





The Gaumont Rose Hill – to be visited by the CTA in September; photo taken April 2006



From the opening programme of the Regent Bournemouth – later Gaumont/Odeon

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 eight people and the reopening of the Granada Walthamstow, which had nine submissions. Is there anything in that they were both about Granada theatres?

On p14 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!

"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

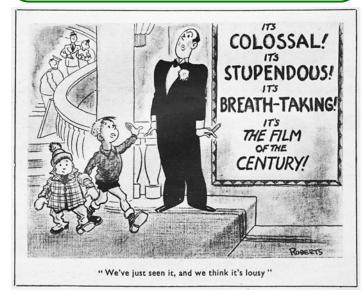
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by Allen Eyles - all fully illustrated with gazetteers ODEON 1 - Oscar Deutsch Entertains Our Nation - £15.00 ODEON 2 - From J Arthur Rank to the Multiplex - £15.00 Buy both Odeon 1 & 2 together for £27 (plus postage) THE GRANADA THEATRES - £18.99

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

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

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VISITS AND EVENTS

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 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.

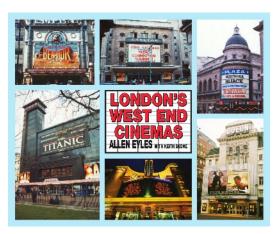


The Embassy/Odeon Esher in April 2006 – now Everyman

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.

CASEWORK

By Tim Hatcher

Grade II* Listed



The Everyman (ex Odeon) Muswell Hill in August 2019

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.

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.

More Casework in the full Bulletin

PUBLICATIONS

Back Numbers Available

PICTURE HOUSE MAGAZINE

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

No 6	£1.50	Television in the Cinema; Atherley Southampton; Hippodrome, Blackpool.
No 8	£1.50	Sol Levy; Reginald Cooper; ABC in NW London.
No 17	£3.00	Special Issue featuring the Cinemas of George Coles with 26 original photographs reproduced in sepia.
No 18	£3.00	Sydney Colwyn Foulkes; United Picture Theatres; Tivoli Wimborne.
No 19	£3.50	Co-operative Cinemas; Ideal Lambeth; Dursley; Alister Macdonald; Granada Tooting.
No 21	£3.50	100 Years On; Travelling Shows; Reggie Rea; Albert Hall Sheffield; Regal Wells; West End Adverts; Scotland.
all issues below have colour cover and inside pages		
No 25	£4.50	Oldest Cinema (Brighton); FE Bromige; 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 50th 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.



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.

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 portholes 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





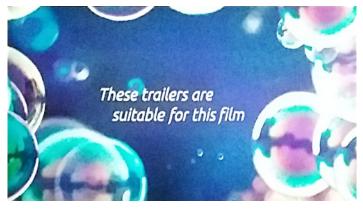


[L-R] Two views of the original interior, the exterior as the Paramount and screen ① as the Odeon

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!"



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]

ADDLESTONE (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}

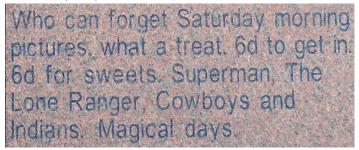
Surrey Live - 16 May

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 cinema also hosts autism and dementia friendly screenings. 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. {14785}

Kent Online - 20 May



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 nightspot. 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 \odot 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.

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 strippingout 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 @, 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

Six more pages of Newsreel in the full Bulletin

LETTERS

FRRATA

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 made 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.

lan 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 has 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 ${\bf Garrick}$ 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 you can't offer than 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 lan 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 Ovens – *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

A MUST for your collection

CINEMAS IN BRITAIN

A History of Cinema Architecture

by Richard Gray

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

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

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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 $4 \pm 1/7 \pm 1$ 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.