



CINEMA
THEATRE
ASSOCIATION

www.cta-uk.org

BULLETIN

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The Regent Kirkby-in-Ashfield (Notts), which is now a Wetherspoons pub – see Newsreel p24; photo taken May 2008



The Curzon Soho (ex Columbia) Shaftesbury Avenue, which recently celebrated its 60th birthday – see Newsreel p25; photo taken March 2004

FROM YOUR EDITOR

There is a saying that Murphy's Law wasn't actually written by Murphy but by somebody else with the same name! Well, Murphy is certainly alive and well in the Bulletin Editorial Office. Despite most of the Bulletin being checked by two or three people and your editor doing a complete physical proof-read before sending it off to the printers, mistakes can still creep in. Murphy says you only notice them after you have passed the proofs onto the printers, when it is too late to change them. In the last Bulletin there were at least three errors – a redundant (greengrocer's) apostrophe, a missing word and a spelling mistake.

According to the Editorial Computer, the last Bulletin contained nearly 30,000 words with almost 178,000 characters and over 120 pictures. If just three words were wrong, that's an error rate of only 0.01% and I don't think that's too bad. Anyway, I apologise for these and hope they didn't spoil your enjoyment of the Bulletin.

On p35 you will read that our Archive is in the process of moving from storage into new premises. I know how much work Clive, our archivist, has put into finding a suitable site and I'm sure you will join me in thanking him and all others who have helped. It will be considerably cheaper and much more convenient to have a permanent location with full facilities rather than paying for storage.

Again you have a full 36-page edition. I have been able to use much of the material I had held over. Next time there will be the third article on Bath cinemas from Ben Doman and also the visit report on the *New Screens for Old* visit to South London on 13 February and hopefully the *East is Best Part 2* visit to East London on 20 March. I also have a few small articles I'm sure I can fit in and, of course, some more holiday snaps. I have also been able to include the index to last year's Bulletins. If you would like a pdf copy of it, please email your editor.

I will almost certainly be at the AGM in London on 1 June – details opposite – so if you have any questions about the Bulletin or its production (or the health of my cat or the state of my bike) you can ask me then.

Harry Rigby, CTA Bulletin Editor

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.

**DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE
SATURDAY 20 APRIL**

CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

(Founded January 1967)

promoting serious interest in all aspects of cinema buildings

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MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Neville C Taylor [subs@cta-uk.org]
Flat One, 128 Gloucester Terrace, London, W2 6HP
Items for possible inclusion in the Bulletin should be sent to
BULLETIN EDITOR: Harry Rigby [bulletin@cta-uk.org]
65 Tennyson Avenue, Harrogate, North Yorks, HG1 3LE

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN: David Trevor-Jones † [chairman@cta-uk.org]
47 The Street, Old Basing, Basingstoke, RG24 7BX
VICE-CHAIRMAN: Ian Meyrick †
11 Tarrant Avenue, Witney, OX28 1EE
SECRETARY: Adam Unger † [honsec@cta-uk.org]
59 Harrowdene Gardens, Teddington, TW11 0DJ
TREASURER: Neville C Taylor † (details as membership secretary above)
CASEWORK COMMITTEE – Chairman: Richard Gray †
45 Arnold Road, Bow, London, E3 4NU [casework@cta-uk.org]
Members: as main committee plus Rob Chesterfield, Tim Hatcher,
Jane Jephcote, Mark Price, Vicky Simon & Peter Wyld
ARCHIVIST: Clive Polden [archive@cta-uk.org]
14 Ivychurch Gardens, Cliftonville, Margate, CT9 3YG
ASSISTANT ARCHIVIST: Rachel Marks
73 Cressy House, Hannibal Road, London, E1 3JF
PUBLIC RELATIONS: Gerald Glover [publicity@cta-uk.org]
228 Malpas Road, Brockley, London, SE4 1DH
PUBLICATIONS & SALES OFFICER: Jeremy Buck †
34 Pelham Road, London, N22 6LN [sales@cta-uk.org]
WEBMASTER: Rachel Woodforde
69A Mill Street, Kidlington, Oxford, OX5 2EE [web@cta-uk.org]
VISITS CO-ORDINATOR: Ray Ritmeester [visits@cta-uk.org]
66 Woodside Road, High Wycombe, HP13 7JB
PICTURE HOUSE EDITOR: Allen Eyles [picture.house@cta-uk.org]
13 Tennyson Court, Paddockhall Road, Haywards Heath, RH16 1EZ
CTA SCOTLAND: Gordon Barr, Gary Painter [scotland@cta-uk.org]
11 Merker Terrace, Linlithgow, EH49 6DD
CTA CYMRU/WALES: John Skinner, Jon Williams [wales@cta-uk.org]
3 Swan Lane, Ystalyfera, Swansea, SA9 2JB
CTA NORTH: Nick Taylor [north@cta-uk.org]
4 Oxford Way, Stockport, SK4 1JR
COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Emma Beeston, Kevin Gooding, Lynda Hillman,
Tim McCullen, Sally McGrath, Ken Roe, David Simpson
Please use [info@cta-uk.org] if uncertain to whom to address an e-mail
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CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

BULLETIN: Members are invited to submit items for possible publication to the Bulletin Editor. However, it is stressed that the publication of an item does not necessarily imply that it reflects the views of the Cinema Theatre Association, its Committee or its Bulletin Editor. It is assumed that submissions are for publication, unless stated otherwise; items may be shortened or edited at the discretion of the Editor. Please state if you require items to be returned and enclose SAE, otherwise everything will be passed on to the CTA Archive.
VISITS: Members and non-members are reminded that they attend visits entirely at their own risk and no responsibility can be accepted by the Cinema Theatre Association or the owners of the buildings for any accidents or injury sustained during the course of any visit.
PRODUCTS: The Cinema Theatre Association does not necessarily recommend or endorse any products or services advertised in the Bulletin or in any flyer or document included in any mailings to members.

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VISITS AND EVENTS

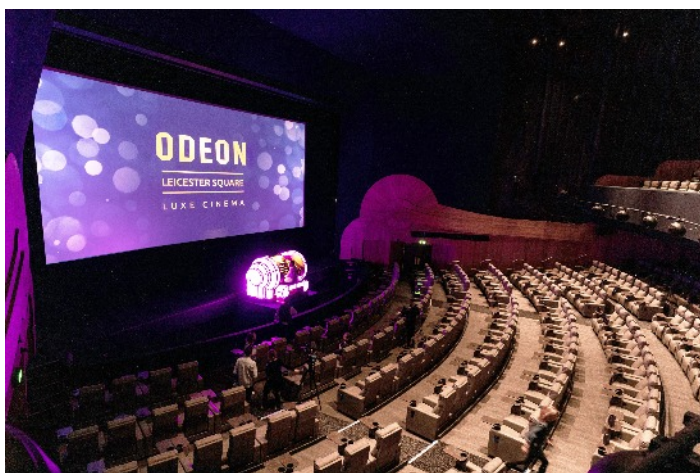
CTA Annual General Meeting

Saturday 1 June 2019 in London

Organised by Ray Ritmeester



The Odeon Luxe Leicester Square – photo courtesy David Holt



The interior of the Odeon Luxe Leicester Square



The Odeon organ on the CTA visit in spring 1982

To start the day we have been invited for a one hour tour of the Odeon Leicester Square. Doors open at 9:30am for our look around the recently refurbished and upgraded venue. Resident organist Donald MacKenzie will be joining us and playing a short musical interlude on the Compton Theatre Organ, affectionately known as the 'Duchess'.

The AGM will be held at the Castle Cinema in Homerton starting promptly at 12:00 midday, doors open at 11:45. The meeting will feature the regular casework presentation about cases from around the UK. The CTA bookstall will also be in attendance. Finish time is 3:30pm.



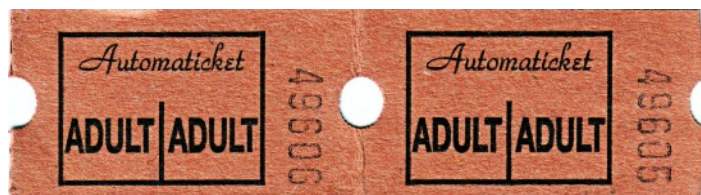
The interior of the Castle Homerton



The Castle Homerton today; photo by Ken Roe

Nominations for committee members are invited and should be sent to the Secretary, Adam Unger (address on p2) to arrive seven days before the meeting. The minutes of last year's meeting will be available in the members' area of the CTA website from the beginning of April, as well as being distributed on the day.

Getting There: The Odeon Leicester Square is served by the Underground, nearest stations are Leicester Square and Piccadilly Circus. The Castle Cinema is located at 64-66 Brooksby's Walk, Hackney, E9 6DA. The closest station is Homerton on London Overground, which can be reached via the Underground, changing at Highbury & Islington. On the day a map will be available for those travelling from the Odeon to the Castle. Members who wish to travel in a group to the Castle will be also be catered for.



Uphill and Downhill and Into the Woods

Wednesday 12 – Friday 14 June

This three-day tour is the first CTA event to include visits in this part of Lincolnshire for over 30 years. We will be based in the City of Lincoln, after first visiting Newark, over the border in Nottinghamshire and afterwards Woodhall Spa. Lincoln has one of the most dramatic locations in England. It is a City of two halves: Uphill and Downhill, connected by streets with precipitous gradients, the most famous being the aptly named Steep Hill.



We start the tour in Newark. The Palace Theatre [above] was designed as a cinema by the local businesswoman and architect, Emily Blagg, 1920. It is where Donald Wolfitt started his acting career. Also in the town is the five-screen Odeon (2007) and two closed venues now in other use: the Art Deco exterior of the Savoy (Robert Cromie, 1936) and what remains of a later façade of the Kinema, which originally opened in 1913.



In Lincoln, we hope to include as many as possible of the current and former cinemas, theatres and mixed-use venues in the City: The New Theatre Royal [above] designed by Bertie Crewe & WGR Sprague (1892) have been both a live venue and cinema. The Odeon (2001) is a nine-screen multiplex. Two closed venues with Art Deco façades have undergone internal alterations: the Ritz (formerly Odeon) by Leslie C Norton (1937) and the Radion by WJ King (1939). We hope to obtain access at both to see what remains of the auditoria. The exteriors of the Picture Hall (Lincoln's first cinema venue, a church hall, 1909), the Cinematograph Hall (1910, in the former Corn Exchange) and the Grand Electric Cinema, a 1911 conversion of a Mediaeval/Georgian building. The Bishop Greaves Theatre was re-named The Venue after being upgraded in 2012 to become a University performing arts centre and a public cinema. The Drill Hall, a brick and cast-iron structure (William Watkins (?), 1889-90), was converted in 2004 into a venue for theatre, music and occasional cinema. The Blue Room is a recently opened multi-purpose venue within the ballroom of the former Lincoln Lunatic Asylum (Richard Ingleman, 1819-20). The Engine Shed, an entertainment complex in the former 1875 GNR engine shed and the adjacent LPAC – Lincoln Performing Arts Centre – both by Stem Architects, 2005-07, as part of the Lincoln University campus. The new Everyman is under construction with a scheduled opening date of early 2020 but something of the exterior may be visible.



From Lincoln, we will travel by coach to the Kinema in the Woods at Woodhall Spa [above], a late 19th-Century entertainment pavilion converted into a cinema (1922). This venue is situated in a wooded glade surrounded by tall trees. Our visit will include a recital by the cinema's resident organist on the Woods Compton organ and a special screening of the 1942 Ealing Studios classic *Went the Day Well?* directed by Alberto Cavalcanti, story by Graham Greene adapted by John Dighton, with music by William Walton and starring Leslie Banks and a host of well-known supporting actors. "Cavalcanti's outstanding film is worthy of Hitchcock at his best." Raymond Durgnat (1970).

To register your interest and receive full details of the tour itinerary, accommodation options, joining notes and a booking form, please send SAE to David Vinnels, CTA Lincoln, 24 Cloudesley Square, London, N1 0HN or email [deco55@btinternet.com] to arrive by Friday 5 April.

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

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Thursday 21 March | Sing-a-long-a <i>The Greatest Showman</i> (2017) 7pm |
| Friday 5 April | <i>Stan and Ollie</i> (2018) [PG] 11am & 7:30pm |
| Sunday 7 April | <i>The Favourite</i> (2018) [15] 2:30pm & 7:30pm |
| Friday 26 April | <i>Wild Rose</i> (2018) [15] 11am |
| | <i>The Titfield Thunderbolt</i> (1953) [U] 7:30pm |
| Sunday 19 May | <i>Make Mine a Million</i> (1959) [U] 7pm |
| Friday 24 May | <i>Colette</i> (2018) [15] 11am |
| | <i>The Italian Job</i> (1969) [U] 7:30pm |

Behind the Scenes Tours at 11am on Mondays 18 March, 29 April & 20 May. £8. Book or simply turn up.

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

THE REGAL EXPERIENCE, WYMONDHAM

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 8 April | Celebrating 100 Years of the Royal Air Force |
| | 633 Squadron (1964) [A] plus |
| | <i>The New Men</i> – an RAF training film from 1962 |
| 13 May | <i>The African Queen</i> (1951) [U] plus |
| | <i>The Last Train</i> an Edgar Lustgarten crime thriller |

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].

- | | |
|----------|---|
| 30 March | <i>A Fistful of Dollars</i> (1964) [15] |
| 27 April | <i>Phantom Thread</i> (2018) [15] |

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

SIXTH RENOWN PICTURES FESTIVAL OF FILM

Sunday 6 October 11am – 7pm at the Plaza Stockport
With A Variety Of Celebrity Guests on Stage, Pathé Newsreels, B features and A features and of course the organist!
Tickets now on sale – £20

from 0808 178 8212 or [www.renownfilms.co.uk]

BRADFORD WIDESCREEN WEEKEND

This year's Widescreen Weekend at the National Science and Media Museum in Bradford will take place from 10-13 October – make a note in your diary. Program details will be available nearer the time.

PUBLICATIONS

Back Numbers Available

PICTURE HOUSE MAGAZINE

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

No 6	£1.50	Television in the Cinema; Atherley Southampton; Hippodrome , Blackpool.
No 8	£1.50	Sol Levy; Reginald Cooper; ABC in NW London.
No 17	£3.00	Special Issue featuring the Cinemas of George Coles with 26 original photographs reproduced in sepia.
No 18	£3.00	Sydney Colwyn Foulkes; United Picture Theatres; Tivoli Wimborne.
No 19	£3.50	Co-operative Cinemas; Ideal Lambeth; Dursley; Alister Macdonald; Granada Tooting.
No 21	£3.50	100 Years On; Travelling Shows; Reggie Rea; Albert Hall Sheffield; Regal Wells; West End Adverts; Scotland.
all issues below have colour cover and inside pages		
No 25	£4.50	Oldest Cinema (Brighton); FE Bromige; Committee's Choice; Gaumont Managers; Carlton Swansea.
No 26	£4.50	Paramount Newcastle; Edward Stone; Granada Men; E de Wilde Holding; Electric Portobello Road.
No 27	£4.50	New Victoria/Apollo ; Whiteladies Bristol; Clark & Fenn; Compton Organs; Tim Foster Associates.
No 28	£4.50	James McKissack; WJ King; Torbay Cinema; Tabs.
No 29	£4.50	Cinerama in Britain; Braziers the Builders; John Fernée; Waller Jeffs; John Duffin's paintings.
No 30	£5.00	The Davis Family, Croydon; Apollo Hammersmith Organ; Norwich Roadshows.
No 31	£7.50	Special 84-page edition: Essoldo – A Family Business: Sol Sheckman and the Essoldo Circuit.
No 32	£5.00	Harry Myers Photographs; Cinemas at the Coalface; Shaws of Darwen: Edward A Stone.
No 33	£5.00	Theodore Komisarjevsky; Circuit & other releases of 1956; The case for saving the New Victoria Bradford.
No 34	£5.00	Beaufort Birmingham; Granada Tooting in 1934; Rank in post-war Scotland; J Braddon's Cinema life.
No 35	£5.00	Holophone lighting; Imitations of Odeon ; Cradley Records; 1909 Cinematograph Act; Kingston Showmanship.
No 36	£6.00	Leslie Kemp; Jeremy Perkins on Brighton; The Clifton Circuit; Circuit Releases of 1960.
No 37	£8.50	Special 92-page issue; saving the Electric Palace Harwich.
No 38	£6.00	Northern Morris Associated Cinemas; Point Milton Keynes; Going to the Cinema in Birmingham; Palace Conwy; Carlton Haymarket; Military Cinemas; Cinema Murders.
No 39	£6.00	WWI and the Film Trade; Tale of Two Regals ; Odeon North Finchley; Majestic Oxford; Films at the Royal Albert Hall .
No 40	£6.00	Tolmer Euston; Michael Stringer memories; West End in the 1950s; Stafford Entertainments; Will Onda & James Atroy; Stephen Waddingham – a Granada man.
No 41	£6.00	CTA's 50 th Anniversary; Plaza Stockport; Majestic Leeds; Grosvenor Rayners Lane; Pascal J Stienlet.
No 42	£6.00	Odeon Elephant & Castle, Plaza Crosby; Depot Lewes; Cineworld Chelsea; Gaumont Sheffield Figures.
No 43	£6.00	Virgin Cinemas; Peter Jewett's ABC memories; Scala Kings Cross; Picture House Campbeltown; Beeston/Nottingham memories.

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 2017 are £4.00 per year (6 issues); individual issues are £1.00 each. Prices for issues in 2018 and 2019 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.



BINDERS FOR PICTURE HOUSE MAGAZINE

These binders are to a new, revised design, which should allow easier storage for the more recent thicker copies of the magazine. The 'Wirex' system allows copies to be inserted easily and removed if required. There are twelve wires per binder, although the number of copies that can be inserted may vary depending on the thickness of the issue. The binders can also be used for the thinner, earlier copies of the magazine. Featuring a red leather-look finish and the magazine title on the spine in the current format.



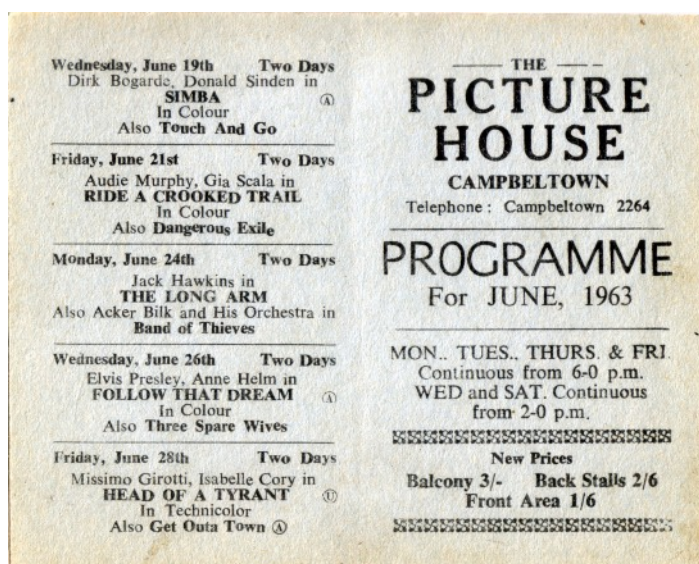
Price: £6.00 per binder, supplied in a special postal carton. Please add £3.00 to your total order for post and packing. Order from the Sales Officer (details below) or online (see the 'Publishing – Picture House' section of the website).

Recently Published (details in previous Bulletins)

Campbeltown Picture House – A Century of Cinema
£10.00 plus postage.

The Wee Pictures

A History of The Picture House (Campbeltown) Ltd
£4.99 plus postage.



Ordering

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

Orders to Jeremy Buck, CTA Sales, 34, Pelham Road, London, N22 6LN. Cheques/POs payable to Cinema Theatre Association, or send credit/debit card number with expiry date and security code. A complete sales list is available by sending an SAE or can be seen on the CTA website [www.cta-uk.org] where you can also place your order, using PayPal. A sales list is sent with every order.

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.

Ordering details above

CAMPAIGNING TO SAVE YOUR HISTORIC CINEMAS

By Tim Hatcher

Listing Criteria

Historic England has commissioned a comprehensive consultation exercise in order to investigate the efficacy of its strategy for listing. This represents a singular opportunity for the CTA to express its concerns, amongst which are factual inaccuracies in assessment and the apparent bias against cinemas of the 1930s, in addition to disparities in appraisal criteria from case to case. A full submission has been presented.

Grade I Listed



The Granada Tooting in April 2004

Works additional to those required to remove vegetation from the exterior of the Granada at Tooting are apparently being undertaken. An official from the local Council is to inspect in order to assess if listed building consent should have been solicited.

Grade II* Listed

Objections have been submitted by the Association to a planning application to build a hotel adjacent to the Dreamland complex in Margate. The proposed structure would have a deleterious impact upon appreciation of the composition of the entertainment building's façade. See photo p19 last Bulletin and Late News p28 this Bulletin.



The Picture House Paignton in June 2008

The Trust responsible for the Picture House in Paignton is seeking to secure further finance in order to fund additional feasibility and business studies into its future operation.

The Conservation Officer of Adur and Worthing Councils has confirmed that alterations to the entrance passage of the Dome do not conform to the approved plans; this circumstance has therefore been referred to the Council's enforcement team.

Grade II Listed

The City Design Manager of Birmingham City Council's Planning and Regeneration Department has been assigned responsibility for overseeing the rebuilding of the **Royalty** in Harborne. Unfortunately the current aspiration is not based upon a full reinstatement of the cinema but instead upon acceptance of its damaged shell as a basis of reference. Objection to this approach is to be initiated.

The **Picture House** in Bridlington has been listed following an application from a third party. Whilst the listing of another cinema is to be welcomed, it seems somewhat anomalous that this conversion of a 1912 temperance hall, subsequently additionally altered, should receive statutory protection, whilst nearby the remarkably intact and architectonically accomplished **Regal** of 1938 has been denied this modicum of security. Once again a predilection by Historic England for cinemas constructed prior to the decade of the latter venue appears manifest.

Following a site visit to the **Granada** in Kingston-upon-Thames, it has been agreed that the integrity of the auditorium ceiling will be preserved in the forthcoming alterations to the night-club that currently occupies the premises. The original proposal would have destroyed the feature's unity of design: this outcome thus represents an undoubtedly positive result. See p6 last Bulletin.

Unlisted



The Grand Banbury in February 2004

Accounts from independent sources report that the interior of the Grand in Banbury has been obliterated. This 1935 remodelling of a 1911 theatre was executed by the prominent architectural practice of Drury and Gomersall; the auditorium represented a fine example of a small house, simultaneously elegant in proportion and embellishment. Its loss is thus extremely regrettable.

Ashford Borough Council has now launched a feasibility study into theatre provision in the town – however, the exercise excludes the Odeon from consideration, despite a petition in its support endorsed by an excess of three thousand signatories. In a token gesture perpetuated ad nauseam countrywide, the Council also wishes to demolish the auditorium and retain only the façade. See Newsreel p22.

The Association is prevailing upon Historic England to incorporate Black's Regal [R] into its Sunderland Heritage Action Zone. Such inclusion would afford this distinguished cinema a degree of protection following the highly controversial refusal of its statutory listing.



Black's Regal Sunderland in September 2006

UP THE NORTHERN LINE (EDGWARE BRANCH)

By Wilf Watters

This time I am off again on a nostalgia trip. Twenty one years ago I lived in Burnt Oak, near Edgware in North London. Recently I took a walk to see if any old cinemas still existed. To my surprise three out of four still do, although in a terrible condition. First one was a modest place built to serve a huge nearby Council house estate called 'Watling' after the Roman road that ran alongside. This was originally the Regent, opened in 1924. It had 900 seats and a balcony was added around 1934. Then it changed to Odeon, then Gaumont, then back to Odeon by 1962. But however it was demolished in 1973 when I filmed it. It was a modest affair – they didn't spend much on the frontage.



The Regent Burnt Oak in 1973



The Savoy Burnt Oak on the CTA visit in September 2006

Walking down the Edgware Road we come to the Savoy. It looks like the demolition gang have moved in. This was showing ABC programmes when I lived there but I preferred the ex Citadel at Edgware, as featured in a recent article of mine.



The Odeon/Classic Colindale in September 2006

Further down the Edgware Road, at Colindale, is a wonderful sample of the work of AP Starkey. Here was a brilliant cinema, still in a good condition, although looking tatty due to dodgy businesses of the past. This was a cosy cinema too with its stadium seating and sloping side walls directing attention to the single screen. From my film, a view of the projection box with staff coping well with the huge spools then being used in the Classic days. Its future is unsure as it's surrounded by new flats and industry.



The Ambassador/ Gaumont/Classic Hendon Central in April 2006

Lastly, slipping across to Hendon Central, we come to what was the Ambassador. With its prime position at a busy junction and a local Tube station it was a very popular cinema; it had opened in 1932. It became a Gaumont in 1933 then eventually a Classic in 1967. It was tripled in 1973 and is now a gym and health centre. It doesn't look very healthy to me and badly needs a paint-up. Perhaps we should be grateful that it still exists, to remind us of the many cinemas that populated our suburbs in years gone by.



Thanks to Allen Eyles for details in his first Odeon book.

Small pictures are frames from 16mm film.

INTERNET CORNER

- ★ [tinyurl.com/yayzu8bj] A *Tatler* guide to London's independent cinemas.
- ★ [www.electriccinemaclub.com] The Electric cinema in London's Portobello Road. Has lots of photos, videos and an archive of programmes from 1969 to 1983.
- ★ [www.screenonline.org.uk/film/cinemas/sect3.html] A BFI page; "The definitive guide to Britain's film & TV history" by Allen Eyles.
- ★ [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bve8Wgaphig] The CinemaScope story – an 18½ minute video.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/y7zxp16k] A page from the *Grimsby Telegraph* – a look inside what remains of the former Savoy, above McDonalds.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/b6qjyby] A page from the 'urban75' blog: *Edwardian Advertising on Coldharbour Lane, Brixton*. There is a link halfway down to a Pathé Newsreel of the opening of the Granada Brixton in 1957. It is not easy to find so the link is [tinyurl.com/ybj7dkfc]; Sent in by Robert Holden.
- ★ [www.splicehere.website] An Australian project to produce a feature film about the rise, fall and rebirth of projected film. You can help crowd-fund via the website.
- ★ [youtu.be/O5BKZZ_59IQ] *The Last Days of Cinerama*. Also tells the story of the filming in 2012 of the 26-minute *In The Picture*, the first film to be shot in 3-strip Cinerama in 50 years.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/y8kn6lmt] A *Scotsman* article – 16 lost Edinburgh cinemas that are gone but not forgotten.
- ★ [www.in70mm.com/news/2019/ppt] A report on a visit to the PPT Archive in Halifax. Has links to other articles.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/y8s2lgg6] Nine pages from the *Bucks Herald* of photos inside the Odeon Aylesbury before it was demolished. Sent in by Martin Tapsell

MY YEAR WITH J ARTHUR RANK

By Fabian Breckels

For some reason I was always fascinated with cinemas, even though my first ever visit – to the ABC Colchester to see *Swallows & Amazons* in 1974 – was not until I was seven. Thanks to a sibling deciding to throw a tantrum, it nearly never happened but once I was in the cinema, that was it. I thought, “I want one” and it was a fascination that never left me.

Most subsequent cinema trips were to the Odeon up the road, which by my mid-teens was the only cinema around. So it was that I applied for an usher's job there in the summer of 1988 and then applied to be a 'Trainee Assistant Manager' with Rank during my final year at what was then Newcastle Polytechnic. As one of the few students with a job lined up on graduation I hope I was not too smug but the job of my dreams turned out to be anything but. That said, I did manage to photograph many of the cinemas I came into contact with, which provides a bit of a snapshot of some Odeons between 1989 & 1990.

Having been interviewed by the Regional Manager for the North at the Odeon Newcastle, I was somewhat surprised to be sent to the Odeon Swansea for my initial 'training'. I'd been told to expect to go north but someone, somewhere, had other plans.



Odeon Swansea, Summer 1989

The Swansea Odeon was built on the site of the old Plaza and had opened on 17 May 1967. Originally the stadium auditorium had a floating screen, similar to the Odeon Elephant and Castle. The whole place was very run down, having been tripled on the cheap in 1982. Odeon ① occupied the front stalls and should have been a nice auditorium; tabs now adorned the originally bare screen but apart from that the original décor survived intact, including the hexagonal light fittings. Apart from the tatty condition of the place the effect was quite pleasing.



Odeon Swansea Screen ①

However, turn around and the story was somewhat different, with screens ② and ③ built on stilts overhanging the rear seats. Both of these were unavoidably lop-sided, despite being a decent size but what I could not believe was the ugly mess of a void between them for the projection beam. I was told that this void had forced them to reduce the size of the original screen, hence the introduction of tabs where originally there had been a floating screen.



Odeon Swansea, Screen ① rear & Screen ②

However, the sorry state of the cinema was the least of my worries. I was supposed to have left Swansea after three months, fully trained as an assistant manager. For whatever reason, that just did not happen. Colleagues seemed too busy to show me the ropes. Besides I was not finding settling into a new town that easy, the fact that I knew I was only there for a few months did not help. One thing I was starting to realise was that I just did not like being moved around at an employer's whim, something that would become a bigger issue for me as my time with Odeon progressed. Knowing that I was not there to stay meant making friends and making a life somewhere was impossible.



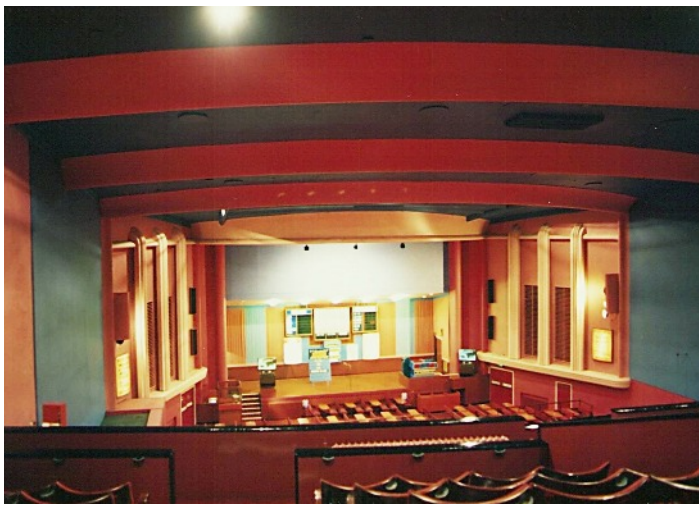
To views of the auditorium of the Odeon Marble Arch

One of the advantages of being Odeon staff was the ability to visit other cinemas and get a look around. Before leaving Swansea I did manage to secure a visit to the Odeon Marble Arch, to see *Gone with the Wind*. This was before the subdivision and subsequent demolition.

On a second visit to see *The Abyss* I asked a projectionist where best to sit. He'd said in the stalls in front of the projection room. One of my lasting regrets is ignoring his advice and sitting in the front circle.



The exterior of the Maxime/Odeon Sketty, summer 1989



The interior of the Maxime/Odeon Sketty, summer 1989

While in Swansea I did secure some cheap accommodation through a contact. In effect I borrowed a whole student house while the usual tenants were on vacation. This was in Sketty, just by the Top Rank Bingo Hall. This was the former Maxime/Odeon of 1938 that had gone over to bingo in 1962. I used my Rank connections to get in to the Sketty Top Rank Club and take some photographs and thought it was a lovely place, intact and very well kept but that did not stop its closure in 1995 and subsequent demolition in 2000.

While renting and having a whole student house to myself, I nearly torched it, thanks to the usual tenant's non-pop-up, pop-up toaster. I'd put some toast on, nipped to the bathroom and came back minutes later to see flames through the glass kitchen door. So I just opened the back door and stuck the toaster in the garden to burn itself out. Years later a firefighter I was chatting to told me that's not what you do but at least I didn't burn the place down.

What I did do was replace the toaster but when the students returned they said they did not want it. In October 1989 I found myself transferred to the Odeon Reading, complete with a brand new toaster!

The Odeon Reading was AP Starkey's cinema of 1937, which when I arrived had just been converted from a twin to a triple. This had not stopped at simply splitting the lower screen in two. The upstairs toilets had been off a lounge that overhung the car park. This had been demolished when the car park was sold for redevelopment so the entire space above the foyer had been redesigned to provide new loos and new offices. Only screen ① survived from the original 1979 twinning.



Odeon Reading - just after the 1989 conversion to a triple exterior, screens ① and ③. The office block on the car park and lounge site is just beginning to be built.

The two new screens were soulless and I always thought the screens were far too high up. But the real loss was the void space in front of them containing the original, huge proscenium arch and the front stalls. While a colleague showed me inside it was far too dark to photograph and I recall it being full of building waste from the conversion. Why Rank did not go for an extra screen in this space I'll never know. That said, Screen ① was a really nice space to see a film in and retained a lot of the original character, although the concealed lighting had long been removed.

While I was there the Reading Odeon had its own way of operating. The manager did effectively 9 to 5 Monday to Friday, the assistants – me and one other – had to cover evenings and weekends. Perhaps there was a good reason for this but it was not my place to ask. It was at this time that they discovered I had not been fully trained at Swansea and could not be bothered to fill the gaps. In return I discovered that I was not keen on handling gangs of unruly kids (apologies if you were one of them) that turned up on Saturday afternoons.



Odeon Reading Foyer 1989 – this really is the best photo I could get

One of the 'improvements' that came with the change to three screens was the new kiosk. This dominated the foyer as it was a huge triangular wedge with the cash desks right by the doors and a walkway with bags of sweets and other items at the back. This completely carved up a foyer that had once been a spacious and welcoming place. You only have to watch the Compton Lodge Studios film of the Reading Odeon, as photographed in 1973, to see how spacious it was then compared to how cramped and overcrowded the cinema became in 1989.

Managerially the foyer was a nightmare as nobody could keep an eye on the whole foyer at any one time. This probably explains why three youths decided to rob the place after the last screening of *Roadhouse* had started upstairs. I'd wandered into the foyer around nine only to find three youths wandering around. One punched me and pinned me to the floor and said, "Stay down and you won't get hurt." while his associates raided the cash desk. The last thing I wanted was any staff getting hurt so I told them to give the robbers what they wanted. As it was they only made off with a few bags of coins and totally missed the cash drawers with the night's takings.

Just as soon as they were out of the door the Police came piling in and, whilst the robbers were never caught, I could not fault the Police for arriving so quickly, nor the front of house staff, all older ladies, for keeping so calm. Once the Police had left it was down to me to wrap things up for the night, after a very stiff drink from the manager's cupboard, used to provide refreshments at press screenings and after smoking the only cigarette I've ever actually needed.

One thing I was allowed to keep from my time at Reading was the now redundant sign pointing to the "Toilets in the Lounge", all of which had been demolished during the conversion to a triple. After years packed away it now points the way to my bathroom.



One that got away – the toilet sign from the Odeon Reading

While at Reading I started to provide relief management for several cinemas, such as the Odeons at Aylesbury, Salisbury and Portsmouth.



The Odeon Aylesbury in 1990

Andrew Mather's Aylesbury Odeon (1937) now demolished, was a great little cinema but in the wrong part of town. After dark the area never felt safe and one night I was chased by some drunks on the way back to the hotel.

When the cinema was originally tripled in 1973 all three screens were served by a single projection suite in the front stalls. Screens ② and ③ had rear projection, which meant the odd spectacle of the curtains opening with the image appearing behind, rather than on top of the curtains as they opened. I recall the minis were very smart with flock wallpaper. In later years when the screen in Screen ① was moved forward and literally hung on some scaffold, the original box was brought back into use. Mather's proscenium was intact behind the new screen and I wish I'd got some photographs but the only time I got in I did not have my camera with me. Apart from the screen being moved forward, much of the original décor survives but the double staircase in the foyer has been partially buried by an oversize concession stand, which ruined the effect. So much as Aylesbury could have been a candidate for listing, I did not enjoy doing relief work there.

Salisbury Odeon, however, was another matter. I clicked with the staff here really well and even the patrons seemed easier to deal with and it was a superb cinema. I can honestly say that my few days at Salisbury were the happiest of my entire time with Rank. It was a triple when I was there although staff were already talking about a fourth screen in the front stalls. As it happens a screen also went into the disused restaurant area but all after my short time there.

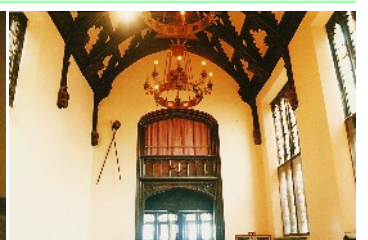
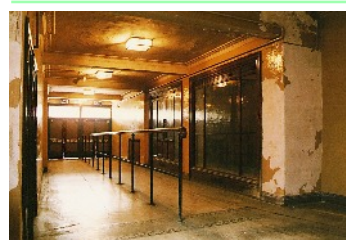


Odeon Salisbury, Screen ① – from the projection box and the end of the circle. Note the original light fittings & tapestries. Only the carpet appears more modern.

At Salisbury the film titles were advertised on an illuminated board above the doors. The first night I was there someone changed the words around to make nonsense. I was told that it was probably a disgruntled ex-employee! Thinking of that reminds me of when we had an ex-employee ring through a bomb hoax at Reading; problem for him was the person who took the call immediately recognised his voice!



Salisbury Odeon Restaurant. This was a fascinating two-room space complete with its own large kitchen, note the original Gaumont British carpet on the floor.



The disused front stall cash desk and the original baronial hall that still serves as the foyer; both Salisbury Odeon 1990.

In 1990 the Salisbury Odeon was a cinema aficionado's dream, original Gaumont carpet in stairwells and the restaurant, the original front stalls paybox. Needless to say I took loads of photographs. This was WE Trent's Gaumont Palace of 1931, which had been renamed Odeon in 1964 and tripled in 1972. What was unique was the foyer was a Grade I listed Tudor hall and the rest of the cinema was designed in sympathy and listed Grade II in 1984.

The photographs I took in 1990 show what had survived nearly 60 years including some original carpet, even in the by then semi-derelict restaurant and front stalls entrance.

Perhaps because I enjoyed it so much at Salisbury I never went back. Most of my relief work was at either Aylesbury or back in Reading after I'd been transferred to Bristol. Most of these were mid-week when cinemas were quiet and they were intended to cover when none of the usual managers were available – leave clashing with someone else's few days off for example.

However, my one trip to cover Portsmouth Odeon (Andrew Mather, 1936) was over a Friday and the opening of *Total Recall*. My few days at Portsmouth were interesting to say the least. One positive was the way some young and enthusiastic staff liked to make publicity displays in the foyer to promote the films on offer. Sadly my photos of the impressive moonscape they made in the foyer for *Total Recall* did not come out.

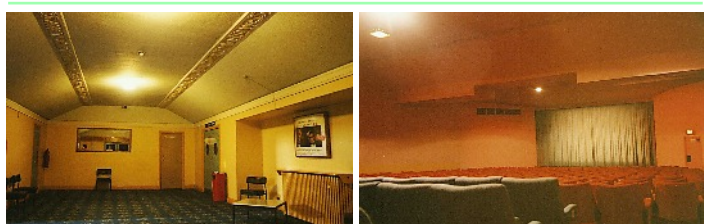


Portsmouth Odeon 1990 – Note the roof of the very long one-storey foyer and the bulk of the cinema auditorium block behind.

The timetable at this cinema was drawn up to ensure the whole cinema was closed and locked up by 10:30pm, so those who wanted to could get to last orders in the local pub. Well that's what I was told, which could be apocryphal. After last orders some of the staff took me by taxi to where I was staying. It's worth explaining that whenever you went on relief duty, it was always the responsibility of the host cinema you were going to, to arrange accommodation and pay for it. Usually that meant a pleasant enough bed and breakfast that would give you a decent night's sleep without breaking the bank.



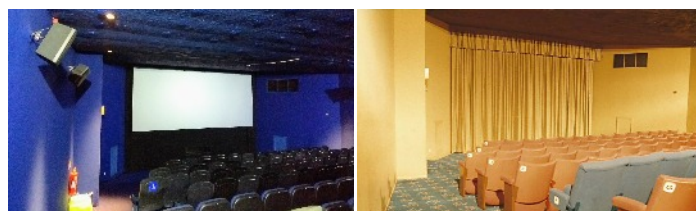
Odeon Portsmouth Screen ① with acoustic tiling already removed, prior to the new screen going in the front stalls. To see how the Odeon originally looked see page 98 of Allen Eyles' book *Odeon Cinemas 1: Oscar Deutsch Entertains Our Nation of 2002*.



Odeon Portsmouth, the long foyer and screen ③ – as enlarged sometime after the original tripling in 1973.

At Portsmouth I was taken to a dive of a B&B that was also another pub. Perhaps one with a lock-in policy as arrangements were quickly made to have a few beers on the tab (ie Rank's expense, not ours!). As these people were my hosts all I could do was comply. About five pints of Stella later I gave up and staggered to bed. I have no idea when the others went home but I was having to deal with a very busy cinema – and full houses – alongside a hangover, the day after.

I also got to visit the Odeon Weston-Super-Mare – this acted as the South West Regional Office for the chain at the time. This was still a triple at the time with the original proscenium arch still serving Screen ①. It is now a quad with very low prices to compete against a nearby Cineworld. I did visit it again in the summer of 2018 to see the latest *Mission Impossible* film in Screen ② and I took some photographs on my phone.



Odeon Weston-Super-Mare Screen ② in 2018 [L] and 1990 [R] when it was a traditional 'drop-wall' mini. Today the lack of tabs allows for a bigger picture. Surround sound has also been installed.



Odeon Weston-Super-Mare in 1990 – Screen ① from the Circle

My final transfer was to the Odeon Bristol in March 1990. That I never bothered to photograph the inside of the place says it all. This was the 1985 triple built in the gutted shell of the original cinema (see *Picture House No 7* of Autumn 1985 for the full story).



The Odeon Bristol in 1990

While my year had some interesting moments, it was here that I finally decided that being moved around every few months, the long hours – at Bristol you did 3½ twelve-hour days a week – was not for me. There were other challenges but as I've deliberately not named anyone but myself I'll leave that there. That said, a very recent diagnosis of ADHD might explain some of them. Suffice to say instead of leaving Bristol for another placement at another Odeon, I left Odeon and stayed in Bristol. I'm still here, in fact I've met several people here who thought they were just passing through Bristol and instead never left, including my partner – but that's a Bristol thing and another story entirely.

Finally I'm indebted to Allen Eyles' *Odeon Cinemas 1 & 2*, which I used to check the historical dates, architects and so on.

THE PLAZA / GAUMONT SOUTHSEA

By Ron Knee

The former Plaza/Gaumont Southsea celebrated its 90th Birthday last September – see p28 Bulletin 52/5. I remember this building well and visited in the early 1990s, then still run by Gala Bingo.

In 1992 I was contacted by Portsmouth City Planning asking if I could visit the building and ascertain whether it was worthy of being included in a Review of the Statutory List currently being drawn up. I then completed a report on the Plaza to be included for listing – see below.

My first visit was in the morning before the bingo opened and I met the Assistant Manager, who showed me around the building, which was spotless and beautifully maintained. I explained that there was interest in listing the former Gaumont. I was informed that she and several other staff had worked there when it was still a cinema and was still in contact with the Head Projectionist, who had been there since 1937 and had met his wife, who also worked at the Gaumont as an usherette. I later visited him at his home and recorded his memories, which were most helpful when compiling my report for the Listing Review.

The Plaza was built by Frank Spickernell (1884–1948) twice Lord Mayor of Portsmouth, who also owned a furniture factory in Lake Road, Portsmouth. He also built the Regent, later Gaumont North End, Tivoli, Troxy, Commodore, Regal Eastney, Carlton Cosham and the Curzon Waterlooville.

The Plaza design was carried out by the Architectural firm of Henry J Dyer & Son, with building works by Samuel Salter. Seating was for 1,331 in the stalls and 384 in the circle. My original photographs show how the cinema looked on opening on 29 September 1928.

The interior designs were something of a mixture. The front of the cinema was in a classical style using Portland stone (for details see listing). The main entrance had four pairs of doors with clear leaded glass panels; the door on the extreme left was the queuing lobby, which ran the entire length of the building.



The door on the right was to offices. The poster boards either side advertising for the forthcoming silent films, Clara Bow in *Wings* (1927) and Greta Garbo in *Divine Woman* (1928). Above the main entrance, picked out in light bulbs, is *Wings*, the current silent film showing.

Whether or not because of planning restrictions or the church next door is not clear, only there appears to be very little space for advertising. On closer inspection at the top of picture you can see the tram wires and bottom right shows a passenger waiting at the tram stop. The transport system was most important for patrons, especially with a large naval presence; the cinema adjoined the very busy Bradford Junction.

The entrance foyer was in Tudor style with wrought iron chandeliers. The left side shows two large stone fireplaces; situated between are two pairs of oak doors inset into the oak panelling. These fireplaces contained large radiators for heating the foyer. In the distance is one of two flights of stone steps leading to the circle foyer. The pay desk is on the right side with only the end section of oak panelling showing.



The auditorium, entrance foyer and circle foyer of the Plaza



The 'sunburst' windows

The circle foyer, in Adam style, is spoilt by the large Art Deco sun design chandeliers and wall lights; these light fittings have obviously been installed to match the huge front leaded glass 'Sunburst' windows, which are the main feature of the whole upper front façade and specifically mentioned in the English Heritage Listing.

Until 1974 the auditorium Frescos featuring the Grand Canal Venice were still intact. These were over-painted by Top Rank Bingo, as was the Portland stone façade. In front of the house tabs was the orchestra pit, used for silent films. Note the central ventilation grilles in the ceiling, decorated with bunches of grapes, which were picked out in gold until the whole interior was repainted.

The most interesting feature was the Plaza's Queuing Lobby. This long passageway was a welcome facility, especially during inclement weather, accommodating up to 500 patrons.

This area had a most remarkable feature: adorning the walls were seventeen framed 12ft-15ft wide hand-painted Renaissance Panels and four panels depicting Heraldic Coats of Arms, enclosed by raised decorative frames moulded with trailing Briar Roses, originally finished in gold.



The queuing lobby at the Plaza



The Plaza auditorium in 1993



Sadly all but two panels were to fall victims of the Top Rank obliterating scheme! Fortunately during this first visit I photographed these two remaining panels. My photos show the detailed work involved; it took the artist with two assistants three years to complete the 21 panels. After the cinema opened they could only work mornings or on Sunday.

A close up of one of my photos shows the artist's signature at the bottom right hand corner of this great battle scene. One can only imagine the public viewing these amazing works whilst awaiting their admittance to the auditorium.

The photo [top previous page] shows the scale of the queuing lobby, with the last panel and the original unpainted oak panelling beneath. The central queue railings are set in the terrazzo flooring. On both side walls are the apertures of the other long lost panels.

LISTING DESCRIPTION FOR THE PLAZA



The following building shall be added:
Portsmouth, Former CB
Bradford Junction The Plaza
SZ6499 7744/5/10012

Cinema, now bingo hall, 1928. Red brick in Flemish bond, painted brick and faience. Composite roof on slates.

Exterior: 1 storey and balcony. 7 bays (bays 3 and 6 narrow). North face: curved projecting painted centre, 4 bays wide has 6 terrazzo steps approaching 2 wide recessed entrances, each with 2-leaf glazed door set within panelled fronts. Flanking detached Doric columns, paired at curved centre. On each side is a projecting bay with recessed entrance, horizontally rusticated at ground floor, moulded jambs, flat arch and keystone. 2-leaf panelled door with glazed top panels. Entablature to centre 2 bays with cornice running through flanking bays. First floor has a detached Ionic column set over each of the ground floor columns. Recessed panels between columns each with 2 tripartite mullioned windows with leaded lights, moulded sill and apron. Similar 1-light window to each side bay with flanking Doric pilasters. Entablature with corbels at centre 2 bays, parapet and coping. Each of the flanking bays has a higher parapet with projecting cap, die and base set over lower pilasters. Each of the flanking left and right brick bays has a recessed centre with two 2-light casements set under a flat stone arch, brick jambs, banded stone sill. First floor has paired 2-light timber mullioned and transomed casements with leaded lights. Stone cornice and stone coped parapet. At far left, brick bay has flat stone arched entrance with 2-leaf late C20 doors. Above are 2 tiers of 2-light casements with flanking 1-light casements, leaded lights, each set under a brick segmented arch. Parapet with stone coping. Elevation facing Bradford Road has to left 4 tiers of 2-light casements with leaded lights, each set under a brick segmented arch. To right shop fronts with flanking pilasters and late C20 infills. At high level are 7 boarded openings with rod opening gear to each top ventilation panel. Bracketed eaves.

Interior: auditorium is panelled at dado level. To each side above dado are 5 paired engaged fluted Ionic columns, entablature with dentilled cornice. Curved plaster ceiling with curved beams. Proscenium at west end has moulded jambs and segmented arch. Ornate patterned plasterwork with vase ornament at each end. Balcony at opposite end (east) timber front with slim balusters and raised panels. Balcony has original seating, each row with ornate scrolled metal end panels. Main entrance vestibule has 2 'Tudor' type recesses on rear wall face with moulded jambs and head, 4 uprights over each shelf with grotesque carved figures. Cornice and splayed top. Flat plastered ceiling with curved exposed beams. Plaster cornice at junction between ceiling and walls. First floor has decorated ceiling roses with moulded plaster cornice at junction between ceiling and walls. Patterned plaster wall panels depicting garlands and figures. Art Deco stained glass 'Sunburst' windows featured in leaded lights with graduating shades of yellow surrounded with a blue sky. Queueing lobby on left of main entrance had 17 Italian Renaissance panels and 4 Heraldic Coat of Arms panels now painted over except for 2 Renaissance panels near entrance.

Dated 4 October 1995

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State, TA Ellbigford

TA Ellbigford

A Higher Executive Officer in the Department of National Heritage

A few months ago I revisited the building again and found the building, now a Mosque, in a much better condition than my last visit. The listed Sunburst windows have been repaired and glazing panels have been installed in front for their extra protection. During this visit I spoke to someone coming out of the old queuing lobby doors. Making enquiries regarding whether the two original panels were still there; I was shown the inside corridor. Sadly the last remaining George Legg panels had been painted over. I contacted Portsmouth City Planning last November, making enquiries why the listed panels had been over-painted. They replied that they were hoping to visit the building soon and confirm whether or not the panels had been obliterated or covered with protective covering. No confirmation has been received at the time this article goes to press.

COMING SOON

After the sale of the Plaza to Gaumont British, Frank Spickernell went on to build a more spectacular Plaza Cinema in 1932 on the outskirts of Southampton. It was designed by Architect Robert Cromie, who had just completed the Gaumont Palace Hammersmith. Details of this amazing interior are yet to come. I have two recordings, one from Richard Egan of Mollo & Egan, who carried out the interior works and the other by the Head Cashier, who worked at the Plaza Southampton from the opening until its closure.



The Plaza as a Gala Bingo in 1997
and as a Mosque in October 2018

PLAZA FACTS

- September 1928: Three Ernemann-II projectors were installed by the Walturdaw Cinema Supply Co.
- September 1928: Plaza opened with silent films *Baby Mine* and *The Elephant's Elbows*.
- January 1929: New sound equipment destroyed by fire, replaced in time for *The Singing Fool*.
- March 1929: Frank Spickernell was fined £5 for using the cinema for music on a Sunday, after a noisy demonstration.
- 1934: The cinema, now renamed the Gaumont, became the first in Portsmouth to introduce double seats at the back of the stalls and circle.
- 1937: *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* played for 16 weeks.
- 1965: The last film shown was on 30 January. Top Rank Bingo commenced in late February.
- 1995: The Plaza is one of only two cinemas in the whole of Hampshire to have Grade II listed status; the other is the Palace Aldershot.

FROM PICTURES TO PINTS: AN INTERNATIONAL SELECTION

By Gavin McGrath

Following the success of *From Pictures to Pints: Cinemas That Became Pubs*, it is time to embark on a short journey across the globe to visit a selection of hostelrys that occupy former cinemas. As with the last project the building does not have to have been purpose-built as a cinema and the pub or bar does not have to occupy the whole of it but does have to be currently trading.

AUSTIN, TEXAS, USA



The 290-seat Iris Theatre on East Sixth Street opened in December 1944 showing Mexican pictures in the Spanish language and was run by Eddie Joseph. It was last listed in the City Directory in 1956. What became of it immediately after closure is not widely apparent but it has been a bar for a number of years. It is now home to the Dizzy Rooster bar, which opened in 2003. The bar has a dance-floor and there is live music seven days a week. The cast of the reality show *The Real World Austin* often frequented this bar although it is chiefly for those on a budget.

KRAKOW, POLAND



The Kino Młoda Gwardia (Young Guards Cinema) opened in the former John's Restaurant building in 1916. Its subsequent names included Corso, Slonko and Stella from 1938 and it was a Polish language cinema throughout World War II. Its final name was current from 1945 until closure in the 1980s when the company was liquidated. It has been the Ermitaz Bar for a number of years and a speciality at the bar are dances for the over-40s.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, USA



The Lyndale Theatre on Lyndale Avenue South was designed by AL Garlough for the Calhoun Theatre Company and opened in May 1915 with around 500 seats. It first closed in the late-1920s but was reopened by WR Frank in 1931. It closed for good in 1952 and has since been a grocery store, furniture store, bingo-hall and an antique shop. It has been a bar since September 2014 called the Lynlake Brewery, founded by Paul Cossette and Mark Anderson. The bar features a line-up of high-quality crafted beers designed to bring out the bold flavours and aromas of the ingredients but does not serve food, which can be brought in however. The walls of the bar are adorned with bicycle rims and the building also has a rooftop patio.

PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA, USA



The Brookline Theatre on Brookline Boulevard opened in March 1921, complete with banqueting hall and was initially run by the company MD TA Gilbert. The landowners were the German Beneficial Union [GBU], who sold the building in 1926 and it was then owned by various companies and leased to Warner Brothers in 1938, who remodelled the theatre. The building also was home to a number of community organisations such as the Seckatary [sic] Hawkins Club and the Roosevelt Club. Shortly after the opening of the nearby Boulevard Theatre it appears the Brookline was being used as a screening room and distribution centre. The GBU re-acquired the building in 1939 but it was bought outright by Warner in 1947, who retained it until 1971. It was later occupied by the Salvation Army and an office for a former State Representative. A suspended ceiling was later installed and the structure converted into office space with much of the old theatre remaining buried. In 2007 Leo Hughes leased the building and converted it to the Brookline Pub. In creating a new balcony for the restaurant a mural was discovered underneath sound-proofing material, which has been integrated into the décor. Apart from craft beers the pub also serves burgers, wings, wraps and pizza. There are also pool tables and live music for entertainment. A mobile phone shop called Cricket occupies one of the retail flanks at the front.

OREGON CITY, OREGON, USA



The 300-seat Star Theatre in Main Street opened in 1913 and was run by William Long, who was forced to retire as a millworker after injuring his back. The building has been substantially altered with the original arched entrance now removed and the parapet wall stuccoed. The current occupant is the Pioneer Pub, which was established in 2009. There is a dance area on the ground floor with pool tables upstairs and the food is basic bar fare. It was previously home to the Headless Horseman Bar and Dr John's Pub.

MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, USA



The exterior of the former Plaza Art Theatre on Washington Avenue looks more like a car showroom than a cinema and inside it had a rather narrow auditorium with just an aisle down one side. It opened in March 1966 and was run by the Brandt chain, which had a number of cinemas in the Miami area. The house is currently an Irish pub called The Playwright. The food menu is varied including lamb ribs, burgers and buffalo chicken sandwiches, along with more traditional fare such as soup, fish and chips and Shepherd's Pie but not particularly of an Irish flavour. The bar is open until 5am.

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PARIS, FRANCE



The Victoria Chatelet, on Victoria Avenue in the 2nd arrondissement, opened in the early 1970s as a single-screen cinema but was later converted into two screens. It closed in February 1988 and was later transformed into an art gallery. Since June 2012 however, it has been a geek's paradise entitled Le Dernier Bar avant la Fin du Monde. Spread across three floors, it is dedicated to various universes such as the cult movies *The Matrix* and *Indiana Jones* along with literary figures such as Jules Verne and Isaac Asimov. To pass the time there is a library of books and board games with recurring events such as the Agency for World Defence, an improvisation show. The name translates as The Last Bar before the End of the World, a reference to *The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy*.

HAMBURG, GERMANY



The original Blumenburg Kino on Hoheluftchaussee dates from the 1910s but was virtually destroyed during World War II. It was rebuilt and reopened in January 1950 and later taken over by Johannes Kuhn before closing in June 1965. The property was notably occupied by an Aldi supermarket in later life but has been the Sunset Billiard bar since 1992. The bar has a selection of pool and billiards tables, a snooker table, electronic darts, a pinball machine and Nintendo Wii, with sports events shown on the big screen. The menu is dominated by salads, croques, gratins and homemade pizza. The cinema itself was also known as the New Flower Castle.

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The Studio 82 cinema on Heritage Drive South West opened in June 1966 and was a single-screen house seating around 500 people. The Famous Players took over the cinema in 1984 but it closed in 1986 and was used as a warehouse. In the 1990s it became a bar with live music and, under new ownership, was a gastropub and nightclub called Studio 82 from 2011. This later closed and a new bar was opened in 2014 by sisters Jill and Tracy Johnson, called Trap & Gill, a concept that began in Vancouver in 1998. The ceiling and walls are covered with reclaimed timber and the upper floor can be used for private events. There is live music at weekends consisting of Celtic and Classic Rock, for which there is a cover charge and there are also pinball tournaments and ceilidhs. In terms of food, dishes include Fish and Chips, Prairie Pie, Lobster Mac, Pizzas and Steak Sandwiches.

TULLAMORE, COUNTY OFFALY, REPUBLIC OF IRELAND



The Grand Central in Market Square opened in September 1924 and was partly on the site of an old meat market. The building, designed by TF McNamara, has a plaque on the front stating Irish National Foresters 1923. The single-screen cinema originally had around 725 seats and closed in 1973. It is currently home to Fergie's bar and lounge with live music staged at weekends.

Images courtesy of: Bruce C (Austin); Yellow Pages Canada (Calgary); David Simpson (Hamburg); Google Street View (Krakow and Miami Beach); Tap Traveler (Minneapolis); Another Believer (Oregon City); Le Dernier Bar (Paris); Brookline Connection (Pittsburgh); and Jennifer Lester (Tullamore).



LOST MOVIES – SILENT & SOUND

By David A Ellis

Moving pictures have been around since 1896. Since then an amazing amount of footage has rolled through the cameras, producing some great movies, both silent and sound. Sadly, much of the footage has been destroyed in some way or lost, possibly tucked away in someone's attic or shed.

One of the main reasons why nearly 80% of silent output is no more is because the film stock was nitrate and has disintegrated. Some films were stored in poor conditions. Some films were destroyed by the film companies to make space on the shelves for new ones. Their attitude was that the film has been out there and now has no more commercial value. This happened in the 1950s and 60s by TV companies; a tape would be wiped to make room for something else.

Also, storage was another problem. There are a number of programmes where there were a great number of episodes but are now reduced to just a few. Two examples include *Juke Box Jury* and *Six-Five Special*, where only a handful have survived. Sometimes a 16mm copy, taken from video, turns up. Examples are early pop shows, which were shot on video, now screened on 16mm, complete with scratches. In these cases the original video has been destroyed. The surviving prints carried an optical soundtrack and were prints that were usually sent to overseas markets.

In the feature film world, some stills and cast/crew lists survive, even if the film itself hasn't. Some films have been destroyed in studio fires. Universal had a fire back in 1924. Fox suffered one in 1937 and MGM had one in 1965. Martin Scorsese's Film Foundation claims that half of all the American movies made before 1950 and 90% before 1929, are gone forever. The Library of Congress states that 75% of all silent films are now lost.

On the BFI's most wanted list are the silent films *A Study in Scarlet* (1914), Hitchcock's *The Mountain Eagle* (1926) and *The Last Post* (1929). Sound films include *Squadron Leader X* (1943) and *Linda* (1960), directed by Don Sharp. Other films on the missing list include *Educated Evans* starring Max Miller and *Bless 'Em All* with the late singer Max Bygraves.

Some films are incomplete. Sometimes films are cut for various reasons, including censorship. The cut footage is usually kept but sometimes it goes missing. The Stanley Kramer film *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World* was premièred at 192 minutes but cut to 162 for general release. In the 1980s twenty minutes of the cut footage was found in a warehouse that was due for demolition. The remaining lost road-show footage was found in 2013 as part of a restoration. A majority of the scenes were complete; the remainder were missing sound or visuals, as they were derived from the original road-show prints. Apparently, the original elements disappeared a long time ago.

Scenes that were cut from *The Good the Bad and the Ugly* are now believed to be lost. *Bedknobs and Broomsticks* was shortened after its premièred from two and a half hours to 119 minutes. In 1996 it was decided to restore it to its original length. Most of the cut scenes were found. However, most of the dialogue tracks for the scenes could not be recovered, so, where possible, the scenes were dubbed by the original actors. Footage of the song *A Step in the Right Direction* hasn't been found.

Some lost films and TV episodes have been found. Some TV material is saved because someone made a video recording of it. The late Bob Monkhouse recorded a lot of material. Because of people like Bob, a lot of material has been saved, which would have been lost forever. There are several *Doctor Who* episodes that are still missing; some have been found on telerecordings, others on home recordings, which are of poor quality. The comedy *Steptoe and Son* is another example of home recording saving the day.

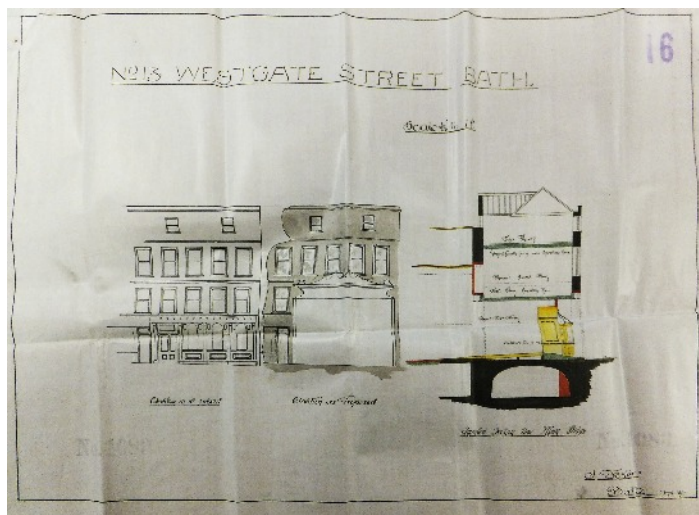
There is still a lot of old material on nitrate stock, which needs transferring to safety stock. The trouble is by the time it is decided to transfer and archive it, the damage is done. With digital technology, a lot of films can be restored to their original quality. A lot of Eastman-color prints and negatives have faded over the years but the digital process will restore elements that have suffered the passing of time. A film doesn't have to be very old to need treatment. The film *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962) had a full restoration job done on it. Let us hope many more films are preserved for generations to come.

THE VAUDEVILLE ELECTRIC THEATRE, BATH

By Ben Doman

Bath's third cinema was a conversion of shop premises at 13 Westgate Street, previously listed as Lipton's Stores, on the opposite side of the street from the Electric and next to the alleyway that runs alongside the Grapes pub through to St Michael's Place. The cinema was owned and managed by Mr HL Lucoque of Abbey View, Bath, who was known locally as a producer of films. Unsurprisingly, there was some considerable opposition to the new cinema from the Bath Electric Theatre Co who ran both the Electric and Picturedrome theatres in the town. Mr Arthur Hales, Manager of the Bath Electric Theatre Company, made a representation to the magistrates on 11 December 1911 to the effect that there was not sufficient business for three theatres to trade in the town. This notion was dismissed due to the fact that both the Electric and Picturedrome were turning people away on most nights and that there were plans to enlarge both existing theatres.

From a report in *Keene's Bath Journal* Saturday 16 December 1911: "In a reply to a question as to whether he thought the new theatre was really wanted, Mr Lacoque replied that taking other towns as an illustration - Swindon, with a less population, had at least five: and Reading, with a population of 80,000, had ten. He thought there was ample room." As with other theatres of the time, great emphasis was made of the safety precautions put in place, it being noted the superior number of exits provided. The license was granted, subject to plans being prepared showing each individual seat marked on it and other "slight alterations" were ordered to be carried out.



Original plans for the elevation and frontage of the Vaudeville

Keene's Bath Journal of Saturday 9 December 1911 carried a description of the new theatre New Vaudeville Electric Theatre in Bath:

"On Thursday afternoon the new Vaudeville Electric Theatre in Westgate Street will be opened. It is due to local enterprise that this theatre is to be opened and a visit to the premises shows that they have been almost entirely rebuilt by a local builder, Mr J Foster, who has undertaken many important improvements in Bath. The artistic building and decorations were designed by Mr E Foster. In this building every item of the stringent requirements under the Cinematograph Act and the local regulations laid down by the Bath Corporation have been complied with and it is claimed that the safety of the public is beyond doubt. The patrons of this Theatre will find that adequate arrangements have been made for most comfortable seating and a clear view of the pictures. No expense has, it has been stated, been spared in acquiring the very latest mechanism for projecting the pictures - the most up-to-date Gaumont machine having been installed - which will be clear and without any flicker, showing the largest pictures in the County, namely 20ft by 16ft.

The artistic decorations have been specially studied to give a pleasing effect but harmonised so that the whole tone of the scheme of colour is quiet and restful to the eyes.

The whole building is fireproof with a solid steel roof, which, together with the fire extinguishing appliances provided and the ample exits (which are in excess of those required by local authority), will give a great sense of security to those attending this theatre. Special attention is drawn to the actual seats, which are fitted with springs for the greater comfort of patrons and upholstered in Pegamoid and Rexine, which is considered by the highest authorities to be the most desirable from sanitary and health point of view, besides being the most comfortable. The seating accommodation is for from four to five hundred persons. The prices of admission have been fixed at the popular prices of 3d and 6d, with a few fauteuils [an arm chair with un-upholstered sides] at 1/-, which can be reserved upon application to the Manager, Mr HL Lucoque, who is well-known locally.

As regards the pictures that will be daily showing, they will, we are assured, be absolutely the latest and the most perfect produced. Special colour pictures will be a feature of every show and the tastes of all will be studied in the subjects, which will vary from comic, scenic, dramatic to the scientific. The selection of pictures is undertaken by the management and the patrons may absolutely rely that only the best will be shown at this theatre. The throw of the lantern is about 67ft and the building itself is 80ft long with an average width of 33ft and 24ft high.

The ceiling is decorated in pale blue, while the upper parts of the walls are dark blue, relieved with white ornamental work after the Adam style; the lower parts are red. The floor is covered with cork linoleum. The operating room is of large dimensions and is absolutely fireproof. The ventilation of the Theatre has been arranged upon the most scientific and perfect lines, that in conjunction with the adequate heating arrangements will ensure that the air is always fresh and comfortably warm in winter. The management extend a most cordial invitation to the public to make an inspection of the Theatre on Wednesday next, 13 December, from 2:30 to 9pm."

The *Bath and Wilts Chronicle* reported the opening, on Thursday 14 December 1911, of the Vaudeville and even without a grand opening ceremony, all seats were taken with standing room only.

NOW OPEN
NEW
Vaudeville Electric Theatre,
THE FINEST PICTURE HOUSE
IN BATH.

Finest Pictures Shown Daily.
Pictures Without Flicker.

Popular Prices: 3d. & 6d. Fauteuils, 1/-.

THE COUNTY RINK,
BATH. Tel. 27.
THREE SESSIONS DAILY
11-1. 2.30-4.30. 7.15-10.30.
THURSDAY, JANUARY 4th. 8 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Juvenile Fancy Dress Carnival,
THURSDAY, JANUARY 18th. 7.30 to 12.
Fancy and Evening Dress Carnival.


"PICTUREDROME,"
SOUTHGATE STREET, BATH.
CONTINUOUS PERFORMANCE DAILY.
8 p.m. to 11 p.m.
ALL THE BEST PICTURES.
Prices—Afternoon (3 to 6), 6d.; Children, 3d. and 2d.
Evening (6 to 11), 8d. and 6d.
Children Half-Price to 8d. Seats only.
Programme Changed Mondays and Thursdays.

ELECTRIC THEATRE,
WESTGATE STREET, BATH.
Continuous Performance Daily, 8 to 11 p.m.
ALL THE LATEST PICTURES.
Prices—Afternoon (3 p.m. to 8 p.m.) Admission 6d.
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Seats 8d., Back Seats 6d. Children Half-Price to 6d.
Seats only.
Programme Changed Mondays and Thursdays.

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PALACE
PERFECTION
PICTURES

ADMISSION—3d. and 6d.
Commencing MONDAY NEXT, April 8th,
with Special Matinee.
EVENING PERFORMANCES 7 and 9, with stop-
over privileges.

THE COUNTY RINK,
BATH. Tel. 397.
THREE SESSIONS DAILY, 11, 2.30 & 7.15.
EASTER MONDAY, APRIL 8th, 9 p.m.,
PORTSMOUTH H.C. v. COUNTY RINK H.C.
TUESDAY NEXT, April 9th, 9 p.m.,
RONDRA VALLEY H.C. v. County Rink H.C.
BATH & WEST & SOUTHERN COUNTIES
SOCIETY.
Patron—HIS MAJESTY THE KING.
President, 1912.—THE MARQUESS OF BATH.
GREAT SHOW AT BATH,
MAY 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th and 27th, 1912.
FINAL ENTRIES CLOSE as follows:—
DAIRY BEHNS, April 27.
POULTRY CLASSES, April 27.
HARNESS, TROTTING and JUMPING CLASSES, May 3.
THOS. F. FLOWMAN,
2, Pierrepont Street, Bath. Secretary.

 **EDWARD P. MALLORY,**
Goldsmith, Silversmith,
1, BRIDGE STREET,
BATH.

THEATRE ROYAL, BATH.
Acting Manager—Mr. LEWIS A. LONG.

EASTER MONDAY & DURING THE WEEK,
Messrs. WM. GREET AND WEEDON
GROSSMITH'S COMPANY
In the Farical Comedy,
“BABY MINE.”
MATINEE SATURDAY, APRIL 13th, at 2.30.
Prices as usual. Box Office open daily at the Theatre
from 11 to 4. Doors open at 7, commence 7.30. Early
Doors 6.45. Tuesdays and Fridays doors open at 7.30,
commence at 8. Early doors 7.15.

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PUMP ROOM CONCERTS.
Musical Director—Mr. FRANK TAPP.
Daily Concerts at 3.
SYMPHONY CONCERT EVERY THURSDAY
at Three.
TO-DAY (EASTER SATURDAY), April 6th,
at 3 and 8.
SPECIAL GRAND CONCERTS.
MR. THORPE BATES.
Solo Harp: MR. ALFRED KASTNER.
Reserved Seats, 2s. Admission, 1s.
Plan at Ticket Office. 2s.

Vaudeville Electric Theatre
WESTGATE STREET.
SHOWING THE FINEST & LATEST PICTURE
PLAYS DAILY.
COLOURED ART PICTURES
AT EVERY PERFORMANCE.
No Change in Price of Admission all day.

Keene's *Bath Journal* reported on Saturday 27 January 1912 that the theatre had introduced a patent clock that would allow the operator to show the time on the screen at 'frequent intervals'. Films being shown that week were listed as "An Aeroplane Elopement, which is 1,500 feet long and *The New Superintendent*, a film of 1,000 feet. In the former a race is depicted between a real aeroplane, a motor boat and express train. Apart from the story of the picture, the film is a most remarkable one, in as much as the cinematographer has been successful in obtaining striking views of the aeroplane flying over a moving train. The chief feature of the second film is the illustrations of large tanks of oil on fire, belching forth huge columns of smoke, intermingled with flames." Also noted were colour films [probably hand tinted] *A Royal Romance*, being an incident in the life of Henry of Navarre, with shots of striking mountain scenery in Upper Bavaria. Films for the following week included *Pheasant Shooting*, showing King Edward VII, King George V and other Royal persons, taking part in this form of sport.

A Mr AE Vaughan became managing partner in 1913. The theatre was proving to be popular and was credited with taking considerable business away from the Electric, which closed for a short time in 1913 due to customers being tempted to the Vaudeville's superior decoration and spaciousness.

Prices in 1914 were advertised as 3d and 6d. In October 1914, plans were submitted to the Corporation for the addition of a balcony to the theatre. These were approved and the balcony added but no drawings survive to indicate the layout. Prices for the balcony were first mentioned in the press advert of 11 December 1915.

Assembly Rooms, Bath.
The Management beg to announce a SHORT SEASON
of High-Class
CINEMATOGRAPH DISPLAYS.
TO-DAY'S PROGRAMME INCLUDES:—
“A FALSE WIRELESS” (Drama).
“WIFFLES' DEADLY DUEL”
(Comic).
“PATHE GAZETTE,” &c.
DAILY, 6 to 10 p.m.
CONTINUOUS PERFORMANCE.
MATINEES Wednesdays and Saturdays, 3 to 5 p.m.
Admission 6d. and 3d. A few Reserved Seats at 1s.
Complete CHANGE OF PROGRAMME
Every Monday and Thursday. 2116

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9, BROAD STREET.
PICTURE FRAMES OF EVERY DESCRIPTION
PICTURES CLEANED & RESTORED. 10

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Musical Director: FRANK TAPP.
DAILY at 3. PUMP ROOM ORCHESTRA.
TO-DAY (SATURDAY) 3 & 8. POPULAR CONCERTS.
MISS DOROTHY GANDY,
Soprano.
THURSDAY, Dec. 10, at 3. SYMPHONY CONCERT.
at 7.30. POPULAR CONCERT.
Vocalists—Miss APPELLE ROBERTS.
ADMISSION—Thursday and Saturday Afternoons, 1/-.
All other Concerts, 6d. Reserved Seats, 6d. Extra.
Books of 10 Coupons for Thursday Evening Concerts, 2/6.
Soldiers in Uniform Half-Price to all Concerts.

Vaudeville Electric Theatre,
WESTGATE STREET, BATH.
MONDAY TO WEDNESDAY NEXT:
“THE MAN OF HER CHOICE,”
Drama.
“ITALIAN CAVALRY”
Military Interest.
“DETECTIVE & MATCHMAKER,”
Clever Animal Comedy.
CONTINUOUS PERFORMANCES from 2.30 till 11/-
POPULAR PRICES: 3d., 6d. and 1/-

The press advert for the Vaudeville of 10 November 1917 announced: “exclusive pictures of the royal visit to Bath at the Vaudeville all next week”. The chance of seeing yourself on screen whilst seeing the visit of King George V to your home town must have been a big draw.

After returning from the First World War, Augustus (Gus) Evens and his wife, Evelyn, played the piano to accompany the silent films at the Vaudeville. He had started his stage career early, giving a command performance aged 12, in 1895, at the Hippodrome London. Also on the bill was a troop named 'The 8 Lancashire Lads', one of whom was a very young Charlie Chaplin. Charlie had stayed with the Evens family and he taught Gus how to paint and draw. One of Gus's later paintings has a couple reading a newspaper, with a playbill for the Palace Bath visible on the back.

Business would have been severely hit by the opening of the luxurious Beau Nash Picture House, which replaced the Electric Theatre, on the opposite side of the road in 1920 as *The Bath and Wilts Chronicle*, 25 June 1923, announced:

“The Vaudeville Picture Theatre, Westgate Street, was closed on Saturday night for an indefinite period and Mr AE Vaughan, the Proprietor, informs us that, as regards its future, nothing is at the moment settled. It may be reopened in the autumn, or, if certain negotiations now in progress materialise, the premises may be disposed of to a large trading firm.”



The theatre never reopened, the premises being listed as “Half Price Stores” in the 1924 directories. It was known for many years as Arthurs Stores. In 1966, workmen renovating the store uncovered part of the original Vaudeville frontage, steps to the balcony and part of a mirror frame. The former palace of the silent cinema is now a branch of The Works [above].

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Ipswich.....1:24 3:21 4:15 6:22

Irvine.....2:19 4:15

Jedburgh.....1:11

Keighley.....1:24

Kettering.....4:15

Kidderminster.....2:19

Killarney (Ireland).....3:21

Kings Lynn.....1:24 3:21 4:15

Kingussie.....1:10

Kirkby Lonsdale.....1:24

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Kirkcaldy.....1:24

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Knutsford.....4:15 5:22 6:22

Kolkata (India).....5:22

Lancaster.....6:16

Lancing.....1:24 2:19 3:11 5:10

Larne.....3:12

Ledbury.....1:13

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Leicester.....1:24

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Lichfield.....5:22

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Liverpool

Aigburth.....1:13

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Crosby.....6:22

Dingle.....1:25

Netherton.....6:22

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Tuebrook.....1:25

Wavertree.....4:32 5:27

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Llanelli.....6: 6,22

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Alexandra Palace.....3:21 4:15 6:23

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Bayswater.....	6:23	Lyme Regis.....	6:2,16	Sandringham.....	4:2
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Camden.....	1:25 3:22 4:11 6:23	Central.....	1:14 3:12,23 6:24	Sheffield.....	5:24
Catford.....	2:3 5:7 6:23	Didsbury.....	6:24	Shotton.....	1:14
Chadwell Heath.....	2:20	Eccles.....	1:13	Silverlink.....	2:1
Chelsea.....	3:22	Gorton.....	1:11	Skegness.....	4:1,17
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City.....	4:15	Hulme.....	6:24	Sleaford.....	2:23 3:25
Covent Garden.....	3:22	Pendleton.....	1:13	Slough.....	3:5 5: 6:24
Crystal Palace.....	6:23	Sale.....	1:26	Small Cinema Circuits.....	6:32
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Tottenham.....	1:26	Rochdale.....	3:25	Wisbech.....	6:19
Tufnell Park.....	4:10	Romsey.....	4:17 6:26	Wokingham.....	3:26
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Loughborough.....	6:24				

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]

ASHFORD (Kent)

Disabled people are finally able to access the screens in the new Picturehouse after completion of the lift installation. The six-screen cinema opened last December with all auditoria on the first floor. Report and construction time-lapse video at [tinyurl.com/ya3j2q32] {58936}

Kent Online – 9 January, 5 February; sent in by Philip Stevens

The Council is to spend £650,000 to convert three buildings into a temporary performance space called Coachworks. One, the former Youth Theatre, is set to be rebranded as the Hothouse. The venue will only have a five-year lifespan.

Kent Online – 24 December, 17 January; sent in by Philip Stevens:
The Stage – 4 January; sent in by Geoff Gill

The former Odeon has been ruled out as a home for a permanent theatre as the Council is in favour of a “new, modern one” and a conversion would be “too costly”. The plans are to partially demolish the building, flattening the rear of the property and knocking through the former entrance in the Lower High Street to make a pedestrian route leading to a new public square on the car park. The space – nicknamed Odeon Square – is set to feature a large outdoor cinema screen surrounded by cafés and bars. Despite looking to knock through the former cinema entrance, most of the frontage will be retained, creating an indoor performance space in the former ballroom on the first floor above the former foyer. See Casework p6.

Kent Online – 15 February

AYLESBURY (Bucks)



The bingo operation in the former Granada closed on 7 February. The building could be demolished and used as an additional entrance to a car park. The cinema opened as the Grand Pavilion in March 1925 and was rebuilt in 1936. It became the Granada in November 1946 and was so renamed the following year. Films ceased in October 1972. A petition to save it has been started. {33269}

Mix 96 – 15 January; sent in by Martin Tapsell (photos)

Martin Tapsell writes: Just for the record, the Gala Club on its penultimate night, 6 February. Note unlit lettering. I was told there may not be any meals available before the 6:45 session but I could nip up to MacDonald's. I walked round the auditorium, empty apart from five women at the back. I'd bought one £2 flyer but “forgot” to come back to play and later the lady bingo player providing breakfast at my Travelodge confirmed there had been no meals for a while. The receptionist implied more Galas not rebranded Buzz might be down for closure soon but nothing found online to confirm. Noted a woman smoking on the steps to High Street, probably finding that preferable to the draughty lean-to Gala provided through a door near the stage.

BARNESLEY (South Yorks)

A new thirteen-screen Cineworld is to be part of the Glass Works development. It will have around 2,500 seats and a selection of formats, including a super-screen, moving seats and curved surround screens. The site is close to the existing two-screen Parkway (ex Odeon).

Yorkshire Post – 17 December

BELFAST



It has been confirmed that the ten-screen Movie House will close at the end of May. Michael McAdam, Movie House Cinemas' managing director, said: “We've been trading at Dublin Road for twelve years but recently we've seen a big shift in cinema attendance out of Belfast City centre to suburban cinemas, which offer free parking.” It has been sold to a software developer, who will redevelop the site.

Belfast Telegraph – 12 February; *News Letter* – 13 February;
photo taken September 2014

BIRKENHEAD (Wirral)

Wirral Borough Council is planning to update the centre of Birkenhead. It has bought the seven-screen 1,756-seat Vue for £7.1m – it will probably be demolished in the long term, along with the nearby Mecca bingo hall. The cinema in the Town Hall is the last venue on the Wirral where 35mm films can be shown. It is maintained by the Projected Picture Trust [PPT].

Wirral Globe – 12 February; *Liverpool Echo* – 15 February; also sent in by Mike Taylor

BLACKBURN (Lancs)

A computer generated walk-through of the former Cotton Exchange has been released by its trustees, who plan to spend £6m on bringing the 1885 building back into use as an arts, culture and events venue. It was a cinema from 1918 until 2005, when it closed as the five-screen Apollo. The building is Grade II listed. There are photos and a history on the website at [exchangeblackburn.org.uk] {24035}

Lancashire Telegraph – 11 February; sent in by Philip Crompton

BLACKPOOL (Lancs)



The Regent has installed a 35mm projector with the help of the PPT. The venue uses 124 seats in the circle of the Grade II listed building; the ground floor is used as an antiques emporium. {6549}

The Gazette, Blackpool – 28 January; photo taken June 2009

BODMIN (Cornwall)

Merlin Cinemas has confirmed it will open a cinema in the former Public Rooms this year. The town's last cinema, the Palace, closed 40 years ago.

Cornwall Live – 16 January

BRADFORD (West Yorks)

The cost of converting the former New Victoria / Odeon into a 3,800-seat performance venue has risen from the initial £15.6m to £22.7m. A decision on the planning application was expected from the Council in March. The venue is due to open in autumn 2020. {3677}

Telegraph & Argus – 5 January

BRIGHTON

The developer has revealed plans for the Grade II* listed Hippodrome. They include restoration and refurbishment of the theatre and include a 74-room hotel with spa and 26 apartments. In the first phase, a steel structure will be built to prop up the existing dome and façade to provide support to the building. {36884}

*Brighton & Hove Independent – 25 January, 1 February;
The Stage – 7 February; sent in by Barry Quinton*

BRISTOL

A £50m regeneration of East Street in Bedminster could see a new three-screen cinema built into a refurbished shopping centre. A number of plans have already been submitted; one plan involves Scott Cinemas, who operate the Orpheus cinema in Henleaze, to run the new cinema.

Bristol Live – 15 February

BROADSTAIRS (Kent)

The ten-screen Vue at Westwood Cross was evacuated as a precaution about 1:30pm on 27 January after a customer thought they smelt smoke and raised the alarm. Two fire engines and an ambulance were seen at the cinema. Firefighters found no evidence of a blaze and left at 1:50pm. {25824}

Thanet Gazette – 1 February; sent in by Margaret Burgoine

BRODICK (Isle of Arran)

Plans have been approved to turn a former ferry terminal into a two-screen cinema. The auditoria will have 55 seats each and be equipped with laser digital projectors and a Dolby sound system. The proposal is for the cinema to be open from 12pm to 9pm seven days a week, showing latest releases and satellite relays. Opening was announced for Easter 2019.

Ardrossan & Saltcoats Herald – 30 November

BUILTH WELLS (Powys)



The two-screen Wyese Arts Centre is to undergo a £5m redevelopment. The current 183-seat screen will be split into two auditoria of 77 and 75 seats. The venue plans to continue running a programme of 'off-site' activities for the duration of the 12 to 18 month building period, looking instead at using alternative venues. There is no mention of the current second screen, which seats 150.

Powys County Times – 7 February; photo taken May 2013

CAMBRIDGE

The Wetherspoons pub in the former Tivoli was gutted by fire in 2015. According to the architects, the building's skeletal structure remains intact. The art deco style frontage also survived but everything else was destroyed, including the roofs. Now another company has plans to bring the building back into use as a pub again. Customers will have a choice of food from several rotating street food vendors. Among the plans are a roof terrace, a basement shuffleboard course and a crazy golf course. A multi-purpose event space could be used for film screenings as it will be equipped with projection equipment and space for 80 seats.

Cambridgeshire Live – 7 December, 21 January

CLITHEROE (Lancs)

Everyman has confirmed it will operate a new four-screen cinema at Holmes Mill. It is hoped to be open before the end of the year.

*Lancashire Telegraph – 21 January; sent in by Philip Crompton;
Clitheroe Advertiser and Times – 24 January; sent in by Joseph E Roberts*

CROMARTY (Highland)

The Cromarty and Resolis Film Society has now gained complete funding for a £240,000 cinema. Construction is expected to start in March.

Press & Journal, Aberdeen – 26 December

CUMBERNAULD (North Lanark)

The owner of The Centre has drawn up plans for a new cinema and restaurant complex. It will include a 'Tier 1' [?] eight-screen cinema with 1,168 seats and be located on what is currently the car park for the Teviot Walk Mall. Discussions are said to be taking place with potential operators.

Cumbernauld News – 1 February

DAVENTRY (Northants)

The Council has approved plans for a four-screen cinema on the library site. It would have two 100-seat screens, one 120-seat screen and one 160-seat screen to accommodate a total of 500 patrons. As reported in the last Bulletin, costs have risen from £8.2m to £12.3m. Work will start in May, after the library has relocated.

East Midlands Business Link – 13 February; Insider Media – 22 February

DEAL (Kent)

A fresh planning application has been submitted for the Regent after previous plans were withdrawn in 2014. This time a two-screen cinema seating 200 is proposed, together with an adjoining restaurant. If approved, a 12-month regeneration programme will begin with a view to opening in 2020. Three of the four existing walls are to be retained, including the Art Deco façade and original dome, which will be recovered and painted bottle green – the colours of the original cinema. The developers say these walls would be strengthened and rendered. The only wall to be demolished is the south side of the building facing the Timeball Tower, where steelwork has rotted. The upper windows would remain the same size but the ground floor windows would be enlarged to increase the sea view for customers. The Reopen the Regent group described the plans as "eminently sensible and achievable". The Town Council has raised no objection to the plans. {32928}

Kent Online – 3, 10 January, 8 February; sent in by Martin Tapsell; see p33 last Bulletin

DEREHAM (Norfolk)



The three-screen Hollywood cinema has been sold, as the chain went into administration. The new owner is the operator of the Orion cinema in Burgess Hill, West Sussex. The Dereham venue will remain open during the transition period and all eight members of staff will keep their jobs. See Cinema Business p28. {24664} Photo taken July 2007.

Eastern Daily Press – 7 February; sent in by John Popey & Les Woods

DOUGLAS (Isle of Man)

Plans have been approved for a £25m development on the former bus station site. The scheme includes – wait for it – a multiplex cinema. No further details have been given.

BBC News website – 11 February

DUNSTABLE (Beds)



Margaret Burgoine writes: I took this photo of the former Union last November. There was some work being done but I don't know what. The grade II listed building is currently used as the Dunstable Conference Centre. {22393}

EDINBURGH

Staff at the **Playhouse** have won a long-running pay dispute with the Ambassador Theatre Group after a judge ruled in their favour. The dispute started in April 2017 when union BECTU argued that certain members were entitled to a 4.2% increase. The ruling means that 25 members will receive an additional 2.2% increase, backdated to April 2017. {1827}

The Stage – 14 February; sent in by Barry Quinton

FAREHAM (Hants)

The Council has changed its plans for the redevelopment of **Fernham Hall** following a public consultation. The changes include the main auditorium having 800 seats rather than the 400-500 seats originally proposed and a flexible performance space instead of a studio solely dedicated to dance. No timescale has been given.

Southampton Daily echo – 3 January; sent in by Ian Patterson

GLASGOW (Central)

Plans have been submitted to demolish the **O2 ABC** (ex Regal/ABC). The music venue was severely damaged when fire broke out in June 2018 at the neighbouring Glasgow School of Art building for a second time. A petition to save the ABC has been started. {38564}

BBC News Website – 6, February; *Daily record* – 7 February;
Glasgow Live – 11 February; sent in by Tom Laughlan

GRAYS (Essex)

Ambitious plans to transform the Grade II listed **State** into a Wetherspoons pub were approved by Thurrock Council almost six months ago but work may not begin for another year. It had taken JD Wetherspoon more than three years to put the plans together. A spokesman for the company said: "The project is out to tender and the aim is to start development work this year, though that is not guaranteed."

Thurrock Gazette – 28 January; sent in by Margaret Burgoine

GREAT YARMOUTH (Norfolk)



The five-screen **Hollywood** cinema has closed as the chain went into administration. A buyer is being sought and the administrator is hopeful that any sale will include the honouring of gift vouchers. The venue is housed in the former Royal Aquarium. See Cinema Business p28. {17924} Photo taken July 2007.

Eastern Daily Press – 7 February; sent in by John Popey & Les Woods

HEREFORD

A new 35-seat cinema has opened on the third floor of a building containing the Dog House restaurant. The **Loft Cinema** was opened on 19 December 2018. Seating is provided on sofas rather than individual seats. Films are screened digitally with revival films nightly, classic films on a Sunday and children's films on a Wednesday matinée. Food is served, supplied from nearby restaurants. {59260}

Sent in by Ken Roe

HORSHAM (West Sussex)

The **Capitol** is offering dementia-friendly screenings. The films will be shown with the lights up, sound low and with no trailers; comfort breaks will be provided if required.

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

HUDDERSFIELD (West Yorks)

Plans, reported on p23 of the last Bulletin, for a nine-screen **Light** cinema on the top floor of the Kirkgate Centre have been approved. The space was formerly occupied by the House of Fraser store, which went into administration. The site is only yards away from the former **Tudor/Classic**, which closed in 1998 and is now a nightclub.

Huddersfield Daily Examiner – 5 January



Plans to redevelop the former **Tudor/Classic** are back on track. The proposals to turn the huge building into the UK's largest pub creating dozens of jobs were dramatically halted in October when the development company claimed a row with Kirklees Council over a tiny road – Back Queen Street – threatened the whole project. However, just as the developer was promising to leave Huddersfield for good, the owners of the Roxy Ballroom next door offered to sell their property – the other half of the former cinema. {3344}

Examiner Live – 6 February; photo taken August 2011

KINGS LYNN (Norfolk)

The 95-year-old three-screen **Majestic** is having a refurbishment. A plea for artists to create artwork for the front of the building has produced an overwhelming response. The owners are looking for a piece that reflects the history of the building. {3262}

Eastern Daily Press – 18 January

KIRBY-IN-ASHFIELD (Notts)

The **Regent**, now a Wetherspoon pub, provided the location for the centrepiece of the town's World War One centenary celebrations. More than 9,000 cascading poppies, entitled the Kirby Poppy Downpour, were draped on the front of the building, which is situated on a prominent corner site at Kingsway and Diamond Avenue. The knitting and crocheting of the poppies began in April 2018 and involved many in the community. The **Regent** opened in October 1930 in a 'modern French style' with seating for 650 in the stalls and 500 in the circle. It was renamed **Essoldo** in 1961 but was converted to bingo four years later. A cinema in the former circle was opened in 1984 but closed in 1993. It was reopened in 2004 but closed the next year. {24491}

Wetherspoon News – Winter 2018/19; sent in by Mike Whitcombe; photo on front cover

LEEDS (West Yorks)

The **Hyde Park Picture House** is to refurbish its nine working [secondary] gas lights as part of a £2.3m Lottery grant. The 'modesty lighting' was originally installed in 1914 over fears of risqué behaviour 'in the back seats'. The Grade II listed cinema had initial Lottery funding of £122,000 in 2016 and now £2.3m is to be spent on the building. {1836}

BBC News website – 10 January

LIPHOOK (Hants)

Work has begun on the transformation of the former Anchor Garage into the Living Room Cinema, which is expected to open later this year. It will be the first purpose-built cinema in the area since the closure of the Rex in Haslemere in 1986.

Haslemere Herald – 14 February

LIVERPOOL (Central)



The new four-screen Everyman opened on 18 December in the Met-quarter, the former Post Office building. The screens seat 54, 83, 118, all with Sony 4k digital projection and 32, with NEC 2k projection, which is available for private hire. {58949}

Sent in and photo by Philip G Mayer

LLANELLI (Carmarthen)

Wayne Davies was just 11 years old back in 1971 when he helped his father fit a carpet to the floor of the Classic (ex Odeon). But he could never have predicted that 47 years later he would be doing the exact same thing again. The Grade II listed building is being converted into a 1,000-seat concert venue and a 400-seat second auditorium. A bespoke carpet is to be manufactured based on the original design. {7304}

Wales Online – 26 December

LONDON (Brockley)

Keira Knightley has been filming scenes for a new comedy drama in the Grade II listed Rivoli Ballroom. The film, *Misbehaviour*, is due to be released in 2020. {15158}

News Shopper – 9 January; *sent in by Philip Stevens*

LONDON (Camden)

Mecca has backed down over a bid to keep its bingo hall open all night due to opposition from nearby residents. It is housed in the former stalls of the Gaumont; there is a five-screen Odeon upstairs.

Camden New Journal – 7 February; *sent in by Tom Laughlan*

LONDON (Ealing)

The site of the former Forum is being redeveloped. It was demolished in 2009, except for the façade, which was propped up with scaffolding. There will be shops, restaurants and 200 new homes and a Picturehouse cinema. The one, two and three bedroom apartments will have bespoke interiors. Kitchens will have stone worktops and gold-finished fittings. Prices start at £599,950. The report gives no further mention of the proposed new cinema. {3772}

Daily Telegraph (Property) – 9 February; *sent in by Chris Ingram*

LONDON (Fitzrovia)

The Paradiso Cinema is situated in the basement of the London Edition hotel and is a 60-seat occasional cinema for connoisseurs of the finest films about sex and sexuality, curated by the *Baron* and *Baroness* Magazines and usually hosted on Valentine's Day. The fourth outing in February 2019 saw the screening of *Destriated*, a collection of seven short films.

[billetto.co.uk]; *sent in by Gavin McGrath*

LONDON (Hammersmith)

Plans have been approved for a multi-million pound facelift for the area, including a new four-screen cinema to replace the now-demolished Cineworld (ex Regal/ABC/UGC). There will be a new public square in the full rejuvenation of King Street's west end and a new look for the 'brutalist' Town Hall.

My London – 13 February

LONDON (Hayes)

Plans for a development incorporating a three-screen cinema at the Old Vinyl Factory have received a £1.2m boost from the Mayor of London's Good Growth Fund. No operator or timescale has been given.

My London – 17 January

LONDON (Homerton)

A second screen opened at the Castle cinema in mid-February. It has 27 seats, including 6 sofas. It is a conversion of the original projection box and rewind room. The main screen has 80 seats. The cinemas are housed upstairs in the 1913-built Castle Electric Theatre, with a Spar supermarket downstairs. The CTA AGM will be held there on 1 June – see p3. {16613}

Castle Cinema Press Release; *sent in by Dave Jones & Ken Roe*

LONDON (King's Cross)

The King's Cross Everyman with three screens (109, 108 & 31 seats) opened in November 2017; this opening never made the Bulletin. The Everyman on the Corner, 150 yards away, although only intended to be a temporary venue, has been renamed screen ④; it has 28 seats. {56781, 54718}

Sent in by Tim McCullen

LONDON (Tottenham)

The Palace Theatre has been added to the Theatres Trust 'Theatres at Risk' register. The Trust is concerned that the religious group that occupies the Grade II listed building does not have sufficient resources to maintain or restore it. The Palace was built by Wylson and Long and opened as a variety theatre in 1908 but for much of its life – from 1924 until 1969 – it operated as a cinema, latterly part of the Gaumont circuit. See Miscellany p29.

Sent in by Jeremy Buck

LONDON (West End)

The Curzon Soho (ex Columbia) celebrated its 60th birthday on 4 February. It was built underground and equipped for 70mm presentations. In 1998 it was expensively tripled. The celebrations were scheduled to start with a showing of *Gigi*, the film with which it opened in 1959. Star Leslie Caron was announced to introduce it.

Time Out – 29 January; *sent in by Tom Laughlan*; *photo on front cover*



Andrew Lloyd Webber has revealed further details of the £45m refurbishment of the Theatre Royal Drury Lane, including plans to make the auditorium a flexible space. Producers will be able to choose between a proscenium arch or in-the-round configuration and capacity will be reduced from 2,200 to 2,000. The auditorium will be reshaped on a tighter curve. Disabled access will be improved, including a 16-person lift to all levels. In a bid to curb waiting times, an additional 20 cubicles will be installed in the ladies' toilets. Front of house facilities will be open to the public all day. The venue has gone dark for 20 months. More than 1,250 seats from the theatre have been donated to three volunteer-led theatres – the New Mills Arts Theatre in Derbyshire, the Olympus Theatre in Gloucester and the Royal Court Theatre in Bacup.

The venue is in dispute with Westminster City Council over an invoice they sent for £279,480 to cover the suspension of three parking bays and a coach drop-off bay for the duration of the works. LW Theatres claims that the maximum revenue that could be raised if the bays were used for the whole period is £62,622.

The Stage – 20 December, 10 January; *sent in by Barry Quinton*; *photo taken August 2018*

Impresario Sir Cameron Macintosh has submitted plans to convert the top floors of the Grade II listed **Novello Theatre** into a luxury five-bedroom, three bathroom apartment. Currently used as offices, it would see the area returned to the use intended by the 1905 building's original architect, William GR Sprague. Sir Ivor Novello lived there from 1931 until his death in 1951.

Evening Standard – 31 January; sent in by Tom Laughlan

The Courthouse Hotel is set in the former Magistrate's Court in Great Marlborough Street. It includes a 100-seat cinema, equipped with 35mm and 2k digital projection and Dolby 6.1 sound. It costs £33 for two including a glass of champagne or £75 for two with afternoon tea or dinner. [www.courthouse-hotel.com/cinema-en.html]

Sent in by Robert Holden

LUTON (Beds)

Margaret Burgoine writes: There is no change in the state of the former Savoy/ABC, which looks an eyesore again. It would have been better if the Council had given planning permission for the foyer to be turned into a church, rather than leave it like this. {6248}



The former Picturedrome now has a new frontage. I took the above photo before the work was completed and afterwards I was disappointed that they only painted black the part with the missing panel. It's a great improvement on how it used to look. {45809}



The work on the former Ritz [above] is progressing very slowly and it's difficult to see what is actually happening. Sometimes the only way you know there are workmen on site is if you can hear them, as their vehicles are parked in the auditorium. {6247}

LYME REGIS (Dorset)

The owners of the fire-damaged Grade II listed **Regent** have confirmed they are working on a fourth set of design proposals for a replacement building. They are working closely with the local authority and Historic England. They have denied rumours that following the merger of WTW Cinemas and Scott Cinemas in 2017, the site had been sold.

BBC News website – 19 February; sent in by Philip Stevens

MAIDSTONE (Kent)

Four customers and five members of staff were evacuated from Buzz Bingo (ex **Granada**) when a fire broke out in the former cinema upstairs; they were allowed back in an hour and a half later. Police said that trespassers broke into the cinema area, which is sealed off to the public and started a small fire. Minimal damage was caused to the Grade II listed building. Films had ceased in April 1999. {29170}

Kent Online – 30 December; sent in by Philip Stevens

Tub Life has announced it plans to stage a Hot-Tub Cinema in Maidstone on Saturday 1 June (provisional). The venue is yet to be announced but the Maidstone date is one of 18 scheduled for this summer across the country. Visitors, who will be served by waiters, will need to book a tub of six.

Kent Online – 11 February; sent in by Philip Stevens

MANCHESTER (Stretford)

Trafford Council is set to approve an updated master plan for Stretford, which could include compulsory purchase of the Longford / Essoldo. The Grade II listed building would be refurbished and reused – potential uses put forward include a cinema, music venue or community space.

North West Place – 28 January; sent in by Carl Chesworth

NEW YORK (USA)

The **Pavilion** in Prospect Park, Brooklyn, has reopened as the Nitehawk cinema after a \$10m two-year revamp. Original elements, such as marble staircases, were restored. There are now seven screens with 650 seats. Report & 2-minute video at [tinyurl.com/y7xdfval]. {1268}

Fox 5 NY – 28 December

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME (Staffs)



The former **Savoy** was demolished last October. Plans have been submitted to build apartments on the site, with a lure of a free bus pass when you move in. {38923}

Stoke on Trent Live – 6 January; sent in by Allan Pointon; photo taken August 2005

NORTHALLERTON (North Yorks)

Everyman has confirmed it will open a four-screen cinema in the Grade II listed former prison building. Construction is due to begin this summer. No opening date has been given.

Minster FM – 17 January

NORWICH

The three-screen **Hollywood** cinema has closed as the chain went into administration. A buyer is being sought and the administrator is hopeful that any sale will include the honouring of gift vouchers. It opened as the **Odeon** in July 1971, built on stilts. A new cinema is proposed as part of the £271m revamp of Anglia Square, with the current cinema building due to be demolished in one of the phases of construction. See Cinema Business p28. {25214}

Eastern Daily Press – 7 February; sent in by John Popey

OSWESTRY (Shropshire)

The 79-seat **Kinoculture** is due to close in April after being told it would have to foot the bill for repairs to the building as well as a 20% rent increase. **Kinoculture** moved into the former United Reform Church in Arthur Street five years ago and has built up a successful venue and clientele. They say that they will not close permanently and hope to run one-off film showings while looking for a new venue. {46915}

Shropshire Star – 25 January

A business plan is being drawn up to turn the former **Regal** into a community building. 200 people turned up at a meeting to discuss the £750,000 scheme. The cinema first opened in May 1933 with 1,080 seats in stalls and circle. It closed with three screens in June 1994. In 2003 the interior was gutted to create two levels for retail. {28606}

Shropshire Star – 13 February

PLYMOUTH



Plans to have a conference centre for GOD TV in the former Gaumont have been dropped. The organisation took out a 25-year lease on the building in 2013. They said they had already spent large amounts on the building and that £35m would be required if they were to finish it.

Premier – 20 January; photo taken June 2008

POOLE (Dorset)

Construction work on the new nine-screen Empire at Dolphin Square was expected to have started by the time you read this. The former Argos store and other units will be converted into the new cinema. One of the screens will be open-air on the rooftop. No firm opening date has been given.

Bournemouth Echo – 27 December; sent in by Carl Chesworth & John R Forster

SITTINGBOURNE (Kent)

Work started last November on the development incorporating an eight-screen Light cinema. Work is expected to be completed in November/December this year with an opening in early 2020.

Kent Online – 11 January

SLIGO (Ireland)

An application to convert a warehouse on the outskirts of Sligo Town into a nine-screen cinema was refused on zoning grounds. The applicants are the Ward family of cinema proprietors so an appeal may be likely.

Sent in by Bob Bradshaw

SOUTHAMPTON



The Grade II listed Mayflower Theatre celebrated its 90th birthday on 22 December. It opened in 1928 as the Empire with 2,289 seats. A projection room was part of the original design and it had been wired for sound by 1934. From 1948 it was renamed Gaumont and films became the chief fare, although the stage was often used. A bingo licence was applied for several times in the 1980s but refused by the Council. The Council eventually bought the theatre and it reopened as the Mayflower in 1987. Last year it closed for 13 weeks for a £7.5m refurbishment and reopened on 26 September 2018 with 1,659 seats. {6296}

Southampton Daily Echo – 22 December; sent in by Ian Patterson; photo taken June 2006

The Harbour Lights Picturehouse – built on reclaimed land in the dock area – was opened in 1995 but closed within twelve months after losing money. It was taken over by City Screen and more recently by Cineworld. For many years it issued a regular programme showing details of the films they are showing. At first the programme was sent direct from the cinema with a covering letter but eventually was sent from London. A regular magazine *Picturehouse Recommends* was sent from London. I notice on recent visits to the cinema (to see *Stan and Ollie* – recommended) that the regular programme has now been discontinued and the *Picturehouse Recommends* magazine has been enlarged to show more programme details; it is now only available to be collected at the cinema. Details of the programme times are shown on a separate sheet available from the cinema. An impressive collection of programmes is shown in the cinema foyer. {6173}

Sent in by Ian Patterson

STOCKPORT

The TV series *Peaky Blinders* filmed a huge scene in Mersey Square in January. The Plaza was transformed into Bingley Hall, a former exhibition centre in Birmingham. A poster outside the venue reveals it will host a rally by far-right politician Oswald Mosley. A transmission date had not been set when your Bulletin went to press.

Manchester Evening News – 9 January; sent in by Nick Taylor

STORNOWAY (Outer Hebrides)

Sunday screenings are to resume at the 189-seat An Lanntair centre following a successful trial early last year – see p23 Bulletin 52/2. Church leaders have again opposed the plans. {27140}

Sunday Post – 30 December; sent in by Tom Laughlan

TORQUAY (Devon)

Merlin Cinemas has announced plans to buy the former BHS building and convert it into a six-screen cinema. They will relocate from their present four-screen Central cinema, the former Odeon, which will be redeveloped. Work is due to start this year but no opening date has been given.

Devon Live, Torquay Herald Express – 19 December; sent in by Carl Chesworth

WAKEFIELD (West Yorks)



Plans have been lodged to demolish the former Regal/ABC/Cannon and use the site as a car park for a period of six years. It opened in December 1935 with 1,594 seats and was tripled in 1976. Films ceased in 1997 and the building has been empty since. The Council still retains the freehold on the site and a covenant is still in place restricting its use to film exhibition, which prevents it from being re-used for other purposes. The CTA Casework Committee has written a strongly-worded letter to the Council objecting to the plans and criticising the Council for allowing the building to fall into disrepair. {3787}

Insider Media – 24 January; *Pontefract & Castleford Express* – 8 February; photo taken July 2004

Reel is to operate a new five-screen cinema on the top floor of the Ridings Centre. It is due to open in May.

Wakefield Express – 28 December

WILMSLOW (Cheshire)

The Rex reopened as a cinema on 21 December 2018 with two screens operating. The Balcony Screen occupies the former balcony but with a reduced capacity of circa 200 as there are luxury seats, a VIP box for four people, sofas for two people as well as standard seating. This is accessed via the original Terrazzo staircase. The Ballroom Screen is much smaller with 66 seats and, as the name suggests, occupies the former ballroom. The cinema is run by the Mordin family, who also operate the Ritz in Belper, the Regal Melton Mowbray and the Savoy Cinema in nearby Heaton Moor.

CINEMA BUSINESS



The Rex originally opened on 15 October 1936 with Errol Flynn in *Captain Blood*. Its capacity on opening was 1,028 but this was later reduced to 856. It also operated as a theatre occasionally until 1985 when the stalls were sealed off and converted to a furniture store and bars and cafés. At this time a new cinema was created in the former balcony with 388 seats, which closed on 8 June 1995 with Hugh Grant in the film *An Awfully Big Adventure*. {33859}

Sent in & photo by John Skinner

WIRKSWORTH (Derbys)

The Northern Light Cinema, which opened in 2013, is to add a deli, café and bar. Air conditioning will also be installed and a new lobby area with extra doors will cut down on noise disturbance.

Derby Telegraph – 9 February

WORTHING (West Sussex)

The Dome Cinema recently staged a wedding where the bride was dressed like Ariel from Disney's *The Little Mermaid*, complete with red hair.

Worthing Journal – November 2018; sent in by Mike Whitcombe

LATE NEWS

BRIDGEWATER (Somerset)

Scott Cinemas is to be the operator of a new seven-screen cinema on the Northgate development. Work is expected to start later this year with opening expected in late 2021 or early 2022. The firm will close its existing two-screen operation in Penel Orliou (ex Odeon).

Somerset Live – 21 February

LIVERPOOL (Edge Lane)

Plans for a new six-screen cinema at Liverpool Shopping Park have been approved by the Council. It is hoped it could be open by the end of 2020. No operator has been named.

Liverpool Echo – 19 February

MARGATE (Kent)

Councillors have defied planning officers' recommendations and approved a six-storey hotel to be built next door to the Grade II* listed *Dreamland* cinema. Historic England had opposed the plans. See Casework p6.

Isle of Thanet News – 20 February

NUNEATON (Warks)

A mystery buyer has purchased the Grade II listed former Ritz. It is understood that legal paperwork is being drawn up before the identity of the new owner can be revealed. {25909}

Coventry Live – 18 February

PLYMOUTH

After several false alarms, the three-screen Reel cinema (ex Royal/ABC) closed on 28 February. The venue celebrated its 80th birthday last July. {24749}

Plymouth Live – 21 February; sent in by David Simpson

WHITEHILL AND BORDON (Hants)

The Council has approved plans for the new town centre, which include a six-screen cinema. The cinema, which will be located on the site of the former Sergeant's Mess, will be operated by The Big Picture.

Community News – 20 February

AMAZON AND NETFLIX IN CINEMAS?

Amazon is reportedly in talks with a number of cinema operators about distributing films it is due to release this year. Netflix has also revealed plans to screen three films in cinemas and is in talks with the boss of Vue. It wanted to buy a US cinema chain but pulled out because of high costs. The steps have brought the streaming companies into conflict with traditional cinema operators, which are used to running films for several months before they are available to viewers at home. Showing films in cinemas means they are eligible for prestigious awards, such as the Oscars.

Daily Mail – 30 December, 25 January; sent in by Ray Dolling & Tom Laughlan

CINEWORLD

In the UK and Ireland, revenues were up 3% while sales in the rest of the world rose 3.1%. Shares closed down 6.8% at 257.8p. It entered the US market with its takeover of the Regal chain for £2.6bn. The group now has 790 sites with 9,518 screens and a record 308m people visited during 2018.

Daily Mail, City AM – 17, 19 January; sent in by Tom Laughlan & Barry Quinton

EVERYMAN

Everyman has borrowed an extra £10m from the banks to expand. It plans to have 14 new venues by 2022, including in London's Borough Market and expects underlying profits to reach £9m for the year ended 3 January.

Evening Standard, City AM – 17, 18 January; sent in by Tom Laughlan

NOT NORMAL FOR NORFOLK



The Hollywood cinema chain has gone into administration with the theatres in Great Yarmouth and Norwich [above] closing immediately. The cinema in Dereham has already been sold. Director Trevor Wicks, said there were multiple reasons for its demise including "a very poor 2018 with the 'Beast from the East' in winter, the World Cup and the long, hot summer, plus high levels of competition in the local area and a number of poor-performing films in recent months." He added: "It is with a very heavy heart that I have had to place the company into administration." See individual place entries in Newsreel.

Eastern Daily Press – 7 February; sent in by John Popey & Les Woods; photo taken May 2004

WINNING STREAK

The Chief Executive at Grosvenor Casinos, part of the Rank Group, said punters won around £3m more than usual in the six months to December. The winnings, the weather and tougher checks to prevent money laundering led to operating profits drop by 35%. Casino visitors in London are up 11% although provincial casinos are struggling. Visits to Rank's Mecca venues were down 11.8%. Rank's pre-tax profits fell 28% to £29.1m on revenues down 2.45 at £366m but the firm is in line with City expectations.

Evening Standard – 31 January; sent in by Barry Quinton

INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENT?

A stage manager who says he had a nervous breakdown after a half-tonne section of the curtain at the Royal Opera House (Covent Garden) fell on him in November 2016 is fighting for £200,000 in compensation. He says he has been unable to work since the accident.

Evening Standard – 8 February; sent in by Tom Laughlan & Barry Quinton

MISCELLANY

NATIONAL POPCORN DAY

Saturday 19 January was National Popcorn Day. We discovered this obscure fact when visiting our local Odeon to see the midday screening of *Mary Queen of Scots*. The manager gave us a free carton of popcorn to enjoy during the film. The many children at the cinema that day (watching *Bumblebee*, *Ralph Wrecks the Internet* and *Mary Poppins Returns*) seemed delighted to get free cartons of freshly warmed popcorn. I'm sure the overworked staff who had to sweep up the vast amounts of spilt popcorn were not!

Sent in by Mike Whitcombe

TOILET THEATRE

A drama lover has spent £75,000 on turning a Grade II listed former toilet block into a 25-seat theatre. The *Phyllis Maud Performance Space* in Newport (South Wales) is named after an aunt who left her the cash.

Metro – 4 January; sent in by Tom Laughlan & Barry Quinton

ITALIAN JOB

Since 2000, Turin (Italy) has had a National Museum of Cinema, housed in the extraordinary Mole Antonelliana, a former synagogue with a towering square dome. [www.museocinema.it/en]

Time Out – 8 January; sent in by Tom Laughlan

THEATRES AT RISK



The Theatres Trust has announced the 2019 *Theatres at Risk* register. Seven theatres have been removed since the 2018 list. This year's register contains 31 theatres with three new additions – *Theatre Ardudwy*, *Tottenham Palace Theatre* [above] and the *Intimate Theatre* in Palmers Green, which is where Richard Attenborough made his stage debut. You can find the full list at [tinyurl.com/yalgvcof].

Evening Standard, BritishTheatre.com – 22 January; sent in by Tom Laughlan

HELICOPTER HOME CINEMA

Maria Merry bought an Agusta 109 helicopter for £950 during a visit to the helicopter museum in Weston-Super-Mare. It was lifted into her garden in Chippenham by crane and wheeled into the garage, where she has turned it into a home cinema. The project has been featured on George Clarke's *Amazing Spaces* on Channel 4.

BBC News website – 28 January; sent in by David Alexander

THERE IS NOTHING LIKE A DAME

Britain's longest-serving panto dame, Berwick Kaler has retired at the age of 72 after 40 years. He was presented with an award at the Theatre Royal York by Christopher Biggins.

Sent in by Carl Chesworth

MILLIONAIRE FIGHTS DEMOLITION ORDER

A millionaire accountant who built a leisure complex in his garden without planning permission is facing legal action after refusing to demolish it. His building has a cinema, squash court, casino, bar and bowling alley. He argued it was one-storey high, like the Nasa shuttle hangar, so no permission was needed. However the Council deemed it was a two-storey structure and ordered the demolition.

BBC News Website – 20 September; sent in by Gavin McGrath

ANOTHER FINE MESS

It took five attempts before the BBC commissioned the film *Stan and Ollie*. The story's author, AJ Marriot, had four letters of refusal from different departments. The film had three BAFTA nominations.

Sunday Express – 20 January; sent in by Barry Quinton

MOVIE TICKET PRICES AROUND THE WORLD

Following the outcry at the prices at the recently refurbished Odeon Luxe Leicester Square, here is what movies cost around the world.

London

£40: Odeon Luxe Leicester Square, with Dolby Cinema, a full recliner and small table.

New York

£20.55 (\$26.49): AMC Loews Lincoln Square, with Dolby Cinema and recliner.

Los Angeles

£16.87 (\$21.99): AMC Century City, with Dolby Cinema and recliner.

Dubai

£15.56 (AED 75): Reel Cinemas, Dubai Marina Mall, with Dolby Atmos and recliner.

Paris

£13.23 (€15): Pathé Beaugrenelle, with Dolby Atmos.

Tokyo

£12.42 (JP¥ 1,800): Toho Cinemas Roppongi Hills.

Beijing

£8.36 (RMB 75): Stellar International Cineplex, in 4D.

Rome

£7.48 (€8.50): Cinema Andromeda, with Dolby Atmos.

Mexico City

£6.98 (MXP 181): Cinopolis Forum Buenavista, in 4D.

Variety (USA) – 21 December; sent in by Terry Hanstock

TALKING PICTURES QUIZ

This TV channel shows its popular *Glimpses* viewing. Before each there is a brief trailer showing:-

1. Public entering cinema
2. Cashier in Pay Box
3. Projectionist starting film

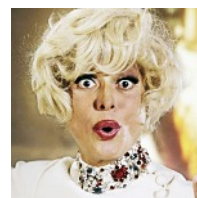
Can you name these cinemas? Answers on p35.

Sent in by Ron Knee

NECROLOGY

CAROL CHANNING 97

Carol had already made a name for herself on Broadway when she starred in *Hello Dolly* in 1964, appearing in all 2,884 performances and reprised it twice. In the cinema she gained an Oscar nomination for her part in *Thoroughly Modern Millie*.



WINDSOR DAVIES 88

Probably best known as the Sergeant-Major in TV's *It Ain't Half Hot Mum*, he also appeared in two of the *Carry On* films. Together with co-star Don Estelle he had a number one hit in 1975 with *Whispering Grass*. Again on TV, he appeared with Donald Sinden as rival antique dealers in *Never The Twain* from 1981 to 1991.



ALBERT FINNEY 82

In 1956 he won a scholarship to RADA and had a successful stage career before entering film. His first role was in *The Entertainer* followed by *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, *Tom Jones*, *Scrooge*, *Murder on the Orient Express*, *Annie The Dresser*, *Gumshoe* and many more.



All sent in by Barry Quinton

REWINDING BACK

Sent in by David A Ellis

NEWCASTLE OPENING

Newcastle's latest cinema, the **Essoldo**, built on the site of an old police station in Westgate Road, was opened on Monday by the Lord Mayor of the City, Alderman Gilbert Oliver. The **Essoldo**, the first cinema built in Newcastle by Essoldo Theatres Ltd, is designed on the most modern lines and contains new features. The walls are panelled with Vitrolite and a stage is provided, suitable for dramatic performances. The seating capacity is 2,000. The building has been designed by Mr W Stockdale of North Shields and the contractor Mr Hastie Burton of Tynemouth.

Cinematograph Times – 1 September 1938

ORGANIST MOVES

Cecil Chadwick, who for nearly a year has been the organist at the **Savoy** cinema, Leicester (ABC) is leaving to take up a similar post at the **Paramount Theatre** Leeds. While at the **Classic** cinema, Belfast, he broadcast over 200 times and he made fifteen broadcasts while touring for the Union Company.

Cinematograph Times – 1 September 1938

FIRST CINEMA REOPENING

The following historic notice has been issued in Aberystwyth to all proprietors of local cinemas:

I am prepared to allow your place of entertainment to continue business from day to day if the following conditions are properly complied with:

1. That you arrange for an operator to listen for air raid warnings during the whole period that an entertainment takes place.
2. That all exits are properly cleared.
3. That you arrange sufficient staff to prevent panic in the case of an air raid warning; and
4. That you indicate in large type throughout your theatre the nearest available air raid shelter, together with instructions to the public on how they should get there.

You will appreciate that I am anxious to allow normal business to continue and I expect the owners of theatres to assist me in not only carrying out the legal aspect of these regulations but also their spirit. I would further add that this is a temporary licence, which may have to be cancelled at short notice.

(Signed) ED Evans DCC for Chief Constable

The Era – Thursday 7 September 1939

TAYLOR, TAYLOR & HOBSON, LTD

It is of interest to note that Taylor-Hobson kinema projection lenses have been selected by the British Admiralty for use with GB Projectors on battleships. Of particular interest during the past year were the developments by this firm for television projection in cinema theatres. 12½in lenses with an aperture of f/2 and also f/1.5 were used for the projection of televised pictures for the Derby and several other outstanding events. These large aperture lenses, with their comparatively wide angle of covering power, represent big advance in lens design for projection. As in past years, some of the largest theatres that have been opened during the course of the year have been installed with Taylor-Hobson lenses.

Kine Year Book – 1940

SIMPLEX EQUIPMENT: J FRANK BROCKLISS LTD

Following their yearly tradition of adding something new to their well-known Simplex equipment, Brockliss, in 1939, have introduced an entirely new Simplex model, which is the first that the International Projector Corporation of New York have ever made, apart from the essential principles of the Simplex as it has been known since its inception. It is, however, found that a big number of those controlling small houses were not in a position to pay the price required for the super equipment and consequently the new Simplex projector, known as the SI, has been evolved for the needs of kinemas seating up to 800 people. Although this is a model for medium-sized theatres, this projector has the unique feature of having synchronised shutters, both front and rear. The projector offers simplicity, ease of operation and the ability to provide good projection.

Kine Year Book – 1940

DEATH IN A CINEMA



The Ritz Warrington; photo courtesy dusashenka

A verdict that he died from a fracture to the base of the skull, with insufficient evidence to show how, was returned today on William Hayward, aged 39, of Welling, Kent but lodging at 148 Wilderspool Road, Warrington. Jennie Hayward, his wife, said they had visited the Ritz cinema on Wednesday evening and, during the showing of a blood transfusion film, her husband put his hand to his head and said, "I won't be a minute." He did not return and after fifteen minutes she got help; he was found in the toilet room with a wound in his head. Mr TS Steel Jr, for the Ritz proprietors and the coroner, Mr AV Cuncliffe, both said they could not believe that the film had anything to do with it. He might have slipped on a step.

Liverpool Echo – 9 June 1941

BIRMINGHAM PARAMOUNT BECOMES AN ODEON

The **Paramount Theatre**, a popular Birmingham cinema, will on Sunday become an Odeon. The Odeon organisation, of which Mr J Arthur Rank is the head, was found in Birmingham. It controls over 300 cinemas in Great Britain. Mr Leslie Holderness will remain manager with Mr K Charles Chisman, formerly of the **Astoria** Finsbury Park (London) as his assistant.

Evening Despatch – Friday 28 August 1942

ANOTHER CINEMA TO CLOSE

Another of Belfast's privately-owned cinemas is shutting down. The **West End Picture House** opened on the Shankill Road in October 1913 and will close its doors for the last time on 2 July. "We can't compete any more with television and the growth of motoring and outside sport." Said a representative of the cinema today. "People's habits are changing and a night out at the cinema doesn't mean the same as it did. Independent owners haven't a chance today."

The **West End** was originally opened by Messrs Joseph McKibbin, Andrew Craig and Henry A Newell and has been in the Craig and Newell families ever since. Three cinemas owned by the McKibbin estate have already gone out of business – the **Midland** York Street, bombed during the war; the **Shankill Picturedrome** closed two years ago and the **Diamond** in Falls Road closed last year.

Footnote: When it was opened, the prices at the **West End** cinema were 2d and 4d. Today they are 1s and 1s/6d.

Belfast Telegraph – 16 May 1960

BABY SITTING SERVICE AT CINEMA

Starting tomorrow and continuing every Saturday until Christmas, the **Classic** cinema in Foregate Steet, Chester, is to have a baby-sitting service during the afternoon. Manageress Mrs M Royle said that mothers going shopping could leave their children at the cinema for 2½ hours for 2s/6d. "We will be showing cartoon films for the children and very young babies will be looked after by myself and my assistant. All the children will be looked after by trained staff," she said.

Cheshire Observer – 14 November 1969

LETTERS

AGE CONCERN

Fabian Breckels made a good case in the last Bulletin for all certificate ratings for movies to be advisory; thus relieving pressure on cinemas who could lose their licence if underage patrons are discovered watching a film they shouldn't be. Fabian correctly points out that those underage movie-goers are easily able to watch any film they want, whatever the certificate, in the comfort of their own home. And that being the case, should cinemas be punished for something that they might not be at fault for?

Certification has always been a thorny issue. I've watched many movies that, in my opinion, should have had their ratings lowered or even raised. At the time of writing my two favourite current releases are *The Mule* and *Green Book*. *The Mule*, Clint Eastwood's latest masterpiece, is a [15] rating while *Green Book*, starring Viggo Mortensen and Mahershala Ali and which I reckon contains a touch more violence and bad language, is only a [12A] certificate. It didn't bother me that Clint's film was rated [15], I just don't understand why.

If parents want to ignore guidelines in their own home, that's fine. But a cinema is a public place and for that reason alone ratings do have a use and probably should still be enforced – even if it means a cinema losing its licence. Also, from a purely selfish point of view, most serious films carry higher ratings, which means I can enjoy the type of film I really like without being disturbed by bored youngsters who simply don't get the nuances of the story.

Fabian also wrote that he once turned a mother and a baby away from a [15] certificate film at the Odeon Reading. This reminded me of a similar instance at the ABC Portsmouth in 1992. We were showing the [15] rated Brian De Palma thriller *Raising Cain* starring John Lithgow and Lolita Davidovich. One midweek afternoon a young couple with a babe in arms turned up wanting to watch the film. Those of us on the front-of-house refused them entry but when the duty manager was called she allowed them in. There was, shall we say, a very heated discussion between the duty manager and the rest of us and the atmosphere in the cinema was somewhat tense for some days after.

Mike Whitcombe

ENDLESS BOX-OFFICE RECORDS

Our editor pointed out in Bulletin 52/6 how rises in ticket prices make continuous excited claims of new record movie earnings rather meaningless. I've followed this up a bit; the problem goes back over many years, with movies that had enormous audiences having unadjusted grosses dwarfed by later films. The *Guinness Book of Records* has attempted to tackle this by trying to adjust for inflation; this is discussed along with other complicating factors such as exchange rates and differential pricing for the likes of road-shows and 3D presentations in a very useful Wikipedia article at [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_highest-grossing_films]. With a number of Health Warnings, the Wikipedia article comes up with this Top Ten all-time Highest Grossing Films, adjusted for inflation, as at 2017:

1. *Gone with the Wind* (1939)
2. *Avatar* (2009)
3. *Titanic* (1997)
4. *Star Wars* (1977)
5. *The Sound of Music* (1965)
6. *E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial* (1982)
7. *The Ten Commandments* (1956)
8. *Doctor Zhivago* (1965)
9. *Jaws* (1975)
10. *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* (2015)

Jeremy Perkins

LIVERPOOL BIRTHDAYS

Both of the following will be 80 years old this year. The Abbey Waver-tree opened on 4 March with 1,870 seats. In 1964 it was converted for Cinerama but closed in August 1979. The stalls area was converted into a supermarket. The outside looks exactly the same as it did in 1939. The Plaza community cinema in Crosby had the distinction of opening and closing on the same day – 2 September 1939. When WWII was declared all places of entertainment were closed by the government but this order was rescinded after a few weeks.

Mike Taylor

BATH AND CHIPPENHAM



The Astoria Chippenham soon after opening and the Upper Foyer today

Just to amend a small item in Ben Doman's excellent article on the Oldfield Picture House Bath – where he says that on 28 September 1945 Emanuel Harris moved on to build the Astoria Chippenham; in fact the Astoria had opened on 22 May 1939. Mr Harris had moved his family into Chippenham at the outbreak of war to avoid the bombing on Bristol and Bath.

On that note the Astoria will be 80 years old in May this year. It now fully operational as a five-screen cinema. I am pleased to report that the end result is pleasingly good! The suspended ceiling in the upstairs foyer (installed in 1967 by Star) has been removed to expose some original plasterwork and the upper part of the windows; the previous ceiling was just above the tops of the doors so it gives an idea of how much was covered up! Overall the quality of the refurbishment is very good and you can see where the reputed cost of £2m has been spent. I hope to do a more detailed story on the Astoria and, from my home town of Calne, the history of the Palace/Regent cinema where I was taught to be a projectionist.

David Reeves

RANK REMEMBERED

In the last Bulletin Tim McCullen remembered a visit to The Rank Organisation's offices in Godstone Road, Whyteleafe. I thought it might be of interest to members to know a little more about the history of the building. John Davis, Rank Chairman, decided that he wanted to centralise the company's various businesses. He did this by bringing all the senior managements and heads of operations into a large office block in Victoria, London at 11 Belgrave Road. All the support services such as Technical Services, accounting and personnel were grouped in the much less-costly Godstone Road building.

I worked there for a time when it was fully occupied and a hive of activity. It was where I encountered my first 'main-frame' IBM computer, which had its own air-conditioned room with banks of spinning tapes. Outside was a team of women punching cards to input data. It was the time of miniskirts and the girls in the typing pool (memories...) vied to see who had the shortest skirt. As the building was nowhere near any facilities it had its own canteen with a grill counter at one end, if you could afford the extra cost. Odeon and Top Rank Club were among the divisions based there. As Rank as a company changed, the building steadily emptied and for a time had non-Rank tenants. The last time I passed it was empty and abandoned with broken windows. It was sad to see so I am glad it has been replaced by a something new.

Tony Williams

Tim McCullen writes: When I went there (two occasions) I was offered the canteen – lack of money kept me from going; I would have gone there today though. It's sad to hear that the building became derelict as I remember it being a buzzing place. Such office space would be unsuitable in today's world, hence it probably got demolished. Any idea when it opened and Rank finally went from there? Wonder what happened to the people who I met there?

INFORMATION WANTED AND FOUND

Following my request on p27 of Bulletin 52/5, where I asked if anyone knew the titles of the music used on the *Talking Pictures* TV channel, I have now found out three pieces that they use between films: *Jaunty Jape*, *Glitzzy Affair* and *Opening Night*. They all come from the Carlin Music Library (Warner Chappell) and can be heard on-line [search2.warnerchappellpm.com/main]. The other pieces of music I haven't been able to track down yet.

John R Forster

METROPOLE VICTORIA

I was fascinated to read David A Ellis's article on the Metropole Victoria on the back page of the November/December Bulletin. I remember this cinema well from my boyhood. We lived in Streatham, which is only a bus ride away and my father took us there to see all the great 70mm epics such as *Spartacus*, *Lawrence of Arabia*, *El Cid*, *55 Days at Peking* (I think) and, later, *Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines*. As David describes, it was a beautiful cinema and the impressive Spanish renaissance auditorium was well-suited to 70mm as the screen was huge with excellent projection and the six-track stereo sound was very effective. Dad always treated us to seats in the circle, which was very steep or seemed so to a ten-year-old! As with most people, these movies left a deep impression and sowed the seed of me eventually becoming a film technician. I still have the programmes for these productions and inside the one for *Lawrence of Arabia* is found a flyer for the Metropole, which I have scanned and attached to this email. I'm sure there are many other CTA members who have memories of seeing these great films at roadshow screenings throughout the country, if only we could see their like again.

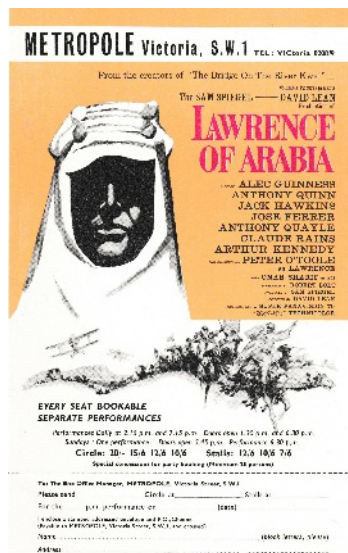
Peter Ferrari

IN DEFENCE

I was disappointed to read James Bettley's letter in the January / February Bulletin favouring the preservation of the Futurist Scarborough over the listing of the Empire in the Haymarket in central London. I realise the letter is mainly directed towards Historic England for failing to list the now demolished Futurist but I feel it unnecessary to grumble about what we have as well as what we have not got. It took best part of forty years to achieve a listing for the Empire, from when it was the Carlton and before subdivision. The CTA was not involved in the original initiative as it was put forward by the now defunct Save London's Theatres Campaign. Subsequently, though, we made repeated attempts to get this cinema listed and myself and the case-work committee were overjoyed when a positive result came through last October and I was personally very surprised and amazed as I thought it might yet again get a thumbs down.

Obtaining listing on interwar cinemas is extremely difficult, whereas as those built prior to and into World War I are seen as rarer, simply because they are older and do get through, as happened for the Picture House Bridlington of 1912, at the end of last year. We also worked extremely hard on the Scarborough case, as did a particular Historic England officer but I think the deciding factor may have been heavy pressure from the local Council, who wished to see an amusement park attraction for its location on the promenade and also owned the building. The importance of the Futurist lay in the fact that was an unusually large cinema for its relatively early date, 1921, being among the first 'supers' and also had interesting split-level planning. But the fine classical façade had been obscured by later cladding, the proscenium had been altered and the auditorium was plain with the original painted decoration long since gone. It should however have stayed, both as a major theatrical venue and as a public amenity for the resort. It was probably the largest and most important auditorium on the east coast and it remains an undoubted loss for these reasons.

The Empire was accepted because Historic England realised that it has the last cinema interior in any kind of original state remaining in the West End of London, with the foyer virtually intact, the upper half of the main 'screen' surviving, with its beautiful chandeliers and the staircases, doors (and even the original door furniture) and original access spaces still to be seen. It is the last of the Paramount cinemas built in the capital and major British cities; we tragically lost two in 2017 – in Manchester and Newcastle – although these had been much changed. Historic England also accepted the Empire's rare American style double balcony planning. Vestiges of this are archaeo-



logical but they are there and it would be possible to regain the complete auditorium if desired by an operator, although it is regrettable that the stage has gone. For the first time the ephemeral cultural significance of the many film premières held there, especially in the Fox days, was taken into account. We were hugely supported in our quest for listing by SAVE Britain's Heritage, a major national pressure group. We may have been successful without them but having their backing did prove a tremendous advantage.

Fortunately, the first page of the Bulletin carries a disclaimer on items submitted for publication or otherwise the Association's casework function might appear incompetent. I had to write in defence of our victory for the Empire after so much effort over so many years.

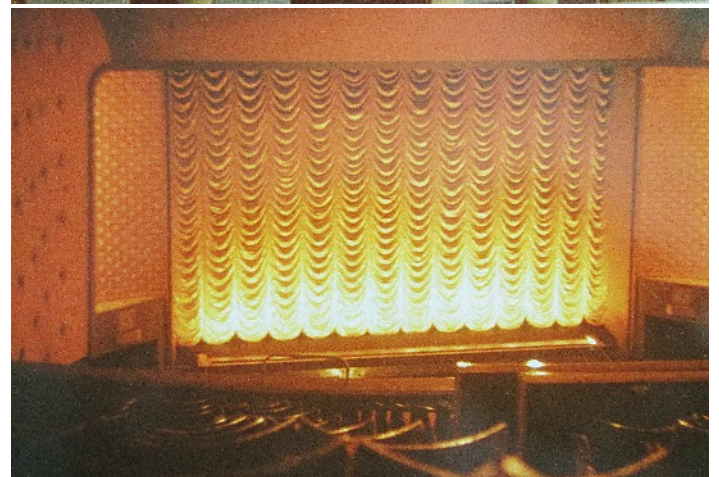
Richard Gray

MATTERS ARISING

A few comments on the last Bulletin. The Odeon Barking closed with six screens – the article on p24 is incorrect. On the 2013 visit to Truro Plaza (p27) the venue seated ① 300, ② 198, ③ 135 & ④ 70. After the refurbishment and extra screen, it now seats ① 300, ② 169, ③ 99, ④ 60 & ⑤ 55; screen ⑤ is above screen ④. The Odeon Leicester Square item (p25) is a little misleading. The screen that is missing is the ground floor mezzanine (later studios). This had five screens originally, making six at one time. It is just Odeons ① - ⑤ now. When reading the bit on Margate (p18/19) the Plaza was mentioned; this closed as a cinema on 12 January 1984. The New Parade closed in November 1981 – has anyone got the exact date? The Dreamland closed on 1 November 2007.

Tim McCullen

ABC MAIDSTONE



I came across these photographs that I took years ago and thought you might be able to use them in the Bulletin if you have space. They are of Maidstone ABC in King Street, which was firstly the Central, then Ritz before actually becoming plain ABC. The photographs of the frontage and auditorium are from 1970. I actually did the canopy on a Sunday morning as there was no member of staff to do it. Just like typesetting but up a ladder! It closed as a cinema in October 1974 and bingo took its place. That was comparatively short-lived and the building was demolished in 1980.

Les Bull

THE PLAZA SUNDERLAND

By David A Ellis

The Plaza, Pallion Road, Sunderland, opened for business on Saturday 1 August 1936. It was formally opened on the Friday in preparation for the first public showing the following day. The opening was performed by Alderman FW Taylor.

The cinema, which had a proscenium width of thirty-seven feet, was an independent cinema run by Pallion (Sunderland) Cinema Ltd, who were based in Newcastle.

Chairman of directors was a Mr John Thompson. It had seating for 1,400, 1,100 of them in the stalls. The general contractors were Sunderland-based Bell Bros and furnishings were in orange and green. The local press reported that the pay boxes and barrier have been designed so that patrons can be dealt with as expeditiously as possible, whatever the rush. These were made and erected by Coutts and Findlater, shop fitters based in Sunderland.

Plasterwork was supplied by Webster Davidson, who at the time had contracts to supply several others, including the Odeon Harrogate. The press also said it would be an attraction for those who did not wish to go to town for their cinema entertainment. The latest films will be screened and the comfort and efficiency of the cinema will be equal to anything to be found elsewhere in the district. Up in the projection room there was the latest Western Electric Sound system. The cinema opened with the film *Casino De Paree* starring Al Jolson. Screening times were twice nightly at 6:30 and 8:45. Prices at the time of opening were, circle one shilling, stalls ninepence and front stalls sixpence. Following films lined up included *Anything Goes*, *No Limit* and *Captain Blood*.



The Plaza Sunderland as The New Monkey in September 2006

The Plaza closed on 12 July 1968 with the screening of *Bridge on the River Kwai*. It went over to bingo, which was run by Gala from around 1995. The building went on to become an outlet store, followed by a club called The New Monkey. In 2016 it became a church. Does anyone have more information on this cinema?

SUNDERLAND'S NEW CINEMA OPENS TO-NIGHT

PLAZA CINEMA

PALLION ROAD

6.30 TWICE NIGHTLY 8.45

THE SHOW OF SHOWS

CASINO DE PAREE

WITH

AL JOLSON RUBY KEELER GLENDA FARRELL PATSY KELLY

A feast of Song, Dance, Novelty, and Spectacle.

PRICES: CIRCLE 1/- STALLS 9d. FRONT STALLS 6d.

NECROLOGY

JIM BUCKLAND 98

Jim was the mastermind behind the Wurlitzer organ installed in the Assembly Hall, Worthing. The organ was formerly located in Buckingham Town Hall, with the console from the Troxy, Stepney and was re-installed at Worthing and re-opened in 1981. Since then, Jim had considerably enlarged the organ, utilising his engineering background, by adding pipes from various UK and USA organs and it is considered one of the finest Wurlitzers in the UK. Many internationally famous organists have visited for concerts, which will continue under the auspices of the Sussex Theatre Organ Trust.



GORDON MINTERN 96

Gordon was the manager of the Regal, Henley-on-Thames, from 1952 until it closed in 1986. With his wife Dorothy, who died in 2016, he maintained the traditional nature of this fine 1937-built cinema, whilst improving the picture and sound quality. He arranged the installation of a Compton organ (originally in the Ritz, Tunbridge Wells) and regular concerts attracted the top organists and large audiences. When the Regal closed, as chairman of the Henley Organ Trust he persuaded the Council to install a top-of-the-range Allen digital organ in the Town Hall and concerts continued there and are still running today. The Compton was re-installed at the Burtsey Fen Collection, near Spalding and the Regal was replaced by a new three-screen cinema, now operated by Picturehouse.



FRANK HARE 92

Frank was a noted theatre organ enthusiast and expert, an early member of the Theatre Organ Club and he was its Northern secretary since 1950. He was co-founder of the Northern Theatre Organ Trust, which in 1970 installed a theatre organ into Ossett Town Hall, Yorkshire. This has the console from the New Victoria, London with pipework from various Compton and Christie organs and regular concerts continue there.



PETER BOIZOT MBE 89

Peter Boizot was the founder of the well-known restaurant chain Pizza Express in 1965 but later he acquired the former Odeon in his home town of Peterborough, which had been lying empty for nearly ten years. He spent around £9 million to de-triple the auditorium, restore lost features and add an art gallery to transform it into the Broadway entertainment centre, which opened in 2001. The CTA visited in 2002 and held their AGM there and many members stayed at the Great Northern Hotel, also owned by Peter and where he lived for many years. For a time, he also owned Peterborough Football Club.



All sent in by Jeremy Buck

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

Sight and Sound 1994 to January 2008. Donation made to the CTA.
Contact: Davina Reynolds 01932 849327

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

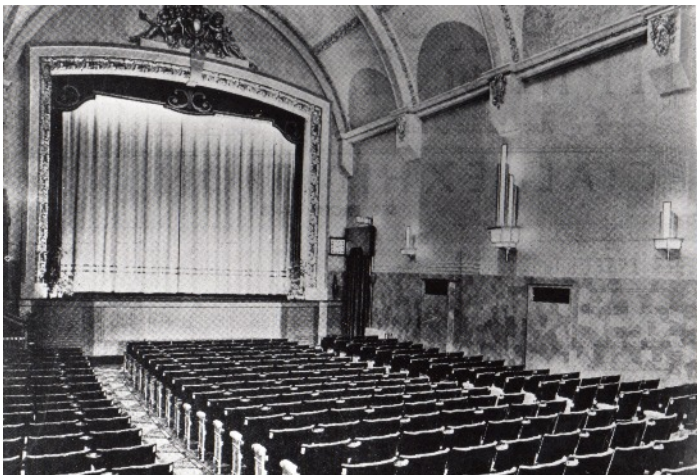
A regular column celebrating our wonderful listed cinemas.
All images come from the CTA Archive.

110 years



Kings Theatre & Hippodrome / Gaumont / Odeon, 27 Cowgate, Dundee. Opened 15 March 1909, architect Frank Thomson. B-listed.

105 years



Torbay Picture House Torbay Road, Paignton. Opened 16 March 1914, architects Hyams & Hobgen. Listed Grade II*.

CARTOON CORNER



"He was like this last time we had a Bette Davis film"

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

90 years

Capitol Albermarle Crescent, Scarborough. Opened 11 March 1929, architect Edwin Sheridan Gray. Listed Grade II. (No photo.)

85 years



Gaumont Palace / Odeon 9 The Broadway, High Road, Wood Green. [North London] Opened 26 March 1934, architects William Edward Trent / Ernest F Tulley. Listed Grade II*.

80 years



George 14 Bath Street, Portobello, Edinburgh. Opened 30 March 1939, architect T Bowhill Gibson. C(s)-listed.

ARCHIVE

ARCHIVE ENQUIRIES

It is hoped that by the time you read this, the Cinema Theatre Association Archive will have moved to new spacious modern premises near Southend on Sea. This development follows three years of searching for suitable premises for the collection that are also sustainable and cost effective. More information will be provided in the next Bulletin.

In the meantime, it is necessary to unpack and reorganise the Archive collections, which have been in storage for over three years. Regrettably we will not be able to receive enquiries or requests to visit the Archive to undertake research for a period of several months. It is hoped that the Archive can be fully open come the summer. We appreciate your understanding in the interim.

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].

The Archive has received a most unusual and rare scrapbook dating from the early 1920s, containing many letters, documents and particularly newspaper cuttings. Although much of the material relates to Ealing and the surrounding area there is also coverage from across the country. As this wonderful item arrived unsolicited, we do not know anything about its origin or history or who kindly sent it to us. If you can please let me know it would be deeply appreciated.

Clive Polden, CTA Archivist

The Projected Picture Trust

Dean Clough Mills, HALIFAX, HX3 5AX

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

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

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

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

contact@ppttrust.org

www.ppttrust.org

MEMBERSHIP

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome from all of us in the CTA to the following new members, who are listed in order of joining: Derrick Moss, Neil Baker, Stephen Bell, Steven Sharp, Kevin Whale, Eric Senat and D Ashton.

DONATIONS

Our grateful and sincere thanks are extended to these members who added a donation when renewing their subscriptions: M Armstrong, DR Barker, PJ Bennett, DR Bennett, MJ Bigham, W Burns, GH Catterick, IC Cooper, DA Cox, D Daniells, R Deahl, MM Dupré, KS Ebsworth, VR Edwards, ML Facey, KJ Finch, M Ford, JR Forster, RA Franklin, GW Gill, RC Gurd, H Hamblet, GF High, RO Jones, AP Jowett, P King, AS King, RS Laugharne, DJ McIntyre, E McNamee, JJ McWilliams, TA O'Sullivan, RP Pilbeam, D Prosser, DJ Reeves, PD Regan, TJ Rhodes, TR Sedgwick-Jell, CB Simmonds, GJ Smith, BJ Steer, RJ Stovell, RJ Thompson, P Tipping, EM Trott, PJ Walters, JW Williams and GHC Williams.

IN MEMORIAM

We learned during January of the death of Keith Bye, an East Londoner and member since 1988, who was a regular attendee at events at The Gallery and on visits in the London area. He returned from holiday in September feeling unwell and died very unexpectedly on 19 November 2018 just a couple of weeks after a cancer diagnosis. Our condolences have been sent to family and friends.

Neville C Taylor, Membership Secretary

DERBY MENU

GAUMONT PALACE, DERBY;

(Opened Monday 17 September 1934)

Now this is an interesting item, reflecting the 'social graces' of 1930s cinema-going. Perhaps it was a layout for a leaflet to promote the theatre's restaurant, or even a script for an 'on-screen' announcement title? In either event, just look at the wording – and prices – of the period:

"Luncheonette" (1/3d); "Dainty Dishes" or a "Four Course Supper" (2/-).

Sent in by Carl Chesworth

Editor's Note: Sorry for the poor quality – it is a scan of a photocopy of a carbon paper copy!

CAFE - RESTAURANT
(On the First Floor)
Accessible from the Theatre and Street
Open from 11.0. a.m. till 10 p.m.

DAILY

MORNING COFFEE WILL BE SERVED

SPECIAL
Four Course Lunch 1/9d
SPECIAL
Luncheonette 1/3d

Afternoon Teas.
High TeasGrills.
FishMeat
Snacks and Dainty Dishes.
Four Course Supper
2/-d

Served from 7 p.m. till 10 p.m.
Teas, Ices etc.
Will be served in the Theatre
Music all day.
Now available
Combined Luncheon
and
Theatre Matinee Tickets
2/6 inclusive
Available until 2.30 p.m. daily
Apply at Cafe Pay Desk.

Here are the answers to the *Talking Pictures Quiz* on p29.
1. The Tolmer Cinema Euston London. 2 & 3 Regent Cinema Chesham.

QUIZ ANSWERS

BOGNOR FINALLY GETS A FOURTH SCREEN

By Mike Whitcombe



The eagerly awaited and much delayed fourth screen at the Picturedrome Bognor Regis, has finally opened. The latest addition to the Victorian-built cinema showed its first film to the general public at 1pm on Friday 21 December 2018 when the Benedict Cumberbatch voiced *The Grinch* was screened. The fourth screen, officially called Screen ② (auditoria are numbered in relation to capacity), boasts 102 black leather seats in a stadium design. It's located in a newly-built addition to the building that occupies what was once the cinema's rear car park. Access to the screen is still through the main foyer, from where you take a newly-constructed corridor that runs along what used to be the rear of Screen ①. New toilets, including a disabled toilet, along with another confectionery stand, have been added at the end of the corridor from where you turn right to enter the auditorium.

The Picturedrome is owned by Bognor Regis Town Council and operated by Adam Cunard's Picturedrome Electric Theatre Company. Plans were passed for the construction of this latest screen as long ago as 2015. But a dispute with a local resident over access to the site and the election of new town councillors who disagreed with the Council extending the operator a twenty-five year loan to construct the building that would house the auditorium caused the scheme to stall. It wasn't until a public outcry and much debate in Council corridors that approval was finally given. On 24 April 2017, by a vote of nine to one, councillors finally authorised a loan of £965,823.

Construction began on 26 June 2017 and was expected to be completed by April 2018 at the latest. But several unexpected setbacks kept pushing the opening date back. These included the repositioning of an exit door when it was realised it would interfere with the screen and additional planning permission for the seating layout when it was decided to realign the seats to make access better. By the end of August 2018 the auditorium was ready for opening. But when safety checks were carried out several concerns were raised. These were gradually resolved until checks on the lining material used to sound-proof the side walls caused another opening date delay. These concerns took longer to rectify and it was expected the screen would not open until early 2019. But with five days remaining until Christmas, management were given less than twenty four hours' notice to open the screen. As the Christmas schedule was already confirmed and booked, the new screen was mainly used as a much needed festive overflow for sold-out houses of *Mary Poppins Returns* until specific booking for Screen ② started at the beginning of the New Year.



"I'm pleased we have finally been able to open the fourth screen at the Picturedrome," said managing director Adam Cunard, who operates nineteen screens at six sites. "Having the additional screen will enable us to show more films than ever before to provide residents of the Bognor Regis area and beyond with additional choice. We hope our regular audiences will enjoy the comfort of the modern surroundings of the new screen and they will be joined by those yet to experience the latest technology in our historic building."

HOLIDAY SNAPS



The Sklavija Kino in Vilnius, Lithuania {18071}
programmed by Media (part of the Europa Cinema group)
Opened in 1992
1 screen, 141 seats

Sent in by Anthony Wills



The Princess Theatre Launceston, Tasmania {53674}
Opened as a cinema August 1911, 1,079 seats
Films ceased 1970, building purchased by local Council
Live theatre use since

Sent in by Anthony Wills