors. Some 20 years later John has revisited the sites and re-photographed the cinemas or, if they have been demolished, the spaces they once inhabited. The result is this book, which features 55 photographs, an essay on South Wales cinemas and extracts from interviews on cinema-going in the 1920s. Members who attended last year's South Wales tour after the AGM may recall visiting an exhibition of some of these photographs in Abertillery.



A **MUST** for your collection

CINEMAS IN BRITAIN

A History of Cinema Architecture

by Richard Gray

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

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

Special price for CTA members

£29.50 + £6.00 postage from

Jeremy Buck, CTA Sales Officer

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

HOLIDAY SNAPS



Tromsø, Norway, 22 March 2018,
daytime temperature -7C
Sent in by Giles & Rachel Woodforde



The village of Seyðisfjörður in Iceland had a little local 'museum'
which I think was more a garage full of reclaimed items no-one wanted.
Sent in by Hilary Byers via David Alexander



This is the cinema Illuminations (which also doubles as a
planetarium) on board the Cunard ship Queen Mary 2.
Sent in by Colin Pinfold via Allen Eyles



[Top:] Kinema Millenium a 300-seat single auditorium in the
centre of Tirana (Albania) and [bottom:] the Opera House,
which is a crumbling communist building.

Sent in by Malcolm Davis



[L:] The Kino Gdynia, Poland
[R:] São Jorge cinema Lisbon, Portugal

According to Cinema Treasures it was built by the Rank Organisation
between 1947 and 1950. I believe it is still open.

Sent in by Malcolm Davis

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

REWINDING BACK

Sent in by David A Ellis

NEW PICTURE HOUSE, ARBROATH



The Picture House Arbroath in September 2006

The New Picture House in Arbroath opened on Christmas day 1930 with the film *Chasing Rainbows*. The opening ceremony was by the Lord Provost, Sir William Chapel JP. Opening prices were one shilling and threepence, one shilling, ninepence and sixpence. There was seating for 1,036 with around 300 occupying the balcony. Projection was provided by Kalee equipment with Western Electric Sound. Access to the projection area was not from inside the building. Heating was supplied by gas radiators and a Keith Blackman system of ventilation continuously changed the air. Local firm William Morrison carried out the plaster and cement work. It was stated that the auditorium had wide aisles and there was no cramping. It went on to say that the building can be emptied either to the High Street or to Hill Place, at the rear, in a few minutes. [23217]

Courier & Advertiser – 23 December 1930

MANAGERIAL CHANGES AT BURNLEY REGAL AND ALHAMBRA

The interesting announcement is made that Mr PJH Cobb, the former assistant manager of the Savoy cinema, has been appointed manager of the Regal Picture Hall. A further change is announced in connection with the Alhambra, where Mr WJ Wright has been appointed manager. They will be pleased to welcome both old and new patrons at their respective cinemas. As from 28 December, the Alhambra will revert to three separate performances daily at 2:30, 6:30 and 8:45, at the following reduced prices of admission, which include tax: afternoons, all stalls 4d, balcony 5d; evenings, stalls 4d & 6d, balcony 7d; seats booked for balcony 9d.

Burnley News – 23 December 1931

OPERATORS' VIEWS

Colonel WCC Gell, on behalf of the Birmingham Court of the Guild of British Cinematograph Projectionists and Technicians (to which organisation a considerable percentage of operators in the City belong) emphasised the importance of its being a definite condition that an operator that an operator should not be employed on more than one Sunday in four. To them, a weekday off was not adequate compensation for the loss of a Sunday. Some operators might find themselves in the awkward position of being told that if they were not prepared to work two Sundays a month they could find a job elsewhere. He thought the Exhibitors' Association would have to recognise that they would need a pool of operators to carry on Sunday opening.

Birmingham Daily Gazette – 18 November 1932

LONDON PAVILION TO BE MODERN CINEMA.

Completely reconstructed internally, the London Pavilion Theatre will be reopened as a modern cinema next Wednesday. This is another stage in the history of this famous old house of entertainment. Its greatest days were in the eighteen nineties when Arthur Roberts, Dan Leno, Little Tich, Vesta Tilley, Chirgwin, Eugene Stratton, Gus Elen, Harry Lauder, Marie Lloyd, Vesta Victoria, George Robey and many other famous artists appeared.

Western Daily Press and Bristol Mirror – 31 August 1934

CINEMA CEILING COLLAPSE

During an afternoon performance at the Tatler News Cinema in Liverpool yesterday, part of the ceiling near the screen collapsed and six members of the audience were struck over the head by pieces of plaster. The lights were turned on and the performance stopped. The injured people were taken to the Northern Hospital, where three were detained. After the ceiling had been inspected by the Fire Brigade to see whether the building was free from danger, the performance was continued. Alderman Edwin Haigh, one of the proprietors of the cinema, said the accident was not a serious one and they were carrying on. There was no panic.

Yorkshire Post – 3 April 1934

FILM RENTERS CLAIM AGAINST PROPRIETORS

Messrs Loader and Beanland, cinema proprietors of the Pavilion Cleveleys (Lancs) were sued at Westminster County Court today by Butcher's Film Service Ltd, film renters of Wardour Street, London, for £9, the estimated percentage on net takings lost by the plaintiffs through non-fulfilment of a contract to exhibit certain films. It was stated that the films were not exhibited and the cinema was closed in March. For the plaintiffs it was stated that the claim was based on the receipt figures of similar cinemas. Judge Dumas; "Where is Cleveleys? Is it a seaside place?" "It is near Blackpool." was the reply. Judge Dumas: "Then the cinema was probably in competition with greater productions, though on wet nights people might sooner go there than Blackpool. If you choose to enter into contacts with no guarantee as to minimum payment you are in great difficulty if it is left to a cinema that finds its prosperity dwindling. However, the defendants have not chosen to come and defend the action." Judgement was given for the amount claimed and costs.

Lancashire Evening Post – 11 October 1934

ELITE CINEMA MANAGING DIRECTOR DIES

News was received in Nottingham today of the death of Mr Walter Bentley, managing director of the Elite Picture Theatre (Nottingham) Ltd, which occurred in London early today. His passing will be regretted by the many friends he made during the two years he lived in Nottingham. He had been ill only a few days. Mr Bentley, who controlled a number of cinemas, was 59 and had been connected with the stage and agency business for over 40 years. He started as a comedian but as his agency business grew, so he abandoned his turn. He was very interested in racing and owned several horses. Among the entertainment houses in regard to which Mr Bentley occupied the position of managing director, besides the Nottingham Elite were the Elite Middlesbrough, Scala Middlesbrough, Central Folkestone, Playhouse Folkestone and the Luxor Eastbourne. It was in 1924 that Mr Bentley became managing director of the Elite, shortly after the cinema had been reconstructed. He was invited by the directors to take the position and it was due to his enterprise and foresight that the house became one of the premier entertainment houses in the City. Today the flag floated at half-mast over the Elite.

Nottingham Evening Post – 12 September 1935

COMPETITION PRICE DROPS

To coincide with the opening of the new Odeon in Horsham, the Union Kinema Company announces changes at the four halls controlled by them. Price reductions have been made at the Carfax and the Winter Gardens. The Capitol is to present kiné-variety programmes and may well-known acts having been booked. This week at the Capitol, Archie and his Juvenile Band form the attraction. At the Ritz, Harold Ramsey, broadcasting organist, is performing daily. The new Odeon, opened last night by Earl Winterton, has AN Beadle as its manager. At the opening performance, Jack Payne and his band appeared.

The Stage – 8 October 1936

IN THE NICK OF TIME

Only sixteen minutes before it was due to be opened this morning by the Mayor (Alderman T Summerbell) Sunderland's newest cinema The Regent at Grangetown had no licence. In the rush of preparing the hall for the opening, the most important point of all had been overlooked. A special meeting of the town's Watch committee was hurriedly summoned at 10:30 am and in fifteen minutes it had completed the necessary formalities and the licence was granted. At 11am the Mayor appeared on the stage to perform the opening. It was said that

the magistrate would like it to be known that this is not to be taken as a precedent. Regulations are made to be carried out, not broken. The application was made in the name of Mr Thomas Thompson, by Mr S Hannay, solicitor, of South Shields, who apologised for not giving the required fourteen days' notice, explaining that in the rush of completing the cinema for today's opening, the matter was overlooked. I ask you to dispense with the notice, added Mr Hannay, saying that his client intended no discourtesy and was always anxious to comply with the law in every way.

Sunderland Daily Echo & Shipping Gazette – 31 May 1937

QUEEN MARY AT CINEMA OPENING

Queen Mary will attend the World Première of *The Great Barrier*, the Gaumont-British film on Canada, which will be given in aid of the Safer Motherhood Appeal, at the opening of the Gaumont Haymarket on 4 February. The *Capitol*, which formerly stood on this site, has been transformed into a luxurious house. It will seat 1,300, as compared with the *Capitol's* 1,550. Another Gaumont Palace, at Regent's Park, will be opened on 23 January.

The Era – 13 January 1937

STEEL FOR TWELVE ODEONS

A large and representative audience gathered at Warrington's newest cinema, the Odeon, on Monday evening, when it was officially opened by Sir Peter and Lady Rylands, supported by the Mayor of Warrington (Councillor Turner Cooper JP) and the Mayoress, Miss Cooper. Sir Peter Rylands gave a hearty welcome to the Odeon and during the course of his remarks said that the contract had been given to Warrington to supply the steel for a dozen more Odeon theatres in various parts of the country. WC Elcock, one of the directors, paid a tribute to the way in which the local authorities had cooperated with the builders. After bouquets had been presented to Lady Rylands and the Mayoress, a collection was taken for the Infirmary. The Band of the 15/19 The King's Royal Hussars gave a musical interlude while the feature film was *East Meets West* starring George Arliss. After the performance a reception was held in the auditorium and there was dancing on stage.

The Era – 13 January 1937

SUPPORT FOR CINEMA PROJECTIONISTS

The cinema strike was taken a stage further today when nearly fifty electricians at the Gainsborough Film Studios, Islington, London, ceased work in sympathy with the strike of projectionists in London, Manchester and Hull. Work on the spy film *Lost Lady*, which is being directed by Alfred Hitchcock, was held up and more than 200 people, including Paul Lukas, the Hollywood actor, Margaret Lockwood and Dame May Whitty had a day of enforced idleness in consequence. An official of Gainsborough Pictures told a *Sunderland Echo* representative, "We are prepared to stop production until the men come to their senses and return to work." Meanwhile, the picketing of cinemas in the affected districts continues but has not resulted in the closing of any halls or had even a slight effect on business.

Sunderland Echo – 19 April 1938

BIRMINGHAM CINEMAS TO CLOSE AT NINE

All theatres, music halls, cinemas and public dance halls in Birmingham will close at 9pm from tomorrow. This decision was reached at a conference of the interests concerned with the Public Entertainments Committee this afternoon. It applies to suburban as well as 'in-town' cinemas. New hours of closing were fixed for one month; the position will then be reviewed in the light of war developments. Licences for places of entertainment will now run from 10am instead of noon, as at present. Sunday hours for cinemas are to be 3pm to 8pm.

Evening Despatch – 2 December 1940

23 CINEMAS TO BECOME MUSIC HALLS

Twenty three cinemas, comprising the Buxton Theatre Circuit, are to become Music Halls. The turn-over from films to revues, variety and road shows has been decided by Mr Harry Buxton of the Gaiety theatre in Manchester, owner of the Buxton circuit. It is understood that Mr Buxton was so impressed by the support he received from the public when he staged a pantomime at King's Lynn (Norfolk) that he felt there was a big future for the music hall in the provinces. The first changes will be made at the Pilot King's Lynn, the Scala and the Gaiety Manchester, the Palace Burnley, the Riviera Tynemouth [sic], the Empire Bradford, the Regal cinemas at Bolton, Blackburn and Grantham, the Queen's Ashton-under-Lyne and the Hippodrome Colne. Changes in the rest of the circuit will be made as soon as possible.

Coventry Evening Telegraph – 3 April 1945

CHILDREN AND SUNDAY CINEMAS

The action of Wednesbury (Staffs) Corporation in putting an absolute ban on the attendance of any child under 15 at cinema shows on Sundays was opposed by Associated Provincial Picture Houses Ltd, who control the Gaumont cinema, Walsall Street, Wednesbury in the Court of Appeal today. Before Mr Justice Henn Collins on 28 February, the cinema company claimed a declaration that the Corporation had no power to impose such a ban. His Lordship declined to make the declaration and the company appealed against this decision. Mr Constantine Gallop KC for the appellants, submitted that the only test that could be applied in this case was whether the party attacking the condition that was imposed could induce the court to take the view that it was unreasonable.

The Master of the Rolls (Lord Green): "Supposing a local authority had imposed a condition that nobody with red hair should be admitted on Sundays, would a court hold that that was reasonable?" Mr Gallop said he thought not. It would be manifestly unreasonable. "The argument for the appellants," he said, "is that where the electors have by a substantial majority voted in favour of Sunday openings, it is going beyond the bounds of what is reasonable or prudent to prohibit a father or mother from taking their children to the pictures. Mr Maurice Fitzgerald KC, for the Corporation, observed that the poll had nothing to do with the admittance of children to cinemas.

Northern Daily Mail – 7 November 1947

YOU CAN'T KEEP YOUR HEAD STILL WITH CINEMASCOPE



CinemaScope, introduced to Britain yesterday in *The Robe* at the Odeon Leicester Square is a great improvement on 3D. You do not have to wear special glasses but it still retains some irritating defects. *The Robe*, on an indefinite run, is presented on the widest of wide screens and the ever-turning heads of the audience reminded me of Wimbledon. The third dimension is not nearly so pronounced as when seen with glasses but it is quite enough to be appreciated. What disappoints me most is the lack of shallow and deep focus picture definition. Backgrounds and foregrounds blur to a marked extent but it can be expected that this infant prodigy of the screen will progress and develop with time. *The Robe* will be seen in Birmingham on 11 January.

Birmingham Gazette – 20 November 1953

ODEON HAYMARKET OPENS

On 4 June, the new luxurious Odeon Haymarket of the Rank Organisation, will become only the second big cinema to open in the West End since the end of the war. Situated in an office block on the site of the old Gaumont (which in its turn replaced the Capitol) the cinema reflects the changing trends in the film world. It has only 600 seats compared with the Gaumont's 1,300 and is designed to impress with comfort. Chosen to open the new cinema is a film very much in the current cinema fashion. For *Barabbas* is a big, lavish Biblical epic and one of the best in this well-populated category. It is made in wide-screen and Technicolor. Another pointer to the way things are going is that the film was made in Rome, now claiming to be rivalling Hollywood, under the direction of Dino de Laurentis, an Italian whose plans are as grandiose as any dreamed of in Hollywood. *Barabbas*, which was directed by Richard Fleischer, is released in Britain by Columbia through BLC films.

With a screenplay by Christopher Fry, based on the novel by Pär Lagerkvist, the epic tells the story of Barabbas, the thief released by public acclaim instead of Christ. It traces his career as, burdened by and uncomprehended guilt, he sees the Crucifixion, is arrested again, spends many years in the appalling sulphur mines of Sicily and becomes a gladiator in Rome. Finally he joins the Christians, accused of setting the City on fire, awaiting death in the Roman capital. Chief merits of the film are a magnificent performance by Anthony Quinn as the brutish, brutal but sympathetic Barabbas, struggling towards comprehension of a world outside his sensed and one of the most exciting gladiatorial combats ever filmed, that between Torvald the champion gladiator and Barabbas.

The Sphere – 26 May 1962

NOSTALGIA TRIP

By Wilf Watters

Have you ever had a nostalgia trip? Well I do from time to time. Going back many years to my youth, I remember the cinemas that I went to.



Starting at Kentish Town in North London, there remains the main structure of the **Palace** built in 1913 and a part of the **Gaumont** circuit; the side and original end remain but the inside was gutted and is now offices. Opposite was the run-down **Gaisford** of which only the street name still exists.



Further on is the huge **Forum**, which means a lot to me as both my parents worked there many years ago. Dad played the organ (which I'm told is still there) and mum was an usherette. It has survived due to HMV running pop concerts until recently.

Moving on, we come to quiet Tufnell Park. I say quiet because as an inner London road junction there's very light traffic. On one corner is the Tube station, still in its 1907 condition [R top]. It has just two lifts still. It was built in ruby-red terracotta by a Leslie Green, who was the leading architect of his day. On one corner, to the right an imposing hotel, is a not-very-interesting brick building [R bottom] which brought moving pictures to Tufnell Park. It was the **Electric Theatre** of 1909. It wasn't in use then, in my day.



Just up Junction Road was where I spent the War days, an uncompleted **Odeon** was started in 1939 but requisitioned when the Blitz came, for storing furniture from bombed houses. I remember seeing food arriving in boxes just across the road from a water storage tank mounted on the pavement for fighting fires.



Going on up Junction Road we come to the **Archway**. Here was the end of the Northern Line and boasted escalators. We slept on the north-bound platform; I spent many nights sheltering from the bombing outside, with my mum who was terrified with them. Before that we went to the pictures at the **Electric Palace** [above] at the bottom of Highgate Hill, popping into the café next door to collect sandwiches to take down to the platform. The **Electric Palace** was opened in 1912 and took ABC programmes. It closed in 1958. I well remember an usherette walking down the aisle spraying perfume around!



Nearby was the **Electric Pavilion** [above L], opened in 1910. This lasted as a ballroom until recent years when all traces of it had disappeared. Opposite is still a relic from the early years of the 1900s – a single decker horse tram depot entrance, to this day still containing track and even a point [above R].



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CINEMA BUSINESS

UK MARKET SHARE

In 2016 Cineworld was ranked as the largest chain in the UK with 25.4% of the market share. Odeon was second with 24.3% and Vue came in third with 20.4% of the audience.

The Herald, Plymouth – 19 April

CINEWORLD PROFITS

Cineworld reported a turnover of £890.7 million for 2017, up 11.6% and a pre-tax profit of £120.5 million, up 22.7%. Admissions grew 3.5% to 103.8 million and the chain opened nine new cinemas, four in the UK, adding 109 screens, bringing the total number to 2,217. However, UK sales have suffered a 2.1% drop since the start of 2018.

The Herald, Plymouth – 19 April; Daily Mirror, Daily Mail – 17 May; sent in by Barry Quinton

VUE FIGURES

Vue's annual report and statement for the year ended 30 November 2017 show a pre-tax loss of £92.759 million; this is the fifth year running it has posted a loss. Admissions in the UK and Ireland were up 0.3% to 187 million punters in 2017, the highest for five years. Turnover was up 4.1% to £246.3 million. The chain has 1,904 screens in 10 countries with 212 sites across Europe.

The Herald, Plymouth – 19 April

Canadian company Alberta Investment Management is seeking a buyer for its 37% stake in Vue. This will likely mean that plans for a stock market float will be delayed for up to a year.

City AM – 15 June

VUE IRISH ACQUISITIONS

Vue Cinemas has acquired two multiplexes operated by Showtime in Ireland, one in Limerick City and one in Ashbourne near Dublin.

Sent in by Bob Bradshaw

DOUBLE GONG



The Odeon Luxe at Glasgow Quay has won awards for *Best Cinema Experience* and *Best Odeon* in the UK.

Glasgow Evening Times – 14 June; photo taken December 2006

QUEEN HONOURS CINEMA MAN

Steve Reynolds, the man who helped reopen the Maxime in Blackwood (Caerphilly) was awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for services to the UK cinema industry. His company programmes 160 screens across the UK and he is credited with helping save cinemas in over 50 towns.

Caerphilly Observer – 27 June

SOUPED-UP CINEMA

Dolby and Odeon have formed a partnership to launch seven of the first Dolby Cinema sites in the UK over the next few years. The high-tech cinemas will showcase Dolby's laser projection systems, high-grade optics, HDR and ATMOS sound.

Metro – 15 June; sent in by Tom Laughlan

T2 FILM PIRATE GUILTY

Police swooped on a film pirate as he tried to record *Trainspotting 2* at the Vue cinema at The Fort in Glasgow in February last year. He is only the second person in Scotland to be convicted of an offence under the Copyright Design Patents Act 1988 – the last received three years' probation.

Daily Record – 26 May; sent in by Tom Laughlan



Moving down the Holloway Road were several early cinemas – long gone. We come to the magnificent Gaumont (now a multiscreen Odeon) [bottom last column]. Inside, the impressive entrance hall [above] reminds visitors of the way cinemas welcomed customers I spent many a days in a queue waiting for the shows. I saw *Snow White* etc there before the theatre was badly damaged by a Flying Bomb in 1944.



Nearby was the smelly Marlborough Music Hall, I say smelly – it was because you could smell the secondary lighting system, which was still gas powered! It was my local Odeon theatre. But JA Rank closed it down because the magnificent Astoria at Finsbury Park was not far away and ran Odeon programmes.



Another Music Hall, at Camden Town, was the Bedford. I visited this in later years as it was holding ballets etc. The orchestra pit was so small that they could only fit in two grand pianos. I filmed the theatre being demolished in 1968 [above].

I should like to thank the staff at Islington Public libraries – especially the local history centre there. Photos from them and my collection.

NEWSREEL

The items in this section are taken mainly from press cuttings from local newspapers; there may be minor errors in reporting dates or other detail.

Photos by Harry Rigby within entry, except where stated.

A number in curly brackets {nnnn} is the reference for the Cinema Treasures website. Go to: [\[cinematreasures.org/theaters/nnnn\]](http://cinematreasures.org/theaters/nnnn)

ABINGDON (Oxon)

The Council has approved permission for the Guildhall to be used as a cinema. It is expected to be open for the release of *Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again* in July. See p18 last Bulletin.

Oxford Mail – 30 April

BARNESLEY (South Yorks)

Cineworld has signed a 20-year lease to run the new thirteen-screen cinema being built at The Glass Works development. There will be over 2,000 seats including a full-height 450-seat Super Screen. The site is in the town centre, just across the road from the two-screen Parkway (ex Odeon). No opening date has been given.

Barnsley Chronicle – 11 May; sent in by Carl Chesworth

BASILDON (Essex)

Empire has been chosen as the operator of a new ten-screen cinema to be built at East Square. No time scale has been given.

Basildon Echo – 12 June

BATH (North Somerset)

Plans have been submitted to convert Jimmy's Grill in Dorchester Street into a cinema. Two operators are interested and one of them is seeking to provide a two to four-screen cinema with bar and restaurant.

Bath Chronicle – 3 May

BEESTON (Notts)

A new cinema is proposed for a site off Station Road. If planning permission is granted, work could start in 2019 and be completed in 2020.

Nottingham Post – 16 April

BELFAST

A 20 minute documentary film has been produced about the now-demolished Curzon on Ormeau Road. Former cinema-goers, employees and locals share memories of the cinema, which opened in December 1936 and closed in April 1999; it was demolished in 2003. The film premiered at the Queen's Film Theatre. {25363}

Belfast Telegraph – 28 May

BIRMINGHAM (Harborne)

The grade II listed former Royalty has been included in the 'Buildings at Risk' register. It has been empty since bingo ceased around 2012 and was damaged by a fire last November. See p15 Bulletin 50/5. {33866}

Birmingham Post – 7 June

BIRMINGHAM (Ladywood)



The twelve-screen Odeon Broadway Plaza has reopened as an Odeon Luxe. When it opened as the AMC in October 2003 it had 2,909 seats. Odeon took over in summer 2012 and now all seats are electric recliners and the capacity has been reduced to 1,264. The 154-seat iSense screen ① has been converted, even though it was only created in October 2012; it has 4k projection and Dolby ATMOS sound. {24152}

Birmingham Mail – 1 June; sent in by Terry Hanstock; photo [as AMC] taken May 2006

BLACKBURN (Lancs)

Vue's UK managing director fears admissions at their ten-screen site could fall by 40% if the proposed new eight-screen Reel cinema opens on the former Waves site. The Council has borrowed £6.5m to finance the new cinema and Reel will sign a 20-year lease. It has been confirmed by the Council that construction will start on the new cinema this October. The planned opening date is Easter 2020. Conservative councillors have pledged to oppose the plans.

Lancashire Telegraph – 26 April, 18 May, 28 June; sent in by Philip Crompton

BOGNOR REGIS (WEST SUSSEX)

The £1m 108-seat fourth screen in an extension to the grade II listed Picturedrome is scheduled to open in August. The Duke and Duchess of Sussex have been invited to perform the opening ceremony. {27384}

Bognor Regis Post – 18, 25 May

BOURNEMOUTH

Rumours that the Council might buy the former Odeon and/or ABC have been denied.

Daily Echo, Bournemouth – 21 May; sent in by John R Forster

BOWNESS-ON-WINDERMERE (Cumbria)

Thousands of people have joined an on-line group to demonstrate their opposition to a possible redevelopment of the Royalty. The group was set up in response to comments made in the Lake District National Park Authority's [LDNPA] local planning review. It described the cinema building as "deteriorating" and that it "detracts from the quality of the conservation area". Charles Morris, operator of the cinema for 25 years, said he felt that the 91-year-old Royalty was in better condition than ever. The Council has said there is no intention to close the cinema. Visit [\[www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/localplan\]](http://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/localplan) to feed-back on the review. {18521}

Westmorland Gazette – 7 June; sent in by Terry Hanstock

BRADFORD (West Yorks)

The new six-screen Light cinema opened on 10 May in the extension to the Broadway Shopping Centre. Seating capacities are: screen ① 105; screen ② 105; screen ③ 50; screen ④ 40; screen ⑤ 37 and screen ⑥ 51. Still to open is a small 20-seat screen that will be available for groups to hire. {57788}

Telegraph & Argus, Bradford – 10 May

BRECHIN (Angus)



Angus Council is understood to be drawing up a package to secure a future for the former Kings. It opened in October 1927 and films ceased in October 1985. It was converted into a nightclub, which closed in the early 2000s. Plans were proposed to demolish the building, retaining the façade and build housing but these came to naught. It has been on Scotland's *Buildings at Risk* register for almost a decade. It is understood to be owned by an Irish developer, who put it on the market last year with a price tag of £0 [ie free] but failed to find anyone willing to take it on. {41454}

Dundee Courier – 30 April; photo taken September 2006

BRIDGWATER (Somerset)

A six-screen cinema is being proposed for the former Splash site at Northgate. Construction could start in June 2019 with a potential opening date of spring 2021.

Bridgwater Mercury – 15 May; Western Daily Press – 31 May

BRIGHTON

Demolition has begun of the grade II listed Astoria and is scheduled to be completed by the time you read this. A block of flats will take its place. It opened in December 1933 with 1,832 seats and a Compton organ. The stage was infrequently used for live shows up until 1958 when the theatre closed for renovations which installed a vast 70mm screen in front of the old proscenium, removed the organ and curtained the impressive auditorium. The balcony steepings were altered and a new projection suite constructed at (and into) the rear balcony. It closed in May 1977 and became a bingo club until 1996; it has been empty since. Plans to turn it into a concert venue came to naught. {1844}

The Argus, Brighton – 9 May

BRISTOL

The owner of a video rental shop has built an 18-seat cinema in its 500-year-old premises. The seats were donated by the Bristol Hippodrome. The tiny 20th Century Flix shop houses 20,000 VHS and DVD movies but last year it made just £160 profit so the owner searched for a way to improve the business.

Daily Express, Metro – 17 May; sent in by Carl Chesworth, Tom Laughlan & Barry Quinton

BRYNMAWR (Blaenau Gwent)

The Council has told the trust that runs the Market Hall Cinema that they must pay £100,000 to take over the building; the amount is for "historic debts". The Trust's volunteers say the amount would bankrupt them. The Council said it would offer funding of £47,000 and point out that it spent a "significant sum" to remove asbestos from the building, during work that closed the cinema for six months last year. {26576}

South Wales Argus – 20 April; Gwent Gazette – 26 April

CAMPBELTOWN (Argyll & Bute)

Nicholas Ferguson CBE, chairman of the Argyll and Bute Economic Forum officially opened the restored Campbeltown Picture House on 19 April. The event included a preview of the new film *Edie* starring Sheila Hancock. {16090}

Campbeltown Courier – 13 April

CANTERBURY (Kent)

Planning permission has been given for a development of student flats and a six-screen 900-seat cinema at the former Council depot in Kingsmead. No operator has been mentioned.

Kentish Gazette – 3 May

CASTLEFORD (West Yorks)

The Moonlight drive-in cinema has opened a permanent site at Digerland, following several successful pop-up appearances over the last few months. It will be open seven days a week all year round. The new facility will feature new weather-proof equipment and technology. Admission is £25 per car.

Pontefract & Castleford Express – 19 April; sent in by Carl Chesworth

CHESTER

The Queen and the Duchess of Sussex [Meghan Markle] officially opened the Storyhouse on 14 June. This was exactly eleven years since the closure of the Odeon, which was incorporated into the new venue. Roads were closed and security was tight. It has been operating since May 2017 and in that time over one million customers have passed through the doors. The project has won several awards, including the Building Award for best refurbishment. {2514}

The Chronicle – 7 June; sent in by David A Ellis

CHIPPENHAM (Wilts)



Work has begun to transform the Astoria [Reel] into a five-screen cinema. Phase one of the £2m project is to build three new screens and a foyer area in the downstairs part of the building; this should be complete by 23 July. Phase two, which will be completed by 28 August, is to completely refurbish the two existing upstairs screens. When conversion to five screens is complete, the total seating capacity will be 552: screens ① and ② will have 131 seats each, screen ③ 71 seats, screen ④ 90 seats and screen ⑤ 119 seats. The original two screens held 404 between them (when all seats repaired and functioning!) so it looks as though the steepings in the original 1939 circle will be adjusted to accommodate modern cinema seats. The cinema will celebrate its 80th birthday on 22 May 2019. {24537}

Gazette & Herald – 3 May;

sent in by and additional information & photo from David Reeves

CORK (Ireland)

There was speculation that IKEA was planning a move to the site currently occupied by the Movie Junction drive-in cinema after the large outdoor screen was dismantled by the owners. These rumours were quashed by the owners, who said that the facility was merely closed for maintenance until further notice.

Evening Echo, Cork – 19 June

DARLINGTON

Financial problems have forced the Majestic Theatre to close, with the former owner leaving about £16,000 owed to theatre companies. The 400-seat venue has been taken over by another company, which plans to refurbish and reopen it in the next few months. It originally opened in December 1932 with 1,580 seats in stalls and circle. It became an Odeon in July 1943 and closed in October 1981. It was converted into a snooker club, which closed around 2010. In 2014 renovation work began to convert the building into a banquet suite and live performance venue. Metal cladding was removed and the MAJESTIC name sign reinstated. A children's play area opened in the lower part of the building with a 280-seat live theatre space in the former circle. It was visited by the CTA in April 2017. {26574}

The Stage – 3 May; sent in by R David Simpson

DAVENTRY (Northants)

An £8.2m budget for town centre redevelopment is set to be approved by councillors. The project includes a cinema and the Council plans to work with the Errol Flynn Filmhouse in Northampton to provide expertise in designing the cinema.

Daventry Express, Northampton Chronicle & Echo – 17 May; sent in by Terry Hanstock

DEAL (Kent)

A new Museum of the Moving Image has opened at 41 Stanhope Road, CT14 6AD. It includes cameras, props, original artwork and moving images created by toys. It is open Friday, Saturday and Sunday 12-6pm. Ironically, the town does not have a cinema. [www.kentmomi.org]

The Guardian – 29 May

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DEVONPORT (Plymouth)

Plans, announced on p19 of the last Bulletin, for a 360° cinema in the former Market Hall, look set to be approved. See letters p21.

The Herald, Plymouth – 20 June

DUBLIN (Ireland)

The former Fairview Grand Cinema is for sale for redevelopment. Part of the site was in use as a private screening room until recently.

Sent in by Bob Bradshaw

DUDLEY

A new cinema is being proposed to replace the Odeon/UCI as part of the upgrade of the Merry Hill shopping centre.

Dudley Chronicle – 26 April

DUMFRIES



The Odeon closed on 28 June. The closure comes just three years after Odeon carried out a revamp by adding 150 'premier' seats; repairs were carried out last year. It opened as the Regal in December 1931 with 1,699 seats in stalls and circle. It had a rather plain street façade from which a long foyer led to the auditorium block. In 1972 it was split with bingo in the stalls and a 532-seat cinema in the circle. It was taken over by Odeon in 2001 and the seating capacity reduced to 450. It is understood the bingo club, now run by Gala, is to remain open. {27022}

Daily Record – 18 May; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Geoff Gill; photo taken August 2009

DUNFERMLINE (Fife)



There are calls to bring back a town centre cinema in the former Orient Express / Robins building [pictured above in March 2004 {2488}]. The town already has a ten-screen Odeon. {27058}

Dundee Courier – 9 May

EVESHAM (Worcs)

BBC's *The One Show* was due to film an item on the cinema usherette at the Regal on 18 June. Customers enjoyed a free screening (by invitation) of the 1953 classic *How to Marry a Millionaire*. There was an exhibition in the circle bar featuring uniforms loaned by The Cinema Museum. No transmission date was available at the time your Bulletin went to press. {13074}

Evesham Journal – 17 May

GLASGOW (Central)

The B-listed foyer block of the former Paramount/Odeon has been converted into a four-storey office block, called Reel House. Many original features have been retained. It includes a third-floor balcony. The original cinema opened on New Year's Eve 1934 and films ceased in January 2006. The auditorium was demolished in March 2013 and was replaced by an eleven-storey office block. {5781}

Glasgow Herald – 6 June



There has been another fire at the Glasgow School of Art, shortly before completion of a £35m refurbishment after the last fire in 2014. This time the flames spread to the neighbouring former ABC, now the O2ABC music venue [pictured], causing the roof to collapse. The adjacent ABC2, built in 1967, survived the blaze.

*Sunday Post – 17 June; sent in by Tom Laughlan, Ken Roe & Martin Tapsell
photo taken November 2006 – you can see the School of Art top left
and the ABC2 extreme right.*

GRIMSBY (Lincs)

Work on the site of the new nine-screen Cineworld in Freshney Place was due to begin in June. It is expected to take 20 months to complete; opening is scheduled for June 2020.

Grimsby Telegraph – 29 May

HAMWORTHY (Dorset)



A development of ten houses will be built behind the Liberal Club. A building used for storage will be demolished, along with the rear portion of the club building. This was the former 400-seat Empire, which opened in August 1935 and closed in 1959. The new plans mean that more of the original cinema will be saved. {27383}

Southern Daily Echo – 21 June; sent in by Philip Stevens; photo taken May 2006

HARWICH (Essex)

The Electric Palace has already raised £57,450 of its £60,000 target towards funding the repair and redevelopment work. A new book *Let's Go To The Pictures* is being sold in aid of the cause – it is available from the cinema and other outlets in the area for £5. A contractor has been appointed for the major project and work was due to start on 18 June. See p 26 last Bulletin.

Daily Gazette – 7 June

HAVERFORDWEST (Pembroke)

A councillor has expressed doubt that a town centre cinema will now happen. There are plans for a five-screen cinema on the former Wilko site; a rival cinema plan bit the dust in its early stages.

Western Telegraph – 2 May

IPSWICH (Suffolk)

Plans (reported on p21 of the last Bulletin) to convert the former five-screen Odeon into a church have been approved by the Council. The building has been empty for 13 years. {13679}

East Anglian Daily Times – 31 May

IRVINE (Ayrshire)



It has only just come to our attention that the Magnum Film Centre closed at the end of 2016 and has been demolished. It opened in September 1976 and films ceased in August 2003. The 323-seat auditorium was then used as a live theatre. {50821}

Sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken August 2009

KETTERING (Northants)



Gala Bingo in the former Granada closed on 7 June. The building has been purchased and will become a banqueting suite. It opened as the Regal on Boxing Day 1936 with 2,000 seats in stalls and circle. Films ceased around 1974. {35251}

Sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken April 2007

KINGS LYNN (Norfolk)



The grade II listed three-screen Majestic celebrated its 90th birthday on 25 May. It hosted a special 35mm screening of *Casablanca*. Guests were dressed in 1940s costume. The 637-seat cinema plans to expand with an extra screen and more than 200 extra seats in an extension. {3262}

Eastern Daily Press – 25 May; photo taken July 2007

KNUTSFORD (Cheshire)

The Curzon is to have a £1m development with two further screens, increasing the total number of seats from 170 to 312. The existing screen will reduce to 141 and the two additional screens, to be created in rooms at the back of the building, will have 111 and 60 seats. Work will take 20 weeks to complete with the new screens set to open in early August. At that point the front of the building will be closed to allow changes to the existing screen and the café/bar area. The whole project is due to be finished by mid-September. The pro-



scenium arch in the Cranford Suite will be retained and incorporated into the improvements. {24795}

Knutsford Guardian – 18 May; photo taken April 2003

LEEDS (West Yorks)

Architects Page\Park have revealed proposals for the refurbishment of the grade II listed Hyde Park cinema. A three-storey extension will be built onto the existing building and linked to an enlarged foyer. A new box-office, café and kiosk will be created in a centralised hub with the current box-office / kiosk retained for display purposes. No time scale was given. The cinema opened in 1914 and still has gas emergency lighting. See Casework p5.

Architects' Journal – 29 May; sent in by Carl Chesworth

LONDON (Alexandra Palace)

The 1895 Victorian Theatre in Alexandra Palace will open in December for its first regular season in 80 years after a multi-million pound refurbishment. The 1,200-seat venue will host a pre-season performance in September by the BBC Concert Orchestra as part of The Proms. {44961}

Evening Standard – 26 April; sent in by Tom Laughlan;

The Stage – 3 May; sent in by R David Simpson

LONDON (Barking)

Revised plans have been submitted for a two-screen (reduced from three) boutique cinema on the site of the former Abbey Sports Centre. It will be operated by Art House. The original application was approved in October 2016 but nothing happened.

Barking & Dagenham Post – 18 April

LONDON (Chiswick)

Building work was due to start in July on a new five-screen Picture House cinema in High Road. Opening is planned for late 2019. The public is being asked to suggest names.

Time Out – 12 June; sent in by Robert Holden & Tom Laughlan

LONDON (City)

A new three-screen Everyman is due to open next year as part of the Broadgate development; it will be located on the ground floor of the 1FA building. The company's shares pushed 3.4% higher to 239.4p on the news

City AM, Evening Standard – 4 June; sent in by Tom Laughlan

LONDON (Hampstead)

The two-screen Everyman has applied for permission to extend its opening hours. They want to offer Sunday morning entertainment by starting at 10am rather than noon. {15982}

Camden New Journal – 24 May; sent in by Tom Laughlan

LONDON (Hayes)

A three-screen cinema is to be part of the redevelopment of the former EMI vinyl record factory. It is due for completion in 2020.

The Sentinel, Stoke-on-Trent – 28 April

LONDON (Holloway)

The Odeon is to have a revamp. Screen 3 in the former tearoom would be removed to open up the foyer area. Removing the screen is expected to reveal the original ceiling; the area would then become a bar, a modern reincarnation of its original use. All remaining seven screens would be refurbished to include new seating and modern screening technology. Vacant shops on the Holloway Road side of the building would be converted into a new restaurant, linked to the cinema's foyer. The ground floor entrances would be refurbished and the **ODEON** sign, currently on the canopy, would be moved to the tower, if

permission is granted. The building opened as the Gaumont in September 1938 with 3,006 seats and a Wurlitzer organ. The auditorium was destroyed during WWII but the foyer and front of house survived. A new auditorium was built and reopened in July 1958, becoming an Odeon in November 1962. It was tripled in 1973 and has been further subdivided since. See article p10. {4300}

Islington Tribune – 15 June; sent in by Geoff Gill, Tim McCullen & Tom Laughlan

LONDON (Stoke Newington)

The first events at the Hackney Arts Centre have been announced; it is due to open on 22 August. It is to be housed in the former Savoy/ABC, which opened in October 1936 and closed as a cinema in February 1984. The stalls area became a snooker hall with a false ceiling; the balcony remained unused. {14878}

Time Out – 12 June; sent in by Tom Laughlan

LONDON (West End)

Gillian Anderson, star of *The X-Files* has added her voice to the campaign for special protection for the Empire Haymarket (ex Carlton). {1838}

Sunday Telegraph – 3 June; Westminster Extra – 8 June; sent in by Carl Chesworth & R David Simpson

LONGRIDGE (Lancs)

The **Palace** has reopened after a five-month refurbishment. The cinema was put on the market in July last year after the previous owner of 41 years retired. However, there were only 8 patrons over the first weekend. The new owner has sent out a 'use it or lose it' message but blames lovely weather for the lack of customers. The cinema now shows several different films a day instead of just one showing. {6903}

Lancashire Telegraph – 25 May, 13 June; sent in by Philip Crompton

LOWESTOFT (Suffolk)



The future of the Marina Theatre has been secured after the Council had a £200,000 loan approved to buy the neighbouring building, which houses the box-office and café. {19949}

The Stage – 17 May; sent in by Barry Quinton & R David Simpson; photo taken August 2005

LUTON (Beds)



Planning permission has been applied for to convert the former Ritz into 59 flats. Originally the applicant wanted to demolish the building and replace it with 91 flats in a seven-storey structure but this idea was considered too big by planning officers. The cinema was opened in October 1937 by the Union circuit and became the Ritz in July 1949. It went over to bingo club in 1971 and was later turned into a nightclub. {6247}

Luton News – 23 May; sent in by Margaret Burgoine [photo]

MARLBOROUGH (Wilts)

The former United Reformed Chapel in The Parade is to be converted into a 108-seat two-tier cinema. It is hoped the cinema could be open before Christmas.

Devizes Gazette & Herald – 26 April

NEWTOWNABBEY (County Antrim)

The opening of a second cinema complex in Newtownabbey will lead to the closure of the six-screen Movie House in Glengormley, its owner has stated. It reopened on 26 May after a £500,000 refurbishment. A planning application has been made for a multi-screen Showcase cinema less than three miles away at the Valley Leisure Centre.

Belfast Telegraph – 9 May

NEWTOWNARDS (County Down)

David Simpson writes: The sad news only reached me recently about the passing of Ernie Watson, who opened the independent **MovieLand** in March/April 1999. He was a wonderful character, who I met on a number of occasions and who was a very welcoming host during the CTA's visit in September 2014. His multiplex had the distinction of being the only one in the UK to have had its own cinema organ, albeit set up above the foyer concession stand. Following his death, on 3 May 2017, his cinema was sold to circuit operator IMC. The Compton organ (from the **Ambassador/Odeon**, Hounslow) was played for the final time in February 2018 and has, sadly, been dismantled and put into storage. See p24 last Bulletin.

NORTH WALSHAM (Norfolk)



The **Regal** has been demolished. It was one of the first cinemas to be built for sound and opened in September 1931. After a period of part-time bingo, films ceased in 1977. The building was last used as a plant hire depot. {50407}

Sent in by Les Woods [photo]

NORTHALLERTON (North Yorks)

Developers behind a plan to build a leisure and retail facility, including a cinema, on the former prison site, have asked for planners' views ahead of a public consultation.

Yorkshire Post – 16 June

The Projected Picture Trust

Dean Clough Mills, HALIFAX, HX3 5AX

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

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

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

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

contact@ppttrust.org

www.ppttrust.org

PETERBOROUGH (Cambs)

Empire is to be the operator of a new ten-screen cinema at the Queensgate shopping centre, after Odeon pulled out. The new cinema will feature IMAX screens and Empire's own format IMPACT screens. It will be fitted out with choices of luxury seating that includes double sofas or individual electric recliners.

Evening Telegraph, Peterborough – 3 May; sent in by Terry Hanstock

PLYMOUTH



The three-screen Reel cinema celebrated its 80th birthday on 15 July. It is not closing, as had been rumoured but is having a spruce-up inside. Original features are being restored and new carpets and seats will be fitted. When it opened it had 2,404 seats in stalls and circle but was tripled in 1977 with bingo downstairs. {24749}

Plymouth Herald – 28 May; photo taken June 2008



The Belgrave cinema has been demolished. It opened in 1912, originally seating 457. It was enlarged to 700 seats when sound came in 1930. It closed in April 1983 and became a club. {50831}

Sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken June 2008

PORTSMOUTH



An application has been submitted to demolish the former Shaftesbury in North End and build shops and 11 homes. The building opened in 1890 and became a cinema about 20 years later. It became a bingo hall in 1975, which closed in 2014. {46972}

The News, Portsmouth – 23 May; photo taken May 2006

REDCAR (Cleveland)

A structural survey has revealed problems at the Regent, meaning the cinema will have to remain closed for the foreseeable future. External staircases will have to be removed. The seafront cinema closed in April. {5304}

Northern Echo – 9 June; photo on front cover

ROMSEY (Hants)

The Plaza has appealed to the public to help raise funds for a new wheelchair lift. A grant application has been filed, which would cover half the £18,000 needed. {41645}

Southern Daily Echo – 20 March

ROTHERHAM (South Yorks)

The former Regal/Odeon was due to be auctioned on 15 May with a guide price of £875,000 to £925,000 but was withdrawn. The property last sold in 2014, when it went for £880,000, also at auction. The property is entirely let to Mecca Bingo until 2021 at a current rent of £125,950 per annum. The tenant has the option to extend the lease. It opened in December 1934 and films ceased in September 1983. It became a bingo hall, which continues today. See Casework p5. {18509}

Rotherham Business News – 24 April

SCARBOROUGH (North Yorks)



The demolition of the Futurist has begun. A number of attempts to save it failed. Cladding was removed in April. They are ripping out the seats with a digger! The site will become home to a Flamingoland attraction. {1842}

BBC News website – 5 June; photo from David Alexander

SKEGNESS (Lincs)

The 302-seat two-screen Tower was due to close for four days from 21 May for a £500,000 refurbishment. A new £30,000 sound system will be installed, replacing the 20-year-old Dolby system. There will also be new seating and a new colour scheme throughout. The cinema first opened in March 1922 and in 1984 the balcony became a 402-seat cinema with an amusement arcade in the stalls; the balcony was twinned in 2003. {25355}

Skegness Standard – 16 May; photo on front cover

SOUTHAMPTON



Permission has been granted for the former Woolston Picture Theatre to become flats. A four-storey building will be erected, retaining the frontage of the cinema. The building dates from 1912 and films ceased in 1973. It became a bingo hall, which closed in 2008.

Southern Daily Echo – 5 May; sent in by Ian Patterson; photo taken May 2006

SOUTHAMPTON

The new NST arts centre, which only opened last February, faces an overspend of £4.47m. It has run into teething problems: the manager of the café/bar has left and it has already reduced its opening hours and stopped serving food; there is no disabled access as the lifts are out of order and won't be fixed until July. The theatre management is blaming the Council landlords. Southampton is bidding for UK City of Culture 2025.

Southern Daily Echo – 20 April, 7, 25 May; sent in by Ian Patterson

The opening night of a musical about the Titanic at the Mayflower Theatre (ex Gaumont) had to be abandoned when part of the back wall tumbled onto the stage. The theatre is due to undergo a £3.9m revamp but said the debris wasn't caused by a structural issue.

Southern Daily Echo – 14 April; sent in by Ian Patterson

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA (Essex)

Plans have been approved for homes and shops to be built on the site of the former Rivoli/Empire, which was demolished in early 2017. The site is up for sale for £2.5m. Built in 1896 and rebuilt in 1920 and 1962, it closed as a cinema in 1998. It was badly damaged by fire in July 2015. {14608}

Southend Echo – 7 June; sent in by Raymond Palmer

ST NEOTS (Cambs)

The Rowley Arts Centre, which includes the six-screen Cineworld is up for sale with an asking price of £7.75m. It is believed Huntingdon District Council is close to completing a deal to buy it. {46711}

Hunts Post – 25 April;

STOCKPORT

Demolition of the former ten-screen Cineworld at Grand Central began in May. It opened in November 1991 and closed last November, a life of just 26 years. It was replaced by a ten-screen Light cinema on the other side of town.

Stockport Express – 25 April, 16 May

Plans have been approved to sell the site of the former Ritz for housing. The cinema opened in January 1938 with 2,343 seats and a Wurlitzer organ. It closed in December 1982 and was demolished around 1986; since then the site has been used as a car park. {34031}

Manchester Evening News – 15 June; sent in by Carl Chesworth

TELFORD (Shropshire)



The ten-screen Odeon is to have a complete revamp. All screens will be equipped with luxury reclining seats, 4k projection and Dolby ATMOS sound. Completion is expected early autumn. {25405}

Shropshire Star – 25 May; photo taken August 2007

WILMSLOW (Cheshire)

It is understood a cinema operator was in advanced talks with the owners of the former Rex with a view to reopening it as a cinema. It opened in October 1936 and had a stage, which was well-used until 1985. Then the building was split with commercial units downstairs and a 338-seat cinema in the circle. It is understood this is largely intact. The furniture store downstairs closed last year. See p24 Bulletin 52/2. {33859}

Wilmslow Guardian – 3 May

WYMONDHAM (Norfolk)

The original piano used to accompany silent films in the Picture Theatre has been donated to the local museum. The cinema operated from 1917 to 1941 and the piano was handed down through the family. The Regal group donated £300 to have the piano tuned and restored. {49158}

Norwich Evening News – 23 May; sent in by Michael Armstrong & Les Woods

HOLIDAY SNAPS



A couple of snaps taken in June 2017 in the Vendee, France [top:] Cinema Agnes Varda, La Tranche-sur-Mer; is a volunteer-manned theatre and was closed for two weeks for annual holidays when we visited. It's named after the French new wave director [bottom:] Cinema Le Fief, Bretignolles-sur-Mer

Sent in by Chris Snowden



The Batan ('Homeland') Cinema

Reportedly, the first purpose-built cinema in Stalinabad (now Dushanbe) in the Autonomous Tajik Republic (now Tajikistan). The Batan in Rudaki Avenue, the City's main thoroughfare is a rare survivor of the old buildings that are being torn down in the name of modernisation. It appears to be the only one on this stretch of the street that is still intact. The cinema gave its name to the central district of the City. (A bit like the west end of a UK town being called Odeon!) The cinema appears to have been in regular use but was closed when I was there. It is completely intact and weather tight with no evidence of dilapidation.

[tinyurl.com/y6w5b57d] a link to a Guardian article

Sent in by Stewart Kidd

MISCELLANY

CINEMA STATISTICS

The number of cinema sites in Britain has grown from 727 to 766 over the past decade. Screen numbers are up 18% to 4,150.

The Guardian – 14 April

EU RULES OK?

If new EU lighting regulations are brought in in September 2020, it is feared that shows like *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* at the Palace Theatre would have to close. The producer claims that replacement LED technology isn't up to scratch – it is inflexible, hard to dim and gives a harsh quality of light. "It may be that one day advances in technology will allow for the change but meanwhile we are light years away from that being the case."

Evening Standard – 22 May; sent in by Tom Laughlan

BUGS FOUND IN CINEMA DRINKS

Tests commissioned by BBC programme *Watchdog Live* revealed unacceptable bacteria levels in fizzy drinks sold at Cineworld, Odeon and Vue cinemas. The programme visited ten branches of each chain, testing the seat fabric, cup holders, a fizzy drink and ice cubes for bacteria. One drink contained 10,000 times what is considered acceptable; salmonella was also present. Many were associated with poor toilet hygiene. The chains replied that they have stringent cleaning procedures.

Evening Standard – 9 May; *Daily Telegraph* – 10 May; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Tom Laughlan

POSTER AUCTION

An on-line auction of 400 rare cinema posters was held on 28 June. Lots were on display at the Odeon BFI IMAX in London from 22-28 June. They included (with estimated sale prices): *Goldfinger* UK Quad Poster (1964) £4,000 - £6,000; *Dracula AD 1972* UK Quad Poster Artwork (1972) £6,000 - £8,000; *The Dam Busters* UK Quad Poster (1955) £6,000 - £8,000 and *Star Wars* US Teaser "B" 7-Sheet Poster (1977) £10,000 - £15,000. The results are not known. [tinyurl.com/ya6xo3tb]

Sent in by Geoff Gill

UNDERGROUND FILMS

Films are being shown in some underground locations. The tunnel under the Thames at the Brunel Museum in Rotherhithe (East London) is showing three of the best adventure films once a week in July and August – admission £25. Food and drink are optional extras. In May a season of films was shown in the caves underneath Notting-ham Castle.

Sent in by Terry Hanstock & Philip Stevens

CHARITY INVESTIGATION



A church exposed as offering gay 'cure' therapies is under investigation over "potential significant" financial losses. The Charity Commission announced it was looking into Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries International (MFM), which has branches across east London, one of which is in the foyer of the former Princess cinema in Dagenham. The auditorium was demolished in 2003. {13744}

Islington Gazette – 8 June; photo taken July 2006

WHAT DUMMIES!

A Bollywood film crew sparked an air and sea rescue by throwing a mannequin off cliffs at Beachy Head. A helicopter responded to calls of a body falling over the cliffs, near Eastbourne and a lifeboat recovered the dummy.

Metro – 18 May; sent in by Barry Quinton

SUITABLE HONOUR FOR ORGANIST OF NOTE

The appreciation society for organist John Mann [78], which started in 1981, has raised £500 to place a window with John's name at Worthing Pier. He has played summer shows in Worthing and Eastbourne for over 30 years.

The Argus, Brighton – 22 May; sent in by Barry Quinton

MUSICALS BAN

English National Opera has banned musical theatre audiences from bringing food and drink to the London Coliseum because patrons have been "picnicking" and "replacing water with gin and vodka". The ban, which also applies to rock and pop concerts, is not imposed on opera, dance, cinema and classical performances, where soft drinks and confectionery are still permitted. However, there are moves to extend the ban to all genres of productions.

The Stage – 10 May; sent in by Barry Quinton

CHILDREN SHOWN 'SCARY' TRAILER

Parents were yelling at the projectionist to stop, when a trailer for horror film *Hereditary* was accidentally shown before a screening of *Beatrix Potter* at the Event cinema in Innaloo, Perth, Western Australia. The cinema eventually switched off the projector and later offered complimentary tickets as a sign of goodwill. This is not the first time this has been reported as happening; previous incidents have occurred in London, Florida and California.

The Guardian – 27 April; sent in by Carl Chesworth

FIGHT BREAKS OUT AT NATIONAL THEATRE

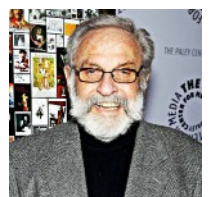
A performance of *Julie* at the National Theatre in London was disrupted in its final moments after two audience members became embroiled in a fight. The incident follows a fight at London's Old Vic last year in which an audience member was punched by another after challenging him about using a mobile phone.

The Stage – 7 June; sent in by Barry Quinton

NECROLOGY

BILL GOLD 97

Bill was the graphic designer responsible for many of the most memorable film posters of the past 60 years, including *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1951), *My Fair Lady* (1964) and *All The President's Men* (1976). Among the directors he worked for were Alfred Hitchcock (*Dial M for Murder* 1954) and Clint Eastwood, for whom he designed some 30 posters.



PETER BYRNE 90

Probably best known for playing policeman Andy Crawford in *Dixon of Dock Green* for two decades from 1955. He also played Derek in *Bread*. His cinema appearances included small roles in *Reach for the Sky* (1956) as well as one as a bridegroom in *Carry On Cabby* (1963).



EUNICE GAYSON 90

The first ever Bond girl, who played Sylvia Trench in *Dr No*. She was the first to say the line, "Bond, James Bond" although her voice was dubbed.



MARGOT KIDDER 69

Played Lois Lane opposite Christopher Reeve in the 1978 *Superman* film and its three sequels. She was unable to work for two years following a serious car accident in 1990 but refused to believe in the 'Superman' curse, which was blamed for misfortunes that befell those involved in the film.



LETTERS

UNIDENTIFIED PHOTOS

Regarding the 'Unidentified Photos' feature on page 30 of the last Bulletin, I'm sure that I won't be the first person to tell you that the top photographs, sent in by Michael Armstrong, show the Regal Gillingham (Dorset). This cinema opened in 1934 and was closed and demolished in 1963.

Lance Salway

Regarding the photo of members at Hereford on p30 of the last Bulletin. I was on that visit – but missed the photograph. You can see Tony Moss and Richard Gray. At the back is a bearded gentleman called Barry Charndler. I believe Carol Gibbons is on it near the front. One wonders how many of them are still around today? It's over 30 years ago!

Tim McCullen

OUR VANISHED LOCALS

There are many publications on local cinemas now no longer with us, one of which is *Hillingdon Cinemas* by a good friend of mine of many years, James Skinner. We think this is now out of print. I am a member of U3A and recently gave a presentation to the Local History Group based on this book with pictures from it to accompany my talk. Also attending were two ex-projectionists from the Savoy Hayes and Ruislip cinemas. I will be doing another talk for another local history society. The thought has occurred to me that some CTA members may be already have done this as I found people appreciated reviving memories of their locals and also the opportunity of talking to those who worked in the cinemas. I know many members worked in cinemas and from the letters in the Bulletin, have interesting stories to tell. This may prompt some to get something together for their local community. The archive department of the local library can be a great source of information and also the CTA archives of course. We are fortunate in having excellent archives in our local library. Food for thought?

Tim Leman

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Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays, Circle 1/6, 2/-

Next Week – MAYERLING, with Charles Boyer, Danielle Derrieux

It is sad to see the demise of the Astoria Brighton. I have fond memories of it. I was on holiday with my father back in 1963 and we went to see *Mutiny on the Bounty*, screened in 70mm with six-track sound. It was very impressive and the stereo was great with distinct left and right. While we were there we went to the now-demolished Academy and Essoldo. Brighton was great for the cinema lover. When I was there in 1963 there were over a dozen cinemas operating, including the ABC East Street, Odeon West Street and the Continental Kemp Town.

David A Ellis

WILF REMEMBERS

If he doesn't already know, Wilf Watters (*Wilf Remembers*, CTA Bulletin 52/3) might be interested to learn that the ABC Ritz Edgware is featured at the beginning of the Dirk Bogarde film *For Better, For Worse*. He and Susan Stephen are seen in a cinema just after the opening credits. I doubt if the interior shots are of the Ritz at Edgware but the exterior long shot shows the cinema as it was in the 1950s before the ghastly tin front was added.

Michael Darvell

NORFOLK CLARIFICATION

Bostock Cinema Circuit
HEAD OFFICE: 115, BROADVIEW ROAD, IPSWICH

CINEMA ATTLEBOROUGH
Phone 3167

Sunday One Performance at 7 p.m. (No Bookings)
Monday to Friday at 7 p.m.
Saturday at 7.30 and 9.15 p.m.
Bookings Daily 2-9 p.m. excepting Wednesdays

Admission 1.3 2.- 2.9
No Child under 12 years of age will be admitted unless in charge of an adult over 16

Free Car Park and Cycle Stands (at Owners Risk)
July 1958

Attractions

The Bostock cinema in Attleborough was not called 'The Regal' but simply the Cinema I was born and lived in Attleborough for the first years of my life and only knew it by that name. Here is a copy of a 1951 *Bostock Cinema Circuit* letter, which lists the cinemas in that circuit and a programme from 1958, which confirms the name. Mrs Dorothy Caley (wife of Mr Bert Caley, who was Manager of the Wymondham Regal) was the manageress of the Cinema in Attleborough up to its closure and when it did close, many of the fittings (including seats) were transferred to Wymondham Regal for spares and were also put to use. Some sources state that the cinema closed in 1956 but as you will see from the copy programme it was still operating in 1958. Another amendment would be in respect of the Regal Holt, which was subsequently sold in 1966 (whilst still operating as a cinema) by East Coast Cinemas (part of the Bostock Circuit) to Colin Dashwood (Brother of Roy Dashwood who had purchased the Regal Wymondham the previous year). Films did continue there and were booked in conjunction with Wymondham. Posters and stills were shared between the two cinemas. Bingo was introduced like Wymondham but I am not exactly sure when the building ceased showing films completely. When it did their two Westinghouse rectifiers were transferred to Wymondham to replace the mercury rectifier and the amplifier was also transferred for installation together with rewriter and spools. Their two Kalee 11 projectors were transferred to a museum in Cotton.

Michael Armstrong

ON SEATING CAPACITIES

For some time I have allowed to get myself quite frustrated by the very small seating capacities of new conversions or the latest 'from scratch' cinema builds. It seems quite acceptable for these developers to assume that their patrons will be quite content to view movies in a 35-seat 'auditorium' as long as they can recline their seat. As time goes on, those same patrons will know no better as this is what the offering is. Ergo, they will forever be limited by that 'experience' – or the complete lack of it. (I can get more sense of occasion at home from a 65" curved screen and Atmos sound.)

Now, I've been trying to find out a bit more detail about seating capacities and other relevant cinema information from some of these newer cinemas owners/developers and from some of the new entrant small chains. Their usually very fulsome websites give virtually no information as to capacity, screen size, sound systems – and this also applies to some of the more established larger operators. Yet one can readily find a whole host of detail as to booking charges, coffees or popcorn! I've tried to seek information from their management – stating that a lack of such detail is likely to give new patrons no real sense of the experience that their screens might offer. But there have been no replies from my well intentioned messages. I'm trying hard not to be cynical – maybe I deserve some, er, chastening from other more forgiving readers!

Edward Huggins

ERRATA

In the May/June 2017 edition of the Bulletin, my *Provincial Cinemas of Northern Ireland* feature mentioned the Montague Cinema in Dro-more. It turns out this is the smaller Dromore in County Tyrone and not the larger one in County Down. I hope this clarifies the matter

Gavin McGrath

WRONG ASHFORD



I was visiting Ashford Hospital in Kent today and spied two nice framed cinema photos on the restaurant wall. But one seemed unfamiliar. Ah! They have got the Odeon [L] but also the Astoria in Ashford Middlesex [R]! Has anyone else noticed?

Martin Tapsell

CINEMA TREASURES IN IRELAND

I have updated the Cinema Treasures website with over 300 entries in the Republic of Ireland so it is well worth a look. This is predominantly the provincial area outside Dublin and Cork, which until I got started was like a pub with no beer. It is now a well-stocked bar with around 90% of the 500 or so known cinemas that operated in the counties featured. What we do need is pictures; despite the fact that the Irish are the most regular cinemagoers in Europe there doesn't seem to be many images in circulation.

Gavin McGrath

PALLADIUM LIGHTING CONSOLE



Hilary Gould at the Light Console, London Palladium, 1942.

Peter Towell's fascinating reminiscence of a lighting control in the auditorium of the London Palladium is entirely correct; however, this was not the installation featured in Ron Knee's article but the earlier 'Light Console', the brainchild of Frederick Bentham of the Strand Electric and Engineering Company. It was no coincidence that it resembled a theatre organ console: Bentham's philosophy regarded stage lighting as an art form which, as such, should be played, not merely operated. The ergonomics of stop tabs, manual keys, foot studs and swell pedal proved ideal for his concept; thus the console and low voltage circuitry were constructed by the John Compton Organ Company. Clearly Bentham's vision required the operator to have a full view of the stage, not just a sideways glimpse from the traditional position of a stage perch; therefore the console resided at one corner of the Grand Circle. Here is a photograph of Hilary Gould, the wartime operator, (and wife of Stanley Earnshaw, a director of Strand Electric), seated at the control. In Bentham's words: "As operator of the Light Console she was often considered to have a cushy job by members of the audience, who could see her but never heard a note of organ music in the show".

Tim Hatcher

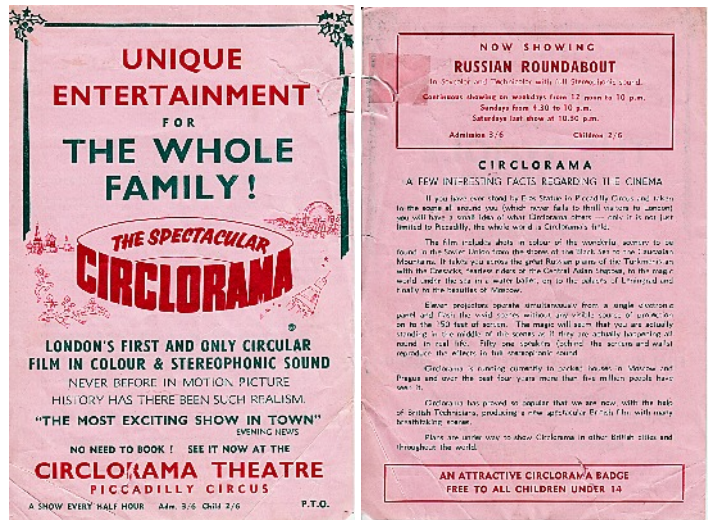
SAN FRANCISCO CINEMAS

The London Evening Standard of 29 June listed some of the historic cinemas of San Francisco: The Roxie [roxie.com], Vogue [voguest.com], Clay [landmarktheatres.com], Castro [castrotheatre.com] and New Mission [drafhhouse.com]

Tom Laughlan & Anthony Wills



360° CINEMA



I refer to item in the last Bulletin 52/3 on page 19: Devonport (Plymouth) saying that the Market Hall is to be transformed into Europe's first 360 degree cinema. I don't wish to rain on their parade and no doubt this will be technically advanced but in the very early 60's there used to be a venue off London's Piccadilly Circus calling itself Circlorama located just around the corner from the long-gone Jacey News Theatre at the bottom of Regent Street. Being interested in the mechanics of cinema systems at the time, I remember there were 11 screens forming the circle and the projector ports were cut into the screen masking opposite. It was standing room only. After 55 years I don't remember too much now about the film other than it was a series of travelogues lasting around 45 minutes. I don't know how long the enterprise lasted for once the novelty had worn off but at the time I could not really see any practical purpose. It was a day of cinematic wonderment as I had just been to the Casino (now Prince Edward Theatre) in the West End to see *How The West Was Won* in the original 3-strip Cinerama. Now that was truly spectacular! Incidentally Disney World Florida had (and probably still does) a similar 360 degree setup using 9 projectors instead of 11.

Alan Hodson; Circlorama flyer sent in by Adrian Uzell

Q: WHAT IS WRONG WITH THIS NOTICEBOARD?

St Anne's on Sea (Lancs) Island Cinemas, taken on 10 June 2018.

A: There is no Screen 5 – Screens 1 & 2 have 100 seats each, Screens 3 & 4 have 50 seats each. This was verified by the staff. The cinema is part of a small independent chain that also includes the Premiere Romford, Premiere Cardiff, Dome Worthing and Majestic Kings Lynn.

Anthony Wills

DONCASTER PETITION

Please sign the petition to save the frieze from the Gaumont Doncaster at [tinyurl.com/yac4a9dp]. This link can also be found on the web site. [www.letsgotothepictures.uk].

Ron & Lynne Curry

LAST THOUGHTS

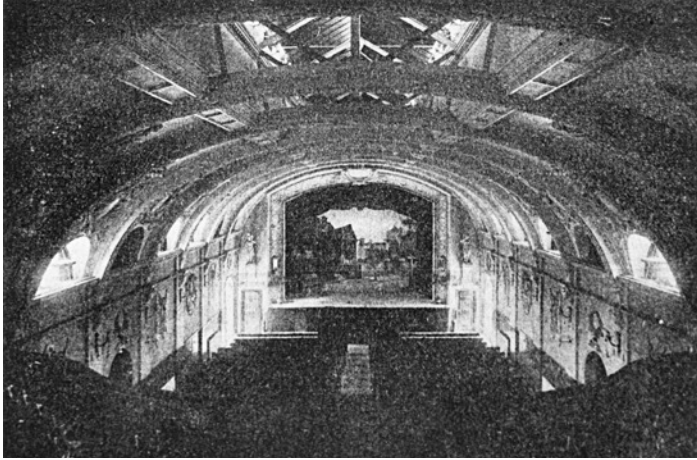
The Bedford in Camden Town, London was a famous Music Hall in its day and was said to be Marie Lloyd's favourite theatre. A full study of the building is given in *Variety At Night Is Good For You*. By the late 1960s it had become derelict and the home to vagrants. Around that time there was a little gem made called *The London Nobody Knows* with a smartly dressed James Mason going around a number of places in London that were slowly disappearing. The beginning of the film shows him going around the derelict theatre. Renown Pictures has recently issued a 3 DVD box set of Music Hall films, which includes two short films. One is *The Finale* – dating from 1968, it shows detailed scenes of the theatre being demolished. Another *Sarah Remembers* made in 1952, shows an elderly lady talking about the changing East End of London with a lot of older properties being demolished. Both were made by Wilf Watters, the same Wilf who writes articles for the Bulletin – see p10.

Ian Patterson

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

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

110 years



Gem/Windmill, Marine Parade, Great Yarmouth. Opened 4 July 1908.
Architect Arthur S Hewitt. Grade II listed.

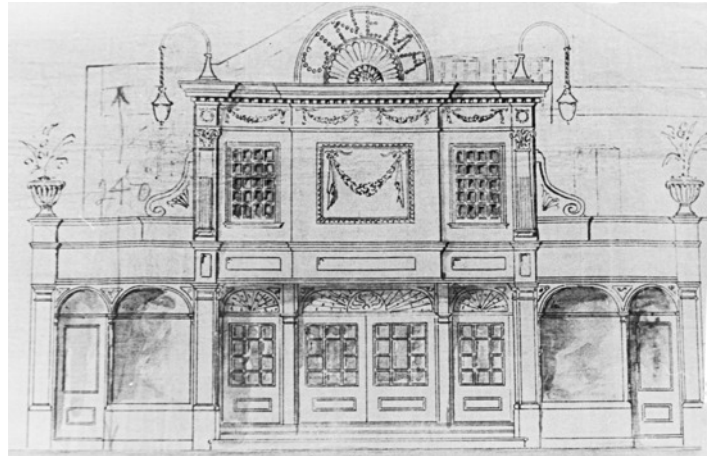
105 years



Queen's / Essoldo, Whitby Road, Ellesmere Port. Opened July 1913.
Architect unknown. Grade II listed.



Central, Central Drive, Blackpool. Opened 11 July 1913.
Architect unknown. Grade II listed.



Picture Palace / Rivoli, Brockley Road, Brockley.
Opened 12 July 1913. Architect unknown. Grade II listed.



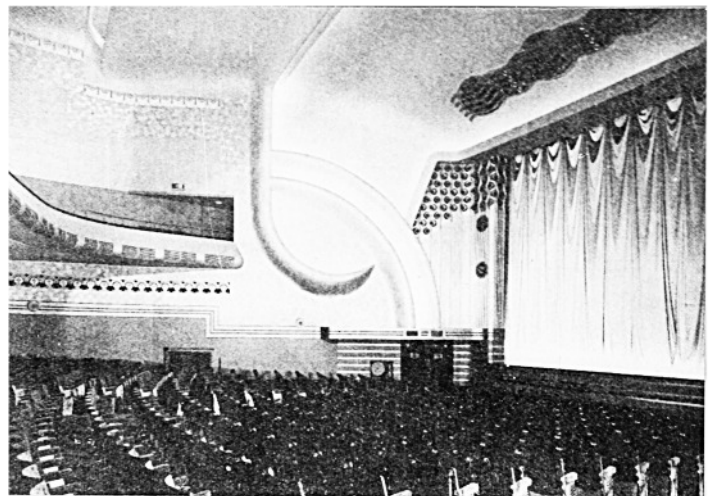
Palace, Upper Market Street, Haverfordwest. Opened 28 July 1913.
Architect unknown. Grade II listed. [Above L]

95 years

Pavilion/Gaumont, Shepherd's Bush Green, Shepherd's Bush.
Opened 16 August 1923. Architects Samuel Beverley and Frank T Verity. Grade II listed. [Above R]

80 years

Regal, North Bridge Street, Bathgate. Opened 17 July 1938.
Architect Andrew David Haxton. B- Listed. (No photo)



Odeon, Rutland Street, Leicester. Opened 28 July 1938.
Architects Robert Bullivant and Harry Weedon. Grade II listed.





News Theatre / Tatler / Classic, City Square, Leeds.
Opened 22 August 1938. Architect Cecil Massey. Grade II listed.



Apollo, Stockport Road, Ardwick Green, Manchester.
Opened 29 August 1938.
Architects Peter Cummings and Alex M Irvine. Grade II listed.

MEMBERSHIP

NEW MEMBERS

The following are listed in the order in which they joined the CTA and we are pleased to extend to them a very warm welcome: Paul Davenport, Anthony Fletcher and Ronald Blake.

DONATIONS

In acknowledging the generosity of members who included a donation to the CTA when renewing their memberships, our sincerest thanks go to: CG Behr, TE Benton, WC Birnie, ME Burgoine, RD Burke, BR Chandler, M Charlesworth, P Chester, MR Cleave, GJV Crane, L Culver, MR Cunningham, AR Davis, JD Elliott, DW Foster, SW Freeman, RK Fuller, DJ Gammage, PH Garrick, P Good, CD Harrison, RJ Hawley, PJ Hoare, A Hodson, RP Jefferies, HB Jones, RA Lascaut, TDC Laughlan, AV Mabey, CA Mackay, FWD Manders, WG Marriott, JL May, AE McCann, P Meiklerleid, P Mellor, B Palmer, IJ Patterson, C Pinfold, JB Powell, MJ Ryder, J Shevelan, RW Short, MP Shotton, RP Skinner, BH Snowball, M Taylor, PE Thackeray, PF Thomas, WJB Thomson, MW Thornton, D Trevor-Jones, DL Walkden, DA Warner, AJ Weise, A Whyatt, D&M Williams, D Williamson, RF Wilson, N Wolland, M Wood and M Wooffindin.

IN MEMORIAM

Sadly, we have learned of the deaths of a number of members since the last membership report. Norman Walley of Crewe died at the age of 86, he had been a CTA member since 1980; Ron W Staton of Linby, Nottingham died at the age of 90, he joined CTA in 2002 and Ron W Gibson of Fulham, West London died on 3 June at the age of 82, he joined CTA in 1986. Our sincere condolences are sent to their families and friends.

Neville C Taylor, Membership Secretary

ARCHIVE

ARCHIVE ENQUIRIES

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

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

ARCHIVE OPPORTUNITIES

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

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

HELP THE ARCHIVE IDENTIFY CINEMAS

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

SENDING DONATIONS BY POST OR EMAIL

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

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

Clive Polden, CTA Archivist

London's West End Cinemas

by Allen Eyles with Keith Skone.

Large format paperback, 210 pages, fully illustrated
with over 400 pictures, including 71 in colour.
Special price to members – £20.00 + £3 postage.



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

Published in collaboration with English Heritage.

THE ABBEY CINEMA WAVERTREE

By David A Ellis

The Abbey cinema in Wavertree, Liverpool, designed by Alfred Earnest Shennon, was the only cinema in the City to screen three strip Cinerama, back in 1964. The first Cinerama presentation was *This is Cinerama*, shown from 17 March 1964 and ran for seven weeks. The cinema was run by the Wood family, who ran Bedford Cinemas (1928) Ltd. They ran a number of cinemas, including the Mayfair Aigburth and the Empire Garston. A new projection box was installed in the stalls area for Cinerama, housing three projectors. The sound was magnetic and on a separate reel. It carried seven tracks and produced excellent sound separation. Because of cost the three strip Cinerama didn't last long, though there were a few good features made in it, including *How the West Was Won* and *The Wonderful World of the Brothers Grimm*, starring Laurence Harvey. After the three strip system proved not financially viable, 70mm Cinerama was shown on the screen, which was made in strips to cut down on reflection. The three projectors that were required for the original Cinerama were removed in April 1965.

The Abbey first opened its doors on 4 March 1939 with the film *Joy of Living*. The opening ceremony took place at 2:30 and was conducted by a Mr WT Lancashire. The film was supported by Mrs Wilf Hamer and her band. It was stated that she appeared by kind permission of the Grafton Rooms directorate. The Grafton was a popular place to go dancing. In advertising the opening, it was stated that the cinema was equipped with perfect architecture, perfect decoration, perfect comfort, perfect sound and vision and perfect programmes. Talk about blowing your own trumpet! They also said, "We have thought of everything, come and see for yourself." They also boasted a car park, deaf aids throughout, coffee, ices etc brought to your seats and a magnificent hall of mirrors.

The main entrance and the tower had a well-designed scheme of neon lighting. The local paper said: 'From the centre of the main entrance hall, with a glass mosaic floor in varying shades of blue with silver stars, rises an impressive column of light, flanked by two similar half columns.' In the foyer, one wall and the ceiling were completely mirrored. The opposite wall was richly panelled in Australian walnut. The floor, completely laid in wood mosaic, struck a musical note in design. There was a decorative motif in the bass clef. Leading up from the foyer to the first floor lounge was a staircase in green terrazzo, which was ten feet wide and enclosed by an ornate balustrading in polished copper and aluminium.

Suspended ceilings and plain plasterwork was carried out by Adams Brothers of Liverpool. The decorative work in the interior was supplied and fitted by HE Wilson (1924) Ltd, who made good use of their Hewiac spray finishing process. The glass and glazing was provided by

It puts YOU in the picture!
See the greatest entertainment event of the century...

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TECHNICOLOR

Opening Wednesday MARCH 18th. 2.30 & 7.45

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or travel agencies

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EASTER WEEK Daily 2.30, 7.45
GOOD FRIDAY 5 & 7.45

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In aid of King George's Fund for Sailors

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7/6 (rear)

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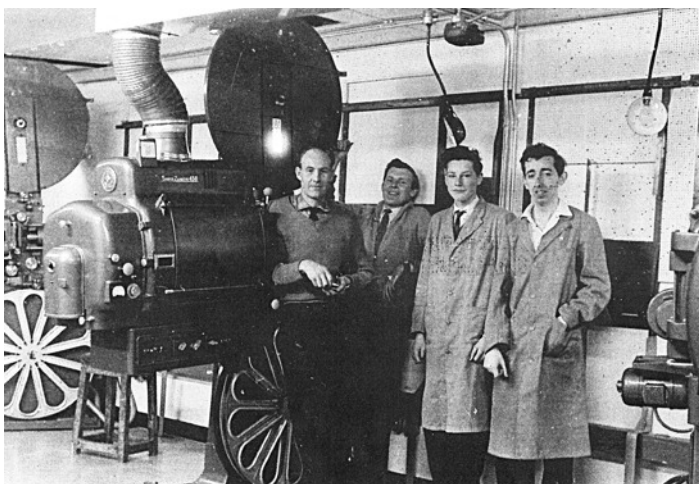
Please send me tickets at for the p.m. performance on Alternative dates I enclose stamped addressed envelope and cheque/P.O. made payable to the Abbey, Liverpool

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CAR PARK for 250 cars



The original frontage and interior of the Abbey



Cinerama projectors and staff at the Abbey

Wilkinson and Co, from Liverpool and Birkenhead. The mirrors to ceiling and walls in the main foyer were supplied and fixed by Williams and Watson Ltd, also from Liverpool.

A novel feature of the foyer was the clock set in the mirrored wall. Two spots of light took the place of the hands. Two pairs of doors led from the lounge to the balcony. The auditorium ceiling was composed entirely of large domes in iridescent gold and individually illuminated. The walls of the auditorium were treated in wide horizontal bands of primrose, orange and gold speckle, separated by bands of silver. The bands led the eye to the main grilles flanking the proscenium, an interesting feature being the illuminated columns of multi-coloured light, which act as a frame. Seating was available for 1,126 on the ground floor and 744 in the balcony. Plumbing throughout was done by Liverpool firm Thomas Murtha and son, who also did the exterior painting and a large amount of interior painting - another local firm. The cinema closed on 4 August 1979 with a 70mm showing of *The Towering Inferno*.

Photos courtesy of Roger Shone & Mike Taylor