



CINEMA  
THEATRE  
ASSOCIATION

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

# BULLETIN

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September / October 2018



The grade II listed former Ritz Ilkeston (Derbys) where bingo ceased in July – see Newsreel p22; photo taken September 2003



The Odeon / Gaumont Eltham Hill (South London) visited by the CTA in May – see report p7; photo taken July 2006



## FROM YOUR EDITOR

This edition marks exactly twenty years since I took over as Bulletin Editor. Thank you for all the support you have given me during that time. As I have previously indicated, I would like to retire in the not too distant future so if you feel like taking over the reins, please let me know. It takes about 50-60 hours to produce the Bulletin, after the deadline date has passed and then a further couple of weeks to get it printed and distributed. If you send in something during this time that has already been put in the Bulletin, please don't be disappointed if I can't include it again.

Vic Harvey sent me some plans for a **Regal** at Luton. We cannot work out if this was a scheme that was never built or what eventually became the **Savoy**. In any case, these plans – and all other things you send in – are passed to the archive.

On p13 you will see I have had to credit an unknown member as we can't identify the signature. Please can you make sure you print your name – and all other proper names, cinema names and anything unusual. It makes my life a lot easier!

Thanks to all those who wished me a good holiday. By the time you read this, we should be in the middle of a four-week trip to Austria with our motorhome. I'll let you know how we got on. I have had no time to prepare my usual Cinema Calendar before our departure. I'll do it soon after we come back so watch out for the advert in the next Bulletin. You'll still have plenty of time to get it before the New Year.

Because I had to get this Bulletin finished before I went away, you may receive it earlier than normal. I'm not intending to set a precedent – normal service will be resumed from the next edition!

Finally, some of you will know my interest in photographing unusual signs. Here is one I came across during my cycling in Kent.

*Harry Rigby, CTA Bulletin Editor*



## AN ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE AGM

Members attending the recent Annual General Meeting in Hull were perhaps surprised when the CTA Chairman reported that Neville Taylor has indicated his desire to retire from the positions that he holds in the CTA. Neville has been Membership Secretary for 20 years and for the past 17 of those has also had the responsibility of being Treasurer. He feels that he would prefer to hand over the reins while still being able to give guidance to his successor(s). Although the two roles fit together very well, it is accepted that it may not be possible to find a replacement who wishes to undertake both. Neville is trying to put together job descriptions for both positions and, it is hoped, will be able to supply these to any applicants. Applicants should be aware that they may be asked to attend an interview with the Officers of the Association and, certainly in the case of Treasurer, be asked to supply suitable references. Applicants will need to be confident users of a PC (not Apple) and familiar with spreadsheet and word processing software. A Windows accountancy program is used and the membership information is held in an MS Access database. Applications should be sent to the Treasurer (contact details opposite), who will supply any further information requested and circulate the applications to the other Officers of the Association.

**DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE  
SATURDAY 20 OCTOBER**

## CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

(Founded January 1967)

promoting serious interest in all aspects of cinema buildings

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### © CTA BULLETIN – published six times yearly by the 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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# VISITS AND EVENTS

## 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 Barnet 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

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'!

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.

**Organiser to contact:** Richard Norman; tel: 020 8668 6077; Email: [RichardNormanCTA@aol.com]

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

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



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

**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!

## Berkhamsted Double Bill

BFI National Archive Poster Collection

and Rex Berkhamsted; Tuesday 16 October

Organised by Adam Unger



A visit has been organised to the British Film Institute (BFI) Poster Collection, housed at their National Archive, in Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire. We are most grateful to the BFI for allowing us to view some of their collection, which is one of the most comprehensive holdings of film posters held anywhere. Included will be Ealing poster examples, press books and some material on cinemas.

The BFI is not charging us a fee for this visit and thanks go to Dr Claire Smith and Nigel Arthur for allowing us special access to this Collection. This visit is open to members only, as there is a restriction on numbers and the tour will be split into two groups, with the first tour commencing at 2pm.

Before visiting the BFI, a visit has been arranged in the morning to the nearby grade II listed Rex Berkhamsted, which will be at 11:30am, for a duration of about an hour. The Rex opened in 1938, designed by David Evelyn Nye for the Shipman and King circuit. It closed in 1988 and after a long period of dereliction, James Hannaway restored and reopened the Rex in 2004. The stalls floor has seating and tables for drinks and food, with conventional seating in the balcony, which has proved to be a highly successful cinema operation.





The interior of the Rex Berkhamsted in April 2005

After the visit to the Rex, there will be a lunch break, with a choice of many eateries in the area, before the first group assembles to be taken to the BFI Archive by taxi/people carrier or your own transport.

**Booking details:** The cost of the visit is £5 with an additional charge for the taxi fare on the day. Please apply to Adam Unger, 59 Harrowdene Gardens, Teddington, TW11 0DJ; enclosing SAE and a cheque for £5, made payable to 'The Cinema Theatre Association'. The closing date for applications is Friday 5 October. Please indicate if you will be using the taxi service or your own transport. Any enquiries, email: [honsec@cta-uk.org] or phone 020 8977 2608.

**Getting there:** The closest rail station is Berkhamsted, served by London Northwestern and Southern. It is about a 10 minute walk from the station to the Rex in the High Street. Full details in the joining letter.

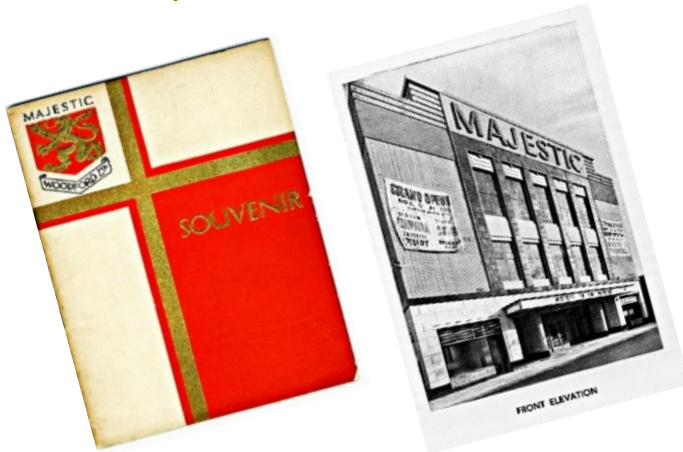
## Entertaining You with Cinema Designs

**Saturday 17 November at 5:30pm (doors open 5:00pm)**

A specially created Double Bill of illustrated talks concentrating on an array of fascinating and creative building schemes designed to appeal to cinema-going audiences that opened during the interwar boom years of cinema development.

### A SUPER-CINEMA OPENING NEAR YOU, SOON!

Illustrated talk by David Jones



The Majestic South Woodford (1934) – A typical example from a souvenir programme that includes a rare image of the exterior just prior to opening.

The mushrooming of street signage and publicity in cities and towns throughout the UK declaring 'A Super-Cinema Opening Near You, Soon' was frequently to be seen during the inter-war boom period of cinema development. The backing entrepreneurs were justly proud of their 'temple to films', trying to make a splash to announce their latest scheme, sometimes in competition with revivals and the big circuits in the nearby locations.

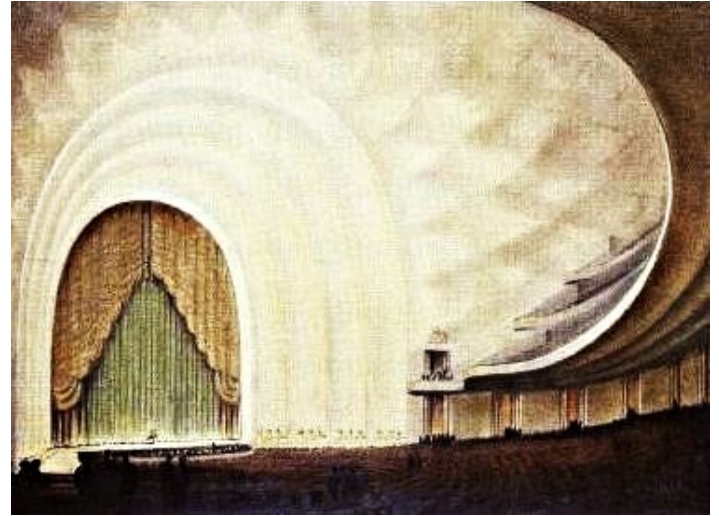
Some well-known and some less well-known architects strived to delight audiences to bring the latest design fashion, innovations and convenience into their schemes – just as the management strived to bring the best entertainment and comfort for their patrons. When the opening date was announced souvenir programmes were distributed and these usually contained interesting details including pre-opening (under construction) photos, illustrations and descriptions are rarely seen afterwards.

David Jones has brought together some examples of these 'A Super-Cinema Opening Near You, Soon' schemes, enabling us to look into what an opening night audience would have experienced with designs, features, VIP celebrities and the presentation.

\*\*\*\*PLUS\*\*\*\*

### THE MYSTERIES OF HYDE PARK!

Illustrated talk by Richard Norman



Architect's drawing for an unexecuted gigantic cinema-theatre scheme located at Hyde Park Corner  
The International Music Hall and Opera House (1939)

We explore three differing cinema schemes with the location Hyde Park in common, using images from archives and feature film footage revealing some rare details.

A truly amazing unexecuted scheme overlooking London's Hyde Park was proposed to build a massive cinema-theatre-concert hall complex loosely along the lines and scale of Radio City Music Hall New York to be called The International Music Hall and Opera House (1939), using the same team of American architects, which included C Howard Crane. Crane was also associated with the design of the Earl's Court Exhibition Centre and the Holloway Gaumont. We will delve into the project's architectural presentation album that hasn't seen daylight for many a year!

Next, the Hyde Park Cinema, Leeds – it lingered on without modernisation and became and was described as the local flea-pit; it has enjoyed a renaissance and is now about to undergo redevelopment and extension (with advice from the CTA's Casework group). It was also used as a location set for several feature films and TV series, where some illustrative clips will be shown.

Finally, the atmospheric Regal (later Odeon) Marble Arch, which overlooks Hyde Park. During its early days it was host to commercial 78rpm recordings by its resident orchestra and the large Christie organ at its heart, as it played the signature music for premières and feature films. We will see a special presentation created by the Cinema Organ Society, a visual adaptation featuring the music from the film *King of Jazz* (1930).

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

**Getting there:** Directions on previous page

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

## Coming Soon

### The CTA Christmas Party with Members' Slide Show

**Saturday 15 December 2018 at 5:00pm (doors open 4:30pm)**

at Alan Baxter's Gallery, Farringdon

Members' festive party and get-together.

Members wishing to suggest a slide show contribution should contact Richard Norman on email: [RichardNormanCTA@aol.com] or tel: 020 8668 6077.

Further details in the next Bulletin

Other (non-CTA) event are on p31





# PUBLICATIONS

## Back Numbers Available

### PICTURE HOUSE MAGAZINE

Listed below are the back numbers of *Picture House* that are still available, along with the main articles the particular issue contains.

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

### Reprinted AGAIN due to popular demand..!

#### ABC – THE FIRST NAME IN ENTERTAINMENT by Allen Eyles

A reprint of the 1993 edition, with a new introduction by the author highlighting developments since the book was published, including the short-lived return of the ABC name. 164 pages, paperback, fully illustrated, £17.50 plus £3 postage.

A few copies are still available of the reprint of *Gaumont British Cinemas*, also by Allen Eyles. 224 pages, paperback, fully illustrated, £17.50 plus £3 postage.

**Special Offer** – buy both ABC and Gaumont together for £30.00, plus £3 postage. Ordering details opposite.

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

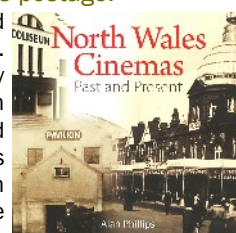
We can supply back numbers of most Bulletins from Volume 21 (1987) to date. Prices for issues from 1987 to 2016 are £4.00 per year (6 issues); individual issues are £1.00 each. Prices for issues in 2017 and 2018 are £4.00 per copy. All prices include postage. There are some issues available from earlier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

## New Publication

### North Wales Cinemas Past and Present

By Alan Phillips. 126 pages, small paperback, fully illustrated in black and white and colour, £6.95 plus postage.

Following recent books about West Wales and South Wales, now it is the turn of North Wales. This concise book is arranged alphabetically from Abergele to Wrexham and includes such large towns as Llandudno and Prestatyn and many smaller towns and villages too. Conwy is included here, with the **Palace Cinema**, which often features in CTA casework reports. There are over 50 towns and villages included here, with a multitude of photographs, although due to the compact size of the publication these are rather small. Nevertheless, this a useful and comprehensive guide to the region's cinemas, which as the title suggests includes modern-day multiplexes too.



## Recently Published (details in previous Bulletins)

### The Cinemas of West Wales

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

### From Projectors to Preachers

*Cinemas that became Churches* by Gavin McGrath.

32 pages, A4 card covers, illustrated. £4.50 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)

**The Last Picture House: Saving Plymouth's Last Original Cinema Building**, by Ian Carroll. 146 pages, A5 paperback, illustrated, £5.99. Available through Amazon: ISBN 978-1721769698.

This book has been produced mainly to publicise the campaign to save the Reel Cinema in Plymouth (the former Royal / ABC / Cannon, etc). 50% of the proceeds will go towards the cost of producing leaflets, stationery, promotional material, etc. After a fairly short history of the building, with mention of other Plymouth cinemas, the bulk of the book consists of reminiscences from patrons past and present and supporting messages from various luminaries and local celebrities. There are many photographs of the remaining architectural features and some historic shots and also a listing of some of the live acts that appeared at the ABC and a section about ghostly encounters.





# CAMPAIGNING TO SAVE YOUR HISTORIC CINEMAS

By Tim Hatcher

## Grade II\* Listed



The Granada Woolwich as a church in April 2015

Although the external impact of the proposed annexe to the Granada in Woolwich has been ameliorated, permission has been granted to convert the fly tower into offices and other ancillary spaces, despite objection from the CTA. This intrusion is highly regrettable as it permanently precludes the cinema from reverting to full theatrical employment.

## Grade II Listed

In somewhat similar vein, the façade of the planned extension to the Hyde Park Picture House in Leeds has been modified, with a brown colour palette replacing the original cream tones. However, the alteration to the foyer has been approved, again despite opposition from the Association. This will destroy the charming intimacy and original atmosphere of the currently unaltered entrance hall. See Newsreel p22.

## Unlisted



The Adelphi Slough in April 2015

Following presentation to Historic England by the CTA of an extremely cogent case for listing of the Adelphi in Slough, it is unreservedly disagreeable to report that a refusal has been received. Once again the determination contains certain inaccuracies and displays little knowledge of the building class. This cinema of 1930 by architect E Norman Bailey presents a dignified façade on an island site and boasts an auditorium retaining an intact original architectural scheme featuring illuminated capitals to its pilasters, alongside an equally impressive and commodious ballroom. Lamentably a Certificate of Immunity from Listing will be issued to the owner.

In reluctant recognition of the above rejection, it has been agreed that an application to list the Odeon in Ashford is unlikely to succeed because this cinema, although largely unaltered, is of no greater quality than the Adelphi. However, its retention is to be recommended to the local Council, which owns the property, although opinion has been expressed by a representative of that august body that it spoils the view towards a church nearby. See Newsreel p19.

The frieze from the demolished Gaumont Palace in Doncaster has been temporarily accommodated in a loggia at Cusworth Hall Museum, where it awaits restoration and re-erection. Concurrently a local petition advocating the project has gained much support.



The Picturehouse/Adelphi/Roxy Bridlington in June 2006

Somewhat surprisingly, Historic England has sought the opinion of the Association upon the possible eligibility of the Picturehouse/Roxy in Bridlington for listing designation. A reply in the affirmative has been forwarded. This cinema constitutes a 1912 conversion of The Temperance Hall and perhaps underlines the apparent higher value placed by Historic England upon early Twentieth Century cinemas in comparison to those of later decades.



The Danilo/Essoldo Hinckley in September 2005

The Council in whose area the Danilo at Hinckley lies has now closed the planning application case relating thereto as no response to its enquiries has been forthcoming from the applicant. A principle has been established with the authority that salient features of the structure should be preserved in any future development of the site.

At the nearby Regent at Hinckley, it has been reported that leases of the foyer and shops, which survive following demolition of the auditorium block, have been sold. These remnants of the structure may therefore become threatened, so a watching brief will be kept upon possible adverse developments of this situation.

Planning permission has finally been granted for the redevelopment scheme encompassing a comprehensive swathe of the Elephant and Castle district in London, of which the Coronet forms part; it will thus be demolished as long foreseen.

An application for a variant to the planning permission conditions relating to Pyke's Cinematograph Theatre at Shepherd's Bush has been submitted. Investigation will be instigated to determine if this would prove of further detriment to the building.

The architect responsible for the renovation of the Savoy in Stoke Newington is proposing 'a light spruce-up' of its exterior, in the process creating a terrace enclosed by pseudo art deco railings for the convenience of the tobacco-smoking fraternity.

Hammerson, owner of the Point in Milton Keynes, intends to demolish the current structure and replace it with a retail and leisure development. Outline planning permission was granted four years ago and does not expire until January 2019. However, the replacement currently propounded is proving contentious with some local councillors.



# DOUBLE FEATURE

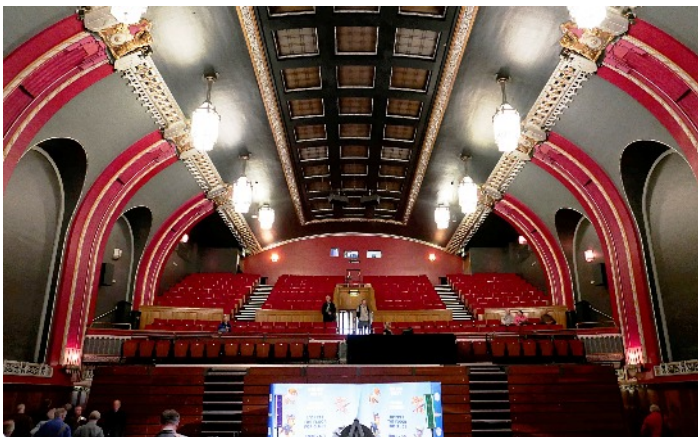
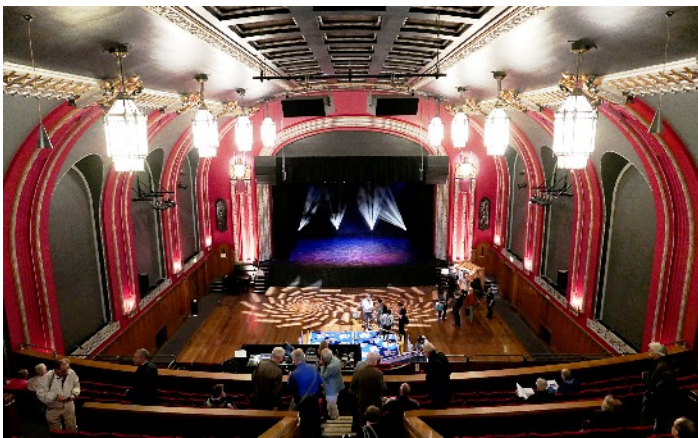
## A report on the CTA Visit to Catford & Eltham Saturday 12 May 2018 by Mike Wood

Due to the unfortunate weather related postponement of the Warwickshire visit, a gap in the events programme needed filling and quickly. Easier said than done, as our events can take months and even years of negotiation with operators to come to fruition. However, Ray Ritmeester came up with a South London double bill of 'A Visit to Catford and Eltham', which did the trick nicely.



The Broadway Catford on the day of the visit

Railway engineering works in South London made the journey from the visit write-up office rather more problematic than usual, so your correspondent took an early lunch break at the Forest Hill Capitol (1928 John Stanley Beard – Listed Grade II) which Wetherspoon have re-opened after its closure and offer for sale in 2014. It is all as we saw it on our last visit in 2006 but perhaps now in need of a little TLC. It was then just a fifteen-minute bus ride to the Broadway Theatre (1932 Bradshaw, Gass & Hope – Listed Grade II) the bus stop being right outside the venue.



The auditorium at the Broadway Catford

It was immediately obvious that something was afoot, because the usual suspects were across the street, already pointing their cameras at this prominent building in Art Deco style with a hint of the gothic. It opened as the Catford Public Halls, an addition to the Gothic Revival Town Hall of 1875, which has since been demolished and replaced by

a bland office block of no apparent distinction. However, we must be grateful that the same fate didn't befall the theatre, which is high, wide and handsome.

Within the stone faced, hip-roofed exterior and set back behind the street-facing range of ancillary spaces, is the auditorium seating about nine hundred, below a curved ceiling with gilded coffered panels and ten large metal and glass lanterns. Four giant round-headed arches feature on each of the side walls, with panels surmounted by shields and all above oak panelling the length of the hall. Heraldic beasts and metal scrollwork grilles flank the curved proscenium arch.

The original Compton organ sits on the stalls floor to stage left. Apart from the seating and drapes, the entire interior appears to be original. A shallow fly tower behind the proscenium allows for house curtains and a screen and the stage extends back but restricted in height and width with a narrow gantry for a fly floor.



The screen, flown



Richard Hills at the Compton organ

Retractable seating can extend forward of the balcony but the flat floor was clear for our visit. We found our favourite places to sit upstairs to hear the organ played by Richard Hills, who demonstrated some classical and light music for us.

It was busy at the theatre with an open day and kids' event but the manager and technical manager, included back-stage, organ loft and the original projection box, on a full tour for us.

It was then a short bus ride to Eltham Hill and the Odeon (1938 Andrew Mather). This is situated nearby the earlier Well Hall Odeon (1936 Andrew Mather with Horace Ward – Listed Grade II), which has been substantially rebuilt as flats. Eltham Hill seated more patrons in stadium configuration but was somewhat less distinguished in its design. However, it subsequently took the name Gaumont and it is still there now, reinvented as a Mecca bingo club. Photo on front cover.

Our thanks go to the managers and staff at these two venues, Richard Hills for playing the Compton for us and to Ray Ritmeester for organising it and providing the notes, supplemented by John Kennett's recollections of cinema-going in Eltham.

*Photos by the author*

### Links for more:

[[www.southlondonclub.co.uk/blog/2017/9/25/a-brief-history-of-the-catford-broadway-theatre](http://www.southlondonclub.co.uk/blog/2017/9/25/a-brief-history-of-the-catford-broadway-theatre)]

[[councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s46607/Catford-Broadway\\_ICA\\_Sketchook-No4-A4.pdf](http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s46607/Catford-Broadway_ICA_Sketchook-No4-A4.pdf)]

[[historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1253065](http://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1253065)]



# A SEASIDE CINEMA PARADISE

By Mike Whitcombe



The exterior of The Dome cinema

I've always envied the residents of Worthing. Not only is the northern edge of this West Sussex town caressed by the outstanding beauty of the rolling South Downs but the English Channel laps a southern boundary dominated by a traditional promenade, complete with a pier that's home to a recently restored art deco tearoom. On summer afternoons when the sky is a cloudless blue and the sun shines kindly down, when seagulls shriek high overhead and an ice cream complete with chocolate flake provides an enjoyable treat, Worthing really is the place to visit.

But for cinema enthusiasts – including those of us who enjoy an ice cream not bought from a cinema kiosk – Worthing truly is a gem of a place. For in an age of multiplexes – that, to be fair, look and feel the same once you're inside their plushly-seated auditoria – Worthing boasts three unique cinemas, two of which are proudly still single-screen affairs.

The three-screen **Dome**, situated on the seafront itself, a few hundred yards east of the pier, is arguably the best known of this trio. Built and owned by the Swiss born Carl Adolf Seebold and designed by London architect Theophilus Arthur Allen, it was originally a flat-floored multi-purpose entertainment hall used for roller skating, concerts, dancing, billiards and meetings. It opened on Easter Sunday 16 April 1911 and was called the *Kursaal*, a Teutonic name for 'Cure Hall'. Six months later, on Saturday, 7 October, an upstairs cinema called the *Kursaal Electric Theatre* opened, operating daily (except Sundays) with a change of films every Monday and Thursday. In 1915 as Britain waged war with Germany, the name was changed to the **Dome**. Six years later the building became the cinema we know today, when at a cost of £8,000 the auditorium moved downstairs to occupy the former main hall. The remodelling was by architect R Kirksby and the opening feature, accompanied by a six piece orchestra, was *Pollyanna* starring Mary Pickford.

Seebold oversaw this conversion, owning the site until 1949, two years before his death. In 1954 CinemaScope was installed, requiring a new proscenium arch to be fitted in front of the old one. During these years, the **Dome** was in competition from the nearby Rivoli, the

ABC Plaza and the Odeon. As they closed (in 1960, 1968 and 1986 respectively) the **Dome** kept struggling on, despite a major redevelopment scheme being announced for the area, which in 1969 led to the building being purchased by the Council.

The next thirty or so years were a heart stopping rollercoaster for this Edwardian masterpiece. The Council showed little interest in the business or the building, threatening closure regularly while offering short term leases, which resulted in anyone running the site unable to spend money on improving facilities. Unscrupulous developers, public protests, petitions, diminishing audiences, a Grade II listing in May 1989 (helped by the CTA) that was upgraded to the present Grade II\*, all made headlines until finally, in November 1999, the Council sold the **Dome** for a nominal £1 to the Worthing Dome and Regeneration Trust. They were backed by a £2.5 million Heritage Lottery Fund award, which led to the building being closed between December 2005, and July 2007 for a full restoration, producing the beautiful late art nouveau inspired cinema you see today.

The **Dome** is, of course, instantly recognisable by its distinctive dome that sits atop the three-storey entrance tower. Venture inside and further painstakingly restored period details greet you. There's the original mahogany paybox – still in daily use [R] – original wood panelled foyer and original auditorium complete with side balconies. Fancy a drink while taking all this in? Then head for the Projectionists' Bar, entered via the main foyer. A couple of projectors stand guard as you relax in comfy chairs with old film reels as tables. Not keen about the movie in screen ①? Then head for the first floor



and screen ②, called the **Electric Theatre**, which opened in November 2002 and is housed in the original 1911 auditorium. Or you could grab the latest blockbuster in the newly opened (February 2018) 41-seat screen ③. Situated in a former shop at the front of the building it boasts a wall to wall screen and romantic double seats embroidered with a logo of the **Dome**.



The foyer at The Dome

PDJ cinemas were responsible for this latest addition. They have operated the site since 2007 but took full ownership from the Trust two years ago in a sale triggered by unpaid debts. The sale sparked controversy but their continued investment suggests the **Dome** is in safe hands.

My favourite Worthing cinema – and yes, I know, like children, you shouldn't really have a favourite – is, however, the single screen **Connaught**. In purely architectural terms, the **Dome** is arguably the winner, mainly because its main auditorium remains pretty much





The façade and foyer at the Connaught

unaltered since it opened almost a century ago. But there's something about the look and feel of the Connaught that appeals to the romantic in me. It's an endearingly nostalgic place with an evocative art deco frontage and entrance hall that positively drips glamour. The auditorium, appealingly wide with working festoons and a capacity for five hundred, still suggests a time around eighty years ago when cinema ruled supreme. And its history is as fascinating as the Dome.

It opened in July 1914 as the Picturedrome, capacity 860, a purpose-built cinema designed by Eastbourne architect Peter Dulvey Stoneham. Seven years later it faced competition from the Carl Seebold owned Dome and when Seebold built and opened the nearby Rivoli in March 1924 cinema audiences at the Picturedrome declined. In 1926 Seebold bought the Picturedrome, giving him ownership of all three Worthing cinemas. But with the opening of two art deco super cinemas in the town, namely the Plaza in December 1933 and the Odeon in March 1934, both of which boasted over 1,500 seats, audiences at the Edwardian built Picturedrome fell and its future looked bleak.

At the time the adjacent Connaught Hall housed the Worthing Repertory Company, who were doing turn-away business. Seebold saw a lifeline for his building and in 1935 the repertory company made the Picturedrome its new home, renaming it the Connaught Theatre. Seebold invested £60,000 towards remodelling work, which included a first floor cocktail bar and lounge area (that still remains open as the Fraser Bar) and the frontage we see today. The entrance façade was completely rebuilt in a Streamline Moderne-style of two storeys paraped in three bays, ribbon windows, black tiles (sadly removed in the mid-1980s) and cream faience. It was a startlingly modern look. And although the building was now a full-time theatre – perhaps the first purpose-built cinema to be so converted – it suddenly looked more like a cinema than the recently opened nearby Odeon! Seebold relinquished control of the building in April 1950 when he sold the lease for £3,500.

The theatre continued until 1966 when diminishing attendances forced it to close. The usual public outcry followed and in 1967 Worthing Corporation purchased it. The auditorium was revamped in 1972, when film projection facilities were installed and the Connaught strug-

gled on with live theatre, closing for a short while again in 1986. That was the year the Odeon also closed, leaving the Dome as Worthing's only cinema. On 2 March 1987, the Connaught, although primarily still a venue for plays, screened its first film in fifty-two years when the Richard Attenborough directed *A Chorus Line* was shown. Movies had finally returned!

Although several plays are still staged at the Connaught each year, it's now daily film shows that form the bulk of the programming. This includes programming for the first floor, single-screen Connaught Studio, in the building next door. This is the former Connaught Hall that opened in October 1916 as a venue for vaudeville entertainment and was used as a rehearsal place and a prop store for theatrical productions after 1935. It reopened as an entertainment venue called the Ritz in June 1995 when the Council installed projection equipment and 240 seats. The first film shown was *Nell* starring Jodie Foster on 3 June.

For more than twenty years this was a delightful auditorium full of Edwardian grandeur. But in 2017 an £80,000 revamp to utilise the space when theatre or comedy is occasionally staged led to the auditorium being completely transformed and the capacity being reduced from 240 to 160. This was accomplished by dropping a wall from the projection box that extended over the rear third of the auditorium and creating a tiered five row balcony along with four rows of stalls in front and a bar area behind. Although the work was well done and the introduction of a bar, open for specific performances, definitely increases the opportunity for extra revenue, the alterations resulted in a loss of a certain charm. The new seats might be comfortable (although the leg room in the balcony is tight) and the picture quality and sound first class but the graceful elegance of the original Edwardian theatre no longer exists and that's a shame.

But despite this one small disappointment, Worthing is still an indulgence to be savoured for cinema enthusiasts. An afternoon movie, say, within the art deco delights of the Connaught can then be followed by a movie a little later within the Edwardian delights of the Dome – less than a ten minute stroll away. Life doesn't get much better than that!

There was a time when cinema-going was shaped by the individual cinemas you visited. Every cinema had its own peculiarities and often the quirks of a particular auditorium enhanced the enjoyment of the movie showing on the silver screen. With the closure of so many much loved picture palaces, that feeling has been lost. But at Worthing, thanks to the existence of the Dome, Connaught and Connaught Studio, a trip to the movies remains a truly memorable experience. Book your tickets today!

All photos by the author.

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...

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or if you would like to become a member only.

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# REWINDING BACK

Sent in by David A Ellis

## LANCING TO HAVE A CINEMA?

The *Worthing Herald* is able to reveal that negotiations and arrangements for the building of a cinema at Lancing are rapidly proceeding. The enterprise has been a closely kept secret until now. The Sussex Theatres Company is the concern that intends to make this venture; the firm owns the *Coliseum* theatre in Horsham.

It is intended to build on a suitable site quite near to the station and so, of course, centrally placed in the village. Negotiations for the land in view have proceeded satisfactorily and there seems to be nothing to impede the scheme.

It is considered that a theatre seating about 500 people would be sufficient for the present needs of the neighbourhood but it will probably be arranged that the building shall be of such a character that it may easily be extended. Provided the consent of the necessary authorities is forthcoming, the scheme can rapidly be carried forward, for the company already possesses plans that should readily prove adaptable to the position. It is intended to install the BTH system, a most modern English product.

The company is acting in the belief that the population of Lancing can support a cinema and in the confidence that the village will continue to grow as steadily as it has in the past few years. If sufficient support is forthcoming, it is proposed to open on every week-day evening. If not, the arrangements may be modified. If the venture materialises, the cinema will be managed by Mr J Morris, who controls the *Coliseum* theatre at Shoreham. No name is yet suggested for the proposed theatre.

*Worthing Herald* – 30 July 1932

## NEW CINEMA FOR LANCING

Work has already begun on the new Lancing cinema, to be called the *Ritz*, which is being built in Penhill Road and which will be under the management of Mr Morris, manager of the *Coliseum*, Shoreham-by-Sea. It is hoped that the cinema will be open from the beginning of the summer months.

The cinema, which will be constructed on modern lines, has been especially designed for the showing of sound films and a café will be included in the building. The finest “talkie” apparatus and machinery will be installed and at first there will be seating accommodation for 750, although arrangements have been made for increasing the capacity as and when the requirements of the district call for it.

The stage will be equipped with modern lighting effects with dressing rooms at the back and there will be a large car park for the use of patrons.

The contract for the building of the cinema has been secured by Messrs AW Gates & Sons Ltd, the builders of Lancing Church and part of the Lancing College buildings. Mr Morris hopes that the cinema will quickly become popular, as nothing of a similar nature has been provided in Lancing in the past and that it will prove an added attraction to visitors and residents alike.

*Worthing Herald* – 11 February 1933

David writes: It seems that Odeon must have taken over the cinema after it was built.

## DISPUTE ABOUT SALE OF FOUR CINEMAS

The hearing was continued in the House of Lords on Monday of an appeal relating to a claim of £10,000 for introducing a purchaser of one cinema at Eastbourne (the *Luxor*) and three at Hastings (the *Regal*, *Elite* and *DeLuxe*). Appellants were *Luxor* (Eastbourne) Ltd and *Regal* (Hastings) Ltd and the respondent was Mr Norman Aldred Cooper, insurance broker of Brunswick Gardens, Kensington. The latter claimed £10,000 from appellants for his introduction of London & Southern Cinema Ltd, which, he said, had agreed to purchase the cinemas for £185,000, to include £10,000 payable to him as commission. He put his claim alternatively as one for breach of contract and asked for an award of the same sum (£10,000) as damages. Mr Justice Branson, in the Kings Bench Division, dismissed his action but on appeal the Court of Appeal gave him judgement for £8,000 damages and costs. *Luxor* (Eastbourne) Ltd and *Regal* (Hastings) Ltd now appealed to the House of Lords against this judgement.

*Eastbourne Gazette* – 14 August 1940

## LANCING CINEMA DISPUTE

A dispute between *Odeon* (Lancing) Limited and *Luxor* (Lancing) Limited was mentioned to Mr Justice Uthwatt in the Chancery Division last week on a motion by the plaintiffs *Odeon* (Lancing) Limited to restrain the defendants from using certain equipment at their cinema. Mr JP Jobling, for the plaintiffs, said the defendant's cinema was mortgaged to the plaintiffs, who had alleged that the equipment had been removed. Plaintiffs started an action for foreclosure and were trying to let the theatre. They had had three offers but it would be very difficult to replace the equipment and let the premises. Plaintiffs would probably succeed in getting the equipment and the matter was urgent. The parties had now got together and agreed that the motion should stand over for one week. Mr Justice Uthwatt ordered the motion to stand over accordingly.

*Worthing Gazette* – Wednesday 17 September 1941

## DCM IS LUXOR'S NEW MANAGER

Mr AG Leavers DCM on Monday took up his duties as resident manager of the *Luxor* Lancing. He succeeds Mr James, who has taken up relief work on the circuit. Mr Leavers, who was formerly on the relief circuit of the *Luxor* Cinemas, has lived in Lancing three years. He is a member of Lancing British Legion and the ARP, in which he plays an active part in the sports section. During the last year he joined the City London Yeomanry and spent a year in Ireland. Shortly afterwards he was transferred to the Royal Fusiliers and it was while serving with this regiment in France that he won the DCM for capturing a strongly manned German stronghold.

*Worthing Herald* – 19 February 1943

David writes: Further to my article on p11 of Bulletin 52/3, it would seem there was a Mr James after Mr Kirk at the *Luxor*. Mr Leavers didn't arrive until 15 February 1943

## ATTRACTIVE FOYER SCENE

The *Luxor* Cinema, Lancing (manager Mr Alfred G Leavers) has always led the way in originality of foyer display and this week an attractive scene from the film showing *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* is laid out in the foyer. Paintings of the forest, the cottage and the figures of Snow White and her dwarfs have combined to make a realistic effect with lighting from behind the cottage shining through the window and, in direct contrast, a mysterious green lighting for the forest. The total cost was exactly two shillings, the cost of the original poster from which the figures were cut.

*Worthing Gazette* – 27 September 1944

## LANCING CINEMAS DEAL: ODEON TO CLOSE

Both Lancing's cinemas, the *Luxor* and the *Odeon* have been bought by Shipman & King Ltd, a London firm controlling a chain of houses. The *Luxor*, previously owned by the Bentley Circuit Management Co Ltd and seating 1,000 will continue as a cinema but the *Odeon*, which belonged to the J Arthur Rank Organisation, will be closed after the last performance tomorrow. Children's Saturday shows, previously held at the *Odeon* will be transferred to the *Luxor*.

*Worthing Herald* – Friday 18 January 1952

## THIEVES BLOW OPEN SAFE AT CINEMA

The manager's office at the *Luxor* Lancing was wrecked when thieves blew open the safe there on Sunday night and stole the weekend takings amounting to £259. They also took 400 cigarettes. The safe door, taken completely off its hinges by the force of the explosion, was blown 15ft to the other side of the room, smashing through the manager's desk on the way. Clothing that the manager, Mr W O'Sullivan, intended to take with him on holiday shortly was ruined in the wreckage.

The thieves entered by smashing a side window and then broke open the door of the office to get to the safe. Local residents were undisturbed by the explosion, probably because the cinema is situated between a bank and the Electricity Board showrooms. “The place was in an indescribable mess when I went in on Monday morning,” Mr O'Sullivan told a reporter. “It looked as if it had been hit by a bomb.”

*West Sussex Gazette* – 27 August 1953





### MAYOR AND MAYORESS ATTEND REOPENING

The Mayor and Mayoress of Worthing, Alderman and Mrs EA Brackley, were present at the reopening of the Odeon cinema on Saturday; they attended the evening show. Speaking from the stage of the cinema, Mr G Stevens welcomed his audience and explained that in the case of an air raid warning, the lights in the cinema would go up. The audience would be informed of the warning and those who wished to leave the cinema could do so. After an interval, the programme would continue with the lights up until the 'all clear' signal was given. "I should like to express my thanks to Mr Oscar Deutsch for maintaining the staff of all his Odeon cinemas during the past week." said Mr Stevens. Owing to the war, The Odeon Mickey Mouse Club has been discontinued.

*Worthing Herald - 15 September 1939*

### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: One of the things most deplored is over-amplified music. Do you get complaints?

A: Yes. Our sound fading equipment is adjusted to the normal person's hearing. It is increased a point or two when the house is full to overcome the buzz of conversation and turned up another point in wet weather because damp clothing deadens sound. Still we receive complaints from patrons that it is too loud or not loud enough. We try to strike a happy medium and (at the Plaza and Odeon) sets of deaf aids are lent free of charge to the hard of hearing on payment of a small deposit.

Here we have a minority report. One manager suggests that, "... as you would expect in a town of elderly people, Worthing audiences are hard of hearing compared with the average and it is the visitor to Worthing who sometimes finds the sound too blatant." A second manager suggests that over-amplification is most frequently encountered with the new stereophonic sound equipment. Some Brighton cinemas have installed this but none in Worthing has yet done so.

Q: Why are seats non-bookable?

A: Because cinema performances, unlike theatre performances, are continuous and any one seat may be occupied by three different patrons during one complete show. If the cinemas went back to separate performances (as they would have to, to hold particular seats in reserve) the first to revolt against having to arrive at a specified time would be the housewives. They would be followed by that casual but still large section of the business community who like to drop into the cinema to kill an hour between appointments.

*Worthing Herald - 20 September 1957*

### LONDON PALACE THEATRE SOLD



The Palace Theatre London in March 2004

An extraordinary meeting of the shareholders of the Palace Theatre (Limited) yesterday ratified the provisional contract recently made by the directors for the sale of the theatre to Mr Sol Levy, on behalf of the Cinema Combine, for £345,000.

*The Scotsman - Friday 16 July 1920*

### THE FUTURE OF THE PALACE

With reference to the rumours that Charles B Cochran would assume control of the Palace, the facts are now stated to be: Mr Cochran has consented to act as chairman and joint managing director with Mr Sol Levy, of Birmingham, in the event of the latter's negotiations for the Palace upon which Mr Levy has already paid a big deposit, being completed. There is every reason to believe that the negotiations will be completed. The policy of the Palace under the new direction will be pictures, vaudeville and miniature light musical productions by Mr Cochran. London Palace (1921) Ltd has been registered as a new company at Somerset House. Among its directors are Mr CB Cochran and Mr S Levy. The capital is £250,000.

*The Stage - 27 January 1921*

### MR SOL LEVY DEAD: CINEMA PIONEER IN BIRMINGHAM.

News of the death of Mr Sol Levy of 255 Hagley Road, came as a shock yesterday to the film world both in Birmingham and in many provincial centres, where he was a prominent figure in cinema entertainment circles. Mr Levy, who had not been in good health for some time, died during Tuesday night at Harrogate, where he was undergoing a course of treatment.

Mr Levy was one of the pioneers of the moving picture in Birmingham. He was a native of London, where he was born in 1877 and his early business career was in the family boot and shoe manufacturing business. He travelled for the firm for ten years and then left to set up for himself. He first became associated with the cinema industry on the exhibiting side in 1905 and in addition to the Scala he built the Futurist in Birmingham. In addition to his Birmingham interests he was connected with cinemas in Nuneaton, Liverpool, Leeds, Middlesbrough and London.

Always keenly interested in music, he was a strong advocate of first class music in cinemas and he was one of the first to introduce it in the theatres with which he was connected. A wife and three daughters are left to mourn his loss.

*Birmingham Gazette - Thursday 11 July 1929*

### CAMEO: JUDGE'S SUMMING UP

Mr Justice Oliver resumed his summing up in the Cameo Cinema (Liverpool) murder trial at Liverpool today. Charles Connolly and George Kelly, both 26-year-old Liverpool labourers, are charged with the murder of Leonard Thomas, the cinema manager, during an armed hold-up on 19 March last year. The Judge said that the jury would have time to consider whether there was time enough between the shooting and the appearance of Kelly at the Leigh Arms for him to get to the cinema and appear in the public house after having got rid of his disguise, the overcoat, the mask and the gun.

On the question of the statements of Northam and Dixon to the police, the Judge said it had been suggested by the defence that they got the details from the newspapers but they could not have got a complete picture until the police court proceedings. How could Northam possibly have got the information about the shooting and the men's wounds unless he got it from the murderer? No one had suggested that Northam was the murderer and the police had never suspected it.

[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cameo\_murder]

*Leicester Mercury - 27 January 1950*

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# SUNDAY OPENING IN SKIPTON

Lesley Tate reports

It was 70 years ago, in July, 1948, that Aneurin Bevan launched the National Health Service; but in Skipton, there were far more pressing matters – that of Sunday opening of the town's cinemas.

## REGAL ODEON THEATRE

TEL. 161 SKIPTON

To-day & Sat: Stewart Granger, Valerie Hobson in "BLANCHE FURY" (A)  
Cont. Saturday from 2.0 p.m. Presented at 3.10 p.m., 5.55 p.m., 8.40 p.m.

Cont. Mon & Wed. from 5.5 p.m.

**MICHAEL REDGRAVE**  
**JEAN KENT**

IN

### "THE MAN WITHIN" (A)

COLOUR by TECHNICOLOR.

Mon. & Wed. 5.20 p.m., 8.55 p.m.  
Tues. Only, 1.45, 5.20, 8.55 p.m.

Cont. Tues. Only from 1.30 p.m.

**ERIC PORTMAN**  
**PHYLLIS CALVERT**

IN

### "MEN OF TWO WORLDS" (A)

COLOUR by TECHNICOLOR.

Mon. and Wed., 6.55 p.m.  
Tues. Only, 3.20 p.m., 6.55 p.m.

**NEXT MON. TUES. WED.**

Cont. Thurs. & Fri. from 6.20 p.m.

**REX HARRISON**  
**KAY HAMMOND**  
**CONSTANCE CUMMINGS**

IN

### "BLITHE SPIRIT" (A)

COLOUR by TECHNICOLOR.

Thurs. & Fri. 6.35 p.m., 8.30 p.m. Sat. Only, 2.45 p.m., 4.40 p.m., 6.35 p.m., 8.30 p.m.

Cont. Sat. Only from 2.30 p.m.

**NEXT THUR. FRI. SAT.**

There was mention of the birth of the National Health Service in the *Craven Herald* of 70 years ago, in July 1948, mostly to do with the monies contained in old hospital funds that were to be reorganised under the new healthcare system. But, of much greater interest, was the vote held in Skipton to decide on whether the town's cinemas should be allowed to open on Sundays. The vote, which saw an impressive 60% turnout, saw 3,329 vote for Sunday opening and 2,596 vote against, giving a majority of 733. It was in stark contrast to a vote taken at a town meeting held a month earlier, when 195 voted for and 377 against. Skipton was not the only place to hold such a referendum but the turnout of about 60% was at the time a record poll for any election in Skipton and, according to the *Craven Herald*, the highest turnout in the country for Sunday opening.



The former Regal / Odeon Skipton in June 2005

## REGAL ODEON THEATRE

TEL. 161 SKIPTON

ALL NEXT WEEK

Continuous Mon, Tues. and Sat. from 2 p.m.  
REMAINDER OF WEEK 5.10 p.m.

**STEWART GRANGER**  
**VALERIE HOBSON**  
**BLANCHE FURY**

Colour by TECHNICOLOR

A BRITISH PICTURE

Mon, Tues, Sat. 3.10 p.m., 5.55 p.m., 8.40 p.m. Remainder of week, 5.55, 8.40 p.m.  
Mon, Tues, Sat. 2.20, 5.5 and 7.55 p.m. KING'S NAVY. (U) Remainder of week 5.10 and 7.55 p.m.

## PLAZA

Tel. 417

THIS WEEK-END: "OUT CALIFORNIA WAY" (On Tronico)  
also "Winter Wonderland"  
SATURDAY—2.0 5.30 8.0.

Commencing Monday, AUG 2 (for SIX DAYS):

### JUST WILLIAM'S LUCK (U)

Based on Richmal Crompton's Famous Character.  
WITH **Leslie Bradley** **Garry Marsh**  
**Jane Welsh** **A. E. Matthews** **Muriel Akeed**  
and INTRODUCING **WILLIAM GRAHAM**

Continuous from 6.30—Full Programme 6.30, 8.30.  
MATINEES—Tues. and Sat., at 2.15.  
SATURDAY—2.15, 5.45, 8.0.

COMING — "MY BROTHER JONATHAN"

The election was held on a Saturday, on 17 July 1948 and polling was the same as for any local government election. Electors voted at the same polling stations used for Council elections. Polling took place from 11am to 8pm and the returning officer was the chairman of Skipton Urban District Council, Mr WA Anderson. In the two weeks before the election, both sides had been busy canvassing. Supporters set up an information bureau at the top of the High Street and campaign talks were held every night at the Regal Cinema. Opponents, notably the Christian congregations but also staff at the Plaza Cinema, who did not want to work on Sundays, held several meetings, including with the Vicar of Sowerby Bridge, where a similar move had been defeated. Churches in the town had also carried out house to house leafleting. One minister at a Skipton church, a Mr WA Pearson, in a letter to the paper, urged people to vote 'no' to Sunday opening. Mr Pearson said he sympathised with the manager of the Regal Cinema and the desire of the Rank Organisation to raise the profile of British films but he remained opposed to Sunday opening. Sunday was the 'Lord's Day' and he had a desire to preserve the English tradition, he said. He failed to see the need to open on Sundays. "Six days, twice nightly, with matinées and the Saturday morning picture club for children should be enough. Why seek to make profit on the seventh day?" he said. "Freedom to worship God is something for which men have given their lives. Would men go to the same lengths to open cinemas on Sundays? Worship and entertainment are not the same."

Meanwhile, in a joint letter to the *Herald*, the employees of both the Regal Cinema and the Plaza Cinema, put forward their views. "Each of us choose to work on Sundays because we are covered by the Conscience Clause," wrote staff at The Regal. "This means if for any religious, domestic or social reason we do not wish to work, we have no obligation to do so. Our work on Sunday is voluntary, yet for the few hours we shall work, we will get double pay. In addition, we will shall also get one day off, mid-week." Staff at the Regal, however urged people to vote 'no' and to preserve Sundays. "The excuses for foisting Sunday cinemas on Skipton are so paltry as to be ridiculous and we can find no justifiable reason for giving up our one day of rest at the dictation of its sponsors. Everyone knows that Sunday was not invented for opportunists to make money," said F Tattersall, for and behalf of the staff.



The Plaza Skipton in June 2005





The result was announced by the Council chairman at 9:15pm on polling day to a crowd, who had gathered outside the Town Hall. Inside the hall, Captain RCM Frost, on behalf of the 'yes' campaign and veteran of some 35 other counts, proposed a vote of thanks to the election officers, saying he had never seen so much efficiency. The Rev J Mills said while disappointed, the churches would accept the result gracefully. "The result is the will of the people and we must abide with it." Following the vote, the result would have to go through both Houses of Parliament before Skipton Urban District Council could tell the cinemas that the County Council had been given the power to allow Sunday openings. It would then be up to the individual cinema to apply to the magistrates' court – the whole process likely to take up to five months.

At the same time the poll was held in Skipton, Craven had been the location for the filming of *A Boy, a Girl and a Bike*. Made by Gainsborough Films, it starred Honor Blackman, Patrick Holt and John McCallum, as well as Diana Dors, Maurice Denham, Anthony Newley and Thora Hird. The crew spent several weeks filming in and around Upper Wharfedale, before heading off to Halifax, to film industrial scenes. The crew returned again to Upper Wharfedale for a further couple of weeks and having made several friends in the area, held a farewell ball in Skipton Town Hall on 6 August 1948. Tickets were sold for 12 shillings and sixpence, including supper and were strictly limited in numbers. The film, which was released the following year, followed the romantic escapades and adventures of a cycling club.

*Reprinted by kind permission of the Craven Herald*

*Sent in by Hector Hill, who adds:*

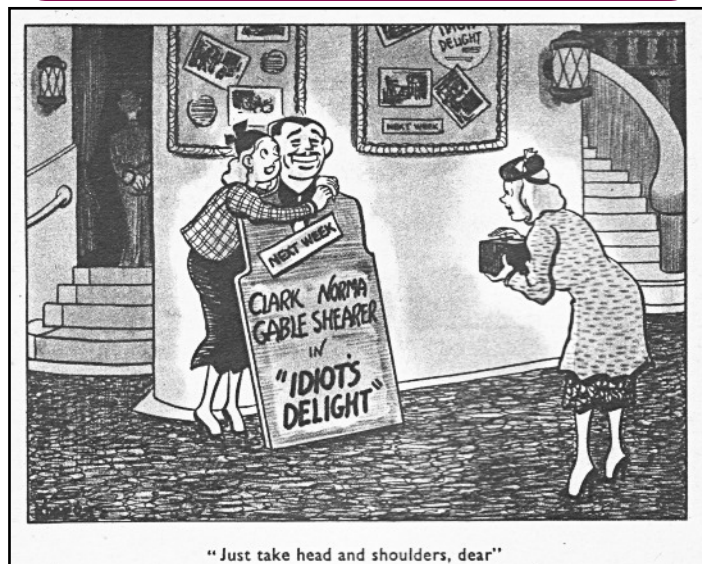
When Skipton voted in favour of Sunday cinema shows in July 1948, there were three halls in the town. The 'Nostalgia' article mentioned only two: the 927-seat Regal, part of the Rank Organisation's Odeon circuit; and the 669-seat Plaza.

The omitted third was the 566-seat Premier Picture House, situated opposite the Unicorn Hotel and set back from Keighley Road. It was adjacent to the now mostly-culverted beck and stood roughly where Poundland is today. The phone number was Skipton 271. In 1948 the Premier was acquired by M Hartley & Sons Ltd of Market Buildings, Barnoldswick, who also ran the Plaza.

I understand that the Co-op converted the Premier into a supermarket: a common fate for redundant cinemas in the 1960s.

*Also sent in by Philip Crompton and another member, whose signature we can't identify*

## CARTOON CORNER



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

## THE BIOSCOPE ON HARWICH GREEN

By David Simpson

Further to the visit announcement in the May/June Bulletin, I went along to the Bioscope on Harwich Green on Sunday 1 July to see *Battleship Potemkin*. This proved to be an excellent recreation of the travelling Electric Cinema Palace presented by Charles Thurston, the showman who built the Harwich Electric Palace, with an ornate frontage by carpenter Adam Threadgall and his team and design and painting by sign writer and artist Bryan Rowland. As it happened, the marquee is usually used for weddings, so there was a 'twinkling star' effect overhead – and a chandelier! This nicely invoked the showmanship that, I am sure, Thurston would have provided! Linking in with Harwich Festival, the Bioscope operated for a week, with the programme of events including a demonstration of the Edwardian Bioscope by David Cleveland and Nigel Lister, local films and a variety of classic and recent feature films. Eisenstein's silent classic came complete with live piano accompaniment by Chris Jarrett. The show was introduced by Trustee (and CTA member) Chris Strachan and the mayor, Charlie Powell, made this a Gala screening. He spoke passionately about the Electric Palace, which was due to close in August for extensive refurbishment work.

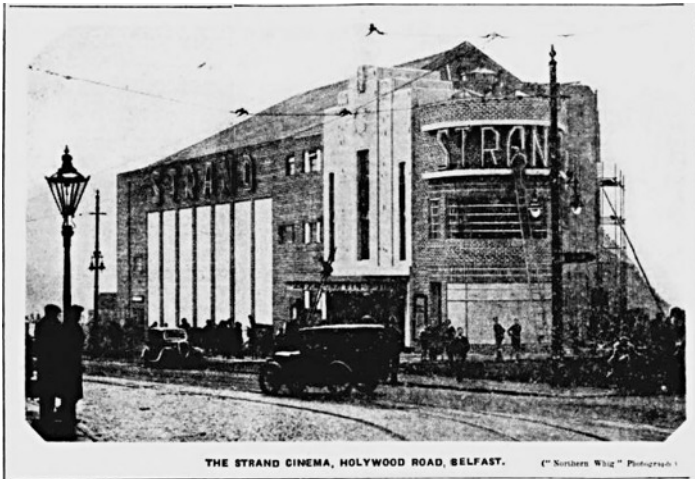
*All photos by the author*





## THE STRAND BELFAST

By David A Ellis



On 7 December 1935 the Strand cinema Belfast, described as a luxury cinema, opened its doors. It was the second to open that year. The other was the Capitol on the Antrim Road, which opened on 9 November. I will cover this in a future piece. The new cinema stood on Gelston's corner, Hollywood Road. It was designed by a Mr J McBride Neill of Belfast, who had also designed the Majestic. He also designed the doors for the cinema. It had seats for 1,170, 270 of those in the balcony. These were supplied by CR Harrison and Sons Ltd, Newton Le Willows. It was Belfast's first suburban cinema to be run by Union Cinemas and was built in six months by Sloan Brothers of Pilot Street Belfast. They built three cinemas in Belfast and built the Tonic cinema in Bangor, Northern Ireland.

Proceeds from the first performance went to the Lord Mayor's Coal Fund. It was opened by the Mayor, Sir Crawford McCullagh. The opening attraction was Shirley Temple in *Bright Eyes*. The cinema housed a café, which had a soda fountain and the carpet was similar to the auditorium's. The local press said, "Unlike many cinemas built in years gone by, there is no over decoration but the auditorium has something new to show in cinema wall decoration, at least in Ireland." The walls had a ground of waterproof plastic paint, on which was sprayed a texture of metallic paint. The colour scheme was carried out in monochromatic shades and the general effect was bright and fresh. The speckling of the sprayed metallic paint was considered most attractive. The auditorium carpet had a specially woven snake design, which was said to give a luxurious effect. The stage was equipped with a festoon curtain. The foyer was covered with terrazzo in bold bars of colour, grey, red, black and aluminium. The paybox also took the eye, with its walls covered with white rubber and staybrite steel, which continued the modern note.

The foyer was large and triangulate in shape and there was ample natural light from the long window running around the corner at the apex of the triangle. There were cloakrooms for both sexes open off the foyer. A Mr DD Young, president of the White Cinema Club, who presided, said that from the stage the auditorium reminded him of a transatlantic liner wending its way through the ocean at night. Later, the cinema was taken over by the ABC circuit. All Union cinemas became ABC. They continued to operate it until it closed in 1983. In 1984 it became a live venue run by a Mr Ronnie Rutherford. In April 1988 it reverted back to cinema use with four screens. Seating was for six hundred and forty. In 1999 it underwent a restoration, bringing back many of its lost features and it won an RIBA Architecture Award. In 2005 the cinema celebrated its seventieth birthday with a screening of *A Night to Remember* about the sinking of the Titanic. This was shown as part of the Belfast Film Festival. In 2013 it ceased as a commercial cinema and the Strand Arts Centre was established as a not profit charitable venture. As well as films it hosts many live events. The cinema is one of two remaining independent cinemas in Belfast, the other being the Queen's Film Theatre. Seating at the Strand is now listed as six hundred and eight. The CTA visited in September 2014.



## HELLO VERA: VERA LYNN IN CHESTER

By David A Ellis

Forces' sweetheart Dame Vera Lynn, now 101 years old was born Vera Margaret Welch on 20 March 1917. She changed it to Lynn, which was her grandmother's maiden name. She had a warm welcome in Chester when she arrived in the City to be at the world premiere of her film *Rhythm Serenade*, screened at the Gaumont Cinema on 30 August 1943. She arrived by train and was greeted by the Sheriff of Chester Bert Reynolds. There was a large crowd to see her, many with autograph book and pencil in hand. From the station she was whisked away to Chester Town Hall where another excited crowd was waiting to see her close up. From there she went to entertain troops at a nearby military hospital. Her film was the first première held in Chester and it was the first time Vera had made a public appearance in a cinema and did it on the condition that she should see the film herself, as neither she or her pianist had seen it.

On her arrival at the Gaumont another crowd was waiting to see her. She wore a long dress of white georgette, with long bishop sleeves, her high neck line relieved with a touch of diamanté. Every seat was taken in the 2,000-seat cinema and Mr Ronald Padgett, the manager announced that she would be appearing on the stage. The applause at that point was deafening. She was introduced by the Sheriff, who apparently had been wondering why Gaumont British and Columbia pictures had chosen Chester for the event. The only conclusion he could come to was that Chester was famous as an ancient and loyal City, depicting a true English spirit. The Sheriff said, "Before coming on to the stage I asked her whether she would sing to Chester people and she agreed to do so. I welcome her to Chester on behalf of you all." This was followed by loud applause.



After her terrific reception, she said: "Thank you very much everyone. I cannot tell you how happy I am to be here, because this is my first appearance with a picture of mine in England in any cinema and I am happy to make my appearance in such a lovely old town." To everyone's great delight she then burst into song with *Sincerely Yours* from her first film *We'll Meet Again*, which was screened at the Regal. She then sang *I Had the Craziest Dream* and *Yours*, as an encore. Before leaving the stage, after being called back twice, she led the audience in a medley of popular tunes, to which the full house responded heartily. She was accompanied by a Mr Len Edwards on the piano. A Mr Bill Luckwell, publicity manager for Gaumont British said that the selection of the Gaumont Chester, for the presentation of the world première was a tribute to the efforts of Mr Padgett, who had worked ceaselessly since taking over management of the cinema. Vera was a guest at the Grosvenor hotel.





By Carl Chesworth



March 2006). The 'Night Watchman' position was pencilled through, so it may never have happened.

It had a full stage and a Compton organ. It was renamed Odeon in 1965 and tripled in 1974. In 1983 ABC bought it and converted it with a single 559-seat cinema in the circle and bingo in the stalls. Films ceased in December 1988 and it eventually became a nightclub. {14897}



Staff to be engaged Friday, Aug. 31st.  
Staff to be measured for Uniforms Saturday, Sept. 1st.  
Uniforms to be delivered Thursday, Sept. 13th.  
Full Staff rehearsal Friday, Sept. 14th.  
Theatre opens Monday, Sept. 17th.

Manager (Mr. Smidmore from Gaumont Palace, Egremont).....	f8. 0. 0
Assistant Manager (Mr. Bradley from Albert Hall, Sheffield).....	4. 0. 0
Foreman.....	3. 0. 0
2 Doormen @ f2.10.0 each.....	5. 0. 0
1 Male Attendant.....	2.10. 0
1 Receptionist.....	2.10. 0
2 Pages @ 12/6d. Each.....	1. 5. 0
10 Cleaners @ 18/- each.....	9. 0. 0
4 Checkers) ) @ f1.0.0 each.....	14. 0. 0
10 Ushers )	
3 Cashiers @ 25/- each.....	3.15. 0
Night Watchman.....	2.10. 0
2 Chocolate Girls @ 10/- each.....	1. 0. 0
.....	-----
.....	f56.10. 0

W/c Sept. 3rd.....Manager.  
Assistant Manager.  
Foreman.

W/c Sept. 10th.....2 Doormen.  
1 Receptionist.  
1 Male Attendant.  
2 Pages.  
10 Cleaners.  
~~Night Watchman.~~

W/c Sept. 17th.....Full Staff as per list



# EVEN MORE WANDERINGS – PART 1

By Hugh Sykes



The Opera House Buxton

On 21 August 2017 Ann and I ventured to Buxton. We found the Opera House with the foyer open; a brief view therein of Frank Matcham's superb work. The theatre was in full use but having some repairs. The red thing in the photo is an electric tram! Not on rails. Sadly the town has been without a full-time cinema since closure and demolition of The Spa some years ago; retail shops now stand on its site.<sup>1</sup>

A few days later on 26 August we were in South Wales for a day visit. Briefly into Newport and found the eight-screen Cineworld, split-level entrances but very bland.



The Cineworld Newport

With lunch arranged in Cardiff, afterwards into the valleys and Pontypridd as first stop. We walked right down to the local museum, housed in a former chapel and still complete with a two manual pipe organ in full working order. Cinema buildings are few but near the railway station is the former County, recently closed to bingo, which had 1,700 seats and a hotel on the frontage plus retail shops – most still open – at street level. Also in the town is the Market Hall (fully open) where I believe locked and derelict is the Town Hall Theatre; does anyone know?



The County Pontypridd

Not too far away is Porth, so a walking tour here. The boarded-up Top Ten Bingo (ex Central cinema) is in poor condition with some plaster-work fallen off. Up the street stands the South Wales Auction House (open for viewing), converted from a chapel but it may have been a cinema. In 1998 when I last drove through, it was open as a shop. I did venture inside – it was full of all types of goods, furniture, bric-a-brac etc for auction.

<sup>1</sup> A 360-seat cinema opened in the Pavilion Arts Centre earlier this year.



The Central cinema Porth

On to Ynysir for Paul Kirner's Music Palace. Although not open on our visit, concerts are held in this former chapel on the Christie organ from the Regal Edmonton and the 2m Wurlitzer from the Picture House Leicester and Gaumont Northampton. Also therein is the 2-4 Compton from the ABC/Ritz Hereford. Cinemas in Ynysir were the Workmen's/Miners' Hall and Poole's Palace. There is still a Workmen's Hall but I'm not sure if film was ever shown in this present venue.



The Phoenix Ton Pentre

Our next venue was the Phoenix Ton Pentre, fully open in stalls and balcony. One screen with tabs, showing all the latest releases. Entrance is gained from the side street, the frontage has film posters and advertising. I've seen photos of the inside – it's lovely. c1950 KYB: Maindy and Eastern Workman's Hall, RCA sound, 630 seats, mats Sat, two changes weekly, prices 4d and 6d. Station Ystrad BR, now called Ton Pentre on the Treherbet line.



The Town Hall Cromer

A day trip to Sheringham and Cromer on 27 October. Purchasing the local paper brought features and some publicity for the Regal / Movieplex and former Town Hall.



The Regal/Movieplex Cromer

Two days later and I'm in Worcester (29 October) so some outside views of the lovely Northwick (house furnishings). It is well looked after and in good condition. Down into the City and Foregate Street, home of the former Gaumont, currently a Gala bingo club and once





The Northwick [top], the Gaumont [centre] and the Odeon [bottom] Worcester

home to a fine 3c-10 Compton and illuminated console on a lift, opened in 1935 by John Bee and removed in 1959. I believe a majority of the organ is in a Warwickshire school, in use to this day. Across the road is the 1950s-completed Odeon, now split into five screens and open, with a Cineworld just under a mile away.



Len Rawle at the Wurlitzer in the Tower Lounge

Now for the highlight of the day, Dorian Collins' Tower Lounge complete with 3-14 Wurlitzer with console on lift and Len Rawle as organist. How Dorian has got fourteen ranks of pipes, plus attachments, toy counter etc into the chamber is amazing. It sings so beautifully into the c30 cinema-seated lounge. An interval for tea and home-made cakes was interestingly 'organised'. The main organ came from Durban in South Africa with some from the New Victoria Preston (Lancs); the oldest parts are c1918.



The Glyndwr Corwen

A visit to Corwen on 11 November to see how the Llangollen Railway's new 'Central' terminus was getting on. The station site is taking shape, with a projected opening in 2019. A view of the Glyndwr cinema was arranged. The former cinema is 'half' in commercial use as a DIY store. Entering through the original R/H doors into a flat floor sales area; the projection room and sloping stadium floor have all been cleared. The toilets remain on the R/H wall with a further set of original double doors (moved) on the disused corridor to the rear lower floor closed off. When the rear half was a supermarket, the proscenium was partly visible, though I seem to remember a false ceiling going through onto the stage.



The Roses Theatre Tewkesbury

Just prior to Christmas, Ann and I visited Tewkesbury (30 November) for some shopping. The Roses theatre/cinema has had a new frontage and foyer. Inside is a café with the tourist information centre as well.

... to be continued  
All photos by the author



# SHEERNESS CINEMAS

By Wilf Watters

This time I'm wandering to the seaside, inspired by Martin Tapsell's book *Memories of Kent Cinemas*. On the North Kent coast by the mouth of the Medway lies Sheerness. The seaside town of Sheerness has docks and until recently a steel works, which has closed down. It has a station with trains but I used my bus pass to get there during the recent heatwave. Sheerness has had quite a few cinemas in the past and there are still three standing. 1936 saw *The Argosy* open and then two cinemas opened in the same year, 1937 – *The Ritz* and *The Rio*. *The Argosy* is still there but looking gloomy since bingo moved out. Two old cinemas still exist, both in the carpet trade; *The Oxford*, the earliest date for this is 1916 but it was open before. The other, the *Arcadia* seems to have lost its auditorium but the frontage is interesting. Then going back earlier – the *Victoria Hall* with its rounded roof, was a very old building, which changed its name to the *Hippodrome* in 1920 and demolition followed in 1970.



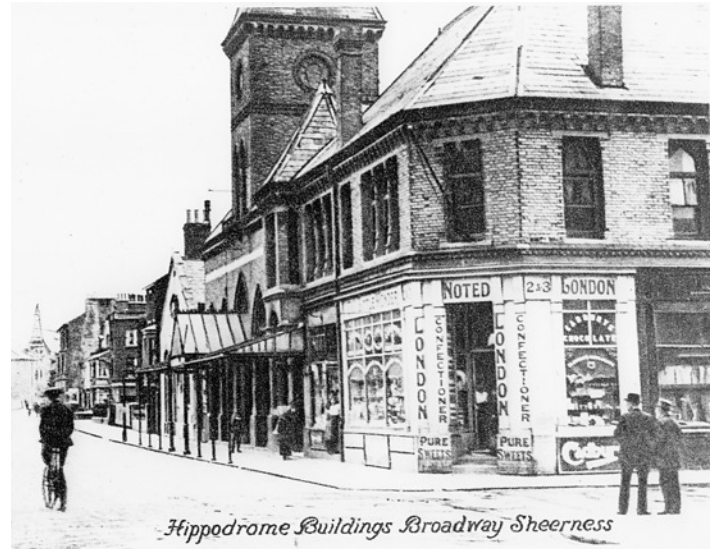
The Rio and the Ritz Sheerness



The Argosy Sheerness



The Oxford Sheerness on bingo and today



Sheerness has a revived Music Hall by the high docks wall. An early building, opened in 1876, it became very popular with artists and stars of that period. The original building was of wood but was rebuilt as a substantial hall with a hotel in the front. The First World War resulted in the hall receiving a direct hit by a German bomber and lay in ruins for many years. It was later in industrial use and after 95 years, a kitchen appliances firm used it for a showroom. The husband and wife team Jenny and Ian Hurkett decided to restore the Music Hall and run films weekly between Music Hall performances. So films can be seen at last in Sheerness. I am grateful to Ian and Jenny for information, Martin Tapsell and the CTA archive.

B/W photos from the CTA Archive; colour photos by the author



The Music Hall Sheerness with Jenny arranging the screen



# NEWSREEL

The items in this section are taken mainly from press cuttings from local newspapers. Although their factual accuracy has been checked by Allen Eyles, there may be minor errors in reporting dates or other detail. Allen has also provided additional comments, where indicated.

Photos by Harry Rigby within entry, except where stated.

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

## ALTRINCHAM (Cheshire)

Work has begun on the new Everyman in George Street, which is set to open this winter. The four-screen cinema is situated in the former JJB Sports unit.

*Altrincham Today* – 3 July

## ANNAN (Dumfries & Galloway)



The closure of the Odeon in Dumfries (see p14 last Bulletin) has led to a huge rise in attendances at the Lonsdale in Annan, 16 miles away. 21 of the 28 shows over the first weekend were completely sold out, with 1,650 people attending. The two screens have 107 and 56 seats. The manager is urging people to book in advance to avoid disappointment. [www.annancinema.co.uk] {17440}

*Daily Record* – 8 August; photo taken August 2009

## ASHFORD (Kent)



Changes have been made to the planned expansion of the twelve-screen Cineworld. The number of extra screens has been reduced from three to two, one of which will be an IMAX screen. A new front entrance will be built and the car park will be altered. The work is to be completed in two phases with the cinema development coming first. Cineworld is also behind the six-screen site at Eldwick Place in the town centre, which will be operated under its Picturehouse brand. {24116}

*Kentish Express* – 28 June; photo taken April 2008

More than 2,000 people have signed a petition calling on the Council to turn the former Odeon into a theatre. It opened in August 1936 with 1,570 seats in stalls and balcony; films ceased in August 1975. It became a bingo club in 1976, which closed last March. The CTA visited in July 2006, when this picture [top next column] was taken. See also p18 Bulletin 52/3 and Casework p6 this Bulletin. {14785}

*Kent Online* – 21 July; sent in by Philip Stevens



The interior of the former Odeon Ashford, on bingo in July 2006

## AYR



The Odeon celebrated its 80<sup>th</sup> birthday on 30 July. It opened in 1938 with 1,732 seats in stalls and circle. It was tripled in July 1987 with 433 seats in the former balcony and two 138-seat minis under the circle. In 1992 the front stalls were converted into a 449-seat fourth screen. Many architectural features remain. The CTA visited in September 2009, when the above photo was taken.

*Ayrshire Post* – 25 July

## BARNSELEY (South Yorks)



The former Electric Theatre is now a private hire venue called The Old Picture House. When the new owner took over three years ago he had no idea the building had been a cinema but when he found out he renamed it. The ground floor retains most of the original features with a stage where the screen would have been. The upper floor sits where the projection room was, hanging over the lower floor. There is also a rooftop garden. The owner is looking to put on film screenings and shows in the future. {24618}

*Barnsley Chronicle* – 3 August; photo taken April 2008



### **BASILDON (Essex)**

Plans for a ten-screen Empire cinema at East Square have been approved by the Council. A building contractor is now being sought.

*Basildon Echo – 25 July; Basildon Standard – 3 August; sent in by Margaret Burgoine*

### **BATH (North Somerset)**



A very rare opportunity to see a film again on a big screen at the grade II\* listed Forum has been cancelled. The Forum was scheduled to show *Raiders of the Lost Ark* with live accompaniment from the Czech National Symphony Orchestra as part of a UK tour on Thursday 20 September. Ticket prices started at £27.50 including booking fee.

*Sent in by Allen Eyles [photo]*

**AE comments:** No explanation for the cancellation – presumably poor ticket sales. Very sad. I would have liked to have gone. However, films that would better suit its Romanesque auditorium include *Gladiator* and *The Fall of the Roman Empire*.

### **BERLIN (Germany)**

More like an art installation than a movie theatre, a new arthouse cinema Delphi Lux has opened in the cool City West. It has 600 seats across seven auditoria with a different colourscape in each with LED strip lighting and textile covered walls.

*Metro – 6 August; sent in by Tom Laughlan*

### **BIRKENHEAD (Wirral)**

The seven-screen Vue (ex Warner Village) could be demolished for offices and a new cinema built on the other side of the park. The move is part of a major redevelopment of the Europa Boulevard area. {24149}

*Liverpool Echo – 31 July*

### **BIRMINGHAM (Central)**

The New Alexandra theatre is to undergo a £650,000 revamp and revert to its original name, the Alexandra. All seats and carpets in the grand circle will be replaced and improvements made to the bar and dressing rooms. The venue opened in 1901.

*The Stage – 9 August; sent in by Barry Quinton*

### **BISHOPS STORTFORD (Herts)**

A 500-seat theatre and a three or four screen cinema are part of the Council's plans for the Old River Lane site. However, the Council has deferred plans for a 546-space multi-storey car park – the leisure development cannot start until this is completed, meaning that it would not be operational until at least 2023.

*Herts & Essex Observer – 19 July*

### **BLACKPOOL (Lancs)**

The grade II\* listed Winter Gardens complex celebrates its 140<sup>th</sup> birthday this year. The Pavilion Theatre inside the complex is to be restored and returned to live use. It was a full-time cinema in the 1950s but was converted into a bar in the 1980s and the proscenium was bricked-up. It has undergone some refurbishment in recent years. {31748}

*Selladoor Press Release – 11 July; The Stage – 19 July; sent in by Philip Nevitsky & Barry Quinton*

### **BOWNESS-ON-WINDERMERE (Cumbria)**

The Royalty has been deemed a 'cultural asset' by South Lakeland District Council to protect it for the future. This would stop the site being anything other than a cinema for the next 15 years. The Lake District National Park had said the cinema was "deteriorating" – see p12 last Bulletin. {18521}

*North West Evening Mail – 2, 19 July; sent in by Terry Hanstock*

### **BRADFORD (West Yorks)**

Work to transform the former Odeon / New Victoria into a 4,000 capacity music venue was due to begin in September. There will be a full strip-out of the 1960s subdivisions and a new get-in door created at the rear of the stage. A planning application for the next phase is due to be submitted in the autumn with work due to commence next summer. An electricity substation in the north tower will be relocated by National Grid at no cost to the project, enabling the tower to be fully opened up and restored to its original layout. {3677}

*Yorkshire Post – 30 July*

### **BRIGHTON**

Campaigners have welcomed a Council plan for the grade II\* listed Hippodrome. Currently under consultation, it states that any plan submitted by the site's owners must preserve the building's original function as a theatre. It also states that if no progress is made within a reasonable time frame, the Council will consider producing a plan for the site itself. The venue has been closed and boarded-up since 2007. {36884}

*The Argus – 8 August; sent in by Barry Quinton*

### **BURNLEY (Lancs)**

Work has begun to demolish the part of the Charter Walk shopping centre that housed the Studio 123 cinemas. The first two were opened in July 1970 by the Leeds-based Star chain and a third screen was added in 1972. It closed and in 1985 was taken over by an independent operator, finally closing in January 1998. The Council say the demolition will remove an unsightly and underused building and is part of wider plans for the continued regeneration of Burnley town centre. {44203}

*Lancashire Telegraph – 9 August; sent in by Philip Crompton*

### **CHORLEY (Lancs)**

Work on the development incorporating a new six-screen Reel cinema was due to start in October. Opening is expected just before Christmas 2019.

*Lancashire Telegraph – 26 July*

### **COLCHESTER (Essex)**

The new 300-seat three-screen Curzon opened on 6 July in Queen Street. It includes bars, a café and a rooftop terrace. Seating capacities are: screen ① 139; screen ② 116; screen ③ 56. {58274}

*East Anglian Daily Times – 19 June, 5 July; Daily Gazette – 11 July*

### **CROMARTY (Highland)**

Detailed plans for a 30-seat cinema on the seafront have been lodged with the Council. If approved, construction could begin in spring next year.

*Inverness Courier – 20 July; Press & Journal, Aberdeen – 21 July*

### **DEAL (Kent)**



Plans have been announced to demolish the former Royal cinema and build 21 apartments and integral retail on the site. Owner Mark Woolls says the amusement arcade in the former stalls area (closed) and the snooker hall above are unsustainable and the walls of the building are too thick to convert it into other use. The Royal began as an Oddfellows Hall in 1891 but was used as a cinema from 1913. In 1933/34 HW Coussens replaced the old wooden balcony and increased seating to 616. The last film to show here was in April 1981.

*East Kent Mercury – 8 August; sent in by Martin Tapsell; photo taken April 2008*



## DERBY

The ten-screen Odeon at the Meteor Centre is having a makeover, possibly to become an Odeon Luxe. New reclining seats are being installed. It opened as the AMC in November 1998 and soon became a UCI. It was taken over by Odeon in late 2006. {21128}

*Derby Telegraph – 11 July*

## DONCASTER (South Yorks)

A plan to spend £10m on a new cinema has been approved by Councillors. It will be operated by Savoy cinemas on land next to the Cast Theatre at Waterdale. Previous plans showed six screens and 1,600 seats.

*Yorkshire Post – 18 July; Doncaster Free Press – 19 July;  
sent in by Hugh & Susan Patching*

The frieze from the former Gaumont is now on public display outside Doncaster Museum on Chequer Road. The 33ft long frieze has been put behind a secure fence and will be given a clean-up by The Victoria Cross Trust, a charity that usually works to tidy up war memorials.

*Doncaster Free Press – 19 July; sent in by Hugh & Susan Patching*

## DOUGLAS (Isle of Man)

Plans have been submitted for a £25m redevelopment of the old Lord Street bus station site. It has been a car park since the bus station was demolished in 2002. The scheme will include a cinema, for which Omniplex has signed a 20-year lease. If permission is granted, construction could begin in March 2019.

*BBC News website – 13 August; sent in by Margaret Burgoine*

## DUBLIN

Passing the Carlton in O'Connell Street in early August I noted that (portion of?) the ground floor had reopened, packed with rows of slot machines. The ceiling has been substantially lowered, with suspended Aeroboard type material and there were no visible signs at all of previous cinema use. The previously resident 4D rides, which were in part of the building for some years, seemed to be gone or closed.

*Sent in by Bob Bradshaw*

## DUDLEY

Companies are being invited to take over the Hippodrome following the collapse of a community-led bid to reopen it as a theatre. It has been suggested a new campaign group could be formed but Council chiefs are thought to favour a new use for the site. {41631}

*Express & Star – 27 July; sent in by Ivan Harris*

## DUMFRIES

Following the closure of the Odeon, a group is calling for an entertainment centre, featuring a multiplex cinema, ten-pin bowling, soft play, laser quest, climbing facility and bar. Two sites have been identified, one a new build and the other an undisclosed town centre property, which could be converted. The cost is estimated at £1.4m.

*Dumfries Courier – 10 August*

## DUNDEE



The former six-screen Odeon at The Stack opened in June 1993 and closed in March 2001 to be replaced by a ten-screen Odeon on the other side of town. The building remains empty and has become a target for vandals and urban explorers. {25917}

*Evening Telegraph, Dundee – 19 June; photo taken September 2006*

## FELIXSTOWE (Suffolk)

The handsome Palace Cinema is independently owned and has two screens in the balcony seating 121 and 76 respectively (info from Box Office staff). The former stalls are on bingo.



**Notes from Cinema Treasures by Ken Roe:** Opened and built for the Union Cinemas Circuit as the Ritz Cinema on 29 March 1937, the original seating capacity was for 959. In October 1937 it was taken over by Associated British Cinemas (ABC). The Ritz was closed by ABC on 13 July 1963 and was converted into a bingo hall but after the town's other cinema, the Picture Playhouse, closed down in the early-1970s, leaving the town with no cinema, it was decided to convert the balcony of the Ritz into two small cinemas. It re-opened as the Ladbroke's Film Centre ① & ② in 1974 with bingo continuing in the former stalls area. It was taken over by the Rank Organisation in c1987 and became the Top Rank Cinemas with Top Rank Bingo remaining. Since the mid-1990s it has been operated as an independent and renamed the Palace Cinema. {14396}

*Sent in by Anthony Wills [photo, 2 August]*

## FOLKESTONE (Kent)

Campaigners are calling for a screening of the 1964 classic *Zulu* to be axed over claims it contains 'racist overtones'. The showing at the Silver Screen cinema was to raise money for armed forces charity SSAFA.

*Kent Online – 25 June; sent in by Carl Chesworth*

## GRAYS (Essex)

Plans have been approved for the grade II listed State to be converted into a Wetherspoons pub at a cost of £3m. It will be fully refurbished internally, although holes will be made in the external walls to install three large windows. The pub will have 475 seats and a further 50 seats on a roof garden. The Compton organ console will be on view in the 'raised' position on the front of the stage and is to be restored. No time scale has been given. The cinema opened in September 1938 and films ceased in November 1989. {1837}

*Thurrock Gazette – 17 August; sent in by Margaret Burgoine*

## GRIMSBY (North Lincs)

The former Regal is to be converted into a Nerf gun and airsoft battleground. The cinema opened in December 1937, built on the site of a former theatre. It was renamed ABC in 1961 and subdivided in 1967 with a 1,231-seat cinema in the balcony and a supermarket in the stalls. The upstairs cinema was [badly] tripled in 1980 and eventually closed as an Odeon. It reopened in August 2009 but only lasted a month. The stalls became an indoor skateboard centre. {13955}

*Grimsby Telegraph – 5, 17 July*

## HERTFORD

East Hertfordshire District Council has endorsed a £13.5m investment in the Hertford Theatre. The main auditorium capacity would be increased to 550 and a rooftop extension will accommodate three additional cinema screens with a total of 200 seats. There will also be a 150-seat flexible studio space. {53726}

*Hertfordshire Mercury – 19 July; The Stage – 21 June; sent in by Barry Quinton*

## HUCKNALL (Notts)

The Byron was due to go up for on-line auction on 22-23 August with a guide price of £325,000+. The operational bingo hall is offered with vacant possession on completion, meaning that the bingo will close due to a fall in attendances. The cinema in the former circle has been disused since 2006, although volunteers have been working to try to reopen it. An application to make it an Asset of Community Value [ACV] was submitted on 11 July. The owner says he has found potential tenants to restore the cinema. Auctioneers' website: [tinyurl.com/y7lq6cle] {13428}

*Hucknall & Bulwell Dispatch – 20 July*



### HULL (East Yorks)

The ten-screen Odeon at the Kingston Retail Park is currently being converted into an Odeon Luxe. It opened in April 1990 with eight screens and two more were added in July 1995. It used to have 1,882 seats but this is likely to be drastically reduced. Screens ① to ⑥ will remain open whilst the other four screens are updated. {24774}

*Hull Daily Mail – 11 July; sent in by Bob Bradshaw & Carl Chesworth*



The Council has acquired ownership of the site of the grade II listed bomb-damaged National Picture Theatre as part of a land swap deal. The ambition of a local Trust to turn it into an educational visitor centre now looks more of a reality. To help the Trust in its aims, become a member or make a donation; visit [ncww2mt.freewebspace.com] where you can download a form. {40893}

*Hull Daily Mail – 24 July; sent in by David Alexander [photo]*

### ILKESTON (Derbys)

Beacon Bingo in the grade II listed former Ritz closed on 19 July due to falling attendances. The cinema opened in May 1938 and films ceased in June 1968. It was converted into a bingo hall almost immediately. The CTA visited in May 2008. {22173}

*Derby Telegraph – 14, 26 July; sent in by Peter Good & Ken Roe; photo on front cover*

### KNUTSFORD (Cheshire)

The two new screens at the Curzon in Toft Road were due to open on 6 August, seating 111 and 60. The café/bar will then be revamped. The current screen will remain open for another three weeks then close for refurbishment. The capacity will be reduced from 172 to 141 to accommodate better seats and this screen is due to reopen on 17 September. See p15 last Bulletin. {24795}

*Knutsford Guardian – 2 August*

### KOLKATA (India)

The owner of the Priya said the fire brigade mandate to install water sprinklers may pose a challenge due to its 80ft high ceiling. The 59-year-old cinema is still a single screen and he may be looking for an excuse to close it.

*Times of India – 10 August; sent in by Stewart Kidd*

### LEEDS (West Yorks)

The grade II listed Hyde Park Cinema has been granted planning permission for the improvements, detailed on p15 of the last Bulletin. {1836}

*Yorkshire Evening Post – 23 June*

The West Yorkshire Playhouse has changed its name to the Leeds Playhouse. This means it will have the same name as when it opened in a temporary space in 1970. It comes ahead of the theatre's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and a £15.8m capital redevelopment project, the first significant work the new building has had since its construction in 1990.

*The Stage – 28 June; sent in by Barry Quinton*

### LICHFIELD (Staffs)

Demolition of the auditorium of the former Regal began at the end of July. The façade is to be retained. Flats and retail will be built on the site. {35893}

*Sent in by Ken Roe*

### LIVERPOOL (Speke)

The new eleven-screen Cineworld opened on 10 August. It has a Superscreen and is in-line for a ScreenX – see next column.

*Liverpool Echo – 10 August*

### LONDON (Edmonton)



The twelve-screen Odeon (ex UCI) at Picketts Lock has become an Odeon Luxe. It has 970 luxury reclining seats, compared with the original 2,660. There is a 172-seat 4k iSense screen with Dolby Atmos sound. All standard screens have been reconfigured for maximum screen size and Dolby 7.1 sound. {21106}

*Epping Forest Guardian – 21 June, 19 July; photo taken April 2006*

### LONDON (Greenwich)

The Cineworld O2 has become the first in the UK to install ScreenX; the first film to be shown was *The Meg*. The system creates a 270° viewing experience by projecting onto the side walls, whilst most of the action takes place on the main screen. It will be followed soon by the new Cineworld at Speke (Liverpool) then at the Cineworld Leeds White Rose in September, before being rolled out to a further 97 cinemas.

*AV Magazine – 10 August*

### LONDON (Highbury)

The 600 capacity music venue The Garage on Highbury Corner has been earmarked for demolition if plans for a new ticket hall for Highbury and Islington station go ahead. It was originally the Temperance Billiard Hall, which was briefly used as the Electric Cinema Theatre in around 1909. It would have been put out of business certainly by the time the nearby Imperial Picture Theatre opened in December 1912. It went back to being a billiard hall/snooker club. It has been a music venue for 25 years. {30216}

*Sent in by Tom Laughlan, who writes:*

I may be wrong but I seem to remember the building was used as a cinema in the 60s or 70s after the old Imperial {30186} which was almost next door, closed in 1959 and was demolished for Council offices.

### LONDON (Islington)



The Coronet of 1911 (later Blue Hall Annexe in 1931) has been under refurbishment and a roof extension, which runs the length of the auditorium, has been added. It will contain 21,000 sq ft of office space and was due to be completed by 25 August. {21232}

*Sent in by Tom Laughlan; photo taken April 2013, before extension*

The new six-screen Lounge by Odeon is situated at Unit 13, Esther Anne Place, Islington Square, N1 1UL, which is about 100 yards north of the Screen on the Green on Upper Street. As it is still a building site, no opening date has been given. It will have no more than 40 reclina-ble seats in each of its six screens and each will offer in-theatre waiter service for food and drink during the film.

*Sent in by Tom Laughlan*





The £35 million Collins Theatre, under the old Collins Music Hall – now Waterstones – was constructed as an Elizabethan courtyard-style venue and was originally meant to have the salvaged set from *Shakespeare in Love* as its auditorium. The plans were initially signed off in 2002 and included building 72 flats to pay for the theatre. Designers decided the only way to fit the planned 600-seater venue into the site was to dig down three storeys – and 22 metres.



However, a row between the previous owners and the developers, as well as various planning complications, stopped the project in its tracks. The flats are there, but the underground theatre has been left in shell form since it was finished in 2008. Plans have now been submitted to convert the theatre into a 400-seat venue. The unfinished space was used in 2013 to film a music video *The Story of my Life* for One Direction. The original Collins Music Hall was gutted by fire in 1958. {30321}

*The Stage* – 16 August; *Islington Gazette* – 17 August; sent in by Barry Quinton  
photo of façade of original Collins Music Hall taken April 2013

#### LONDON (Kensington)

A £1bn plan to transform the Olympia exhibition centre has been revealed. There will be a new 1,500-seat theatre, another performing arts venue, a cinema and a conference centre. The listed main halls will be modernised and upgraded with new mezzanine levels and the main delivery hub will be moved underground. The Ideal Home Exhibition and the International Horse Show will remain. It was completed in 1886; its rival exhibition centre at Earls Court was demolished in 2015.

*Evening Standard* – 3 July; sent in by Tom Laughlan

#### LONDON (Sidcup)

The Council has given the green light to plans to move the library to the ground floor of a new building with an arthouse cinema above. They will be built on the site of the former Blockbuster store at Elm Road. The move has met with opposition from local residents.

*News Shopper* – 29 June; *Bexley Times* – 5 July; sent in by Terry Hanstock

#### LONDON (South Kensington)

A 357-seat theatre is being built inside the Natural History Museum. It will have an end-on stage with a seven metre revolve and raked seating. It will host the European première of a play about Charles Darwin.

*The Stage* – 26 July; sent in by Peter Good

#### LONDON (South Ruislip)

The eleven-screen Cineworld has celebrated its first birthday. Once home to Arla's bottling centre, the site now houses a 1,745-seat cinema, which has shown more than 346 films across more than 15,946 screenings. Over 350,000 customers have been through the doors and 58,000 large tubs of sweet popcorn have been sold. {56065}

*Uxbridge & West Drayton Gazette* – 18 July

#### LONDON (Streatham)

The grade II listed Streatham Hill Theatre has been listed as an Asset of Community Value [ACV]. See p29 Bulletin 52/2.

*The Stage* – 26 July; sent in by Barry Quinton



In 2015 developer London Square secured planning permission to redevelop the old Streatham Gaumont Cinema and an adjacent site for retail and residential use. The Section 108 agreement alongside the permission stipulated that the development also provide a new theatre space. Designed by David Hughes Architects, the 120-seat Streatham Space Project, part of a mixed-use development, opened its doors on 4 June 2018. The auditorium includes windows (with black out shutters) for daytime flexible use. A kitchen, small multi-use room and rehearsal [space]/studio have [also] been designed for daytime flexible use. [streathamspaceproject.co.uk]

*Theatres Magazine* – Summer 2018; sent in by Allen Eyles

**AE comments:** It seems odd that the Section 108 agreement did not require new cinemas in place of the old Gaumont, although that had been a bowling alley after closing in 1961. However, along with comedy and other live shows, Streatham Space Project is screening a series of 'New Films for a Fiver' including a Sunday matinée of *Isle of Dogs* which had 77 seats sold on the preceding day. The new theatre, not on any part of the old cinema site, is on Sternhold Avenue at the corner of Blairderry Road.

#### LONDON (West End)

The production of *Brief Encounter* (using both actors and film) at the Empire (ex Carlton) Haymarket, originally advertised to run until September, was take off in July, presumably because of poor business. When I visited on the evening of Thursday 12 July there were only about 100 in the audience.

Sent in by R David Simpson

#### LONDON (West Norwood)

Picturehouse is seeking to vary the terms of Lambeth Council's planning conditions for its new cinema in West Norwood. The cinema, a joint venture between Picturehouse and the Council that will also house a library, had been due to open earlier this year. The application, spotted by the Norwood Action Group [NAG], seeks to vary the planning permission granted just over two years ago to give Picturehouse and its architects longer to obtain a BREEAM certificate. BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) is the world's longest established method of assessing, rating and certifying the sustainability of buildings. The original planning permission made occupation of the building conditional on it having a BREEAM rating of at least "very good". Picturehouse now want this condition to apply up to six months after occupation. "This indicates that work and consequently certification is behind schedule," said NAG.

Sent in by Robert Holden

#### MACCLESFIELD (Cheshire)

Plans for a major development, including a seven-screen cinema, have been scrapped due to major retailers pulling out of the scheme. It is thought that Cineworld was to have been the operator.

*Macclesfield Express* – 18 July

#### MAIDSTONE (Kent)



The eight-screen Odeon at Lockmeadow was offering customers a refund if they couldn't stand the heat after 30 minutes. The cinema was experiencing trouble with its heating and air conditioning systems during the summer heatwave. Customers complained that they weren't told until after they had bought their tickets.

*Kent Online* – 27 July; sent in by Philip Stevens; photo taken April 2004



## MANCHESTER (Ardwick)

On 7 August there was a large fire in a factory adjacent to the Apollo. Eight fire engines attended. It is not clear if any damage was caused to the former cinema, now a concert venue.

*Sent in by Stewart Kidd*

## NOTTINGHAM



After years of neglect the Majestic Cinema in Mapperley has been cleaned up and renamed the Old Picture House. The new owners are UK Ghost Hunts, local paranormal investigators, who hope to start showing films once an exhibition licence has been obtained. In the meantime 'paranormal investigation evenings' are on offer and the former balcony now hosts a tearoom. The building also houses Nottingham's first Haunted Museum, a collection of 'rare and strange artefacts linked to the dead'. Adding to the mysterious atmosphere is a sealed metal door hidden behind a false wall in a room leading to one the building's towers. What lies behind is as yet unknown...

*Sent in by Terry Hanstock [photo] & Ken Roe*

## OSWESTRY (Shropshire)

The Original Factory Shop in what was the Regal Cinema is set to close, according to the website of *Oswestry Advertizer*. Although the interior alterations to the Regal rendered it beyond use again as a cinema, it will probably become one of the eyesores in the town centre. Last week, the *Oswestry Advertizer* reported that Trevor Harris (former owner of the Regal) had withdrawn his application to open a 112-seat cinema in the former Salvation Army building. The reason given was that he had been unable to raise the finance required and had not had any offers from the local authority for grants for which he had applied. That leaves the Kinokulture cinema in the former church hall in Oswestry that still appears to be very well supported and successful. Morrison's Supermarket has decided to build its new store on the former cattle market site. When this was first proposed some years ago, Cineworld were in line for establishing a five-screen cinema but they pulled out when Morrison's temporarily abandoned of the project. This had left an awful eyesore on the main road in to the town. The delay by Morrison's was due to planning permission being given to Aldi and to Lidl to build new supermarkets between the town and the proposed Morrison's on the former cattle market. We shall see.

*Shropshire Star – 6 August; Oswestry & Border Courier – 9 August; sent in by Vic Harvey & John Powell, who supplied additional information*

## PETERBOROUGH (Cambs)

The future of the Broadway Theatre (ex Odeon) has been plunged into doubt due to financial problems. £68,000 is owed in rates; some productions have not been paid and others cancelled. The operator has had the lease terminated but the main leaseholder thinks he can turn things around. {19950}

*Peterborough Today – 9 August; The Stage – 16 August; sent in by R David Simpson*

## PLYMOUTH

Contrary to what we reported on p17 of the last Bulletin, the three-screen Reel will close. The bingo hall underneath closed on 1 August as the lease expired. Demolition of the building is a strong possibility, although the façade could be retained. {24749}

*The Herald, Plymouth – 11, 12, 13 July*

## POOLE (Dorset)

Plans for a new nine-screen Empire cinema at Falkland Square have been approved by the Council. Empire has signed a 25-year lease.

*Daily Echo, Bournemouth – 2 August*

## PORTISHEAD (North Somerset)

Plans for a £60m development at Old Mill Road, incorporating a six-screen cinema, have been submitted. No operator has been named. The scheme has caused some controversy.

*Bristol Post – 5 July; North Somerset Times – 11 July*

## REDCAR (Cleveland)

Boards have gone up around the seafront Regent as asbestos is removed. The cinema has been closed since April after an inspection revealed structural problems. See p17 last Bulletin.

*Evening Gazette, Teesside – 22 June*

## SALE (Greater Manchester)

Plans for the redevelopment of the town centre include a six-screen cinema. No operator has been named.

*Sale & Altrincham Messenger – 5 July*

## SHEFFIELD

The ten-screen Odeon in the City centre closed in July for transformation into an Odeon Luxe. No further details or reopening date were given.

*South Yorkshire Times – 7 August; sent in by Carl Chesworth*

## SLOUGH

Slough Museum has devised a walking trail around the town together with guided tours during August. This includes visits to the sites of the former Granada and the current Empire. By downloading an app and scanning information boards close to each site, you can obtain more photos, videos and stories on your mobile phone.

*Museum flyer; sent in by R David Simpson*

## SOUTHAMPTON



The five-screen Cineworld at Ocean Village closed on 9 August. It opened as the Cannon in July 1989 with 1,650 seats. Growing competition is given as the reason for the closure but it has suffered from lack of investment. {21361} *photo taken May 2006*

*Southern Daily Echo – 18, 21 July; sent in by Ian Patterson & Ken Roe;*

The Mayflower Theatre (ex Gaumont) has gone 'dark' for eleven weeks for a £7.5m refurbishment. It will include painting the auditorium red and gold, replacing seating with 1,659 wider seats and reupholstering all seats in the balcony; installing LED lighting; improving disabled access and moving the orchestra pit to under the stage. An army of contractors will work day and night with up to 120 different tradespeople on site.

*Daily Echo, Southampton – 23 June; sent in by Ian Patterson*

## STAFFORD

Two bouncers at the Wetherspoons in the former Picture House have been suspended after they allegedly attacked a teenager on the night of England's World Cup semi-final.

*Staffordshire Express & Star – 17 July; sent in by Chris Ingram via Carl Chesworth*

## SUDBURY (Suffolk)

A new cinema could be built with money from funding for community projects.

*East Anglian Daily Times – 14 July*

## SWINDON (Wilts)

Outline planning permission has been granted for a development on the North Star site, incorporating a thirteen or fourteen screen Empire cinema. The town already has two Cineworlds with six and seven screens and a twelve-screen Empire.

*Swindon Advertiser – 28 June*

## TAUNTON (Somerset)

Plans for a new cinema at the Firepool site have been approved by the Council. No operator has been named.

*[somerstlive.co.uk] – 1 August*



### TELFORD (Shropshire)

The 10-screen Odeon has been rebranded an Odeon Luxe. Seating has been reduced from 2,080 to just 718 fully reclining seats. There is a 107-seat iSense screen, measuring 15 meters by 6.2 metres. The cinema remained partly open during the works, which were due to be completed in September. {25405}

*Market Drayton Advertiser – 9 August*

### TENTERDEN (Kent)

The Pebbled Building in the High Street has been identified as a potential site for a two-screen cinema. The building is already owned by the Town Council but they would need to find £1.8m to fund the cinema.

*Kentish Express – 2 August; sent in by Wilf Watters*

### TUNBRIDGE WELLS (Kent)

Work to transform the site of the former ABC (etc) has been postponed a second time and now may not begin until next summer. A small cinema is to be incorporated into the redevelopment.

*Times of Tunbridge Wells – 1 August*

### WIMBORNE (Dorset)



The Tivoli will celebrate 25 years since it reopened on 23 November 1993. It opened as a cinema in August 1936 and films ceased in April 1980. It lay empty until 1990 when the Friends of the Tivoli group was formed. Films are once again part of the program, along with live theatre. {25848}

*Daily Echo, Bournemouth – 5 August; sent in by Philip Stevens; photo taken March 2009*

### WINDSOR



Cinema is back in town at the Old Court (formerly the Windsor Arts Centre aka The Old Fire Station) under new management. New projection equipment has been installed. The Theatre Royal Windsor had a go with films a few years ago but soon abandoned the idea.

*Sent in by R David Simpson; photo taken April 2009*



### WOLVERHAMPTON

The two-screen Light House cinema could close due to lack of funding. It lost an annual grant of £47,000 from the Council in 2015 and has struggled to find between £600,000 and £700,000 it needs every year to stay open. A campaign has been launched to save it and also a loyalty card scheme has been introduced. It opened in March 1987, housed in the historic Chubb building. {25862}

*Express & Star – 28 July, 7 August; Birmingham Post – 2 August; sent in by Ivan Harris*

### WORKINGTON (Cumbria)

The residents of the suburb of Moorclose have raised more than £40,000 for a new projection and sound system for their 215-seat theatre, which is housed in the Community Centre. As well as showing a variety of films including the latest blockbusters, it will also be hosting live entertainment shows. The refurbished theatre café will be available for people to buy popcorn and drinks.

*Times & Star, Workington – 23 July*

### WORTHING (West Sussex)

Plans to transfer Worthing's theatres and museum to an independent trust have been revived. Councillors will be asked to release £100,000 to explore the trust option via a procurement exercise. See p8.

*The Argus – 4 July; Worthing Herald – 5 July; sent in by Barry Quinton*

### YORK

Construction of the thirteen-screen multiplex at Monks Cross is progressing well and on schedule. There will be an IMAX screen. It is scheduled to open in summer 2019.

*The Press, York – 2 July*

### YOUGHAL (Co Cork, Ireland)



The Regal Cinema, closed since August 2010, reopened on 9 July, refurbished with a café/bar and operating as a twin. {31087}

*Sent in by Bob Bradshaw [photo]*

A MUST for your collection

## CINEMAS IN BRITAIN

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by Richard Gray

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## CINEMA BUSINESS

### VUE EXPANDS

Vue ramped up its European expansion to give it 1,989 screens across 10 countries in Europe. It bought 11 Polish cinemas under the Cinema 3D brand and Ireland's two-cinema group Showtime. The chain has just over 80m visitors a year.

*Evening Standard* – 3 July; sent in by Tom Laughlan

### FOX TAKEOVER APPROVED

Disney has won shareholder backing for its £54.3m takeover of most of 21st Century Fox. Assets being bought by Disney include Fox's film studio and some of its best-known TV networks. Disney will also get Fox's 39.1% stake in UK TV firm Sky.

*Daily Mail* – 3 August; sent in by Tom Laughlan

### BIG PROFITS

The low-budget movie *A Quiet Place* about a family trying to survive an alien invasion, cost just £15m to make but made £250m. It was produced by Viacom's Paramount Pictures. Profits at Viacom, which also owns Nickelodeon, MTV and the UK's Channel 5 rose to £369m despite a 4% revenue fall. Paramount also did well with comedy movie *Book Club* making £52m.

*Daily Mail* – 10 August; sent in by Tom Laughlan

### HITS PURSUED BY BEAR

Paddington has smashed the top 20 highest grossing British films. Only *The Kings Speech*, *The Inbetweeners* and *Four Weddings and a Funeral* have taken more money at the UK box office. The first *Paddington*, released in 2014 has notched up £38.9m and last year's sequel *Paddington 2* has done even better, taking £42.5m. Both films have outperformed such home-grown films as 2009's *Slumdog Millionaire* (£35.4m) and 1982's *Gandhi* (£21.4m).

*Metro* – 26 July; sent in by Barry Quinton

### THANK YOU FOR THE MUSICAL

*Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again* opened to pre-booked sell-outs across the country. The Grosvenor cinema in Glasgow reported it completely sold out in the opening weekend. The original *Mamma Mia!* Released ten years ago, made £466m at the box office.

*Sunday Post* – date unknown; sent in by Tom Laughlan

### NORTHERN IRELAND CINEMA DAY

Northern Ireland held a Cinema Day on Monday 27 August, organised by Film Hub NI, part of the BFI audiences network. Audiences were invited to dress up and singalong to *The Wizard of Oz* at Belfast's Black Box while Moviehouses at Cityside, Maghera, Coleraine and Glerngormly screened the Disney classic *Lady and the Tramp* with doggy-themed activities. [Www.filmhub-ni.org]

*News Letter, Northern Ireland* – 10 August

### LONDON THEATRES RENAMED

Andrew Lloyd Webber has rebranded the venue division of his organisation as LW Theatres. The name change, from Really Useful Theatres, is intended to create a clear divide between the venue arm and the Really Useful Group, which handles Lloyd Webber's creative output. The seven London theatres owned by the group will keep their own names.

*The Stage* – 26 July; sent in by Barry Quinton

### LES MIS TO MOVE

Hit show *Les Misérables* will move out of the Queens Theatre to another West End location, to enable the theatre, which has been its home for more than a decade, to undergo renovation. It is centred on strengthening the plaster ceiling to enable another 100 years of operation. The venue reopened in 1957 after wartime bomb damage.

*The Stage* – 2 August; sent in by Barry Quinton

### ELECTRIC MOVIES

Electric (the same firm as the Electric Portobello Road and Shoreditch) Drive-In is returning to Soho Farmhouse (Oxfordshire) for three nights of outdoor screenings enjoyed from the comfort of a BMW electric car. Guests can watch the latest releases on an 18m screen in one of 45 BMW i vehicles alongside a special food and drink menu delivered straight to the car. All cars cost £50 and seat 2 people. [www.electrictcinema.co.uk/drivein-bmw-2018]

Sent in by Philip Stevens

## MISCELLANY

### THE GREAT MOVIE RIDE

It is one year since *The Great Movie Ride* at Disney's Hollywood Studios closed. Amongst other things, it included a replica of the Chinese Theatre in Los Angeles. The attraction opened with the rest of MGM Studios (now Disney) on 1 May 1989 and it ran until it closed on 13 August 2017. [tinyurl.com/y8v2t6cj]

[theKingdomInsider.com] – 13 August; sent in by Terry Hanstock

### THAT TAKES THE BISCUIT

Until now, over-55s attending the weekly 'Silver Cinema' screenings at the Odeon in Basingstoke paid £3 to enjoy a tea or coffee and pick up a couple of biscuits from a tray before watching a film. However, cinema bosses have decided that is a health hazard and now each biscuit has to be individually wrapped. One patron described it as "health and safety gone mad" and thought it increased global plastic pollution.

*Daily Mail* – 18 June; sent in by Tom Laughlan & Barry Quinton

### MAMMA MIA! HERE WE GO AGAIN

A woman with dementia was forced to leave a screening of the *Mamma Mia!* Sequel for singing along. After other audience members complained, the cinema in Newport (South Wales) organised a dementia-friendly screening with free tickets for the unfortunate lady.

*Metro* – 6 August; sent in by Tom Laughlan

### ACADEMY MUSEUM OF MOTION PICTURES

It's hard to believe but there is no major museum devoted to the movies in Hollywood. Now the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (the folks who give out the Oscars) are converting a former department store on LA's 'Miracle Mile' into a museum, expected to open next year. The total bill is approaching \$400m.

ABC [USA] website – 15 August; [tinyurl.com/y9j88up8]

### CINEMA MUSEUM TOURS

Mr Morris Hardcastle, Cinema Commissionaire [R], leads highly entertaining tours of the Cinema Museum throughout the year. On these tours, you will hear about the extraordinary history of the Lambeth Workhouse building and the wonderful collections of the Cinema Museum, together with a tribute to the one man who links the Lambeth Workhouse and the world of cinema: Charlie Chaplin. The Museum is a celebration of every aspect of going to the cinema in Britain in the 20th Century. The two-hour guided tours are very popular and full details of dates, times and how to book can be found at [www.cinemamuseum.org.uk]

Sent in by Robert Holden



## NECROLOGY

### TEDDY JOHNSON 98

Together with his wife, Pearl Carr, they came second in the *Eurovision Song Contest* in 1959 with *Sing Little Birdie*. They were celebrity television fixtures in the 1950s and 60s and appeared in many pantos and seaside summer shows.



### BARRY CHUCKLE 73

Despite his diminutive size, Barry Chuckle (real name Barry Elliott) was one of the titans of children's television. As one half of the comedy duo The Chuckle Brothers, with his brother Paul, they first had success on *Opportunity Knocks* in 1967. Their Saturday morning show *Chucklevision* earned them a BAFTA children's special award.



### LESLIE GRANTHAM 71

Best known for playing 'Dirty' Den Watts in the BBC's *Eastenders* from 1985 to 1989 and 2003 to 2005. The episode where he served divorce papers on his wife on Christmas Day 1986 was watched by more than 30 million viewers, half the population of the UK.





# LETTERS



## SATURDAY MORNING PICTURE SHOW

I recently picked up some Saturday morning club badges on eBay that I thought may interest other members. There's usually a good selection of ABC Minors badges (search 'abc minors') but I hadn't seen these more unusual ones [above] before. I'd love to hear from anyone that could put a date or give a bit of background information on them.

Ben Doman

## ABBEY CINERAMA

Nice article by David A Ellis about the Abbey Cinerama in Liverpool on the back page of the last Bulletin. The projectionists in the photograph were all friends of mine. Indeed I worked with two of them before they joined Cinerama as we all worked for the Rank Organisation. From left to right — Chief Projectionist Ron Checkley; Second Projectionist Jim Wood; Third Projectionist Ian Brown; Co-second Projectionist Des McCreal. I worked with Jim and Des. Only one projector was removed, the remaining two were reconfigured for 70mm projection and remained until the cinema was closed in 1979. On 7 August 1979 all the contents of the cinema were auctioned off; I have a copy of the auction brochure. The projectors were bought by an exhibitor in Birmingham. The building still looks the same today from the outside; part of it is a supermarket and the remainder is snooker. Only two of the projectionists are still alive, Ron Checkley and Ian Brown. Ron lives not far from me and Ian lives in Jersey. Des McCreal took the photograph using a time exposure. Not bad for its time.

Mike Taylor

## BIRKS ABERFELDY

After going to the Birks Cinema in Aberfeldy this week and seeing the list of six different films being shown one day (on one screen), which would have cost 6 x £8.50 (£51.00!) it made me think back to the continuous performance days when you could go to the cinema at 1pm, pay 1/6 and stay until the Queen was played around 10:30pm after having seen the main film three times, the support, News and *Look at Life* at least twice. Just another way of seeing how much seeing a film on the big screen has risen over the 50 years. How lucky the people of Aberfeldy are to have an old cinema reborn. When we go it is a 60 mile round journey but it's so much nicer than the multiplex film machine and the smell and foot crunch of popcorn — and it has red seats, much more welcoming than the dismal black leather, which now seems the norm at most multiplex cinemas.

David J Kay

## WALTURDAW

Among the many people supplying cinema equipment was Walturdaw. They had offices in London, Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Glasgow and Dublin. On my projection room visits I never came across a Walturdaw projector. I wonder how many cinemas installed them? Apart from projectors they supplied sound equipment, carpets, lenses, seating, arc lamps, lighting, uniforms curtains and spots. A company that was a lot bigger than I thought. Are there any members who can shed more light on them and know where some of their equipment was installed?

David A Ellis

## ROXY NYC MODEL

Further information has been sent in about the Roxy New York City model photo featured on page 28 of the letters section of the last Bulletin. The Ben Hall mentioned was one of the founders of Theatre Historical Society of America, and author of the book *The Best Remaining Seats*. He was murdered in his New York apartment by a rent boy he had picked up in Times Square.

Ken Roe

## DAM BUSTERS IN BOWNESS

One of the extras on the newly restored DVD/Blu-Ray of *The Dam Busters* (Studio Canal) — "The making of The Dam Busters documentary" — briefly features the Bowness Royalty Cinema's organ as an organist (sorry, don't know who it is) plays a few bars of Eric Coates' famous march. Another extra shows newsreel footage of the film's 1955 royal premiere, with a number of interior shots of the foyer and lounge of the Empire Leicester Square [now Cineworld].

Terry Hanstock

## INFORMATION WANTED

Does anyone know the title of the music used under the *Now Showing* title on Talking Pictures TV?

John R Forster

The comedy series *Taskmaster* that finished on 4 July on Freeview channel Dave appeared to be filmed in a red plush theatre with boxes and a circle. Can anyone tell me which theatre was used?

R David Simpson

## OLD CINEMA SEATS — WHEREVER NEXT?



I was surprised to find four refurbished cinema seats in the new Next store in Dover, for the use of men fitting on new shoes. I was told some other new Next stores have such seats but both another branch and interested customers have been told they are not for sale! They are in sight of a lot more newer seats in the adjacent Cineworld!

Martin Tapsell



# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

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

## 105 years (1913)

Scala/Cameo/Plaza, 468 Hoe Street, Leyton, London.  
Opened September 1913. Architect unknown. Grade II listed.

Scala, Market Place, Ilkeston. Opened 4 September 1913.  
Architect James Parsons (Parsons and Sons). Grade II\* listed.

Hillhead Picture Salon, 17 Vinicombe Street, Hillhead, Glasgow.  
Opened 4 October 1913.

Architects Brand & Lithgow / James McKissack. A listed.



Picture House / Gaumont / Astra, Ward's End, Halifax. [above]  
Opened 20 October 1913. Architect unknown. Grade II listed.

## 95 years (1923)



Picture House / Gaumont / Odeon / Winding Wheel,  
13 Holywell Street, Chesterfield. Opened 10 September 1923.  
Architect unknown. Grade II listed. [above]

## 90 years (1928)



Plaza/Gaumont, Bradford Junction, Southsea. Opened 29 September 1928. Architect Henry J Dyer & Son. Grade II listed. [above]

## 85 years (1933)

Troxy, 490 Commercial Road, Stepney. Opened 11 September 1933.  
Architect George Coles. Grade II listed. [See opposite page 29]



Toledo/ABC/Cannon, 380 Clarkston Street, Muirhead, Glasgow.  
Opened 2 October 1933. [above]  
Architect William Beresford Inglis (Weddell & Inglis). B listed façade.

## 80 years (1938)

State, George Street, Grays. Opened 5 September 1938. Architect  
Frederick G M Chancellor (Frank Matcham & Co). Grade II\* listed.



Gaumont/Odeon, 419 Holloway Road, Holloway, London.  
Opened 5 September 1938. Architect C Howard Crane.  
Grade II listed façade and foyer. [above]

Regal/ABC/Odeon, 118 Lothian Road, Edinburgh.  
Opened 10 October 1938. Architect Stewart Kaye. B listed.



Odeon, 127 Dunstable Road, Luton. Opened 12 October 1938.  
Architect Andrew Mather/Keith P Roberts. Grade II listed. [above]

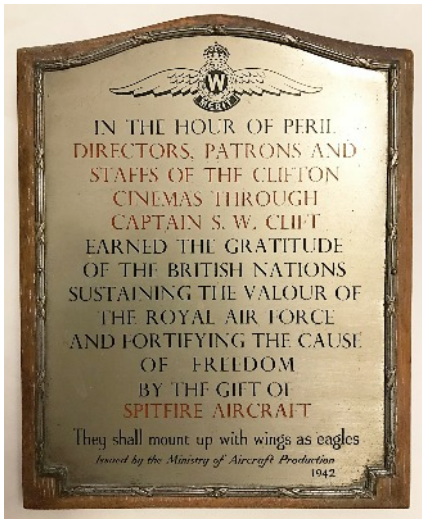


# ARCHIVE DONATIONS

As reported at this year's CTA AGM, the Archive has once again received donations both large and small. I would like to highlight just two that may be of interest to readers.

## CLIFTON CINEMA CIRCUIT

In December last year the Archive received a large box packed with papers relating to the Clifton Cinema Circuit. These papers contained company records and documents as well as correspondence and publicity material. The collection contained a great deal of material about Sir Sydney Clift, including his will and material on members of his family, including a 35mm newsreel of his daughter's wedding. One of the most interesting items was a small plaque [below] presented to Clifton Cinemas by the Ministry of Aircraft Production in 1942 in recognition of the funds raised by the Circuit for production of a Spitfire. Other paperwork documents the Spitfire fundraising project, including complaints about it from patrons! There is also material on Sir Sydney's trip to Hollywood to promote UK exhibitors in 1949 where he is pictured with various studio operators of the time and film stars like John Wayne and Bob Hope.



Sir Sydney Clift



Sir Sydney Clift with John Wayne

## IRVING T PATTERSON DRAWINGS

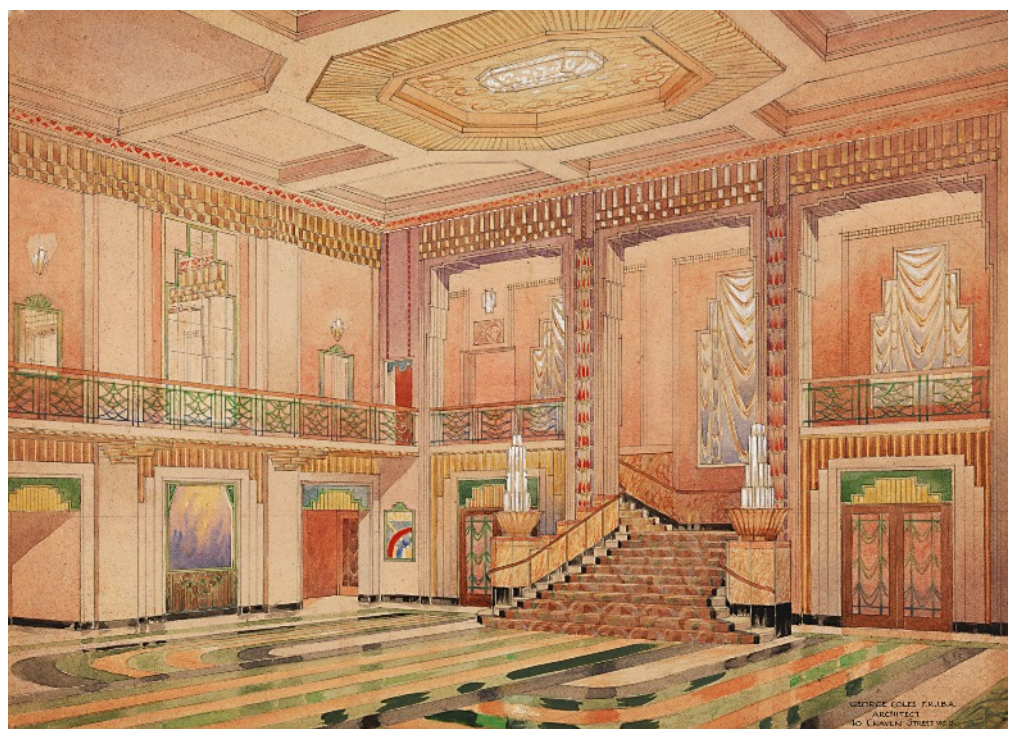
Another unique collection arrived last summer in the form of various architectural drawings showing interior and exterior views of cinemas designed by the George Coles practice. These were saved by Irving T Patterson who worked as an architect in the practice in the 1930s and was responsible for many of these drawings. These include exteriors of the Ritz Leyton and Odeon Kennington – both unbuilt projects by George Coles and interiors for the Granada Welling, Trocadero Elephant and Castle and Troxy Stepney. Due to the valuable and unique nature of these drawings we have arranged for them to be professionally photographed.

## DONATIONS

Should you wish to donate anything at all, including digital photographs, please do get in touch. Also if you can spare a little time to volunteer for the Archive please let me know. If you are familiar with Word and Excel there are tasks that can be undertaken at home with no need to travel to the Archive. [archive@cta-uk.org]



Drawing for the unbuilt Odeon Kennington



Drawing for the foyer of the Troxy Stepney



## ARCHIVE CORRECTION

I'm sure I won't be the only person to contact you re the photo on p22 of the current Bulletin, which purports to be of the Central Cinema, Central Drive, Blackpool, opened 11 July 1913. There is quite a mix-up here! The image is actually of the building that came to house the Central Beach Cinema located on the Central Promenade opposite the Central Pier. There is no sign of a cinema in the image you printed but since it opened and closed several times over the period 1913 to 1947 that doesn't mean much. It actually first opened in May 1913 and became the Trocadero in the 1920s and from 1947 to closure in 1971, the New Ritz. See [cinematreaasures.org/theaters/36697]. The confusion perhaps arose because there was another Central Picture Theatre that also opened on 11 July 1913 and was located on Central Drive. This was the cinema that soon changed its name (to avoid confusion!) to The King Edward Cinema. In this guise it remained open until 1972. The building still stands and is Grade II listed. As you can see on the image on this website, it is quite a different building. [cinematreaasures.org/theaters/6546]. I hope this helps!

Roy Stafford

I write with reference to the picture of the Central Cinema Blackpool at the foot of page 22 in the July/August 2018 issue of the Bulletin. Minor correction. The address was Central Beach rather than Central Drive. The large building depicted was a hotel, eventually known as the Huntsman Hotel. The cinema was situated below ground level, under the hotel. It became the Trocadero by 1920 and eventually was renamed the Ritz.

Jon Harrison [photos of Trocadero & Ritz]



The Central Beach Cinema later the Trocadero



The Ritz Blackpool



The CTA Archivist writes: Both correspondents are correct; we used the wrong photo showing the wrong Central cinema. As they confirm, there was a small cinema within the building featured but the details we provided were for the Central Picture Theatre that later became the King Edward Picture Palace – correct picture above. Apologies.

Clive Polden

## CIRCUIT HISTORIES AVAILABLE

### REDUCED PRICES

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

All available from the Sales Officer – address on p5.  
please add £3.00 for postage.

## 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.

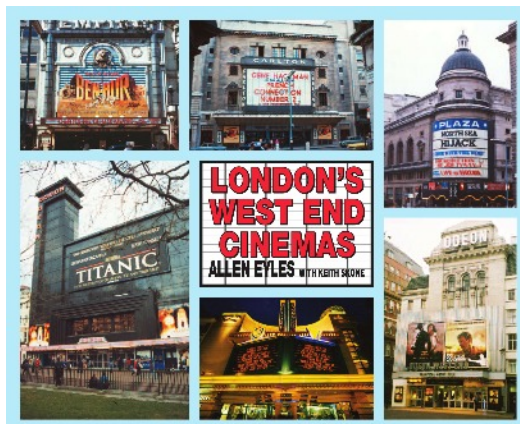
Please let me know before sending donations by post and do not send them directly to the archive as there is no facility to accept post securely. Please send items c/o 14 Ivychurch Gardens, Cliftonville, Margate, CT9 3YG. Small quantities of scanned material or digital photographs can be emailed to [archive@cta-uk.org].

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.



## 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

Saturday 15 September Organ Coffee Morning from 10am **free**  
Saturday 22 September *On Chesil Beach* (2017) [15] 2:30pm  
Sunset Boulevard (1950) [PG] 7:30pm  
Saturday 6 October *Murder on the Orient Express* (2017) [12A]  
at 2:30pm and 7:30pm  
Wednesday 31 October *Young Frankenstein* (1974) [12A] 7:30pm  
Saturday 3 November *Sing-a-long Rocky Horror* (1975) [15] 7:30pm  
Thursday 15 November *White Christmas* (1954) [U] 7:30pm  
Behind the Scenes tour at 11am on Monday 29 October;  
£7 – book or simply turn up.

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

### THE REGAL EXPERIENCE, WYMONDHAM

7 October *Mr Hobbs Takes a Vacation* (1962) [U] plus  
*Look at Life – Why all the Rush* (August Bank Holidays)  
4 November *Tiger Bay* (1959) [A] plus  
The Two Ronnies in *The Picnic*  
9 December *Scrooge, The Musical* plus  
*Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer* 1944 cartoon

Shows on Sundays at 2:30pm at the Wymondham Ex-Service's Club  
(former Regal cinema) NR18 0AT [tinyurl.com/zddvkq4].  
Further information from Michael Armstrong [01953 603246]

### THE FECKENODEON Worcestershire, B96 6HN

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

29 September *Finding Your Feet* (2017) [12A]  
27 October *Hitchcock's Rear Window* (1954) [PG]  
24 November *The Post* (2017) [15]

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

### 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]

### REGENT 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: 13 Oct (sold out), 10 Nov, 12 Jan, 9 Feb & 9 Mar at 10am & 11:15am. Tickets: £5 per person. [tinyurl.com/y9c5r62m]  
Spaces are limited to 6 per tour – book now to avoid disappointment!

## INTERNET CORNER

- ★ [tinyurl.com/y9nwrzr3] Photographs of the Playhouse Alnwick (Northumberland) before it closes for refurbishment.  
*Sent in by Terry Hanstock*
- ★ [allafrica.com/stories/201807150008.html] Why Nairobi (Kenya) is a Cemetery of Cinema Halls. *Sent in by Bob Bradshaw*
- ★ [tinyurl.com/yblpl77n] Photos from *The Guardian* of the Hyde Park Picture House in Leeds. *Sent in by Robert Holden*
- ★ [www.shoreditchtownhall.com] The website of Shoreditch Town Hall, visited by the CTA in July. *Sent in by Ken Roe*
- ★ [tinyurl.com/yc6k4q52] A Nottingham Evening Post page on the golden days when Sneinton had two cinemas.  
*Sent in by Terry Hanstock*
- ★ [tinyurl.com/ydg37yu5] An article from *The Guardian* on the life and perils of a cinema usher/cleaner.

## MEMBERSHIP

### MEMBERSHIP

The report from the Membership Secretary is very short for this issue. There have been no new members since our last issue and, although a few members have failed to renew, no deaths have been reported. The number of un-renewed members from May and June, who received a final reminder in July, is rather higher than usual; perhaps some will still renew. This all means that we must report that the total number of paid-up members has now fallen to 1,019.

### DONATIONS

We are pleased to be able to send our sincere thanks to the following members who have kindly included a donation when they renewed their annual subscriptions: JC Barnes, IA Barrow, AC Bates, HD Behr, IJ Bellion, JL Briddon, RL Buckler, RA Buckley, MJ Burke, LR Carter, J Clarke, WPC Cobb, DWT Corn, D Daniells, RJA Galloway, DN Hammond, AM Harris, TA Harris, B Hopper, RE Howes, M Hutton, PTL Johnson, AS Kidd, JM Lewis, I Lockie, SD Locking, JJ McKillop, PG Moules, JH Popey, DJ Profit, CA Rampley, J Ramsden, JJ Seabrook, BC Sinclair, G Snowden-Davies, PV Stevens, BP Stoveld, R Thorne, KS Wheelan, D Williams, JE Williams, JN Wilson and BD Wingrad.

*Neville C Taylor, Membership Secretary*

## OBITUARY

### RON GIBSON 1936-2018



An avid cinema and theatre-goer, Ron was born in Fulham on 11 January 1936. Educated at Chelsea Central School, he went on to complete his National Service in the Royal Air Force. Later in life he joined the Civil Service, ending his career in the DHSS.

On retirement he was free to widen his interest in 'show business' generally but cinema in particular; he attended the NFT/BFI regularly. Ron joined the CTA in 1986 and was a supporter of the Club for Acts & Actors (CAA) and the British Music Hall Society. He was also a member of the Founder Friends of the New Wimbledon Theatre and a volunteer front of house helper. His collection of theatre and cinema programmes has been donated to the appropriate archives.

After a mercifully brief illness, Ron died on 3 June 2018 at St Mary's Hospital, Paddington. His funeral held at Mortlake Crematorium was attended by his family and friends, including a group of CTA members.

*Richard Norman*

## SMALL ADS

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

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

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

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

**FOR SALE:** *Mercia Bioscope* magazines from issue 84 (August 2004) to the last issue 113 (November 2009). 40 copies total, all in excellent condition. Offers invited; postage costs would be £6/7. T Chapman, 74 Dower Road, Sutton Coldfield, B75 6TL or phone 0121 308 2315



# HOLIDAY SNAPS

## Cinemas and Theatres of the Costa Brava

*Sent in by Anthony Wills*



Top to bottom: The Cines Roses multiplex at Roses  
The Comta Theatre at Ripoll (also shows films)  
The Teatro Municipal Jordi at Figueres (despite the sign  
there is no evidence of any films currently being shown there)

## Interesting conversion of a Venetian cinema

On a recent trip to Venice I found this very special, little, former cinema, the Teatro Italia, which had been subject to 'adaptive reconstruction' to turn it into a supermarket. I don't believe it was ever used as a theatre as there is no fly tower or area behind the proscenium arch. One good example of the thought that was given to the conversion is that the former ticket box is now the security office – sadly the guard was on the ball and prevented my access to the balcony area; I was keen to see whether the projection box was intact!

*Sent in by Stewart Kidd  
photos next column*

