



CINEMA
THEATRE
ASSOCIATION

www.cta-uk.org

BULLETIN

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The Gaumont Rose Hill – to be visited by the CTA on 7 September, see p3; photo taken April 2006



From the opening programme of the Regent Bournemouth – later Gaumont/Odeon; see Newsreel p18

FROM YOUR EDITOR

It was good to meet some of you at the AGM in London. I'm sorry I hadn't the chance to speak to more of you but the time was very short. I have a terrible memory for names and faces so don't be afraid to come up and introduce yourself next time.

Thanks as usual to all contributors, both for articles and press cuttings. As we have said before, our press cutting service doesn't claim to be exhaustive so anything you can send in will help. Two newsreel items stand out this time – a cannabis farm in the Granada Kettering that was sent in by nine people and the reopening of the Granada Walthamstow, which also had nine submissions. Is there anything in that they were both about Granada theatres?

Can I please ask contributors to note the Bulletin 'house style' and try to use it in submissions. I don't put full stops or spaces in abbreviations – C. T. A. is just CTA. Film, book and newspaper titles are simply in *italics*; if you use inverted commas I have to strip them out. Dates are given as, for example, 20 August, not 'the 20th of'. It all helps.

Again, at the risk of repeating myself, because of the time lag between sending the Bulletin off for printing and you receiving the hard copy, I sometimes receive items that have already been covered. Please don't be disappointed if I can't include them again. Everything I get is sent to the Archive, whether I use it or not.

On p23 of this Bulletin there is an item about the passing of Doris Day. Way back in Bulletin 37/1 I told you how I used to help run a 16mm cinema at the hostel when I was a student. Once we had a battered print of Doris Day's *Calamity Jane*. I recorded the soundtrack [shame] on a reel-to-reel tape recorder. Goodness knows what happened to the tape [or the recorder] but I can still to this day sing the songs with the discontinuities caused by the splices in the print! If you want to hear the rendition it'll cost you a pint!

The deadline for the next edition is 20 August. Just like last year, this will have to be absolutely rigid as we are on holiday for the whole of September and I need to get your Bulletin done before we go. I'm afraid I will not be able to deal with anything that arrives after 20 August.

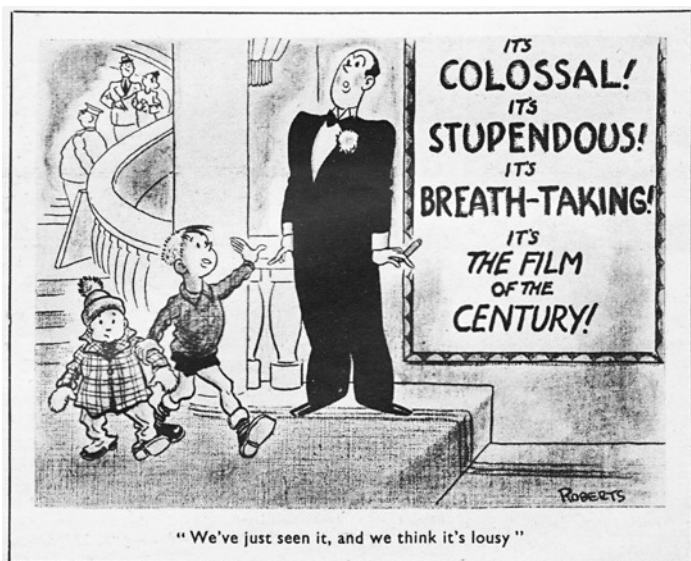
"And Finally..." as Esther Rantzen said to Cyril Fletcher at the end of each episode of TV's *That's Life* [I hope I've got that right]. Gavin McGrath sent me a page of cinematic quotations. Here is the first:

"She said that all the sights in Rome were called after London cinemas."

Pigeon Pie by Nancy Mitford [1940]

Harry Rigby, CTA Bulletin Editor

CARTOON CORNER



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

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE TUESDAY 20 AUGUST

CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

(Founded January 1967)

promoting serious interest in all aspects of cinema buildings

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enquiry; this address will be monitored and e-mails redirected if necessary.

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CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

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

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

Please 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.

Typeset in Franklin Gothic Book by Harry Rigby

Printed by The Ludo Press Ltd, 18 Wimbledon Stadium Business Centre, Riverside Road, London, SW17 0BA [www.ludo.co.uk]

VISITS AND EVENTS

A Cinematic Wander Around Coventry

organised by Peter Lea and Richard Norman

POSTPONED

We regret that due to unforeseen planning difficulties, we have had to postpone the above visit, originally scheduled for Saturday 17 August. We are sorry about this and will let you know when a new date has been arranged.

A Tour of South-West London and Surrey Borders by Routemaster Bus

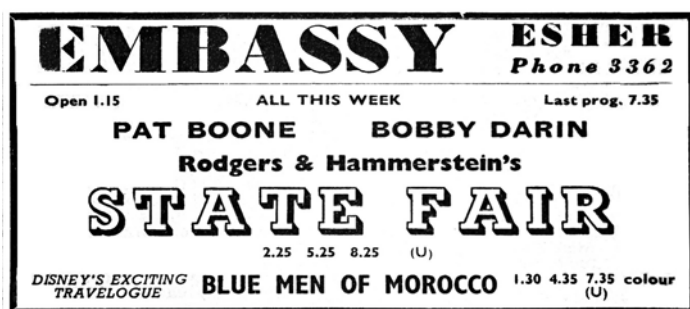
Saturday 7 September

The long-awaited trip is now on the road! We plan to pick up at a station in the area at about 10am and visit venues in Woking, Esher, Surbiton, Rose Hill and many more. A lunch stop will be included and suitable drop offs at stations will be made after our last visit.



The Embassy/Odeon Esher in April 2006 – now Everyman

For full details please send an email to [r.ritmeester@sky.com] or send SAE to Ray Ritmeester, 66 Woodside Road, High Wycombe, HP13 7JB no later than 17 August.



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

A Message to All Members Regarding Visits and Events

from Ray Ritmeester, Visits Coordinator

The opportunity sometimes arises of a short notice visit to a venue. These events cannot always be publicised in the Bulletin because of the deadline on publication, so we would encourage members to subscribe to the CTA E-news service and check the CTA website for any last-minute items. You can join the CTA E-news facility via the link on the CTA website.

Other Events of Interest [not organised by the CTA]

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

THE PLAZA STOCKPORT

Friday 26 July *If Beale Street Could Talk* (2018) [15] 11am
Harvey with James Stewart (1950) [U] 7:30pm
Friday 16 August *Peterloo* (2018) [12A] 11am & 7:30pm

Behind the Scenes Tours at 11am on Mondays 29 July & 19 August.
£8. Book or simply turn up.

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

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. Events confirmed so far include *Celluloid Saturday*, a full day of film on film. *South Sea Adventure* will be screened with Act 1 in 3-strip Cinerama and Act 2 in Digital. Films will include *Pillow Talk* and *Love Me or Leave Me* in 35mm and *Ice Station Zebra* in Digital. Full program details will be available nearer the time but passes are on sale now. [tinyurl.com/ybfq434g]

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.

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	Holophane 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.

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.

Also Available (but not from the Sales Officer)

Last Reels by Ben Dowell. A5 paperback, 274 pages, £6.99. Available from Amazon etc. ISBN: 978-1-09348-717-6.

The author's tongue-in-cheek introduction says: "This is a work of fiction, although based on the author's recollection of actual events. Names, characters, events, businesses, places and incidents are either the product of the author's imagination or have been used in a fictitious manner. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental"

And the blurb on the jacket reads: "2010: As the cinema industry changes from film to digital, is there still a place for the projectionist? Graham has been captivated by cinema all his life. Will his dreams of a career in projection be shattered? Cat's love of nostalgia and the magic of film have carried her through many changes. Can her job survive this time around? Bill has worked in the industry for nearly fifty years and wants to pass on his skills to a new generation. But is his experience obsolete in a digital age?"



This may be of interest to members with an interest in projectors! Thanks to Geoff Gill for drawing our attention to it.

CAMPAIGNING TO SAVE YOUR HISTORIC CINEMAS

By Tim Hatcher

Grade II* Listed



The Everyman (ex Odeon) Muswell Hill in August 2018

No objection has been proffered to planning and listed building consent applications relating to an installation of new duct-work in a compartment at the rear of the foyer of the Everyman (ex Odeon) in London's Muswell Hill. The proposed undertaking is of a minor nature and will not have any deleterious impact upon the appearance of the public space.

The Trust which aspires to restore and operate the Paignton Picture House has appointed a representative of the CTA to its board.

Grade II Listed



The former Odeon Woolwich in April 2015

A listed building consent application relating to the Odeon in Woolwich lacked woefully in detail and was accompanied by somewhat incomprehensible plans. This solicitation has now been withdrawn for amendment prior to re-submission. It appears that the exercise advanced would be of a minor nature and would not impinge upon the historic fabric of the edifice.

The latest proposition from its local Council for a renewed rôle for the Longford in Stretford is conversion to a performance space and community centre.

CIRCUIT HISTORIES AVAILABLE

REDUCED PRICES

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

All available from the Sales Officer – address on p4.
please add £3.00 for postage.

Historic England is reviewing the listing description of the Picture House in Leicester, of which cinema only the rear façade [R] survives. A comprehensive response has been formulated and forwarded to that body.

Officials of York Council's Conservation Department have responded to the Association's request for investigation and intervention regarding the degradation of pointing and other external dilapidations of the Everyman (ex Odeon) in York. Extremely disappointingly – and equally surprisingly – they comment that they have no time to investigate this disrepair, despite the deterioration relating to a distinguished and prominent listed building. It is thus rendered incumbent upon the CTA to ascertain the identity of the freeholder and urge that remedial action be initiated.



The rear façade of the Picture House Leicester
[photo David Simpson]



The Picturedrome / New Olympus Theatre Gloucester in May 2006

The Theatres Trust has intimated that the Picturedrome (Ritz / New Olympus Theatre) in Gloucester may be rehabilitated as a theatre. This 1923 cinema underwent debasement of its interior whilst under the auspices of a previous leaseholder.

Unlisted

A further modified application for redevelopment of the site of the Regent in Bournemouth has been lodged. This proposal retains both frontage and rear of the current structure and incorporates eighty dwellings into a lower-rise block than that of the previous schemes submitted. Unfortunately this renders the proposal more likely to receive approval, despite renewed objection from local groups and the Association. See Newsreel p18.

Because of the regular congregation of undesirable persons around the portals of the Odeon in Exeter, its operator wishes to modify the entrance area to include metal shutters. Whilst appreciative of the incommodity presented, this locally listed building has a fine, largely unaltered façade and a detailed investigation of the proposition will be undertaken. Should it be found to include elements detrimental to the cinema's external aesthetics, robust objection will be tendered. See article on back page.

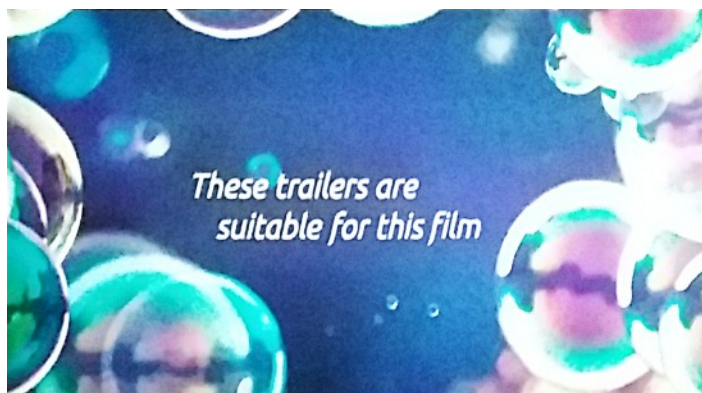
A consultation was due to be held with the team responsible for formulating the previously reported embryonic redevelopment project for the Dominion in Harrow. Those attending include the planning and heritage consultants and the architect. See p25 last Bulletin.

The Majestic in Mapperley near Nottingham is threatened with demolition. A submission has been made for its inclusion on the register of locally listed buildings, alongside several other objections to the planning application. See p24 Bulletin 52/5.

MOVIE TRAILERS

By Mike Whitcombe

*Now for the bit everyone loves,
Oh yeah!
The trailers,
I love the trailers,
All 'specially chosen for this film, actually.'*



Anyone who has visited their local Odeon to see a movie will be familiar with the above words. They are the voiceover to the introduction of Odeon's trailer package. Up on the screen, the written statement that 'These trailers are suitable for this film' shines out into the darkness. Your afternoon or evening of eagerly awaited escapism has begun. If the main presentation doesn't live up to expectations – and for every gem such as *Stan and Ollie* there's a dud like *Hereditary* – the trailers can be the most enjoyable part of the show. Edited to capture your attention, imagination and desire to return and see the whole film on the big screen, the trailer plays an important role in your cinema-going experience.

Trailers were so named because they originally did just that – they trailed the main feature. That was back in the infancy of the cinema when the one or two reel films shown in hastily erected Nickelodeons didn't have the endless end credits movies are now burdened with. A simple cue card saying 'The End' would then be followed by a crude trailer for next week's presentation. Although most customers were too busy pulling on their coats or grabbing their hat to notice these teasers, it wasn't until the 1930s that the trailer was moved to play before the main feature.

The first trailer was shown in November 1913 when Nils Granlund, the advertising manager for a string of theatres owned by Marcus Loew (who co-founded Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in April 1924) produced a short promotional film for the musical *The Pleasure Seekers* that was opening at the Winter Garden Theatre on Broadway. It was just footage of rehearsals and it was a promotion for a stage play not a movie. But it captured people's imagination. The wire services reported the event and the *Lincoln (Nebraska) Daily Star* described it as an entirely new and unique stunt. The following year Granlund produced the first trailer for a movie when, using a slide technique, he promoted an upcoming Charlie Chaplin film at Loew's Seventh Avenue Theatre in Harlem.

By 1916 movie studios were making their own trailers. The following year the *New York Times* reported that the National Association of the Motion Picture Industry were sending trailers to all of the 15,000 movie theatres in the United States. These films were 70 feet in length and were attached to longer films. But creating trailers became a time-consuming business that the movie studios weren't interested in. A New Yorker called Herman Robbins realised this and in October 1919 he founded National Screen Services. Without attaining the permission of the studios, Robbins took stills from films, spliced in text and titles and sold them to movie theatres. Instead of suing Robbins, the West Coast based studios sent films to the East Coast, Albany based NSS to convert into trailers, receiving a small royalty from the NSS in return. Within six years NSS had opened their first office in Los Angeles and were dominating the publicity of movies.

From the 1920s until the late 1950s, NSS produced movie trailers that followed the same format: authoritative voiceover, key visual moments, dramatic music and descriptive text such as 'Colossal!' 'Stupendous!'

or 'You've never seen anything like it!' Mordaunt Hall, writing in the *New York Times* as early as 1929, argued that trailers should have more "conservative wording and a more rational and less sensational selection of excerpts from the film". Nobody paid him any attention.

Trailers began evolving during the 1960s thanks to directors like Stanley Kubrick. He hired graphic designer Pablo Ferro, who favoured quick cutting, to edit his *Dr Strangelove* teaser. A decade later the Kubrick influence was still evident with the release of the original *Star Wars* trailer. Despite having a traditional voiceover, the majority of the trailer was composed of short clips taken out of context that gave a flavour of the film without giving away any plot points.

Today, most trailers have evolved into highly polished mini-movies told in three acts. The first act lays the premise, the second drives that along and the third act has a dramatic climax containing a strong piece of music and a visual montage of emotionally powerful moments. Best recent examples of this are the trailers for the Oscar winning *Green Book* and the Kiera Knightley romance *The Aftermath*. Both stand up to repeated viewing, capturing your imagination in the first few frames and using music to create heart tugging dramatic effect.

Hollywood-based firms such as The Ant Farm, Aspect Ratio, Trailer Park and Flyer Entertainment are the current main players of trailer production. These firms often work in a state of top secrecy as the studios making the big blockbusters – think Marvel's *Avengers: End Game* (2019) which earned \$1.2 billion worldwide in its first four days of release – are reluctant to reveal the contents of their multi million pound products until opening night. Employees at these firms have to sign non-disclosure agreements and surrender their mobile phones before beginning work. With trailers now getting a billion hits on social media as well as being seen in cinemas, it's a highly lucrative business. It's also a competitive one that is reflected annually in the Clio Key Art awards, presented by *The Hollywood Reporter* and the Golden Trailer Awards.



Original 35mm trailers. Each trailer was surrounded by a coloured band denoting the certificate of the teaser. Green meant [U], yellow was [PG], orange indicated [12A] and white denoted [15].

Two of the most legendary names in the world of trailer production are John Beal and Don La Fontaine. Beal was born in 1947 and is a composer who has scored over 2,000 trailers including those for *JFK*, *Titanic*, *Black Rain* and *The Hunt for Red October*. He's been a regular

award winner for his original trailer compositions. Voice-over artist Don La Fontaine had a career spanning forty years until his death in 2008 at the age of 68. He narrated over 5,000 trailers and at his peak he would record thirty a day. He was nicknamed 'Thunder Throat' and 'The Voice of God' and claimed his favourite work was for David Lynch's *The Elephant Man* (1980).

Most trailers run to around two and a half minutes – that's roughly 250 feet if you're using good old 35mm film. This complies with the maximum length approved by the Motion Picture Association of America. In January 2014 the National Association of Theatre Owners unexpectedly asked film distributors to limit trailers to a maximum time of no more than two minutes. It's been a request that has been largely ignored if you check out the length in minutes of current trailers.

As trailers are often released while the film is still in production, the footage will be taken from the dailies. This means scenes in the trailer might not make it into the finished film. Even when this isn't the case, trailers can suggest a misleading take on a film. The teaser for *Mother!* (2017) starring Jennifer Lawrence, hinted at an edge-of-your-seat horror flick but the released film was an overwrought parable devoid of tension. When an American woman believed that the stylish *Drive* (2011) starring the commanding Ryan Gosling and Carey Mulligan, did not live up to the promise suggested by the trailer she filed a law suit against the makers. Sanity was restored when she lost the case.



The importance of trailers to the success of a film has increased with the advent of social media. The age of only being able to see a trailer if you made it to your cinema seat in time is long gone. Today, trailers can be viewed at any time and as many times as you want, on your phone, tablet or laptop. But the way trailers are viewed at your local cinema has also changed in the past couple of decades. Trailers were once shown for films that would be playing at that particular cinema. The tag 'Friday for Seven Days' would not only introduce what was playing next week but would also be the final trailer before the main presentation. Nowadays that is no longer the case. The trailer package is now preceded by wording explaining that the following trailers are suitable for the film you're about to watch – and doesn't necessarily mean the forthcoming film you're getting excited about will even open at the cinema you're sat inside.

This trend began when I was still a projectionist at the Odeon Portsmouth (Andrew Mather, 1936) almost twenty years ago. As that was a time when 35mm was still king – just. It also meant I could largely ignore Odeon's official trailer policy that was e-mailed each week from Head Office and show trailers for films that our site was actually booked to play. This course of action didn't impress the management team of Odeon Portsmouth but as somebody who had honed his craft at a cinema where those 'Coming Soon' tags were as important a part of a show as opening and closing the tabs, I simply ignored their tantrums and concentrated on advertising the future attractions of our site. I was always of the opinion that our loyal, regular patrons were more important than the out-of-touch Suits at Head Office. Such rebellious behaviour, of course, would not be possible today when trailer packages are digitally prepared off site and projectionists, to the relief of many managers, are but a distant memory!

Every projection team had their own unique way of preparing trailer packages. When I transferred to the Odeon Portsmouth I introduced a method that had been handed down to me at the ABC Cosham (RA Thomas, 1934). Next to my main rewind bench I screwed a numbered



The author preparing a trailer reel at his rewind bench in February 2007. Note the Perspex board and the numbered trailer boxes.

This was in the projection box for screens 2 & 3 at the Odeon Portsmouth, which was situated at the rear of the former stalls, under the former balcony. The original stalls coving is being used as a shelf to store film cans above the rewind bench. These film cans contained 'Coming Soon' tags and Orange adverts amongst other odds'n'ends.

Perspex board onto the wall and placed numbered trailer boxes neatly along the rear of the bench. The name of the film being advertised was then entered onto the board with a chinagraph pencil and the trailer placed into the appropriate numbered box. It was a remarkably simple idea that was remarkably effective. Although we only had four screens that could still mean eight films a week and the cutting and splicing of thirty or more trailers every seven days. Each trailer package had to be timed to the exact second and this was done by running it through a film counter. Before we opened for the day, I would often run trailer packages through the projector as well so I could watch and time them in a deserted auditorium – one of the few perks of being a trailer-loving projectionist.

Not all projection teams were so diligent about preparing trailers. I remember one projectionist at an ABC cinema that will remain nameless, who continued to screen trailers for films already played and sent back. Apparently, the removal of out-of-date trailers meant less time in the local pub.

I'm not sure when my fondness for trailers began. Perhaps it was in 1973 when at a matinée performance for Disney's animated tale of *Robin Hood*, there was a [U] certificate trailer for *Magnum Force*, the sequel to *Dirty Harry* (1971). As I was just seven years old at the time I had no idea who the great Clint Eastwood was. But I do remember laughing very loudly – and being told to be quiet – as to why a man named Harry would be called dirty! Nowadays a trailer for a tough thriller would be considered inappropriate before a family film but as long as the trailer has the same certificate as the feature it's a great way of engaging bored adults forced to take their kids to the flicks.

The anticipation a trailer can deliver can be addictive and I've certainly sought out a film just on the basis of 120 seconds of well-edited teasing. The adverts might bore us senseless but the trailers are something we just can't live without. As that Odeon introduction to their trailer policy says: "I love the trailers!"



ISLE OF MAN CINEMAS

By Gavin McGrath

CASTLETOWN

The **Cosy Cinema** in Mill Street began life as a roller-skating rink built by the Cubbon Brothers and was adapted for cinema use in 1930. It was taken over by the Ramsey Amusements Company in 1936 and became known as the **Pavilion**. It closed around 1959 but was reopened in June 1963 as the **Royal** by the Neston Cinema Company. This was short-lived however and it is believed to have closed in June the following year. The building was later a factory for a company called **Strix** but it was demolished in 1993.

DOUGLAS



The **Broadway Cinema** is part of the refurbished **Villa Marina** complex on Harris Promenade. It opened in April 2004 following refurbishment of the complex and has 154 seats. The **Villa** itself was a conversion of a private mansion and opened in July 1913 and now comprises a concert hall, theatre, the **Dragon's Castle** children's play area and the **Villa Marina Arcade** with an ice-cream parlour and restaurant. The centrepiece of the Marina is the **Royal Hall** with its Edwardian grandeur and state-of-the-art lighting and sound systems. It hosts darts and boxing tournaments along with concerts. The complex is government-owned and run.

Fred Buxton built **Buxton's Picturedrome**, part of the **Pierrot Village**, on the Central Promenade in 1910, which he disposed of shortly before his death in 1920. The whole site was sold off to the Palace and Derby Castle Company and the cinema was renamed the **Crescent Picture House**. The company erected a new pavilion next to the cinema, where pictures could be screened, believed to have been an interim measure while arrangements for a super cinema were drawn up to replace the **Picture House**. The **Crescent Pavilion** hence opened in July 1923 and was constructed mainly of timber. It was demolished in the 1960s and replaced with an amusement arcade.



The new **Crescent Cinema** [photo bottom previous column] opened in June 1930 and was built on the site of the old **Crescent Picture House**. It was designed by local firm **Lomas and Barrett** with the façade in faience and a balustrade around the roof. The auditorium had a somewhat medieval appearance with around 1,960 seats. It was owned by the **Palace and Derby Castle Company** and lasted until the 1970s. Following the end of films the building was home to a waxworks exhibition hall and had a fitness centre upstairs. In 1999 plans for a pub were blocked and the building was given protected status in 2001. However the site was redeveloped in 2008 and is now occupied by apartments, with the façade of the cinema retained and integrated into the new build.



The **Empire Electric Theatre** in Regent Street opened as the **Bijou Theatre** in May 1893 and was later the **Mona Theatre** featuring **Dysons Pictures** and a **Myriorama**. The hall was situated above shops and was renamed the **Empire Theatre** when **Charles Dare** staged variety acts as the main attraction. It became a full-time cinema in 1913 and was renamed accordingly but only lasted until 1929, deciding not to convert to talking pictures. Shops still occupy the ground floor but the hall itself appears to be empty having once housed an Indian restaurant.



The **Gaiety Theatre** on Harris Promenade opened as the **Pavilion Theatre of Varieties** in July 1893. It was designed by **William J RENNISON** but initially struggled and was sold at auction. It was later reconstructed by **Frank Matcham** and was reopened as the **Gaiety Theatre and Opera House** in July 1900 by the **Palace and Derby Castle Company**. The first show was the musical *Telephone Girl*. The façade is in Italian Renaissance style with the interior combining elements of Baroque and Elizabethan décor. Cinema equipment was installed in the 1920s to allow films to be screened alongside the staple plays and variety shows. Following World War II it went over to full-time cinema use, which continued until the Manx government took it over in 1971 at a cost of £41,000. Restoration began in 1976 and was completed in time for its Centenary celebrations. It now stages productions by local companies and touring productions of musicals, drama and opera and forms a part of the **Villa-Gaiety** complex together with the **Villa Marina**. Tours are available every Saturday in the summer season and the theatre is Grade II listed.



The New Regal Cinema in Victoria Street was originally the Grand Theatre, first built in 1882 to the designs of WJ Rennison on the Aquarium and Baths site and then rebuilt in 1888 using Ernest Long and Frank Matcham. Alfred Hemmings bought out the lease and had it rebuilt again courtesy of Huon Matear in 1900. The building was renamed the Grand Picturedrome around 1909, presumably having gone over to film and was later run by Fred Buxton, owner of the Pierrot Pavilion. It was acquired by the Palace and Derby Castle Company in 1920 and later became known as the Grand Cinema. It was remodelled by local firm Lomas and Barrett as a super cinema and reopened as the New Regal in June 1935. The auditorium seated over 1,200 patrons and had a Compton 3-Manual/6-Ranks organ installed. CinemaScope was installed in the mid-1950s when the cinema was equipped with a BTH sound system. Later life saw the cinema operating during the summer months only but it did survive until 1983. It was later demolished and replaced with Celtic House.



The Palace Cinema just off the Central Promenade occupies the old Opera House and is all that is left of the old Palace Pavilion complex. The 293-seat screen ① is in the old stalls area and the 95-seat Screen ② in the former crush hall along with the foyer. The cinema opened in May 1988 and has digital projection and 3D capability with Screen ① fitted with Dolby Digital Surround Sound. Plans for a third screen in 1998 never materialised. It was temporary closed in 2003 owing to cliff subsidence and refurbished in September 2011. The Coliseum part of the complex was demolished in 1965 for the Palace Hotel and the ballroom in 1994 for an extension to the Casino. The cinema is run by the Sefton Group.

The Pierrot Pavilion on Central Promenade, run by Fred Buxton, had a small cinema operation going from July 1923 on what appears to be an interim measure while the new Crescent cinema was being built next door. The Pavilion was sold off in 1962 and the site became an amusement arcade. Like the cinema next door this was demolished for apartments.



The Piazza Cinema opened as the Summerland Cinema in October 1988 in the leisure centre of the same name on Strathallan Crescent. The centre, opened in 1978, occupied the site of the old Summerland complex that was destroyed by fire in August 1973. The first film to be shown in the 200-seat auditorium is believed to have been *Crocodile Dundee*. The cinema closed in 2004 as a result of the centre needing substantial repairs to continue. The centre was demolished in 2007.



The Picture House in Strand Street opened in July 1921 (one source states 1922) with seating in stalls and circle. Designed by Harold J Shepherd, it was also equipped with a Jardine 2-Manual/16-stop organ although this was later replaced with a Compton. The island's first talkie, *Movietone Follies of 1929*, was shown here in November 1930 with a Western Electric sound system in place. The cinema was enlarged three years later and had a refurbishment carried out in the mid-1960s. Originally a Strand Cinema Theatre Company house it was taken over by the Palace and Derby Castle Company in 1945. In later life it screened films in the evenings only and eventually just during the summer months. It finally closed in May 1988 and was later demolished. It was replaced with a retail outlet, currently occupied by Superdrug, which is faced with a timber-style façade replicating the original.





The Royalty Cinema in Walpole Street, designed by Harry Lomas, was built on the site of the Pier Pavilion and opened in June 1927. The frontage consisted of granite columns along with glazed white terracotta and the auditorium, slightly Atmospheric in appearance, had seating for almost 1,200 in stalls and circle. It was built for and operated by the Palace and Derby Castle Company, who had a hand in most of the Island's cinema at one point or another. It was later a live theatre staging shows rather than screening films and closed at the end of September 1970. It was later occupied by Chipperton's bathroom store but was demolished in September 1996 for an office block.



The Strand Cinema was the first purpose-built cinema in Douglas and opened in Strand Street in 1913. The 1,050-seater was designed by G Temperley with the façade in white faience tiles with two balconies in the centre and oriels with leaded windows. It was run by the Strand Cinema Theatre Company but taken over by the Palace and Derby Castle Company in 1945, the year a fire took hold in the building. The cinema operation was restricted to the circle only from 1968 with an amusement arcade occupying the stalls. It closed in May 1988 with *Empire of the Sun* the day before the Palace opened. The amusement arcade continued into the 1990s but the cinema was demolished for retail, apart from the façade and the site is now occupied by a TK Maxx store.

ONCHAN



The Avenue Cinema on Royal Avenue opened in June 1936 with *Jack of All Trades* and was designed by Norman Barrett of Lomas and Barrett. The cinema, run by the Onchan Cinema Company, was situated on a sloping site and seated around 875 patrons. It was later renamed the Continental and closed in 1961. In its post-cinema days it was notably occupied by Skillicorn Builders but the site was subsequently cleared and is now occupied by Royal Court housing.

PEEL

The Albert Hall on Peel Promenade was situated in a Baptist Chapel brought from Douglas brick by brick and rebuilt. Saturday matinées were popular here but films ceased when the Pavilion opened in 1923. The building had various uses afterwards but was eventually demolished.



The Pavilion Cinema on Stanley Road opened in July 1923 with 400 seats, a conversion of a grain store and had a ballroom upstairs. It was operated by the Strand Cinema Theatre Company originally, then by the Palace and Derby Castle Company from 1945 but purchased by the local Freemasons in 1961. The Masons continued operating it until closure in September 1968 and then converted the property into a Masonic Hall.

PORT ERIN



The Strand Cinema in Church Road opened in June 1935 and was designed by Harold J Shepherd. It had stadium-style seating for 700 people with a stepped rear section rather than the traditional balcony. CinemaScope came in the 1950s when the sound system was BTH.

Run originally by the Strand Cinema Theatre Company it too passed to the Palace and Derby Castle Company in the 1940s. It closed in 1971 following vandalism and never reopened. A motor museum later occupied the auditorium and it is understood that the owner still keeps his cars inside. There is a selection of businesses along the frontage of the 'Museum Building' including a health food shop.

RAMSEY

The Cinema House on what was then Queen's Pier Road opened in August 1920. It was originally run by the Strand Cinema Theatre Company but bought by the newly-formed Ramsey Amusements in 1931 for £8,250 when silent films were still being shown. It closed in the 1950s and was later a car showroom for Ray Motors but the building no longer survives, having been demolished in 1991.

The Picturedrome was a conversion of the Old Cross Hall, in operation from 1903 when acquired by Billy May. It is believed to have had around 600 seats and was later run by a Tom Dyson but had ceased trading by 1925.



The Plaza Cinema in Albert Street was a conversion of the Palace Concert Hall & Ballroom in 1912, although not renamed until June 1936 when modernised. It was originally owned by the Isle of Man Tramways & Electric Power Co. Ltd but was leased to various businessmen notably Hugo Teare during the Great War. Ramsey Amusements had acquired the business by 1934 and ran it until the town commissioners bought the building in 1972 for £10,440. It was then leased to Mannin Entertainments but closed in June of that year when the last two films to appear in the booking register were *Kidnapped* and *Carry on Matron*. It was then in use as a leisure centre but was demolished in 1990. The site has been a car park ever since.

OPEN AIR AND DRIVE-IN CINEMA

Ultimate Productions are the Island's premier outdoor and drive-in cinema providers. The Home for Rest for Old Horses on Richmond Hill in Douglas hosts regular drive-in events during the winter months with entry for cars being around £25. At Milntown House near Ramsey films were also shown alfresco in 2016 and 2017 with the latter season including *Wonder Woman* and *Top Gun*. Admission to the event was £12 with customers being advised to bring their own chairs.

OTHER VENUES

Speakeasy Cinema has been held at the Bath and Bottle in Victoria Street, Douglas, since at least 2014 and boasts free entry and free popcorn. Films screened during the summer of 2018 included *Heavenly Creatures* and *Black Hawk Down*. The Centenary Centre in Atholl Street, Peel, screens two seasons of films per year and has done so since 2008, hosted solely by volunteers. Films shown in the run up to Christmas 2018 were *Darkest Hour*, *The Farthest* and *Paddington 2*. The Civic Centre in Farrant's Way, Castletown, operates a community cinema with many different films screened throughout the year. In 2017 all three original *Star Wars* films were shown as part of the 40th anniversary of the franchise. Cunningham's Holiday Camp screened free films for campers in the 1920s through to the 1970s when it was known as Douglas Holiday Camp. The J&S Dance Studio in Princes Street, Ramsey, had an 80-seat video cinema running from May 1980 for about six years and films are also known to have been screened at the Laxey Working Mens' Club, now simply 'The Institute', on New Road in Laxey.



The Patchwork Café in Port St Mary screens films under its Cinema Supper Event. On the bill for the summer of 2018 were *I Tonya*, *Lady Bird*, *The Darkest Hour* and *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*. There was also a cinema at RAF Jurby in the north of the Island especially for servicemen. Sundown Cinema screened films with a motorcycle theme in August 2017 in the TT Paddock on Glencrutchery Road, Douglas and again in August 2018 when the slightly more mainstream films *Grease* and *Quadrophenia* were included. Victoria Hall on Prospect Hill, Douglas, built in 1862, is also believed to have screened films. Last but not least, Ultimate Productions screened the 1975 Steven Spielberg classic *Jaws* at the Western Swimming Pool in Peel. The company provided rubber rings, lilos and even dinghies for people to watch the film afloat.

ISLE OF MAN FILM FESTIVAL

Every September the island plays host to this Festival, which started in 2012, with screenings spread across various venues on the island. Apart from using the Broadway Cinema films have been screened at Mother T's Community Centre in Laxey, at the old Douglas Head Amphitheatre, which hosted *The Goonies* in 2015 and also at Castle Rushen in Castletown, where *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* and *Labyrinth* were shown in 2016. Fabian Riggall, founder of Secret Cinema, had his Future Shorts programme of internationally acclaimed short films making an appearance at the Festival in 2015.

PROPOSED CINEMAS

A £25 million development for the centre of Douglas, featuring a hotel and cinema, was given the go-ahead in February this year. The plans, which were submitted in August 2018, include provision for a car park, private apartments and retail outlets. The building would occupy the site of the former bus depot in Lord Street, overlooking the quayside, which has been used as a car park since 2002. According to reports contracts have been exchanged between the developers, Travelodge and Omniplex cinemas, with construction expected to take two years.

THE PALACE AND DERBY CASTLE COMPANY

The Palace (Douglas, Isle of Man) Ltd was set up in 1890 and headed by John Brown, the proprietor of a local newspaper, to manage the Palace complex consisting of the Palace Pavilion and Opera House. In 1898 it merged with the Derby Castle Company, set up in 1878, the Marina Pavilion and the Falcon Cliff Company to become the Palace and Derby Castle Company Ltd. The Grand Theatre and the Palace Coliseum were later added to the inventory. The Derby Castle complex itself became run down by the 1960s and was sold to the Douglas Corporation, who had it demolished and replaced by Summerland, which opened in 1972. The Palace Cinema is the only remaining building of the group to survive.

The CTA visited the Island in 2004 – see p5-8 Bulletin 38/6.

Photos courtesy of: David Simpson (Broadway); Unknown (Crescent, New Regal, Piazza, Picture House, Royalty and Avenue); Cinema Theatre Association (Plaza) and Gavin McGrath (all others).*

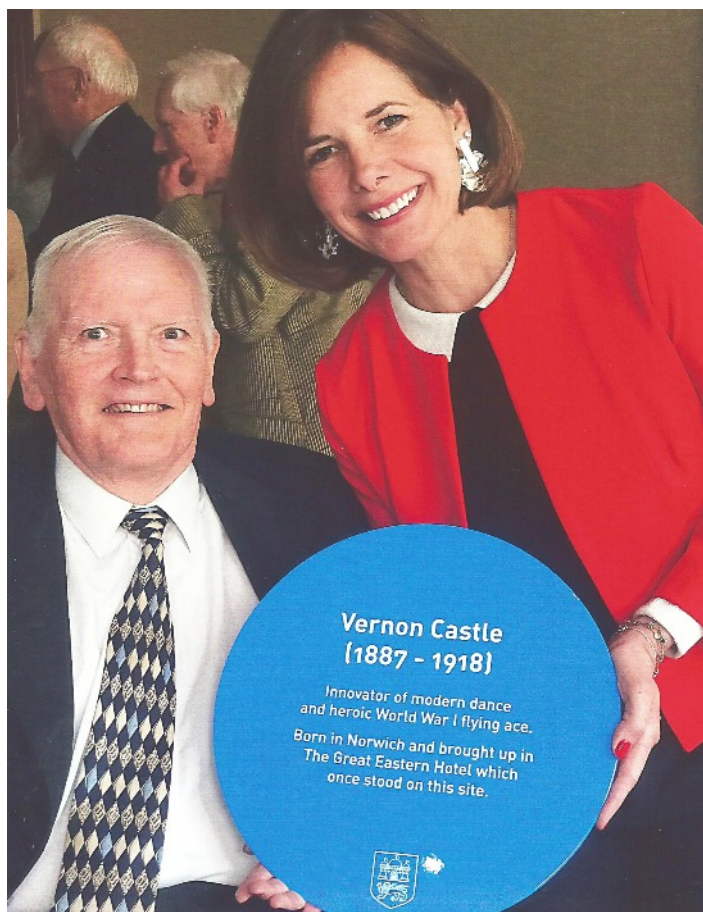
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REGAL STORIES

News from The **Regal** Experience Group at Wymondham, Norfolk who show classic films at the town's former **Regal** Cinema.

By Michael Armstrong

On Sunday 19 October 2008 we showed *The Story of Vernon and Irene Castle* starring Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers and we were lucky in having Fred Astaire's daughter, Ava Astaire McKenzie, attend the show as our guest. Following this, Philip Yaxley, publicist and historian of our Group, researched the history of the famous couple and found that Vernon Castle, who was not only a famous dancer but also a First World War pilot was born and bred in Norwich, which is about ten miles from Wymondham. He lived with his parents in a Hotel on the Prince of Wales Road in Norwich, the site of which is now occupied by Premier Inn's Nelson Hotel. After much negotiation with the Norwich City Council, Philip Yaxley and Derek James, a freelance Newspaper reporter, eventually got the City Council to agree to erect a blue plaque in memory of Vernon Castle on the wall of the Nelson Hotel. Philip's Daughter Joanne, who is a *Strictly Come Dancing* fan, suggested to her father that he should ask Dame Darcy Bussell whether she would like to unveil the plaque and she readily agreed.



Michael Armstrong with Dame Darcy Bussell and the plaque

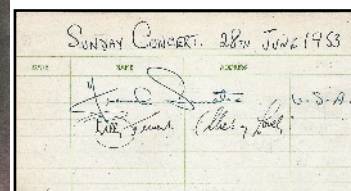
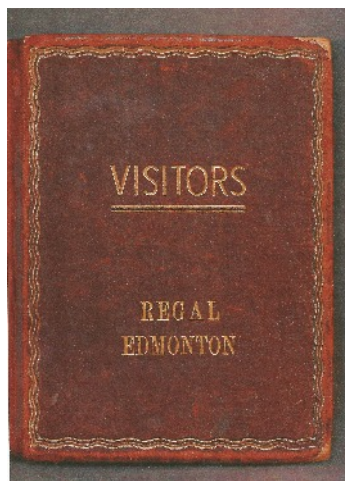
The **Regal** Experience Group agreed to pay for the plaque and the ceremony subsequently took place on 30 April 2019. Philip had managed to trace relatives of Vernon Castle and they were invited to the event together with Dame Darcy, the **Regal** Experience Group, Derek James and Council officials. Ava Astaire McKenzie was also invited to attend but unfortunately due to ill health was unable to do so but wished the event every success, which it was.

As well as contributing towards the plaque the **Regal** Experience were pleased to pay for the restoration of an old piano, which had been donated to the Wymondham Heritage Museum. The piano had been used for silent films at the old Picture Theatre Wymondham, which opened in 1917 and closed in 1940 as it was not able to compete with the new luxury **Regal** Cinema that had been built in the town and opened in 1937. The Museum is now using the piano once again for entertainment and tea on a Sunday afternoon.



We are continuing to attract new patrons to our shows from outside Wymondham. A couple who now regularly visit each show are David and Marjorie Daniels from Edmonton in London. They are a lovely couple who are dedicated to 'cinema', both having formerly worked at the **Regal** Edmonton. They tell us that they take the CTA Bulletin and read about one of our open day events, which prompted them to come some three years ago. They said that with the name 'Regal' they felt at home straight away. They are now friends of the Group and when they attend each show Marjorie, who was a former show girl, dresses up as a character from the film being shown. She is also the Usherette selling ice-cream from the original **Regal** tray and wears an Eldorado apron. Eldorado ice-creams were formerly sold at the **Regal** up to its first closure in 1962. At Christmas Marjorie kindly knitted bedsocks for some elderly people from a local home and they were delighted to meet her and receive the socks. David helps with clearing the chairs after the show. David and Marjorie both tell us that they have led a 'Regal' life and it is great to now be involved with another **Regal**.

Marjorie started tap-dancing lessons aged four years and went to dancing schools. She left school aged fourteen years and saw an advert in *The Stage* paper, which took her to Mac's Rehearsal Rooms in Great Newport Street, London and passed an audition as a chorus girl. Whilst at Mac's Rehearsal Rooms she met Band Leader Ivy Benson. Her first stage appearance was a pantomime, which ran for four weeks at the Alex Gardens Theatre Weymouth, when she was paid £6 per week. The star of the pantomime was Sandy Powell's son Peter Powell. When she was fifteen Marjorie was in a show run by Bruce Forsyth's father Brian Forsyth Johnson and when Bruce attended a rehearsal Marjorie had the pleasure of dancing with him. Following this Marjorie then went to Llanelli in South Wales for six weeks and was a soubrette chorus girl on the large stage of a cinema there. David and Marjorie did go back to visit some years later but found it had been demolished. From there Marjorie went on tour with shows, for which most of the venues were cinemas or halls.



The Visitors' book from the **Regal** Edmonton and the page with Frank Sinatra's autograph



The Regal Edmonton showing *Genevieve* in about 1953

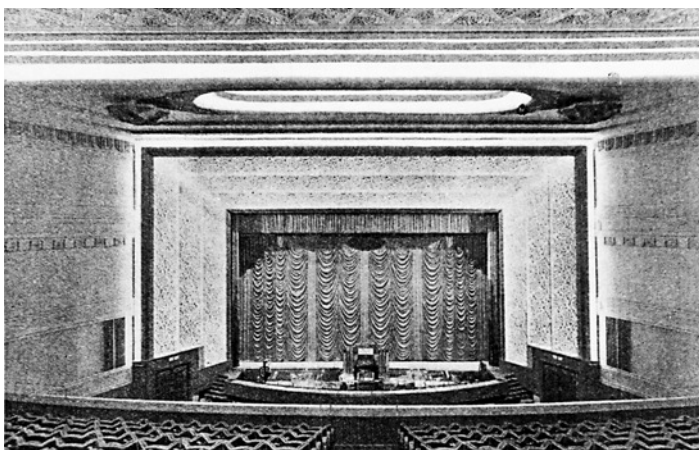
and had two children. The cinema closed in 1972 showing *Chato's Land*. Following the closure David and Marjorie constantly kept an eye on the building and although it showed some films again for about four months in 1974, it was subsequently sold and demolished. Luckily David was able to salvage a number of items that had been thrown into a skip. The most important find was the Regal's Visitors Book, which contained a wealth of signatures of stars who had performed at the venue. One of these was Frank Sinatra, who had a concert on 28 June 1953; the photo [bottom previous column] shows his signature in the book. In addition there were a number of old signs and David has constructed a cinema room at his home to house these, along with a 35mm projector.



[L] Marjorie dressed as Marilyn Monroe for the film *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* at the Regal Wymondham
[R] David threading the final reel of film shown at the Regal Edmonton in July 1972

They were pleased to attend in London the screening of the film *The Final Reel* as it featured myself, Les King and the Regal Wymondham in the story of cinemas in Norfolk. They say it was a very successful event. It was narrated by the late Sir John Hurt and Les and I felt very honoured to have been included.

David and Marjorie have enjoyed their 'Regal' life and we are only too pleased that they have now become part of our Regal life and enjoy being 'part of the show'.



The interior of the Regal Edmonton – photo courtesy Dusashenka

From the Weekly Herald – 11 August 1972

Once films took over – now the live show is on the way back.
The Regal Edmonton, a showman's palace
where Frank Sinatra once entertained

I don't think they noticed me but the other week I stood on the stage of the Regal Edmonton, with the members of the Royal Ballet. The reason I mention that is not to do a bit of name dropping but to make the point that the stage of the Regal can, in fact, accommodate the Royal Ballet and still leave room for the members to dance. The Regal, which has just closed for conversion into a Sundown entertainment centre, is a showman's palace, big and grand, with a somewhat imposing façade and secret parts hidden in its vast belly, which audiences never see.

The statistics of the place speak for themselves. It was laid out in 1937, reputedly with the largest stage of any theatre in Europe: 65 feet wide, 46 feet deep and 76 feet high. This allows the screen to 'fly' above the performers' heads during live shows. The auditorium can seat 2,500, although this will change now that the builders are in. There are no fewer than 800 doors. Stan Boxall has been chief technician at the Regal since 1956 but he has been in the Tottenham Palace, Wood Green Odeon, Stamford Hill Odeon and other places for 44 years, and he remembers the Regal from its early days. It was built as a combined cinema-variety theatre, a role to which it is about to revert. The first live shows only lasted two to three years. "The war meant the end of them, although the place stayed open throughout the war as a cinema."



The Regal has, of course, remained primarily a cinema ever since, with only occasional stage shows. Frank Sinatra, the Rolling Stones, Bill Haley and Cliff Richard have all performed there; so have the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. More recent concerts have featured The Spinners and the New Seekers. When the New Seekers appeared they were allocated the three-star dressing rooms just along the corridor from the Music Library, a room long since emptied of music sheets. For performers less notable there are 30 more dressing rooms behind the stage. Designed for three people, each is a neat, functional little room, with mirrors, wall-lights, chairs and not much else. When the Royal Ballet occupied these rooms, packets of Elastoplast, ballet shoes, aerosol cans of pain-relieving skin-spray, make-up and lemonade bottles were scattered over the dressing tables and everywhere there were

costumes, over 750 of them, which a small staff of ladies were feverishly ironing in a crowded corner of the building. Down another stairway and without quite knowing how, you find yourself in an opening that leads to the giant gantry that carries the turntable section of the stage (yes the Regal has a revolving stage too).

This is the twilight world of the behind-the-scenes man. In closer contact with the nervous excitement on and around the stage is the technician who operates the six rows of 12 heavy levers that control the stage lighting. They share their place in the wings with a mass of theatrical litter, a scenery dock and some 50 'tracks' – ropes and pulleys from which hang lines of overhead lights, curtains and scenery. "If I were to drop dead this minute it wouldn't matter a damn," said theatre manager Jeff Way. "But if anything was to happen to the chief technician and his assistants, I don't know what we'd do. No-one else knows how to work this lot." The chief and his assistants are also in charge of the projection box, a quite spacious room as pre-war boxes go and strikingly free of the debris that is in such evidence at the opposite end of the theatre. For all its ordered veneer, however, the box is still run by the chief and his men, with an enthusiasm that is fired in the blood. But then that's the essence of show business.

MISCELLANY

BEATLES POSTER



A quad [30inx40in] poster for The Beatles' appearance at the ABC Carlisle on 21 November 1963 sold for £23,812 at a Bonham's auction in London on 12 June. Other items in the Entertainment Memorabilia sale included George Harrison's guitar and John Lennon's original handwritten lyrics for *I'm In Love*. Full results at [tinyurl.com/yv5hguj].

The Times – 7 June; sent in by Barry Quinton

FILM-GOER DIES AFTER HEAD TRAPPED UNDER SEAT

Ateeq Rafiq [24] had dropped his keys in the Gold Class reclining seats at the Vue in Birmingham's Star City. As he knelt down to search for them, the leg rest came down, trapping him for 15 minutes. He suffered a cardiac arrest and died a week later from his injuries. The seats are fitted with pressure sensors, meaning the controls only work when someone sits down. If they get up, the headrest and leg rest are meant to return to the vertical position after four seconds and stay there. However, this seat had "blown a fuse".

Metro – 17 May;
sent in by Carl Chesworth, Gavin McGrath, Tom Laughan & R David Simpson

WORLD'S WIDEST SCREEN

A 38m wide 22m high IMAX screen is due to open in 2020 at the Traumpalast in Leonberg near Stuttgart in south-west Germany. The new record holder will surpass previous huge screens in China and Australia. Their website [leonberg.traumpalast.de – in German] suggests the cinema has at present ten screens all with Dolby Atmos. The current widest screen is a mere 12m so where will they put the new one? Wikipedia list the population of Leonberg as just 45,000!

Hollywood Reporter – 10 April; *Intergame* – 11 April; sent in by Carl Chesworth

GIANT TV SCREEN

If Samsung's 146-inch TV, most popularly known as 'The Wall', was not enough, the tech giant now is planning to introduce a bigger version of the TV, featuring an 8k display. Starting at only 73-inches and 1080p, the MicroLED technology allows the TV to be customized at any size, scaling up to 292-inches; this size goes over 24ft in the diagonal. With a depth less than 30mm, the slim, bezel-less infinity design along with customisable décor frames allows the display to blend seamlessly into its surroundings. The Wall Luxury will be available globally this July, however, Samsung didn't detail the pricing!

Business Recorder – 13 June

TOP TEN BEST AND WORST JOBS

Experts at the World Economic Forum forecast 133 million new jobs will be created globally by 2022 as a result of technology and automation. At the same time 75 million jobs will be lost as lower-tech jobs are eliminated. App developers, physicians' assistants and marketing research analysis are among the top jobs of the future but projectionists, factory workers and watch repairers are on the way out. With fewer people going to the movies, projectionists have a projected -6.4% job growth and an average salary of \$22,048. Paper hangers – the people who hang wallpaper and billboard advertisements – have a projected -12.6% job growth and an average salary of \$30,499.

Mail Online – 9 January; sent in by Carl Chesworth

007 EXPLOSION

A crew member was injured during filming at Pinewood of the 25th James Bond film, which has not yet been named. A planned explosion went wrong and also ripped off sections of the roof and walls. They were filming a scene where a fireball rips through a laboratory. This is the latest in a series of problems to hit the movie, after star Daniel Craig injured his ankle on location in Jamaica earlier this year. Original director Danny Boyle pulled out over "creative differences" with studio bosses. The hiccups contributed to the original release date of October being pushed back to April 2020.

In a separate incident, a spy camera was found in the ladies' loo at the studios. A 49-year-old man has been arrested on suspicion of voyeurism.

Metro – 5 June; *Daily Express* – 22 June; sent in by Tom Laughan & Barry Quinton

SPRAYS USED TO DISINFECT CINEMAS

These sprays were used to dispense a very delightful perfumed disinfectant made by Gosssmiths and identified as 'June'. This mixed with tobacco smoke to produce a characteristic fragrance associated with 'Picture Palaces'. The essence used to be supplied in one-gallon cans to be diluted with 10% to 90% water and loaded into the spray, which was then pumped up to a working pressure. A member of staff then walked slowly backwards down the gangway with the outlet valve of the spray open and a fine mist of perfume was then dispensed throughout the auditorium. The essence cost 10/- a gallon but if the theatre agreed to show an advertising slide, the price was reduced to 8/6d. The slide depicted a silhouette of a crinoline lady in green with a blue background and the lettering stated: "June, a perfume which you may purchase from all chemists."

I clearly recall that on one occasion, when I was relieving the manager of the Elite St Leonards, I loaded the spray and pumped it a little too enthusiastically. The filler plug, which had a very worn screw thread, shot out under pressure and the 'June' discharged all over me and my dinner jacket. Although I went home and had a bath and had my suit cleaned, I was jocularly referred to as smelling like a "pox doctor's clerk" (an old cinema expression) for several days afterwards.

Amusing reminiscences from the late Dennis E Williams by letter to Martin Tapsell in 1987

BOOK AWARD



Scala Cinema 1978-1993 (profiled in Bulletin 52/6 p4), the comprehensive account of this iconic cinema and the equally iconic Scala Cinema Club, has been judged Best Moving Image Book (from over 40 candidates) at the prestigious Kraszna-Krausz Book Awards 2019. CTA member David Simpson was one of the 'Scala Angels' who supported publication: he is third from left, with author Jane Giles fourth from left and publisher Harvey Fenton fourth from right, celebrating the £5,000 cash prize awarded at the Royal Society of Arts in May.

Sent in by David Simpson

LATVIAN PIG FARM FINDS NEW LIFE AS MOVIE THEATRE

A former pig farm in Latvia has been converted into a cinema and museum in the Vecpiebalga municipality, bearing the name *Film Farm*. The outside of the building resembles a regular kolkhoz-era farmhouse. The interior, however, is furnished with 50 seats from the now defunct cinema in Cēsis and an authentic 16mm movie projector, evoking the ambience of Soviet-era film screenings in country clubs and cinemas.

LSM.LV [Latvian Public Broadcasting] – 10 June

CINEMA BUSINESS

TICKET PRICES

In 2018 the price of a UK cinema ticket fell for the first time in 17 years to an average of £7.22.

The Guardian – 8 June

MOVIES FOR A FIVER

The cinema ticket price war in Portsmouth between Odeon and Vue (where tickets are £5 and £4.99 respectively) is going well for the Odeon Port Solent. During the 2019 May half term, the 29-year-old six-screen multiplex attracted over 19,000 admissions, more than 12,000 more than would normally be expected.

Sent in by Mike Whitcombe

HOLLYWOOD BANKBUSTER

	Vue	Odeon	Cineworld
Birmingham	£5.74	£5.75	£11.30
Bristol	£5.74	£5.75	£6.20
Cardiff	£4.75	£5.75	£5.20
Edinburgh	£6.74	£11.25	£11.70
Manchester	£5.74	£6.75	£12.10

Film fans are facing a postcode lottery with cinema tickets more than twice the price in some cities compared with others. The cheapest tickets are in Cardiff where the Vue charged £4.75, including a 75p booking fee. However a ticket for the same film at the same time at the Odeon Mansfield [Notts] is £13.25, including the 75p booking fee, more than twice the price. Child tickets at cinemas also vary, costing £4.75 and £10.75 respectively. Even when visiting the same chain, prices still differ, depending on location. At the Odeon in Birmingham New Street it is £5.75 compared with the £13.25 in Mansfield.

Daily Mail – 11 May; sent in by Carl Chesworth, Tom Laughlan & Barry Quinton

JAPANESE CINEMA TICKET PRICE INCREASE

The price of a standard ticket in Japanese cinemas is going up for the first time in 26 years. The price was raised on 1 June from ¥1,800 to ¥1,900 (£13.85). The multiplex chain Toho was the first to announce the increase, citing factors including building costs for new cinemas, the expense of installing new technology and anti-earthquake measures. Another major chain said it would follow suit but two others said they would not raise their prices. However, a complex system of discounts mean that the full ticket price is rarely paid, with the average ticket costing around ¥1,300 in 2017.

The Guardian – 10 June; sent in by Carl Chesworth

AVENGERS SET TO SMASH FILM RECORD

The new *Avengers: Endgame* movie earned \$2bn [£1.52bn] at the box office eleven days after its release and now looks set to unseat the 2009 hit *Avatar* as the biggest earner ever. It took *Avatar* 47 days to reach the \$2bn mark. *Titanic* from 1997 grossed just under \$2.2bn but it did not pass the \$2bn mark until April 2012, when a 3D version was released to mark the 100th anniversary of the sinking.

Daily Mail – 6 May; sent in by Barry Quinton

CINEWORLD

Cineworld's profits more than doubled last year to \$349m [£262.2m] (pre-tax) compared with \$155.1m a year earlier. Box office sales accounted for about 60% of the revenue; the remainder came from food and drink. It was a slow start this year – revenues fell 9.4% between January and May but record breaking sales with the new *Avengers: Endgame* movie helped it remain on track to meet full-year targets.

The chain agreed the sale and leaseback of 18 US sites for \$270m to release cash. Proceeds will be used to pay a special dividend and cut its debts.

The I – 15 March; *Evening Standard* – 13, 15 June;
sent in by Margaret Burgoine & Tom Laughlan

RANK'S BINGO DEAL

Rank Group is close to buying online rival Stride Gaming for £115m. The deal would make the Mecca Bingo owner the second biggest group in online bingo with 18% share of the market. The deal values Stride, which owns such brands as Kitty Bingo, at 151p per share. Stride's stock rocketed 26% while Rank's rose 4.4%.

Daily Mail – 1 June; sent in by Barry Quinton

ORIGINS OF BINGO

Although the exact origins of bingo are somewhat of a mystery, it is widely thought that it began life in Italy, evolving from the Italian Lottery 'Lo Giuoco del Lotto D'Italia'. The game moved from country to country and is understood to have arrived in England in the early 1920s. It soon spread nationwide and has been in play for what is believed to be 100 years. During the early years, bingo mainly featured at fairs and carnivals but following the growth of television in the mid-1950s bingo halls soon started replacing cinemas.

Grimsby Live – 16 June; UK Bingo website

POPCORN SHORTAGE

Several London branches of Picturehouse, including the flagship in Piccadilly Circus, ran out of popcorn on the first weekend of May, the opening weekend of *Avengers: Endgame*. Supplies were replenished the next day.

Daily Express – 7 May; sent in by Margaret Burgoine

ROCKETMAN BANNED IN SAMOA

The Elton John biopic *Rocketman* has been banned in Samoa because of its depiction of homosexuality. The censor said that representations of gay sex went against the beliefs of the Pacific nation, where gay sex is a crime punishable by up to seven years in prison.

Metro – 12 June; sent in by Tom Laughlan

GRANT AWARDS



The Victoria Theatre Salford in October 2005

Six endangered theatres have been awarded a share of £90,000 from the Theatres Trust's Theatres at Risk Capacity Building Programme. The Peterborough New Theatre – formerly the Broadway (ex Odeon) will receive £7,500 to fund a ceiling void structural inspection while Salford's Victoria Theatre will get £21,600 for a viability study to determine whether it can be restored for performance. Others awarded funding include the Spilsby Theatre in Lincolnshire, Swindon's Mechanics' Institute, the Morecambe Winter Gardens and the Empire in Burnley.

The latter has also been awarded £44,000 from the National Lottery. Campaigners for refurbishment of the Grade II listed building bought it for £1 in December last year. The grant will be used to develop a better understanding of the building's condition, look at viable future uses, establish a charitable organisation to support the refurbishment and provide trustee training for those managing the project. The 1,200 seat Empire is the last surviving Edwardian theatre in east Lancashire and has been disused for 20 years.

The Stage – 19 April, 30 May; sent in by Barry Quinton

THE PARAMOUNT NEWCASTLE

By David A Ellis

The Paramount, later the Odeon Newcastle was described as the north's most elaborate cinema and was officially opened on Monday 7 September 1931 with the film *Monte Carlo*. There was also a stage presentation by Francis A Mangan: *The Ladder of Roses*. The cost to build this magnificent theatre was approximately £250,000, a tremendous sum back then. The architect was Frank Thomas Verity, FRIBA, in association with his partner Samuel Beverley FRIBA. Verity designed many cinemas, including the Paramount in Paris and the Paramount, later Odeon Manchester.

The proscenium width was fifty-four foot wide and thirty foot deep. One of the attractions was the Wurlitzer three manual, nineteen rank theatre organ, which was removed in 1964. Seating was for 2,604 and a report in the *Bioscope* dated 9 September 1931 says: "As far as the seating is concerned, the minutest details have been considered to ensure the perfect comfort of patrons. The chairs have been specially designed following research work over three years. During that time hundreds of X-ray photographs have been taken at the London hospitals to discover in which particular style of chair the maximum comfort can be obtained. Everything, even to the correct curvature of the spine has been carefully considered."

The auditorium was decorated in the style of the Baroque period and the colour scheme consisted of blue, buffs and deep rose tints, with touches of gold, silver and marble Dutch metalling, giving it pleasing colour harmony. Regarding the auditorium, the *Bioscope* said: "It can safely be said that the interior decorations of this huge theatre are among the finest in Europe. All effects have been achieved by free painting on the walls, which has been carried out by special artists from London. All pure decoration as far back as the ancient Egyptian Empire, the Byzantine Empire, the Grecian Empire and the Roman Empire originally took this form."

The building was constructed throughout of steel and concrete and almost fireproof. The press said: "The operating room has been constructed on the roof of the building and is adjoined with the rewinding rooms, rectifying room and generating room. The situation of the operating chamber and the provision of fire shutters render it impossible at any time for fire to get into the auditorium itself. The whole of the projecting room is surrounded by fourteen-inch walls with port-holes of fire-resisting glass. Should an explosion occur, the roof would blow off before the fire reached the auditorium. Western Electric sound apparatus has been installed."

In November 1939 all the Paramount theatres were sold to Odeon. The Newcastle theatre was renamed on 22 April 1940. Many famous stars trod the theatre's boards, including Billy Cotton, Joe Loss and George Formby. In 1954 CinemaScope was installed and in the '70s



a number of pop stars belted out their songs; these included The Who and Rod Stewart.

In 1975, like many others, the cinema was tripled, with 1,228 seats in screen ①, which was in the circle area and had been extended. The stalls

area accommodated screens ② and ③. There were 158 in screen ② and 250 in ③. In 1980, a fourth screen was added, which had room for 361. The building was a Grade II listed building by 1999 and English Heritage said it was the best surviving Paramount cinema in Britain, with a well composed façade and rich interior with Lalique glass fittings.

In 2001 Odeon built a new multiplex in the City and successfully applied to have the cinema de-listed to maximise the site value. The mighty Paramount/Odeon closed in 2002 and remained empty. Demolition began in December 2016. The front of the building collapsed into the street – luckily no-one was hurt. Another fine cinema gone, now only to be seen in photographs.

Photos courtesy Cinema Treasures {3307}



The exterior as the Odeon in October 1998



[L-R] Two views of the original interior, the exterior as the Paramount and screen ① as the Odeon

NEWSREEL

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

Photos by Harry Rigby within entry, except where stated.

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

ADDESTONE (Surrey)

Two youths have caused "extensive damage" to a window of the **Light Cinema** after using a catapult to fire objects at the building. The suspects may have also caused damage to vehicles in the nearby multi-storey car park. Officers are reviewing CCTV footage in an attempt to identify the two culprits. The six-screen cinema only opened in October last year. {58621}

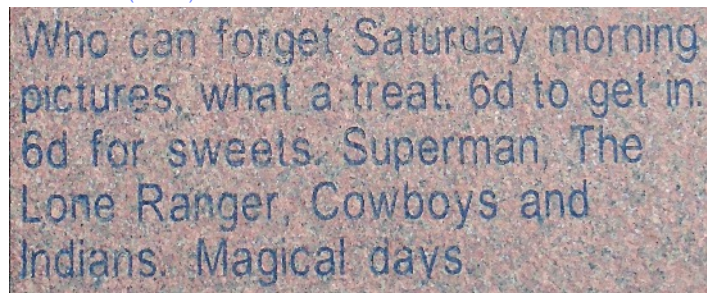
Surrey Live – 16 May

ANNAN (Dumfries & Galloway)

Bingo in the former rear stalls of the **Lonsdale** will close this summer and become a third screen for the cinema; it is expected to have 67 seats. The existing two screens are in the former front stalls and on the stage of the original building and seat 107 and 56. Admissions have risen since the closing of the **Odeon** in Dumfries. The existing bingo foyer entrance on Lady Street (the original cinema entrance), the rest of the rear stalls and the upstairs will be available for rent in the future. See p30 Bulletin 52/6. {17440}

Annandale Observer – 17 May

ASHFORD (Kent)



The Eldwick Place development, which incorporates the six-screen **Picturehouse**, has been nominated for an architectural award. The complex is clad in a gold coloured, anodised aluminium mesh, shaped to wrap up the building from the first floor and in sections to curve around the building's façade. Photos at [tinyurl.com/y5lrsw5j]. The cinema hosted its first dog-friendly screening; the event will continue in the second week of each month. The pavement outside has some memories of local people, known as the Eldwick Etchings [above]. {58936}

Kent Online – 3, 21 May; sent in by Philip Stevens & Martin Tapsell (photo)

Hoardings have been put up at the former **Odeon** to stop vandals climbing onto the roof. The Council bought the building after bingo ceased last year. They want to demolish the auditorium and knock through the entrance to make a pedestrian route to a new public square. The CTA has written to Historic England requesting the building be listed. {14785}

Kent Online – 20 May, 25 June; sent in by Philip Stevens



The Regal Barnstaple

BARNSTAPLE (Devon)

The former **Regal** is up for auction with a guide price of £225,000. It opened in August 1937 with 1,122 seats and closed in May 1982. It was then used as a snooker club and for retail but latterly as a nightclub. {34934}

Devon Live – 27 April; photo [bottom previous column] taken June 2018

BIRKENHEAD (Wirral)



A fire destroyed the roof of the former **Empire / Essoldo / Classic / Cannon** on 24 April. An investigation into the cause is taking place. The remains of the building were deemed structurally unsafe and the site was cleared. The cinema opened in May 1917 and went over to bingo in the 1960s. Films returned in February 1969 when the building was refurbished and a new front added. Closure came in 1993 and the venue became a nightclub. {32705}

Wirral Globe, Liverpool Echo – 26 April; photo taken July 2007 sent in by Alan Hodson, Philip Meyer & Mike Taylor



The former **Savoy/ABC** has been demolished. It opened in October 1938 with 2,100 seats and a full stage, which in the event was hardly ever used. Films ceased in March 1982 and it became a snooker hall. Later the balcony was subdivided and a gym opened. Both had closed by 2016. Urban explorers' photos at [tinyurl.com/yyjkef4w]. {32707}

Sent in by Alan Hodson (photo)

BIRMINGHAM (Harborne)

The grade II listed former **Royalty** has been hit by fire for the second time in seven months; the previous one virtually gutted the building. It is the third fire since bingo ceased in 2012. The future of the site has been in abeyance while various interested parties have tried to come to a common agreement. {33866}

Birmingham Live – 1 May

BLACKPOOL (Lancs)

The home of Blackpool's famous showbar 'Funny Girls' will soon have two new signs on its frontage. One will be an illuminated fascia sign and the other a back-lit readograph carrying the titles of shows at the nightclub. A design statement says they are intended to reflect the

building's heritage as a former cinema – it used to be the town's Odeon, which closed in 1998. It was bought and renovated by local entrepreneur Basil Newby, who owned several other gay venues. The gala opening in 2002 was attended by Joan Collins. However, financial problems caused it to close in 2018. Debts of £4.3m were reported and last January it was taken over by Lancashire brewer Daniel Thwaites. Planning permission is needed for any alterations to the property, which is Grade II listed. {1833}

Blackpool and Fylde Advertiser – 10 May; sent in by Raymond Dolling

BODMIN (Cornwall)

Merlin cinemas has applied for a licence to operate a five-screen cinema in the former Public Rooms. It will be known as the Capitol Cinema. No opening date has been announced but is expected to be later this year.

Cornwall Live – 22 May

BOSTON (Lincs)

The Savoy has installed reclining seats. This reduces the capacity of screen ① from 343 to 150. It is not clear from the report if all five screens have been so fitted. {24206}

Grantham Journal – 23 May

BOURNEMOUTH



As reported on p21 of the last Bulletin, developers have submitted new plans for the former Regent/Odeon. They propose an eight-storey block with two retail levels, 76 apartments and 68 parking spaces; the façade would be retained. Two previous applications have been rejected. A further planning application is also expected for the nearby ABC site. See Casework p5.

Daily Echo – 10 May; sent in by John Forster; image from the Regent opening programme

BRADFORD (West Yorks)

Bradford Live, the group behind the redevelopment of New Victoria / Odeon have released fresh pictures showing progress in the stripping-out works, which began at the beginning of the year. Demolition contractors are on site to take out the partitions, ceilings and floors that were installed when the building was split into a multi-screen cinema. They've been working in Odeon ②, which was the biggest of the cinema screens. The front floor has been taken out and has become a drop for rubble down to the floor below. They have also taken out the ceiling at the back of Odeon ② and are working towards the front. In Odeon ① the ceiling has gone and the huge original roof trusses are now visible. The dividing walls between the two screens are being taken down; this will leave a large steel frame that will need cutting and removing from the building. It is at this point that the full scale of the auditorium will be revealed. The stripping-out, which has also included work to remove a false ceiling in the south tower, was expected to be completed by the end of June. A large opening has been made in the back of the building to allow machinery inside. The main refurbishment is expected to start in the summer, once a separate contractor has been appointed. It will include the substantial repair and renovation of the existing building along with a small extension to provide extra catering and other facilities. The conversion will turn it into a 3,800-capacity live music venue, due to open in late 2020. Photos and full report at [tinyurl.com/y2jph9p8]. {3677}

Telegraph & Argus – 2 May

BURY ST EDMUNDS (Suffolk)

Building work is under way to convert the former bingo area at the Abbeygate Cinema into a 300-seat screen and also a smaller screen. This will complement the existing two screens in the former circle. The first phase involves laying drains and creating a larger foyer, which will join through into the existing cinema; this work is expected to be complete by the autumn.

Bury Free Press – 7 June; East Anglian Daily Times – 8 June

CARDIFF

Permission has been applied for to demolish the former Gaiety and build an eight-storey block of student apartments. The building has been empty since 2006. See p21 Bulletin 52/6. {17595}

Wales Online – 20 May

CHELTENHAM (Glos)

Cineworld has been keeping tight-lipped about what is going on at their eleven-screen operation at the Brewery Quarter. However, a planning application has revealed some of the big changes. The submission is for new signs at the front of the building advertising 4DX and IMAX screens. The ongoing works saw the closure of The Screening Rooms next door, which was part of the chain but showed films in smaller, luxury rooms, offering waiter service to your seat. But the new development appears to show three so-called VIP cinemas on the ground floor with seating for 28, 34 and 42 people. Plans also appear to show associated seating and bar area in a 'VIP foyer' where hot and cold food would be served. Meanwhile, plans for a five-screen 'boutique' cinema in the Regent Arcade were approved last October, it will be operated by Tivoli, which is part of Empire Cinemas.

Gloucestershire Live – 23 April

CLEVEDON (Somerset)

The roof of the grade II listed Curzon is in need of vital repairs. The roof tiles are "past their prime" and insulation cannot be laid down on top of the iron panels in the ceiling as they will not bear the extra weight. The Victorian drains will need work as well. An appeal has been launched to raise the £500,000 needed. The venue missed out on a £2.6m bid from the Heritage Lottery Fund [HLF] last October, despite a strong case being made. Instead HLF has suggested they apply for its new smaller fund, where the maximum it can give is £250,000. Meanwhile, the cinema has introduced a new film classification [F] to indicate whether a film has a female director or writer, or women on screen "in their own right".

North Somerset Times – 24 April; additional information from Anthony Wills

DAVENTRY (Northants)

Work has started on the Mulberry Place development. It will see the former library site transformed into a four-screen cinema. The Council is on course to agree a lease to its preferred [un-named] operator. Completion is expected by early 2021.

East Midlands Business Link – 12 June; Daventry Express – 13 June; sent in by Carl Chesworth & Terry Hanstock

DEAL (Kent)

Cinema returned to the Astor Community Theatre on 20 May with a film every week. A new screen and seating have been installed. Local author Deborah Moggach, whose book *Tulip Fever* was turned into a film, was guest of honour at the launch. See p 27 Bulletin 53/1. [www.theastor.org] {32926}

Dover Mercury – 8 May; Kent Online – 27 May; sent in by Martin Tapsell

Plans to reopen the Regent have been revised to allow easier delivery access at the rear. The side facing the Timeball Tower is semi-derelict. {32928}

Dover Express – 6 June; sent in by Martin Tapsell

DONCASTER (South Yorks)

Planning permission has been granted for a multiplex with up to eight screens in the Frenchgate Shopping Centre in the former BHS store. Discussions are in progress with potential operators. Opening is scheduled for spring 2020.

Eastside (Northern Lifestyle) – 1 May

DUNDEE

The ten-screen Odeon is to become an Odeon Luxe after a ten-year lease was agreed. There will be fewer seats but a better 'cinema experience' with 4k projection and Dolby Atmos sound. No time scale has been given for the work. {27057}

Insider UK – 15 May

DUNFERMLINE (Fife)

More than 1,000 people have signed a petition calling on Odeon to cut prices at their out-of-town ten-screen cinema, though to be the dearest cinema in Scotland. The success of the campaign has captured the imagination of a group of volunteers who have now created the Dunfermline Cinema Project. The project is aiming to crowdfund £40,000 to be able to find a suitable venue in Dunfermline town centre and create a community cinema that is "for everyone".

Dunfermline Press – 30 May

DURHAM

The new six-screen Odeon Luxe opened at the Riverwalk development on 5 June. Seating capacities are 91, 49, 54, 44, 82 & 70. All are equipped for Real 3D. Screen ① is an iSense screen with Dolby Atmos sound and 4k projection. {60096}

The Journal, Newcastle – 26 April, 10 May

EASTBOURNE (East Sussex)

The new eight-screen Cineworld was due to open on 12 July; it will have digital laser projection. The existing six-screen Cineworld at Sovereign Harbour will close on the same day.

Eastbourne Herald – 3 May; sent in by Geoff Gill

EDINBURGH (Central)



Plans have been approved to convert the former La Scala / Classic at 50 Nicholson Street into a 400-seat Wetherspoons pub. Wetherspoons will invest £2.5m to refurbish the venue. The cinema opened in 1912 and it became the Classic in April 1974, showing 'adult' films. It became a bingo hall in the mid-1980s. The change of use of the closed bingo hall has been controversial with police and local residents lodging objections. Wetherspoons won planning permission on the third attempt and have now got a variation to the existing bingo licence, which allows them to open the pub. {45848}

Edinburgh Evening News – 29 April; sent in by Scott Keir; photo taken March 2004

EDINBURGH (Corstophine)

Plans have been submitted to extend the Gyle Centre onto the car park, losing 334 parking spaces. The extension would contain a six-screen cinema on the upper level with 800 seats.

BBC News website, Edinburgh Evening News – 13 June

FOLKESTONE (Kent)

Hundreds of people have signed a petition against plans to turn the Debenhams store into a cinema when it closes next year. The town already has the Silver Screen cinema.

Kent Live – 26 April; Folkestone Herald – 2 May

FORT WILLIAM (Highland)

The new cinema was granted planning permission only a month ago, yet a construction company is already on-site and foundation works for the building are under way. It is due to open in May next year. The year-round cinema will have two screens, a café bar area and a stage for music nights. It is being built on the same site that the Town Hall occupied, on the High Street at the top of Cameron Square. However, a delay has occurred after it was discovered the building was built on sand, rather than stone and the foundations for the next building would need to be built deeper than was initially expected.

Press & Journal – 8 May

GLASGOW (Central)

Construction has begun on the new nine-screen Vue cinema in the St Enoch Centre. It is housed in the former BHS store. Opening is set for summer 2020.

Glasgow Evening Times – 30 April

News has only just reached us that the former Salon cinema suffered a major fire on 22 March 2018. It was demolished on 5 April 2018. It opened in June 1913 with 950 seats but closed in May 1923. It was in use as a nightclub, retail and a Chinese restaurant. {44080}

Sent in by Ken Roe

GRANTHAM (Lincs)

Some details have been released about the new five-screen Savoy, which is currently being fitted out. There will be a total of 701 seats, made up of 184 in screen ①, 167 in screen ②, 118 in screen ③, 141 in screen ④ and 91 in screen ⑤. All screens will be wall to wall and floor to ceiling. Screen ① will feature a 4k laser digital projector and Dolby Atmos sound. No opening date has been given.

Grantham Journal – 23 May; sent in by Carl Chesworth

GRAYS (Essex)

Wetherspoon has confirmed that the first stage of work has started to convert the Grade II* listed State into a pub. Specialised asbestos removal is taking place; after this they will repair the roof to ensure the building is watertight.

Essex Live – 31 May

GREAT YARMOUTH (Norfolk)

A licensing application has been submitted for permission to screen films at the Royalty between 9am and 2am, although it states that these times would vary from week to week. The building dates from 1875 and closed as the Hollywood with five screens in February this year. The identity of the new operator is unknown. {17924}

Norwich Evening News, Eastern Daily Press – 11 June; Great Yarmouth Mercury – 13 June; sent in by John Popey & Les Woods

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD (Herts)

Revised plans for an eleven-screen cinema in the Marlowes Shopping Centre have been submitted. This is the third planning application for the scheme with the previous two both being approved by the Council. The new proposal is for a slightly smaller seating capacity of 924 with access via escalators and lifts from the North Court Mall.

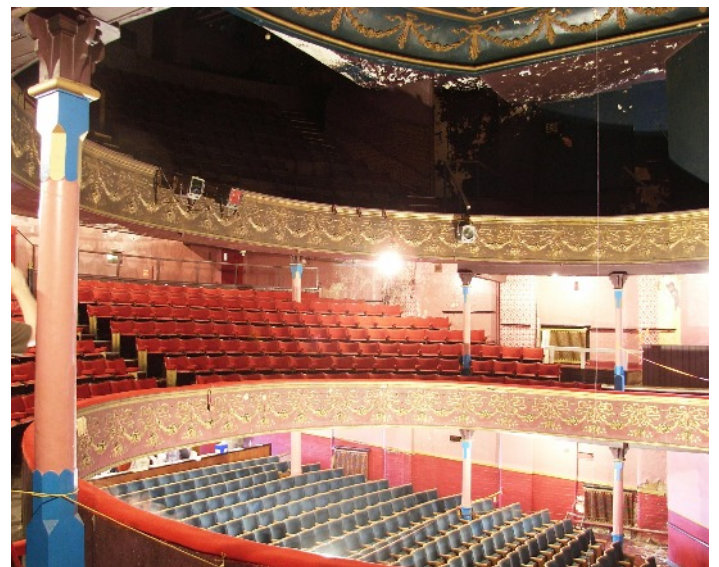
Hemel Today – 29 May

HIGH WYCOMBE (Bucks)

The Wycombe Arts Centre will host a community cinema on the first Friday of every month. The first film on 7 June was *Bohemian Rhapsody*.

Bucks Free Press – 7 June

HYDE (Tameside, Greater Manchester)



Plans to renovate the Grade II listed Theatre Royal and turn it into a Mosque have been rejected. An application for listed building consent, which would have seen the remaining part of the stage demolished and a glass wall put in place to divide the auditorium, was deemed unacceptable. Officers argued that the works, which also included covering of images on the stage balustrade frontages and installing a suspended ceiling, would together "hide or eradicate architectural features and characteristics, including the scale of the space of the auditorium, that are intrinsic to an Edwardian theatre".

Manchester Evening News – 31 May; sent in by Carl Chesworth; photo taken September 2007

KESWICK (Cumbria)



The 270-seat Alhambra closed from 12 June to 2 July for repairs to the ceiling and repainting of the auditorium in the original colour scheme of gold and cream. Further work will involve restoration of the original antique radiators and tin wall panels. Original features include an art deco clock to the left of the screen and pink rosettes dotted in the ceiling, which are believed to have once held chandeliers. The operators have already provided a new roof and set aside more than £15,000 for the current work. A crowdfunding appeal has been launched for £9,000 to complete the project. {3150}

Keswick Reminder – 17 May; photo taken July 2010

KETTERING (Northants)



A “sophisticated” cannabis farm has been found operating in the former Granada. Police raided the building in early June and said the factory could produce drugs worth about £2.8m each year. The force said that officers would take a day to remove about 2,000 plants. No arrests have yet been made. The cinema was opened as the 1,748-seat Regal on Boxing Day, 26 December 1926 by Princess Diana’s grandfather, Earl Spencer and became the Granada in January 1948. Films ceased in June 1974 and it became bingo, which closed in June 2018. The venue had been purchased to become a banqueting hall. Pictures on the Metro website at: [tinyurl.com/y26jc96j]. {35251}

Metro, BBC News website – 14 June; *Daily Mail* – 15 June; photo taken April 2007 sent in by Margaret Burgoine, Mike Collins, Janet Eady, John R Forster, Alexander Kidd, Tom Laughlan, Ian Mitchell, Barry Quinton & Martin Tapsell

KINGS LYNN (Norfolk)

Plans have been submitted for a two-screen cinema in part of the Grade II listed Corn Exchange. If approved, work could start next year. The screens would have 58 and 52 seats. No operator has been named.

KL.FM – 24 May; *Your Local Paper* – 31 May; *Lynn News* – 14 June

LANCING (West Sussex)

The former Luxor has been turned into twelve flats. The façade has been retained. Prices were listed as between £135,000 and £210,000. {35057}

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

LEWES (East Sussex)

A thief broke into The Depot on Good Friday and stole a safe, which was later found discarded. The report does not say if anything valuable was inside. {55997}

The Argus, Brighton – 17 May; sent in by Barry Quinton

LLANGFNI (Anglesey / Ynys Môn)

A planning application has been submitted to turn the Grade II listed former courthouse into a ‘boutique’ cinema. Developers plan to provide seating in the form of two-person sofas but make little change to the exterior of the building, which held its last hearing in 2017.

BBC News website – 23 April; *Daily Post (Wales)* – 24 April; sent in by Margaret Burgoine

LONDON (Bromley)

The six-screen Picturehouse opened on 7 June. It is housed in the 1936 former Odeon, which had four screens; these were in the former front and rear circle and the former rear stalls. Two screens have been added, one above the foyer and one in an extension, which will have catering facilities. A lift has also been installed. {14116}

Bromley Times – 25 April; *News Shopper* – 29 May; *Time Out* – 4 June; sent in by Carl Chesworth, Tom Laughlan & R David Simpson

LONDON (Catford)

Lewisham Council has slammed vandals who smashed up the windows of the Broadway Theatre. All front-facing windows of the Grade II listed building have been boarded up while the Council works to have them repaired. A sign on the front of the Broadway confirms it is still open for performances. The sign describes the broken windows as a “random act of vandalism.”

News Shopper – 19 June; sent in by Philip Stevens

LONDON (Chelsea)



The six-screen Cineworld on Fulham Road is to undergo a renovation and be rebranded Picturehouse later this year. It looks like screens will be re-stepped, reducing (but not eliminating) the asymmetrical nature of screens ① & ②. The cinema will operate as normal until October and will then close until November to do the foyers etc. As this Bulletin went to press, screen ① had already closed! It opened as the Forum in December 1930 with 2,200 seats and was renamed ABC in 1961, tripled in 1974 and subsequently further subdivided. {17033}

Cineworld Press Release; sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken April 2006

LONDON (Kensington)

New designs for the redevelopment of the Olympia exhibition centre include a four-screen arthouse cinema and a 1,500-seat theatre. The historic façade will be restored and retained.

City AM – 7 June; sent in by Tom Laughlan

LONDON (Shepherds Bush)

The former Odeon ② (originally Pyke’s Cinematograph Theatre then Essoldo) was demolished in May. It had been hoped that the stone panel on the side of the building would be preserved. The building was last used as a ‘Walkabout’ pub. {3776}

Sent in by Ken Roe

LONDON (Soho)

A planning application has been submitted to demolish the iconic 20th Century Fox building in Soho Square, which has stood as the studio’s UK headquarters since it was built in 1936–7. This follows the Walt Disney Company’s \$71.3bn takeover of 20th Century Fox’s entertainment assets in March.

Screen Daily – 11 June

LONDON (Walthamstow)

Visitors to an open day at the Grade II* listed former Granada/EMD were given a virtual reality look at how it will look when refurbished. Restoration is due to commence in 2020 and be completed by 2022. The decorative top of the façade, removed many years ago, will be reinstated. Seating in the auditorium will be reduced to 1,050 [was originally 2,679] and will be leased by the Soho Theatre Company as a live theatre attracting major stars, comedy performances, pantomime and occasional films. News pages with photos at: [tinyurl.com/y5vn2zec] & [tinyurl.com/y4lz33m2]. {9397}

Evening Standard – 24 May; The Guardian – 29 May; Time Out – 13 June; sent in by Margaret Burgoine, Mike Collins, Ray Dolling, Ian Johnson, David Jones, Michael Jones, Tom Laughlan, Ken Roe & R David Simpson

Ian Johnson writes: My father was a plasterer who worked on the Granada's interior when it was being built! He was proud of this and often mentioned it.

David Jones writes: There is a lot of damage, even some of the Castle light fittings on the Chandeliers have been smashed. I was not impressed by the idea of inserting a second circle.

Meanwhile, the Mirth bar in the foyer has received the lowest possible food hygiene rating after an inspection in February. Gnawed food products and mice faeces were found in a storeroom and the cleanliness in the kitchen was poor.

My London – 24 May

LONDON (Wandsworth)

A former TV studios at Ram Quarter is to be converted into a 250-seat cinema, the first permanent home for Backyard Cinema. The company has described itself as a leader in the alternative cinema experience, as it uses themed backdrops to go along with the films. The new venue is set to open in September.

Wimbledon Times – 24 May

MAIDENHEAD (Berks)

The refurbished eight-screen Odeon Luxe has officially reopened after six months of work. On the opening weekend on 15/16 June it was offering tickets at £5. See p29 last Bulletin. {24995}

Maidenhead Advertiser – 6 June; sent in by R David Simpson

MARGATE (Kent)

The iconic Dreamland Cinema (1935) on Marine Terrace is getting the cold shoulder from its owners Thanet District Council. Restoration to the exterior of the Grade II* listed building (including installation of eye-catching new neon) was completed in the summer of 2017. And here we are in the summer of 2019 and the cinema, ballroom and Sunshine Café are still asleep. All three areas need sympathetic operators – especially the Dreamland Cinema. When the 2017 renovation was completed, the Council stated that it would seek tenders from prospective cinema operators. For two years, the Cinema Theatre Association has been awaiting a response from Thanet District Council to our letters of encouragement... but answer came there none.

CTA Press Release – 16 May; Isle of Thanet Gazette – 24 May; sent in by Margaret Burgoine

MARKET WARSOP (Notts)



Plans have been resubmitted to demolish the former Strand and build retail units. Previous plans came to naught. It is likely the building will be completely demolished and not retain the façade, as previously thought. The 785-seat cinema opened in 1937 and films ceased in 1961. It was used for bingo until October 2011. {24488}

Mansfield Chad – 22 May; photo taken on CTA visit in May 2008

MARLBOROUGH (Wilts)

Planning permission is being sought to convert a listed former chapel on The Parade into a cinema and an adjoining building into an annexe where food and drink can be sold. Funding of £1.5m for the project is already in place. The cinema could have up to 120 seats with 80 on the ground floor and 40 in the balcony. It could be open early in 2020.

Devizes Gazette & Herald – 23 May

MIDDLESBROUGH

Plans – announced on p26 of the last Bulletin – to add another 440-seat screen to the Cineworld have been approved. No time scale has been given. {25083}

Evening Gazette, Teesside – 7 June

NEWTON ABBOTT (Devon)

The Council has agreed to move forward with plans for a four-screen cinema in the town centre. The current location planned is the site of the New Look store in the Market Walk shopping centre. It could be open by 2021. Scott Cinemas, who operate the existing two-screen Alexandra will operate the new cinema.

Herald Express, Torquay – 1 May

NORTHAMPTON



The Jesus Fellowship Church (formerly known as the Jesus Army) has closed its venue in the former Savoy/ABC following a series of historical cases of child sexual abuse. Membership of the church dropped from 2,500 to less than 1,000 after the abuse claims were made. Six men have so far been sentenced. The cinema opened in May 1936 and was tripled in 1974. Films ceased in April 1995. Since 2005 it has been available to hire for conferences, events and live performances, being known as The Deco; their website is still active and advertising events. The CTA AGM was held there in 2012. {22658}

BBC News website – 29 May; sent in by Margaret Burgoine; photo taken June 2012

NOTTINGHAM

The Broadway is to replace the seats in screens ①, ② and ④ this summer. They will be replaced with a wider, new design that (finally!) includes a cupholder. The aisle widths will also be increased. Screen ① will also experience a technical upgrade with 4k projection and 7.1 sound being installed, bringing it in line with Screen ②'s recent projection and sound improvements. The Paul Smith identity in screen ④ will be maintained with a new, approved striped design. To minimise disruption to film fans, only one screen will be closed at a time while the redevelopment – due to finish in early September – takes place. The existing seats are currently looking for a new home but a few will no doubt be left over for customers to take in return for a donation to their charitable projects. If you're interested in owning a piece of Nottingham's cinema history, please contact [seats@broadway.org.uk] and a member of the team will get back to you. All customers with seat dedications have been contacted regarding these changes. {21755}

Broadway Press Release – 10 May; Nottinghamshire Live – 5 June; sent in by Terry Hanstock

Plans have been submitted to demolish the auditorium of the Queens Cinema and build flats. Dating from 1909, it closed suddenly in January 1955 with the rest of week's run cancelled. The foyer became a retail unit and the auditorium was used as a car showroom; it is not known when this closed. {57582}

Nottinghamshire Live – 7 May; sent in by Terry Hanstock

Plans have been submitted to convert vacant office space on the upper floors of the Grade II* listed former **Elite** into student flats. Part of the building is occupied by a nightclub and other businesses, which would not be affected by the plans. The cinema opened in August 1921 and closed in March 1977. It was last used for bingo, which ceased in the early 1990s. {21746}

Nottinghamshire Live – 14 May

The **Majestic** in Mapperley made the pages of *Private Eye*. It gave a brief history of the building and mentioned the demolition plans, reported on p26 of the last Bulletin. The report was surprisingly factual and your editor couldn't find a sarcastic comment anywhere.

Private Eye #1407; sent in by Ellen Cheshire & Simon Walker

OBAN (Highland)



Work has begun to improve the interior of the 150-seat **Phoenix**. The work includes lifting the carpets, painting the walls, upgrading the electrics, revamping the foyer and creating a new concession stand. {25734}

Oban Times – 6 June; photo taken September 2016

PLYMOUTH

Construction is progressing on the Grade I listed **Royal William Yard** in the Historic Dockyard. The front right hand corner of the second floor will become home to a three-screen **Everyman** cinema. Cinema-goers will enter through a ground floor door and take the stairs or a lift to the top deck. The screens will be in 'pods' each holding about 100 people, which will sit inside the historic building. The shell will be handed over for fitting out in early 2020.

The Herald, Plymouth – 15 June

PORT TALBOT



Plans have been announced for the future of the **Plaza**. If approved, the YMCA will occupy the grade II listed building, which will offer a café, hall, gym and offices that can also be used by the local community. The proposals "retain an element of the existing grade II listed building that will be altered and amended in a considerate manner". The auditorium will be demolished to enable a new structure, symmetrically attached to the retained part. Existing floor levels will be respected. The roof has partially collapsed. {18212}

South Wales Evening Post – 6 June; photo taken July 2008

PORTSMOUTH

Cinema for Seniors is a new initiative to help alleviate loneliness among older people in Southsea (where the recent main D-Day events were held). Classic films will be shown at the **Pavilion** at Canoe Lake (that can hold 30 people), along with tea and coffee, on the first Thursday of the month. The first screening took place on 7 February last with 16 people attending, nearly all of whom lived alone. The film was *Singin' in the Rain* with the sound set at an acceptable level. More details can be obtained at [www.canoelakeleisure.co.uk] or [dinah.uk@gmail.com].

Pompey Pensioner (issue no 54); sent in by Mike Whitcombe

SLINDON (West Sussex)



Student Joe Cornick has brought 35mm film back to the **Coronation Hall**. The 35mm projector was originally installed brand new at the **Pavilion** Hailsham in 1999 and was transferred to a part-time venue at the **Angel Centre** Tonbridge when the **Pavilion** went over to digital projection. I [Colin Hide] used the projector at **Angel Centre** until 35mm was discontinued. The projector was stored at the centre and has now been donated to Joe at Slindon where he is putting it to good use. Joe's first film was *Man in the Moon* (Kenneth More) screened on 10 and 11 May to full houses. The hall has a proper projection room and films were previously screened here by Kinetours Ltd of Hove around the end of the Second World War.

Chichester Observer – 15 April; sent in by Colin Hide

STOWMARKET (Suffolk)

The first designs have been produced for redevelopment of the **Regal**. A side extension will be built to create two new screens, one with 84 seats and one with 57. The 234-seat main auditorium will also be refurbished with new toilet facilities and an expanded foyer and café. A full planning application has been submitted. If approved, work will start later this year with a timeframe of 52 to 65 weeks. The cinema secured a grant of £1.56m from East Suffolk District Council last year; the town Council also contributed £650,000. {6241}

East Anglian Daily Times – 9 May

STREET (Somerset)



The former **Maxime** has been transformed into a stylish restaurant; the venue is already receiving good reviews. The Victorian hall was first used as a cinema in 1921 and films ceased in September 1989. It was most recently used as a nightclub. Photos at: [tinyurl.com/y5b74br8]. {50357}

Somerset Live – 23 April; photo taken August 2003



THIRSK (North Yorks)



A volunteer was replacing a carpet in the back office of the Ritz and uncovered pages from trade magazines of the 1930s. Names like Boris Karloff, Ronald Reagan and Ernest Hemmingway feature, along with topics including new legislation, film fees and even delinquent children in audiences. Some of the pages will be put on display. The cinema is revamping certain areas after receiving a £2,000 grant. {3372}

Northern Echo – 28 March, 1 May; photo taken April 2015

THRAPSTON (Northants)



A group of knitting enthusiasts dubbed the 'Yarn Bombers' have created a mini woollen version of their home town including the local pub, post office and church. The seven-strong team have spent the last two years furiously knitting the quiet high street of Thrapston, complete with hanging baskets and pedestrians. The group, whose oldest member is 93-years-old, made more than 15 of Thrapston's most prominent buildings including the former Plaza cinema. {44252}

Daily Mail – 19 June; sent in by Tom Laughlan & Martin Tapsell

TIDSWELL (Derbys)

The upper room at the 18th Century George Inn hosts monthly digital screenings. It started as a small film club in 2005 and in 2012 became the first community cinema to show live broadcasts from the National Theatre. Pre-show meals and interval drinks are available.

Derbyshire Life – April; sent in by Susan & Hugh Patching

WELLINGTON (Shropshire)

The former Clifton has a new owner, who is currently deciding what to do with it. The space where the cinema was in the former circle is still intact, although it has no seating or equipment. It could be reopened if the right people came forward to run it. Alternatively the building could be used as shops or turned into apartments. {37745}

Telford Journal, Shropshire Star – 6 June

WETHERBY (West Yorks)

On p5 & p29 of the last Bulletin there were items about a planning application at the Wetherby Film Theatre to build an extension and split the main auditorium. The CTA has issued a press release:

"The iconic Wetherby Cinema (1915) on Crossley Street is one the finest examples of an early original bungalow-style cinema still in operation. In fact, the Wetherby Cinema (originally the Raby, subsequently the Rodney) has more or less been in continuous use. Overlooked by Historic England and therefore unlisted, the cinema is unprotected from the possible defacing of its original interior to create a multi-screen monster.

Actually, the owners have continuously modernised the cinema by moving the box office, adding a bar and installing digital projection. In 2014 the sound system was upgraded to Dolby 7.1. They have even retained a 35mm projector 'in case'! The Cinema Theatre Association is pleading with Historic England and Wetherby Town Council (which has already raised objections to the refurbishment proposals) to list this Edwardian gem to prevent its being altered beyond recognition. The vacant block of land next to the front entrance on Crossley Street will provide better facilities for patrons and, with a little ingenuity, would provide adequate space for two more screens. A sympathetic alteration to the rear stalls could provide another screen without ravaging the original interior."

WHITSTABLE (Kent)

Canterbury City Council has recommended that Whitstable Harbour Board turns down plans for a cinema in South Quay Shed. A 40-seat 'boutique' cinema had been proposed as part of its transformation into a mixed use space.

Kent Online – 11 June; sent in by Philip Stevens

WOODHALL SPA (Lincs)

The Kinema in the Woods has added a third screen with 74 seats to the right of the existing building. It was due to open on 5 July. All works have been carried out sympathetically with the existing building. {6373}

Lincolnshire Life – 1 June

WORTHING (West Sussex)

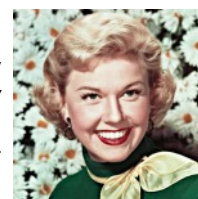
Customers and staff at the Connaught Cinema were evacuated on 19 April as firefighters tackled a small fire in the roof. The cause was found to be accidental and nobody was hurt. {23914}

Worthing Herald – 25 April; sent in by Barry Quinton

NECROLOGY

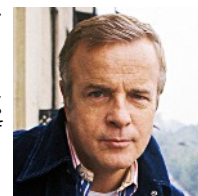
DORIS DAY 97

She began her career as a 'big band' singer and entered Hollywood in 1948. She starred in many films in her 20-year career, including *Calamity Jane* and *Move Over Darling* and was nominated for Best Actress in *Pillow Talk*. In 2011 she released her 29th studio album.



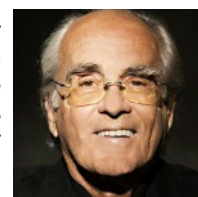
FRANCO ZEFFIRELLI 96

He is perhaps best known to many as the director of the 1968 adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet* – starring a then-unknown Leonard Whiting and Olivia Hussey. He also directed stars including Elizabeth Taylor in the 1967 film *The Taming of the Shrew* and was nominated for two Oscars.



MICHEL LEGRAND 86

Michel was a French composer, arranger, pianist, singer and conductor. He wrote the music for over 200 films and won three Oscars (for *The Thomas Crown Affair*, *Summer of '42* and *Yentl*) and five Grammys. He undertook extensive concert tours and made his final UK appearance in September last year at London's Royal Festival Hall.



FREDDIE STARR 76

A constant fixture on TV from the early 1970s through to the late 1990s, he was also capable of packing theatres for one-nighters and summer seasons. He made an early appearance on film in the 1958 teenage drama *Violent Playground*. A publicity stunt led to *The Sun* headline "Freddie Starr Ate My Hamster".



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

LETTERS

ERRATA

The Cinema Birthdays page in the last issue has an error – the Kingsway/Vogue listed was demolished in 2006 (despite its listing). [www.scottishcinemas.org.uk/glasgow/kingsway.html]. The Vogue pictured at the top of the next column is a different one – the Vogue Govan, opened 1938. Same architect, confusing names! [www.scottishcinemas.org.uk/glasgow/vogue.html].

Gordon Barr

MATTERS ARISING



Page 19 of the last Bulletin has another excellent article from David A Ellis, this time about the Biograph Cinema at Victoria. Although reconstructed as a luxury cinema in the late 1920s, I only remember it as a rundown cinema in the early 1970s. As far back as the 1960s it had acquired a bad reputation; it was said that there was more activity amongst the audience than on the screen. The manager at the time said he would increase the lighting. These photographs were taken in the early 1970s (apologies for the poor quality). The date shown is believed to be incorrect; the correct date is 1908 or 9. I went to the Biograph in the early 1970s, sitting at the end of the back row so I could make a quick escape in the case of trouble. However nothing happened. One film was shown immediately after the other so I was unable to see the cinema décor. There was a National Car Park on the site a few months later.

Ian Patterson

Regarding the Capitol Cinema Belfast, where Mr Ellis requests more information. A large block of Curran cinemas passed to Odeon in 1956, including the Capitol Belfast (Eyles and other authorities). Sources quote two very different dates of closure, 1972 and 1975 and I would suspect the earlier is the more likely date given 'The Troubles'.

Bob Bradshaw

Concerning the Newsreel item on p21 of the last Bulletin about a new cinema for Brodick on Arran – I'm currently on Arran on holiday and can confirm that far from having opened at Easter, the building is still empty, although it does have a "now let" sign outside it.

Gordon Barr



Re: Bill Heine. Although I never met or knew this gentleman, here are some pictures of his sculptures on his cinemas and his house. The old black and white pictures were taken by my brother in the 1980s. When Picturehouse opened their two-screen cinema Dukes at the Komedia in Gardner Street, Brighton, that too had small sculptures at the front similar to the one at the Duke of Yorks. It's a shame that they demolished the Not the Moulin Rouge in Oxford in the early 1990s, as I believe the site is still vacant and certainly in this case would have kept on going in one form or another had it not been demolished.

Tim McCullen

A couple of comments on items in the last issue:

1. Page 5: I can confirm that the Flying Ladies are now back on the splay walls of the Odeon Leicester Square.
2. Page 31: Jeremy Perkins' query about the Odeon West End Whitcomb Street entrance. The Odeon West End was originally called the Leicester Square Theatre, the name it was given when it opened as a live theatre. It was developed by Jack Buchanan, who had a flat at the top of the building over the front entrance in Leicester Square. There were other areas below the flat and both became Odeon offices when Odeon vacated its offices in the Dominion. They were occupied by film booking and marketing and the West End Première office. The theatre's dressing rooms were on the Whitcomb Street side of the building and these were also used as offices as well as staff rooms for the cinema staff. There was no direct connection between this side of the building and the offices on the front. The only way to get from one side of the building to the other was via the cinema auditorium. As visitors were discouraged from using the main cinema entrance, the Whitcomb Street entrance was given a facelift and became the main entrance for Odeon business.

When the theatre auditorium was gutted the stage disappeared and a very modern cinema auditorium replaced it. This had a floating balcony – a somewhat wasted feature as the only place you could appreciate it was if you stood in front of the screen. Remnants of the original theatre still existed above the new ceiling. Subsequently this auditorium was twinned with the lower and larger new auditorium occupying the former stalls and the upper auditorium occupying the former balcony. Both cinemas were equipped for 70mm.

As an aside, Jack Buchanan had another flat at the top of the Garrick Theatre in Charing Cross Road.

Tony Williams

Odeon's Film Booking in Whitcomb Street was just that... where the film bookers worked from. I was asked to visit the Marketing Executive there in 1993 to discuss the trailer-title package revamp under Laurie Clarke's appointment as MD, following my invitation to revamp the Odeon 'tower' design in 1988 when James Whittell was the MD. At least it got me into my beloved NSS Perivale on an 'official' capacity, rather than my many casual visits, so I (sort of) fulfilled my ambition of working for them after all! I was also involved in another scheme to produce a 'Policy Trailer' to emulate the American multiplexes but with Odeon having a 'tired estate' with very little to offer and match the American's cinemas, the project was scrapped! The art director at NSS said, "we can make you a better trailer with what you can't offer than with what you can!"

Carl Chesworth

CHISWICK PALAIS

Memories of a West London cinema were recalled by a reader's question sent to the *Daily Express* feature 'The Saturday Briefing' recently. He asked for information about the setting of the Ealing Studios' 1950 production *Dance Hall*, which starred Petula Clark, Diana Dors, Natasha Parry and Jane Hylton as four girls who loved dancing at the "Chiswick Palais". He was told that although a Chiswick Palais did exist it was in fact a small cinema that merely lent its name to the fictional dance hall. It was short-lived, opening in 1909 and closing just six years later to be used as a Government storage facility. In 1919 it became the Palace of Entertainment before a Woolworth store was built on the site, which today is a Waitrose supermarket. Another cinema, the Gaumont Palace Streatham, was disguised as the exterior of the 'Palais'. It became a ten-pin bowl in 1962; that closed in 2006 and was demolished in 2016.

Raymond Dolling

MONKEY BUSINESS

Some further information on the Bob Monkhouse court case mentioned by Ian Patterson in the last Bulletin. It appears that Monkhouse was accused of "conspiracy to defraud film distributors of hiring fees" by importing pirated 16mm prints from the USA through Heathrow Airport and then – without any customs inspection – on to an accommodation address in Jersey for distribution. Together with Anthony Scott, an Acton based film director, he was sent for trial at the Old Bailey in June 1979. However, the Judge halted proceedings on the grounds of insufficient evidence and both men were acquitted. According to the Judge, Monkhouse's only action that might have been to the "economic detriment" of the film companies was the loan of a 16mm print of *Goldfinger* for Terry Wogan to show at his son's birthday party.

Sources include: *Acton Gazette* – 7, 28 June 1979; *Birmingham Daily Post* – 5, 20 June 1979; *Daily Mirror* – 5, 20 June 1979; *Liverpool Echo* – 13 July 1977.

Terry Hanstock

SEARCHING FOR SHERLOCK: THE GAME'S AFOOT

The UCLA Film & Television Archive – the second-largest Archive in the US after the Library of Congress – and the Baker Street Irregulars, the foremost Sherlock Holmes society in the US, are mounting a world-wide search for the missing Sherlock Holmes films. More than 200 films about the iconic British detective are missing or lost or are in need of restoration or preservation. Such lost films include the British production of *A Study in Scarlet*, produced in 1914; the Danish series, produced by Nordisk films, beginning in 1908; the Holmes parody made in 1913, directed by a woman, Alice Guy Blaché; and many more.

The Archive and the BSI are contacting archives around the world as well as organisations whose members might be able to assist with the search. Who knows where these treasures might be found? Perhaps a CTA member is a collector of silent films and doesn't realize that the Sherlock Holmes film in the collection is "lost." Perhaps visitors to a soon-to-be razed or renovated theatre's projection booth may find film cans that contain a reel or two of a missing film? Perhaps in that trunk in the attic that hasn't been opened in decades reveals a deteriorating film about the detective?

Actor Robert Downey Jr, who has portrayed Sherlock Holmes on screen in two films, with a third Holmes film in pre-production, is the Honorary Project Chair. If a CTA member who would like further information about the project or knows where the Archive might direct an enquiry or even has a hint of a possible fading reel of a Sherlock Holmes film somewhere, please contact the *Searching for Sherlock: The Game's Afoot* project coordinator, Barbara Roisman Cooper at [peninc1@aol.com].

Barbara Roisman Cooper

RUTLAND CINEMAS

There's an article about The Picture House / The Picture Theatre in Oakham by Robert Owens – *Oakham's first cinema* - in the current issue of the Rutland Local History & Record Society Newsletter (no. 1/19, April 2019, p9-12). Available at: [www.rutlandhistory.org/newsletters/201904.pdf].

The Society has also digitised most of its other main publication, The Rutland Record – this includes Brian Hornsey's article – *Cinemas in Rutland* (The Rutland Record No. 12, 1992, p80-83) which can be found at [www.rutlandhistory.org/rutlandrecord/rr12.pdf].

Terry Hanstock

RECALLING THE GOLDEN AGE OF CINEMAS

This is a follow up to the Bulletin report on the former Plaza in Maidenhead, page 26, May/June edition. I had earlier written a letter reflecting my schoolboy memories of the Plaza, which was published in the *Maidenhead Advertiser* on 25 April 2019 and is reproduced below.

After writing the letter to the *Maidenhead Advertiser* I also remembered the Palace in High Street, Slough and the Empire in Peascod Street, Windsor. I should have remembered the Palace, badly damaged by fire in 1945. Granada restored the building opening as the Century in 1950. On leaving school I joined Granada Theatres as an office assistant at the Granada and also the Century in Slough. I remembered the Empire for another reason – it was the first cinema in the area to re-issue Universal's *Dracula* and *Frankenstein* films with a [H] certificate. Not easy getting past the box office looking over 18.

William G Gilbert

Your reports of the fire-damaged Roma nightclub on Queen Street cast me back to my schooldays in the 1940s, when I knew the site as the Plaza Cinema. To escape the German bombs falling on Walthamstow we moved temporarily to Maidenhead then Burnham, a village returned to in recent years. I was an enthusiastic film fan from a very early age. Subject to available pocket money I endeavoured to get to the cinema three times a week. In addition to the Plaza I had the choice of the Rialto in Bridge Avenue and in Windsor the Playhouse in Thames Street and the Regal in Peascod Street. All four cinemas were part of the ABC (Associated British Cinema) circuit. The Rialto and the Playhouse showed the latest ABC circuit releases while the Plaza and Regal programmed second run movies from the other circuit releases on Gaumont and Odeon. Consequently if you missed a first release you could catch up at the Plaza, which had two or three changes each week.

In 1944 I passed the scholarship to Borlase in Marlow, meaning I had to change trains or buses in Maidenhead, with the great temptation to catch up with a movie at the Plaza. Along the Bath Road at Cippenham, there was yet another second release cinema, the Commodore (later the Essoldo). Cinema-goers of the period had a wide choice with the Granada, Adelphi and Ambassador in Slough all showing the latest circuit releases. All these cinemas that provided great entertainment over the years have now gone, apart from the Adelphi surviving with bingo. From all the time spent in cinemas like the Plaza I knew I had to be part of the movie entertainment business. I managed to achieve this over the next 60 years from cinema to the world of international film and broadcasting.

As I dwell upon cinemas of the past I was greatly encouraged to read your latest report that the local Odeon is undergoing a full refurbishment to become a luxury cinema. Despite all the different forms of entertainment over the years, cinema still survives.

William Gilbert

BERLIN SURVIVOR



The Universum cinema in Berlin remains in good condition, having become the home of the radical theatre company, Schaubühne. It was designed by the prominent Modern German architect Eric Mendelsohn between 1927 and 1928. Mendelsohn went on to design a few buildings in Britain, notably the De La Warr Pavilion in Bexhill-on-Sea, which itself contains a theatre. For any CTA members visiting Berlin, Mendelsohn's Metal Workers' Union building of 1929 is close to the Universum.

Tim Sedgwick-Jell (photo)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

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

105 years



Grange 234 Kilburn High Street, Kilburn. Opened 30 July 1914.
Architect Edward Albert Stone. Listed grade II.

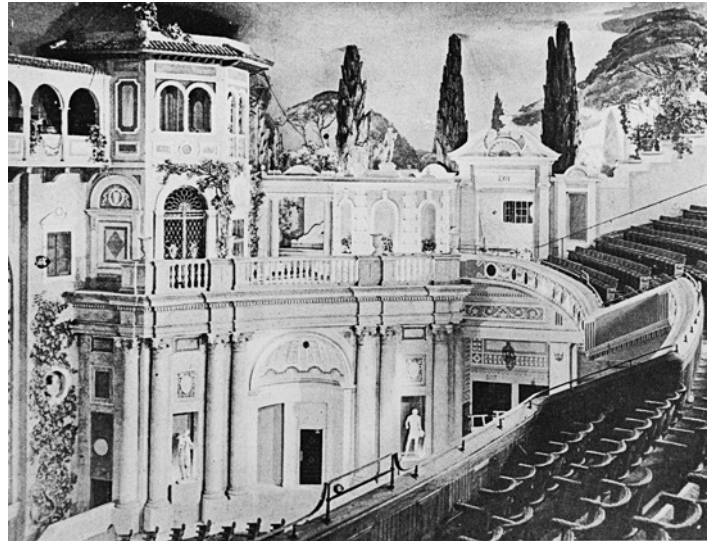


Theatre Royal (Royal Theatre) Jewry Street, Winchester. Opened 24 August 1914. Architect Frederick GM Chancellor. Listed Grade II*.

90 years



Playhouse 18 Greenside Place, Edinburgh. Opened 12 August 1929.
Architect John Fairweather. 'A' listed.



Astoria (Odeon Astoria) 211 Stockwell Road, Brixton. Opened 19 August 1929. Architect Edward Albert Stone. Listed Grade II*.

85 years



Riviera Den Crescent, Teignmouth. Opened 6 July 1934.
Architect Howard Williams. Listed Grade II.

Correction

In the May/June Bulletin we got our Vogue's confused. We featured a photograph of the Vogue Govan, which was sadly demolished. We were referring to the Kingsway/Vogue Cathcart. However, despite its listing, this too has been demolished.

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OBITUARY

PETER GAPPER 74

On 6 April 1959, Peter, having left school, got his first job as a rewind boy at the Plaza in Camden Town, which was run by the Rank Organisation. His duties were to rewind the film spools after screening, replace lamp bulbs, stoke the coke boiler and scrub the projection room floors. Over the next few years he was taught to look after the projectors, which were Kalee 11s with wooden runners that had to be soaked in oil once a week and exchanged (does anyone still remember this system?). BTH type C arclamps were in use. Sound came via 22-volt batteries and later 12-volt car batteries, which were recharged daily. This system came to an end on 5 September 1965 with the installation of Kalee 12s, which were a disaster. The Plaza was a poor relation to the Gaumont/Odeon just around the corner and Kalee 21s with President arclamps and a Duosonic sound system were hastily installed.

Peter became the second projectionist and was the last operator on duty when it closed on 29 September 1994. He spent his entire working life at the Plaza and was well-liked by all who came in contact with him. He had an amazing memory for dates of events and a love of classical music, of which he had a large collection and could describe the changes of labels, their colour and dates in the record industry. He also had a large collection of DVDs featuring his favourite film actress, Doris Day and it is an incredible coincidence that his passing was on the same day as her, 13 May.

RIP Peter Gapper – 1944-2019

Tom Laughlan, ex manager, Plaza Camden Town

INTERNET CORNER

- ★ [tinyurl.com/y5a595pe] A page from the *East Anglian Daily Times* – Memories of Odeon Lowestoft 40 years after closure.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/y5x6a2b7] From the *Ipswich Star* – BBC Breakfast's Bill Turnbull launches Aldeburgh cinema's centenary celebrations.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/y55rfotx] A page from *Gedling Eye* on the Majestic in Mapperley, Nottingham.
above three items sent in by Terry Hanstock
- ★ [youtu.be/oFD7W6whbcl] If you couldn't attend the CTA visit to the Odeon Leicester Square on the morning of the AGM, here is a nine-minute video taken on the day.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/y5kfvp9] A page on the *Playing Bingo* website about the Granada Tooting by member Charles SP Jenkins.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/y6yolb9h] Another page with pictures of the Granada Tooting, this time on the ianVisits website.
- ★ [youtu.be/qHiuKzgaeO8] A 13-minute video by Neal Sean about the history and stars who appeared at the Savoy/ABC/Coronet in Holloway, north London, now a Wetherspoons pub.
sent in by Martin Tapsell

A **MUST** for your collection

CINEMAS IN BRITAIN

A History of Cinema Architecture

by Richard Gray

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

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Jeremy Buck, CTA Sales Officer

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MEMBERSHIP

NEW MEMBERS

The following, listed in the order in which they joined, have recently been extended a warm welcome to membership of the Association: Greg Cooper, Anthony Quinn, Bernard Fitzpatrick, David Pring, Darren Stuart, Barbara Roisman Cooper, Michael Pass and Nick Joy.

DONATIONS

In acknowledging the generosity of members who included a donation when renewing their subscriptions, our sincere thanks go to:

DA Alexander, CG Behr, TE Benton, MJ Bigham, AL Body, ME Burgoine, RD Burke, LR Carter, BR Chandler, M Charlesworth, B Claussen, MR Cleave, WJB Coleman, GJV Crane, L Culver, MR Cunningham, PD Davenport, AR Davis, LJ Deacon, JD Elliott, IC Ewers, DW Foster, SW Freeman, RK Fuller, DJ Gammage, GC Gibson, P Good, MP Greenslade, CD Harrison, RJ Hawley, A Hodson, RA Lascut, TDC Laughlan, AV Mabey, FWD Manders, JL May, P Mellor, PG Moules, RM Paddock, B Palmer, JB Powell, MJ Ryder, J Shevelan, A Smith, DE Smith, BH Snowball, M Taylor, PE Thackeray, PF Thomas, MW Thornton, DA Warner, DB Williams, RE Williams, RF Wilson, M Wooffindin and AJ Zak.

IN MEMORIAM

We were sorry to learn that Ronald Blake of Paignton, who joined CTA in 2018, has passed away at the age of 85. Our sincere condolences are sent to his family and friends.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Following discussion and with careful consideration, your Committee has decided that it has become necessary to increase subscription rates with effect from 1 July 2019. As members will have seen from the accounts published in the last issue, expenses once again exceeded income for the 2018-2019 year. In part this has been due to the extra costs of storing the Archive but, with its move into new premises, the situation will improve in the coming year. One factor however is inescapable – the regular annual increase in postal charges for our mailings to member has added about 20% to this cost in the four years since subscriptions were last reviewed. For the majority of members, the modest increase of UK subscription from £29 to £31 will mean, we hope, that your valued membership is still a worthwhile use of your funds. Pro rata increases apply to other subscription rates but that for Associate Members remains £10. As is usual, the various rates of subscription can be found on page 2 of this issue.

Neville C Taylor, Membership Secretary



ARCHIVE

ARCHIVE OPPORTUNITIES

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

HELP THE ARCHIVE IDENTIFY CINEMAS

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

SENDING DONATIONS BY POST OR EMAIL

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

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

Clive Polden, CTA Archivist

THE ODEON EXETER

By Mike Whitcombe



The Odeon Exeter on a rainy evening

The Odeon Exeter has been entertaining Exonians since 1937. The principal architect was Robert Bullivant who assisted his boss Harry Weedon. The two men had already worked together that year on the Odeon York and between them they designed an impressive frontage dominated by four ribbed vertical bands in light tiles that also housed neons, which lined up with raised features on the canopy. It was an eye-catching design that today can still be imagined even though the tops of the vertical bands and the stylish canopy are sadly long gone.

Messrs Hewitt and Cherry of Exeter were employed by Odeon to negotiate the purchase of the site in Sidwell Street, which many felt was a little too far from the City centre. Mr WP Wilkins was engaged as the builder and construction took thirty-six weeks at a cost of £70,000. Seating capacity was 1,920 with the balcony holding 744 and the stalls 1,176. Opening night was Monday 30 August and for Odeon it was their sixth new-build opening of the month and their twenty-fourth of that year. AC Reed declared the cinema open and the band of the 4th/7th Royal Dragoon Guards entertained a full house.

The main feature was the financially profitable Warner Brothers feature *Charge of the Light Brigade*, directed by Michael Curtiz. Although full of historical inaccuracies, it was a hugely popular flick, which proved that when it came to making another British military blunder appear gallant, glorious and even glamorous, nobody did it better than those wise old moguls of Hollywood. Errol Flynn and Olivia de Havilland played the leads (it was the second of eight movies in which they played opposite each other) and they were wonderfully supported by Nigel Bruce, David Niven and Donald Crisp, who were all members of a British film colony that was fondly called the 'Hollywood Raj'.

On 4 May 1942, the cinema suffered bomb damage and was briefly closed following the infamous Luftwaffe attack that completely destroyed the opposite side of Sidwell Street and most of Exeter City centre. In a seventy minute attack, beginning shortly after 1am, twenty bombers dropped 10,000 incendiaries and 75 tons of high explosive. Thirty acres of the City was devastated with 156 people killed and 583 injured. Of the city's 20,000 houses, 1,500 were completely obliterated and 2,700 badly damaged. 400 shops, 150 offices, 50 warehouses and 36 pubs were also destroyed. It took more than a decade to rebuild the City and the cinema wasn't fully repaired until 1954, when it was closed between March and June for the work to be carried out. The front entrance steps, however, still show shrapnel damage from the explosions over seventy years ago.

During the early 1960s, Odeon spent £6,000 on new dressing rooms and enlarging the stage. This allowed several famous acts to play to sell-out crowds at the Odeon in the mid-60s, including Dionne Warwick, Dusty Springfield, Rod Stewart and, on two occasions, The Rolling Stones. In the late 60s the cinema received a refurbishment, which reduced the capacity to 1,630. Tripling took place in 1972 and from 6 August of that year the cinema boasted a capacity of 742 in the former circle and 119 and 118 in the former rear stalls area. A fourth screen that seated 344 was eventually placed in the former front stalls during August 1988. This work also saw a new screen in the old circle and screen ③ reduced to 105 seats. (Current seating capacities are 507, 106, 88 and 248.)



The box at the Odeon Exeter

The art deco elegance that Weedon and Bullivant created can still be sensed today as my wife Janice and I discovered when we visited the cinema on the third weekend of May 2019. By chance we were greeted on entering by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable duty manager. On learning of our interest in the building, she gave us a quick tour. We marvelled at the former circle (now screen ①) and were fascinated by the original projection box, which apart from a digital projector also boasted a 35mm projector with platter and a rewind bench with 35mm film still rolled up in a drawer. We then saw the History Wall (a permanent installation in the upper foyer showing the history of the cinema) before watching a movie in screen ④, where the seats were comfortable and the sound and picture quality excellent.

It wasn't that long ago when most major High Streets throughout the country boasted an Odeon showing the latest releases. As an example of that era, this proud looking Odeon still deserves to be sought out and enjoyed. It might once have been an impressive single-screen site but even accommodating four auditoria, the eighty-two year old Exeter Odeon remains a fitting tribute to the amazing genius of architects Weedon and Bullivant.

All photos were taken on Saturday 18 May 2019