



CINEMA
THEATRE
ASSOCIATION

www.cta-uk.org

BULLETIN

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The Grade II listed Hyde Park Picture House in Leeds, which closes in March for a year's refurbishment; photo taken June 2005 – see Newsreel p18



The fourteen-screen Showcase in Manchester's Belle Vue, which may be demolished; photo taken August 2005 – see Newsreel p20

FROM YOUR EDITOR

In the *Miscellany* on p18 of the last Bulletin, I featured a 50p coin produced by the Royal Mint to commemorate 30 years of Wallace and Gromit. The heading for this item was *Caeseus Praestans*, which is the inscription on the coin. However, I forgot to say what it meant. Apparently it is Latin for 'Cracking Cheese'!

I had an email from a member who thought we had given out his address. The CTA will never reveal a member's personal details – to do so would be in breach of the Data Protection Act. If you wish to contact another member, write your letter and put it in a sealed and stamped envelope. Send this in another envelope to the membership secretary (address opposite) with a covering letter stating the name of the member you wish it forwarded to. Don't forget to include your own name and address if you expect a reply.

On the subject of emails, I keep getting emails purporting to have come from John Benzing. Many members will recall that John sadly passed away a few years ago. I'm sure I don't need to remind you that such emails are spam and should be deleted without opening any attachment or clicking on any link contained therein.

I'm sorry to report I am still being sent photos that are of far too low a resolution to print in the Bulletin. In one case (it was a scan of a newspaper page) the image was so bad it was unreadable. Please send me the highest resolution you have available – I can scale it down if necessary but I cannot go the other way. Also, if photographing indoors or in poor light, please try to steady your camera or use a tripod. If there is significant camera shake, the picture is unusable. Remember – what looks OK on the small screen of a mobile phone may not be suitable for publication in the Bulletin.

Back in December we went to the Parkway cinema in Barnsley to see *The Aeronauts* in 70mm. As usual, operator Rob Younger put on an excellent presentation. It was a rare sight to see two 70mm prints on the platter in the projection room, as they were also showing *Joker* in 70mm. It was an afternoon matinee performance and the system issued allocated seats. There were probably fewer than 30 people in the audience (in an auditorium with over 600 seats) but when we got to our reserved seats, we found someone else sitting in them! We simply sat elsewhere. Google StreetView has been inside the Parkway – and several other cinemas too – so you can appreciate the interiors. See also Cinema Business p23.

About 35 miles south of Barnsley is the National Trust property Hardwick Hall (more glass than wall) in North Derbyshire. It was built in the 1590s [I know it's not a cinema] by the formidable Bess of Hardwick, the richest woman in England after Queen Elizabeth I. We visited there a few years ago and met a costumed actress, dressed up as Bess [R]. She had been invited there for an interview but when she arrived, she found it was an interview for local radio.

Harry Rigby, CTA Bulletin Editor



The 2019 edition of *Picture House* was dispatched to members by second-class post from the printer on Friday 21 February. Anyone wishing to propose an article or feature for the 2020 edition should contact the editor as soon as possible at the address listed at right.

Allen Eyles

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE MONDAY 20 APRIL

CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

(Founded January 1967)

promoting serious interest in all aspects of cinema buildings

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CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

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

It is assumed that submissions are for publication, unless stated otherwise; items may be shortened or edited at the discretion of the Editor. Please state if you require items to be returned and enclose SAE, otherwise everything will be passed on to the CTA Archive.

VISITS: Members and non-members are reminded that they attend visits entirely at their own risk and no responsibility can be accepted by the Cinema Theatre Association or the owners of the buildings for any accidents or injury sustained during the course of any visit.

PRODUCTS: The Cinema Theatre Association does not necessarily recommend or endorse any products or services advertised in the Bulletin or in any flyer or document included in any mailings to members.

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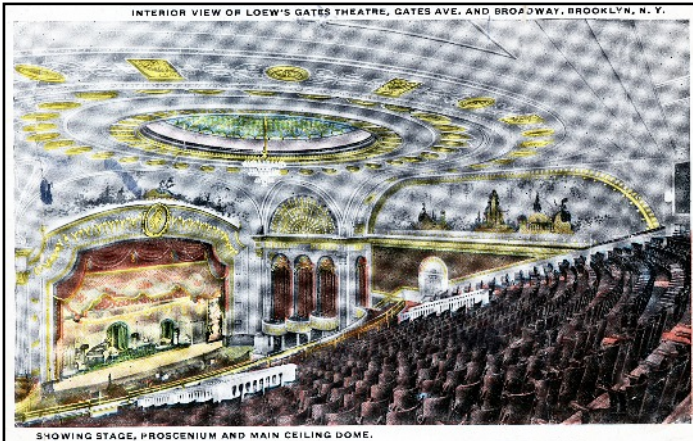
Visits' registration hotline ansaphone : 020 8800 8393

VISITS AND EVENTS

A Brooklyn Bite of the Big Apple

Illustrated talk by Cezar Del Valle

Saturday 28 March; The Gallery, 5:30pm (doors open 5pm)



Loew's Gates Theatre, Bushwick, Brooklyn 1921 - 1977.
Architect Thomas White Lamb, 2,925 seats. Now a church.

In the second event of this short series of presentations featuring international guest speakers, the CTA welcomes former cinema manager, distinguished theatre historian, author and tour guide Cezar Del Valle from Brooklyn, New York City. Fellow CTA member Cezar will be well-known to other members who attended the two successful visits to New York organised by Ken Roe and assisted by Cezar in November 2000 'Big Theatres in the Big Apple' and in October 2007 'Another Bite of the Big Apple'. Many visitors to New York go to Manhattan and miss out on some of the real treats to be found in the other Boroughs; Brooklyn, Bronx, Queens and Staten Island.

In this presentation Cezar will take us on a tour around the less-beaten tracks of Brooklyn, which in 1941 had 233 cinemas operating, the most in any of the five Boroughs. Brooklyn had large movie palaces in its Downtown; Loew's Metropolitan (3,618 seats, architect Thomas Lamb - 1918) now restored as home to the Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir; the Brooklyn Paramount (4,124 seats, architects Rapp & Rapp - 1928) currently being restored as a concert venue; the RKO - Keith Albee Theatre (3,246 seats, architect Thomas Lamb - 1925) demolished in 1978; the Brooklyn Fox Theatre (4,088 seats, architect C Howard Crane - 1928) demolished in 1971. All these and more were within a few minutes' walk of each other!

There were also many splendid cinemas in other districts, such as Brooklyn's Broadway, Bushwick and Flatbush Avenue, plus dozens of smaller neighbourhood theatres, which will be featured in Act 1 of the presentation. Act 2 will be devoted to the playground of New York, the famed Coney Island and adjacent Brighton Beach, with its wide Boardwalk, beach, and amusement parks. Over the years, it hosted 48 roller coasters! Its connection to the movies includes locations for Harold Lloyd in *Speedy* and Woody Allen filming sequences for *Annie Hall* plus movie theatres of course.

If you have never visited Brooklyn or have been and want to re-live memories, then this is your opportunity to take a stroll with Cezar along the streets and avenues featured in films such as *The French Connection*, *Saturday Night Fever* and many others. On the way Cezar will be thrilling you with historic stories of the glamour, the heartache and the ups and downs of the movie theatres of the Borough of Brooklyn. Don't miss... It will be an evening to remember!

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

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

Admittance: £10 on the door. Guests welcome (includes wine and light refreshments).

CTA Annual General Meeting

Saturday 16 May; 1:00pm (doors open 12:30)

Venue: The Gallery, getting there details opposite

Nominations for committee members are invited and should be sent to the Secretary, Adam Unger (address on p2) to arrive seven days before the meeting. As well as being distributed on the day, the minutes of last year's meeting will be available in the members' area of the CTA website from 13 April. A hard-copy can also be obtained from this date, by sending an SAE (C5 size) to the Secretary.

There is no charge for attending just the AGM. Members Only!

Between the AGM and the Double Bill of Illustrated Talks there will be a refreshment break, with time for members to visit their own choice of local eateries.

A Double Bill of Illustrated Talks

Saturday 16 May (following the AGM)

5:30pm (doors open 5pm)

Venue: The Gallery, getting there details opposite

Admittance: £10 on the door. Guests welcome (includes wine and light refreshments).

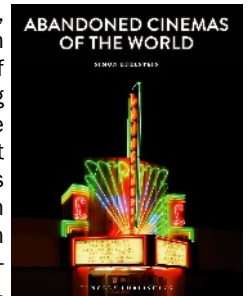
Abandoned Cinemas of the World by Simon Edelstein, assisted by Elisabeth Christeler

International guest speaker arranged by Ken Roe

In the third event of this short series of presentations featuring international guest speakers, the CTA welcomes well-travelled cinema photographer Simon Edelstein from Geneva, Switzerland, who will be assisted by Elisabeth Christeler. Both are long-standing members of the CTA. Simon has a knack of photographing cinemas that are interesting because they are down on their luck or their luck has run out and they have become abandoned. Simon has spent the past twelve years travelling with Elisabeth to countries around the world such as USA, France, Italy, India, Morocco and Cuba, visiting far flung cities in over 30 countries, searching out abandoned cinemas, which he has brought back to life through his camera lens. He will be sharing with us his adventures to places most of us will probably never have the opportunity to visit. In 2011 Simon published his 270-page photograph book *Lux, Rex & Corso* featuring the cinemas of Switzerland.

We hope to have limited copies of Simon Edelstein's book *Abandoned Cinemas of the World* [image above] on sale and available for signing. The photograph on the cover of Simon's new book is the *Laurelhurst Theatre & Pub*, Portland, Oregon, USA (660-seats, opened 1923).

Continued on next page...



A **MUST** for your collection

CINEMAS IN BRITAIN

A History of Cinema Architecture

by Richard Gray

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

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

Special price for CTA members

£29.50 + £6.00 postage from

Jeremy Buck, CTA Sales Officer

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

ALSO

Robert W Paul – Origins of the British Cinema by Professor Ian Christie, Broadcaster and author

Presenting the Animatograph: Robert W Paul not only made Britain's first films, in partnership with Birt Acres but was also a pioneer exhibitor. He worked a circuit of London's music halls early in 1896 before branching out into shows in Brighton, Cheltenham and other regional towns. But why has he not been long celebrated as our equivalent to Edison or Lumière? Why did he cease his activity of film exhibition in what was becoming a competitive showman's market? Ian Christie will offer some suggestions, based on research for his new book, *Robert Paul and the Origins of British Cinema* (Chicago, 2020). Ian Christie is Professor of Film and Media History at Birkbeck University, London.



Guest speaker arranged by Richard Norman
see also *Publications* p8

Movie Magic 'Round The Moor

1-6 June; organised by David Vinnels

This tour is now fully booked but names for a reserve list are being accepted – contact details in the last Bulletin. The organiser has been in touch with all those who have indicated their interest and full details will be sent out around the end of March.

Coming Soon

An Archival Day at the Seaside! Saturday 27 June

organised by David Simpson and Clive Polden

In March last year the CTA's archive moved to Rochford, near Southend-on-Sea, in Essex. On this first 'official' group visit, members will be able to browse the collections and, due to the much increased space, view artefacts that have been hidden away for years but have now been put on display. The day will start with a visit to the Grade II listed **Palace Theatre** in Westcliff and include free time on Southend's famous Golden Mile. A coach will be arranged to meet members at a local railway station

Full details in the next Bulletin (including confirmation of the date, which is subject to the theatre being available to us).

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 REGAL EXPERIENCE, WYMONDHAM Norfolk

- 5 April *The Treasure of Sierra Madre* (1948) [A] plus *Hidden Treasure* (Look at Life series) plus a local cinema display
- 3 May *Brigadoon* (1954) [U] plus *Hollywood Hobbies*
- 7 June *The Thirty Nine Steps* (1959) [U] plus Laurel & Hardy in *Busy Bodies* plus a display featuring the Norwich Hippodrome and Laurel & Hardy

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

Further information from Michael Armstrong [01953 603246]

THE ROYALTY BOWNESS-ON-WINDERMERE LA23 3BJ

Silent film presentations with Wurlitzer organ accompaniment:

- Saturday 11 April *The Cameraman* (Buster Keaton, 1928) 2pm
- Saturday 23 May *The Oyster Princess* (Ernst Lubitsch, 1919) 2pm

Wurlitzer organ concerts on the third Tuesday afternoon of each month, starting in April. Admission £6, start 12:30 (two hours):

- 21 April Elizabeth Harrison
- 19 May David Ivory
- 16 June Melissa Edison (USA)

Classic film presentations featuring the Wurlitzer organ before the performance and during the interval:

- Tuesday 9 June *The Lavender Hill Mob* (1951) 2pm

THE PLAZA STOCKPORT

- Thursday 2 April *After The Wedding* (2019) [12A] 11am
A Streetcar Named Desire (1951) [12A] 7:30pm
- Saturday 18 April *1917* (2019) [15] 2:30pm & 7:30pm
- Friday 24 April *Little Women* (2020) [U] 11am
Little Women (1949) [U] 7:30pm
- Saturday 25 April *Organ Coffee Morning* 10am admission free
Emma (2020) [TBC] 3pm & 7:30pm
- Friday 1 May *The Personal History of David Copperfield* [PG] 11am
The Adventures of Robin Hood (1938) [U] 7:30pm
- Saturday 16 May *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?* (1962) [12] 2:30pm & 7:30pm
- Tuesday 19 May *Blue Murder at St Trinians* (1957) [U] 7:30pm featuring Stockport's own Sabrina on what would have been her birthday.

Behind the Scenes Tours at 11am on Mondays 30 March, 27 April & 25 May. £8. Book or simply turn up.

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

THE FECKENODEON Feckenham, Worcestershire, B96 6HN

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

- 28 March *Four Weddings and a Funeral* (1994) [15]
- 25 April *Stan & Ollie* (2019) [PG]

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

REGENT CHRISTCHURCH CINEMA MUSEUM OPEN DAYS

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

Tickets: £5 per person. [tinyurl.com/y9c5r62m] or 01202 499199. Spaces are limited to 8 per tour – book now to avoid disappointment!

ART DECO BY THE SEA EXHIBITION

Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, University of East Anglia, Norwich
9 February – 14 June; Monday-Saturday 10am-4pm [scva.ac.uk]

Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle-upon-Tyne [laingartgallery.org.uk]
11 July – 10 October; Monday-Saturday 10am – 4:30pm

Admission charges apply at both venues

Art Deco by the Sea is the first major exhibition to explore how the Art Deco style transformed the British seaside during the 1920s and 30s. In a new age of mass tourism, new coastal resorts were built and existing resorts modernised using the Art Deco style. The show will celebrate iconic examples of seaside architecture, from hotels and apartment blocks to lidos and cinemas and it will show how the Art Deco style permeated all aspects of life by the sea from fashion and furniture to fairgrounds and funfairs. The exhibition will include around 120 works drawn from public and private collections across the UK.

Sent in by Tom Laughlan & Nick Taylor

LEICESTER SQUARE STATUE TRAIL

Bronze statues depicting famous moments and characters in cinema from the last century are being placed in Leicester Square in a celebration of London's film history. Laurel and Hardy, Mary Poppins and Mr Bean will be among the eight figures represented in the 'statue trail'. A statue of Gene Kelly recreating the memorable *Singin' In The Rain* dance sequence by hanging from a lamppost will also be on show. The installation runs until 30 June.

[www.leicestersquare.london]

Metro – 8 January; sent in by Tom Laughlan, Gavin McGrath & Barry Quinton

ELECTRIC PALACE HARWICH – HARD HAT TOUR

Thursday 26 March at 2pm

Hard Hats and Hi-Vis jackets provided:
strong shoes/boots advised.

Max 10 per tour:
if numbers attending are more than 10,
there will be a second tour at 3pm.

Donations of £10 each to cover costs
will be much appreciated.



HERITAGE CASEWORK

By Tim Hatcher

Grade II*

The conversion work initiated in order to convert the **State** in Grays into a hostelry of the JD Wetherspoon chain has been halted whilst variances to the approved planning consent conditions are sought. It is understood that installation of additional fenestration to the auditorium is proposed. This is a perturbing development: the windows previously approved for the rear stage-wall already represented an undesirable intrusion upon the building's originality and character.

Grade II

It is gratifying to record that planning and listed building consents relating to the **Grand** in Westbourne have been declined.

A new strategy for the area in which the **Forum** in Liverpool is situated has been formulated and accorded the appellation 'Upper Central'. Redevelopment is scheduled to commence during the current year, with the conversion of the cinema into a music venue encompassed therein.

As an element of the refurbishment of the **Empire** (ex-**Carlton**) in London's Haymarket, the former stalls area in the basement is to be converted into four screens. Assurance has been furnished that prominence will be awarded to the original wooden panelling.

The latest scheme for redevelopment of the **Regent** in Lyme Regis incorporates two residential apartments. Contact with the architectural practice involved is to be established.

Unlisted

The **Curzon** in Eastbourne is currently advertised for sale at a price of two and one-quarter million pounds. Enquiries are to be instigated in order to ascertain if the building is locally listed or situated in a Conservation Area. See Newsreel p18.

The residual façade of the **Picture House** in Leicester has been divested of its listed status by Historic England. As it was deemed worthy to retain its listing following the demolition of the major portion of the cinema some years ago, attention is once again drawn to the disproportionate subjectivity of the statutory assessment process as currently practised.

Regrettably the Council local to the **Dominion** in Harrow has rejected the CTA's recommendation that the foyer spaces should be integrated into its proposed redevelopment. A report has been prepared investigating a practicable means of stabilising the frontage during the demolition and rebuilding processes.

Approaches are to be made in order to secure an archival record of **The Point** in Milton Keynes prior to any construction activity on site.



The **Futurist** in Nottingham has been proposed for local listing. Although this building by Alfred Thraves has been thoroughly stripped internally, it retains a significant street presence. *Photo taken July 2004.*

It may be recalled that the **Regal** in Sunderland was denied listed status, despite being endowed with an accomplished and largely unaltered interior. In order to stimulate local interest and awareness, the Association's Public Relations Officer recently composed an exemplary press-release (see p26 last Bulletin) which prompted newspaper and radio attention. It is also envisaged that a presentation concerning the cinema shall be made to the local historical society.

ELECTRIC PALACE NEWS

By Chris Strachan



The main structural repairs at the Grade II* listed **Electric Palace** in Harwich are now making good progress after the not-totally-unexpected discoveries of additional, sometimes quite significant, problems – as often happens during such extensive and intensive assessments of 'ancient' cinemas! These major problems have now been very carefully dealt with and successfully overcome by the excellent team work of the architects, the main contractors and several expert restoration firms specialising in fibrous-plaster ceilings, external and internal ornate plaster-work, cement-work, new roof, new air-circulation plant and ducting etc. etc.

One of the causes of increased costs and significant time delays was due to the confirmation of asbestos in the roof-space after the dismantling and removal of the whole outer roof. This was dealt with by a specialist clearance firm thanks to an additional grant from Historic England specifically for this purpose.



One aspect of the newly-built **Palace** in 1911 was the finial above the main arch of the Frontage. It is not known how long the original finial lasted but it was a feature of the original building which Gordon Miller, the Architect who saved the building from destruction in 1972 by successfully promoting an emergency listing, had recommended for reinstatement when an extensive restoration project took place. With the presence over the past year of by far the largest amount of scaffolding ever used in our restoration works projects now seemed the best opportunity to proceed.

All of this was made possible by the awarding of appropriately generous Grants from both The National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) and Historic England (HE) – both organisations recognising the rarity status of Grade II* listing of a small town cinema dating from 1911. The initial NLHF Grant made the multi-faceted original Project practically possible and their uplift-funding for asbestos removal proved a very useful addition to the main financing of that expensive extra additional item by HE. HE arranged for the **Palace** to be placed on the Buildings at Risk Register and awarded a very significant grant, all of which resulted in the situation being satisfactorily resolved in an efficient and timely manner. This successful outcome was much appreciated by the Trust.

The parts of the restoration programme in need of more funding are: the seating refurbishment, toilets renovation, replacement of security gates of the open entrance foyer, reinstatement of the finial and installation of a stage extension. To support the Electric Palace Crowd-funding Campaign please visit our pages on [electricpalace.com] or [chuffed.org/project/save-our-cinema]. {2597}

SCOTTISH CASEWORK

By Gary Painter

ABC/Regal Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow (1929, CJ McNair – Category C-listed)

Following the 2014 fire, restoration work on Charles Rennie Mackintosh's Glasgow School of Art building was only a few months away from completion when a second, more destructive blaze on the evening of 15 June 2018 left the entire building a roofless shell. In the wee small hours of the following morning, just as the blaze in the Mackintosh building had been largely extinguished, flames were seen breaking through the roof of the adjacent O2 ABC. By the time dawn broke, the ABC's roof had collapsed into a smouldering heap of melted steelwork and corrugated sheeting.



The Regal/ABC as a music venue, showing the ABC sign and the extra reproduction bay on the left; photo taken November 2006

The O2 ABC has a complex history, starting off life as a Panorama / Diorama circa 1875 before being converted to an Ice Skating Palace around ten years later. It was in this guise that it hosted Glasgow's first film show on 26 May 1896 – around six weeks after the first public screening in Scotland at Edinburgh's Empire Palace Theatre.

It was subsequently converted to a Hippodrome, with a floodable circus ring and hosted Hengler's Circus until its conversion into a Waldorf Palais de Dance in 1927. The dance hall work was carried out with an eye on future conversion to a cinema and sure enough, only two years later, it was rebuilt and opened as Glasgow's flagship ABC venue, seating 2,359 in an auditorium typical of McNair's work as ABC's main architect in Scotland.



The ABC2 as a nightclub; photo taken July 2009

In October 1967, the completely new 922-seat ABC 2 opened next door to the older building, which was now called ABC 1. In 1979, ABC 1 was quadrupled, giving the complex five screens in total. The largely unaltered 1967 building closed in October 1998, with the screens in the original cinema following a year later. After lying derelict for a few years, both buildings were essentially stripped to bare brick internally and reconfigured as bars, nightclubs and a gig venue.

The 1967 building reopened as a Jumpin Jaks nightclub, latterly a Beer Hall, although this had been closed for a while at the time of the 2018 fire. It was unaffected by the blaze but had been the subject of a planning application to demolish for student housing – these plans were refused as they were considered to be visually detrimental to the adjacent Mackintosh building.

The original 1929 cinema housed a pub and a 1,300-capacity music venue named ABC and originally featured a large reproduction of the old ABC Cinemas logo over the main doors. Internally, very little was left of the original cinema, apart from some terrazzo floors and a tiny bit of plasterwork in the foyers. The venue auditorium made a feature of the exposed steel roof structure, hidden when it was a cinema. Externally, the building was an amalgam of every phase of its use over the years, from the semi-circular Panorama brickwork at the screen end (the only surviving vestige of a Panorama in Scotland that we know of) to an extra reproduction bay added to the Sauchiehall Street façade in 2002.

This is a building whose worth we have perhaps underestimated over the years. In the Cinemas' Thematic Survey we held with Historic Scotland in 2007-8, we did not put it forward for listing due to the extent of alterations over the years. It was Historic Scotland themselves who suggested a C-listing a couple of years later during their Theatres' Thematic Survey, remarking that it has...

"...a complex history; however its various changes have resulted in a striking and unusual streetscape elevation, which is an important feature of one of Glasgow's principal streets. The imposing full-height entrance, designed by CJ McNair, one of Scotland's celebrated cinema architects, is typical of cinema design and was purposefully designed to advertise its presence and draw patrons into the building."

In the year after the fire, the ABC owners made no attempt to secure the building or perform any repairs, leaving the local authority to put in temporary props and board up the windows. The owners then applied for consent to demolish the building entirely (Ref 19/00266/LBA), making various wild suppositions about the contaminants from the fire, the structural strain of the collapsed debris on the remaining load-bearing elements, the volume of dirty water pooling within and the stability of the steeply-sloping site with the ruins of the Mack perched precariously above. They even questioned the effectiveness of the Council-installed propping, despite having spent a year making no effort to secure the building themselves. Glasgow City Council (GCC), Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and the Glasgow School of Art itself all objected and we maintained that the structural engineers employed did not specialise in the conservation of damaged heritage assets. The site's owners then simply continued to submit broadly similar alarmist reports until eventually GCC and HES relented and withdrew their objection, although we understand that both are still keen to retain some elements of the damaged building. Some 20 months after the fire, the building shows such little sign of distress that GCC's Building Control is happy for the public to walk immediately underneath it.

While we acknowledge the huge impact of the fire, the owners have made no attempt to investigate any options other than complete demolition, starting with the main façade. We proposed demolition of the 1967 ABC 2 structure, as this would give easy access to the rear of what's left of ABC 1 but this option has not been explored. The 1929 façade is almost entirely intact and at the very least, it could clearly be saved and reused with a new build behind it, even if the entire rest of the building was found to be beyond repair.

This building has been the site of entertainment of many different kinds for generations of Glaswegians, proving to be a hugely adaptable building; the tragic fire should be looked at as an opportunity to create a reborn ABC fit to continue entertaining the City for the future. A quick move to completely demolish the building now would be short-sighted, go against all local and national planning policies and guidelines and be something the City would regret for years to come.

Our objection letter was cited as being useful and informative in several other objection letters, including that of HES and several local politicians. Our concerns were shared by a number of other organisations including the Theatres Trust, Architectural Heritage Society for Scotland and many others.

We now await the decision of the local authority.

Waverley Shawlands, Glasgow (1922, Watson, Salmond & Gray, Category A-listed)



The Waverley / ABC Shawlands photographed in July 2009

Boasting an unusual red sandstone exterior and domed corner entrance, the former Waverley Cinema is the only known cinema work of architectural practice Watson, Salmond and Gray, who were more associated with commercial and hospital work. With a seating capacity of 1,320, it opened in December 1922. Renamed the ABC Shawlands in 1964, it closed as a cinema in 1973. After use as a bingo hall and then a snooker club from 1982, it was empty by 2002. It was later sold and converted to a bar/restaurant/club by the G1 Group, all of which had closed by 2019. G1 successfully applied to convert the interior to a three-screen cinema with function room in 2013 but this was never enacted.

In 2019 it was sold to Wetherspoons, who have submitted a listed building consent application (Ref 19/02301/LBA) to convert it to a large bar. We submitted an objection because the plans were insufficiently detailed for a Category A-listed building, with no cross-sections or detailed conservation plan for the original auditorium space. The auditorium was always fairly plain, with a barrel-vaulted ceiling and some simple double columns along the sidewall. Some of these appear to still be in-situ, albeit boxed-in. There were also concerns that the planned toilets took up most of the small balcony and a kitchen took up the screen end, making the original spatial arrangement harder to read.

The plans were passed in January 2020, with a few additional cross-sections finally added and the toilet/kitchen objections dismissed. Conditions were attached regarding inspection and further detail of original decorative elements as work progresses, although there has been no sign of any work starting as we approach the end of February.

Regal Auchterarder (1925, Charles T Ewing, Category B-listed)



The Regal Auchterarder in September 2006

Opening as the Auchterarder Picturehouse on 9 September 1926 with Chaplin's *The Gold Rush*, this is a rare, little-altered, silent-era survivor, especially so in the Perth & Kinross area. Renamed the Regal after a takeover by the JB Milne circuit in 1946, it had a central entrance flanked by two integrated shop units, a first-floor café and kitchen, a small orchestra pit and a very unusual pressed tin barrel-

vaulted ceiling in the auditorium – a common feature in parts of the US and Australia, less so in Scotland. The only other extant cinema example we know of is in the former Forres Picturehouse of 1927. Apart from a few alterations to the entrance and to install sound, use as an antiques shop since 1963 has meant that the interior retains many original decorative details. Indeed, the photos we have show chandeliers, which are apparently from the former Ascot cinema in the Anniesland area of Glasgow, removed when that cinema was largely demolished for flats behind a retained façade circa 2001.

This is a cinema we would have previously nominated for listing but for the extant planning permission to demolish for housing, granted in around 2006 despite our objections. Now that the permissions have expired, the local authority themselves nominated it for listing, which we were happy to support, although we understand the decision may have been appealed.

The very comprehensive listing entry, at Category B, can be found here: [portal.historicenvironment.scot/designation/LB52527]

An extensive collection of images recorded for Historic Environment Scotland's Canmore database can be viewed online here: [canmore.org.uk/site/285942]

Govanhill Picture House Bankhall Street, Glasgow (1926, Eric Sutherland, Category B-listed)



The Govanhill Picture House in July 2009

Pre-dating other cinemas with elements of Egyptian styling in the UK by a few years, this little cinema sports a lovely tiled entrance with lotus-bud columns and a winged scarab flanking the door. Sold to ABC shortly after opening, it went over to bingo in the early-60s and was converted to a warehouse in the mid-70s, at which point the relatively plain stadium-style interior was lost and the property horizontally subdivided. It fell into disuse at some point around 2000 and was almost lost a few years later with an application to completely demolish it for flats. This was withdrawn after our objections, then replaced with a successful application to build flats behind the retained entrance but the economic crash prevented this from happening. It became increasingly ruinous, losing a chunk of its roof to storms and metal thieves but an application in around 2012 for an Asian market and banqueting complex saw the roof replaced and the ground floor finally reopened in 2019 as an Asian fabric shop. The upper floor remains disused but following a pop-up film screening as part of a Queer Classics film festival in 2018, a local collective known as the Glasgow Artists' Moving Image Studios (GAMIS) screened Friese-Greene's experimental colour travelogue *The Open Road* (1926, the year the cinema opened) at the venue during Glasgow's Doors Open Day festival in September 2019. They took this opportunity to display plans they have drawn up to convert the venue into a series of small art studios surrounding a 120-seat cinema and are currently seeking trustees to help with these plans. Search for "GAMIS - Govanhill Picture House" on Facebook for more details.



PUBLICATIONS

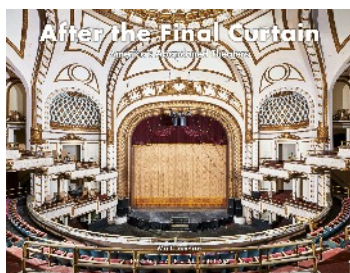
New Publication

After the Final Curtain Volume 2:

America's Abandoned Theatres by Matt Lambros

Hardback, landscape size, 224 pages, fully illustrated in colour. Special reduced price £29.99 plus postage. (RRP normally £34.99)

The author came to the UK to give a talk to the CTA in February and this second volume of his photographs of decaying USA cinemas is now available. In the early 20th Century the streets of small towns and cities across America were filled with the lights and sounds of movie theatres. The most opulent were designed to make their patrons feel like royalty; people would dress up to visit. But as time went on it became harder and harder to fill the 2,000+ seat theatres and many were forced to close. Today, these palaces are illuminated only by the flicker of dying lights. The sound of water dripping from holes in the ceiling echoes through the auditoria. In this new book, internationally-renowned photographer Matt Lambros continues his travels across the United States, documenting these once elegant buildings. From the supposedly haunted Pacific Warner Theatre in Los Angeles to the Orpheum Theatre in New Bedford MA (which opened the same day the Titanic sank) Matt Lambros pulls back the curtain to reveal what is left, giving these palaces a chance to shine again!



Also available: After the Final Curtain Volume 1: The Fall of the American Movie Theatre: £29.99 plus postage.

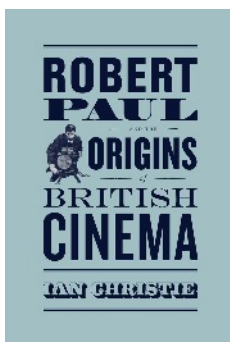
Also Available (but not from the Sales Officer)

Robert Paul and the Origins of British Cinema by Ian Christie
354 pages, paperback, ISBN: 978-0226105635

Available through Amazon, etc. RRP around £25.00

The early years of film were dominated by competition between inventors in America and France, especially Thomas Edison and the Lumière brothers. But while these have generally been considered the foremost pioneers of film, they were not the only crucial figures in its inception. Telling the story of the white-hot years of filmmaking in the 1890s, this book seeks to restore Robert Paul, Britain's most important early innovator in film, to his rightful place.

From improving upon Edison's Kinetoscope to co-creating the first movie camera in Britain to building England's first film studio and launching the country's motion-picture industry, Paul played a key part in the history of cinema worldwide. It's not only Paul's story, however, that historian Ian Christie tells here he also details the race among inventors to develop lucrative technologies and the jumbled culture of patent-snatching, showmanship and music halls that prevailed in the last decade of the nineteenth century. Both an in-depth biography and a magnificent look at early cinema and fin-de-siècle Britain, the book is a first-rate cultural history of a fascinating era of global invention and the revelation of one of its undervalued contributors. See Events on p4.



Back Numbers Available

BULLETINS

We can supply back numbers of most Bulletins from Volume 21 (1987) to date. Prices for issues from 1987 to 2018 are £4.00 per year (6 issues), individual issues are £1.00 each. Prices for issues in 2019 and 2020 are £5.00 per copy. All prices include postage. There are some issues available from earlier years – 1967 to 1986. Please send enquiries to the Sales Officer.

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 Campbelltown; Beeston/Nottingham memories.

There are also available a few second-hand copies of out-of-print issues of *Picture House* 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.

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.

Ordering

For post and packing: Total order value up to £20.00 please add £3.00, Total order value from £20.01 to £40.00 please add £4.00 Total order value from £40.01 to £60.00 please add £6.00. For larger orders and overseas, please contact the Sales Officer, email: [sales@cta-uk.org]. 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 and all the books 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.

INTERNET CORNER

- ★ [tinyurl.com/sqwtcql] A page from the BBC – The golden age of Belfast Cinemas. *Sent in by Philip Stevens*
- ★ [tinyurl.com/vzqdcph] A *Leicester Mercury* article with pictures of the former Oadby cinema – and other photos of Leicester's past.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/tjzdhmo] Photos and videos from the *Liverpool Echo* on Merseyside's vanished cinemas.
- ★ [cambridgestuff.xillennix.com/cinemas] Cinemas of Cambridge.
- ★ [www.chestercinemas.co.uk] Chester Cinemas – what else?
- ★ [tinyurl.com/w2eezak] From the *Eastern Daily Press* – Norwich Cinemas.
- ★ [www.jncohen.net/JaceyGroup] About Jacey Cinemas. Includes links to some 1950s Pathé News videos.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/yyatynu7] BBC News – Aberystwyth: The town where cinemas stayed open as WWII began. *Sent in by Margaret Burgoine*
- ★ [tinyurl.com/sczfxar] A *Yorkshire Evening Post* report on Channel 4's new home in the former Majestic in Leeds. Includes photos and a 1-minute video.
- ★ [youtu.be/_FI5KP5MnWE] A 14¾ minute film from the Huntly Film Archives – building the Regal cinema in Hull [and](#)
- ★ [youtu.be/9dO4TSY7N7I] A 3½ minute British Pathé version.
- ★ Visit [youtube.com] and put "movie palaces" as the search term. Produces hundreds of videos, including over 200 collected by Compton Lodge Studios.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/ulp4dmr] From *Nottinghamshire Live* – 29 photos showing the changing face of Theatre Square in Nottingham.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/yxbrvnoy] From *Plymouth Live* – a complete history of every cinema there's ever been in Plymouth.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/vryxafq] From *Derbyshire Live* – Burton-upon-Trent cinemas from the past that you may remember.

WELCOME TO A NEW CTA PATRON

We are delighted to welcome Alan Baxter CBE as a patron. Alan is the founder and principal of the multi-disciplinary practice that bears his name. The practice's work ranges from the engineering of new buildings and restoration projects, to historical research and conservation plans. Its work has included the new *Everyman Theatre* in Liverpool, York Minster and railway electrification projects. For many years he served on the London Advisory Committee of English Heritage and Urban Panel.

In the early 1990s he acquired a large building in Cowcross Street, which he developed as a low-rent space for small firms, e.g. of architects, and charities such as the Twentieth Century Society and opened a gallery in the basement where those interested in all aspects of the built environment could hold lectures, interact and socialise. His generosity has afforded organisations such as ours a central London venue for events that otherwise would be economically impossible to offer. Such support for voluntary organisations in the conservation sector is critically important to their success.

Alan has warmly complimented us on the quality of our publications. We hope that he will be able to take part in some of the CTA's activities.

David Trevor-Jones and Elaine Harwood

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CARTOON CORNER



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

The Projected Picture Trust

Dean Clough Mills, HALIFAX, HX3 5AX

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

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

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

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or if you would like to become a member only.

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www.projectedpicturetrust.org

HAPPY CENTENARY, PICTUREDROME

by Mike Whitcombe



Searchlights piercing the dark night sky and a red carpet leading elegantly gowned women and dinner suited, bow tie wearing men into the Grade II listed four-screen Picturedrome Cinema was just the beginning of a magical night to celebrate the centenary of this Bognor Regis landmark.



The author and his wife, Janice, are greeted by Marilyn Monroe and Charlie Chaplin

Marilyn Monroe and Charlie Chaplin greeted the three hundred specially invited guests before a no-expense evening got underway. Screen ②, the latest auditorium just twelve months old, hosted a champagne fountain and a four piece jazz band while a complimentary cocktail bar just outside this screen attracted an excitable crowd. The main foyer, meanwhile, was home to a delicious, cascading chocolate fountain and the multi-tiered Picturedrome birthday cake. In screen ①, the original auditorium, the cinema's latest acquisition, an organ played on the night by the impeccable John Mann, was exclusively revealed for the occasion.



Guests mingle in screen ①



John Mann entertains at the organ



The birthday cake and the champagne fountain

The Picturedrome has been a full-time cinema since 1919 (see Bulletin 54/1) and is now owned by the local Council and run by Adam Cunard's Electric Theatre Company. It's fair to say that without Adam's passion the cinema would have closed a decade ago. On Friday 17 January he showed his devotion for his home-town cinema by closing it for the day and putting on an unforgettable centenary celebration where champagne flowed freely all night long, television crews recorded the occasion for posterity, five former Mayors of Bognor along with the granddaughter of the very first manager and representatives from Sony and Disney Studios all rubbed shoulders with an exclusively invited audience, each of whom dressed to impress.

The history of the building was well presented through an elegantly produced twelve-page souvenir brochure, a display of various pieces of cinema memorabilia (provided by CTA Wessex) located throughout the site and a carefully researched illustrated talk, using the main screen to show some fascinating photos, by local historian Sylvia Endicott.



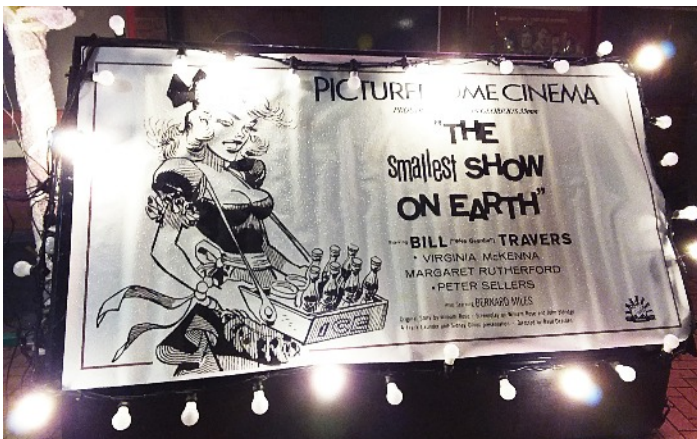
Adam Cunard outside the Picturedrome



Unveiling the plaque on the side wall

Adam Cunard, resplendent in his gold-coloured evening jacket, also reflected on the building's history during a speech in which he paid grateful thanks to staff and customers alike, both past and present, who have made and continue to make the cinema such a well-loved success. He added how special it was to be celebrating one hundred years, correctly pointing out that so many of the early cinemas couldn't celebrate such an anniversary as they had been put out of business eighty odd years ago by the art deco picture palaces of the 1930s, which we now cherish.

After his speech, Adam, along with local MP Nick Gibb, unveiled a plaque on the side wall of screen ① celebrating the milestone. Adam was then joined by Marilyn Monroe, who sang *Happy Birthday, dear Picturedrome!* before cutting the spectacular birthday cake to huge cheers and loud applause.



Advertising the main feature



Adam makes his speech

A programme of nostalgic adverts, 1950s newsreels and vintage trailers followed before an intermission when cinema staff emerged from the shadows to hand out complimentary ice cream and even more free champagne. The main feature was, quite appropriately, the always amusing *The Smallest Show On Earth* starring Peter Sellers, Bill Travers and Virginia McKenna. It was a 35mm print projected with a real projector and was gloriously full of scratches and cue dots that are now sadly a distant memory of a golden cinema-going past.



Marilyn Monroe sings *Happy Birthday*

Adam was present at the auditorium doors to personally thank everyone for attending. When guests congratulated him on such an amazing evening, he looked genuinely proud of what his team – from right-hand man Spencer Clark, manager Emma, assistant manager James and all the hardworking floor staff – had achieved. The final treat came in the shape of a goodie bag containing sweets and a unique Picturedrome centenary mug.

It was a huge privilege to attend this memorable evening. Too many cinema anniversaries are ignored but this truly momentous occasion – one hundred years of continually showing films to a local community – was as glamorous as any Academy Award ceremony. It was a dazzling night of excitement, memories, hope for the future and genuine love for a building that continues to make the magic real!

HOLIDAY SNAPS

By Malcolm Davis

These photos were taken last November in Vienna. Below is the Artis International Kino. It shows mainstream films in their original language and has seven screens with between 256 and 30 seats. [www.cineplex.at/center/artis-international]



Below is the Volkstheater, which is undergoing renovation. It was erected in 1889. It has a programme of modern and classical plays. [www.volkstheater.at]



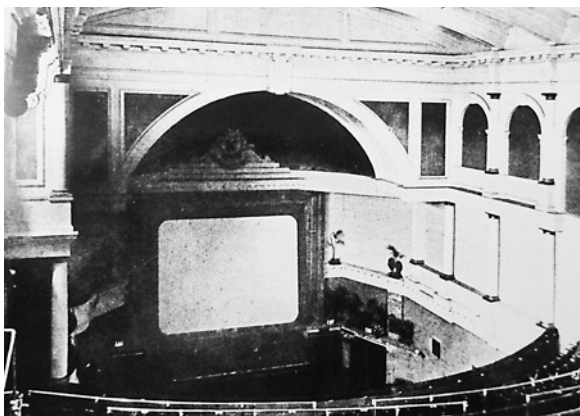
100 YEARS OF THE KING'S CROSS CINEMA

By Gavin McGrath



It is almost a hundred years since the opening of the King's Cross Cinema, so with the centenary fast approaching it is time to take a quick look at a piece of local history.

Plans for the former cinema were approved as early as November 1913 to the designs of the original architect Frederick Foster. It is not clear why his services were dispensed with but the building was erected to the plans of H Courtney Constantine, following approval of his designs in April 1915. The freeholder of the site was the Metropolitan Railway Company and much of the building was built over the railway track. Although a licence had already been granted for exhibitions, the cinema's opening was postponed owing to the outbreak of the Great War. In 1917 the company that had been set up to operate the business begged the Council to allow the ground floor to be opened, owing to the amount of money that had already been spent on the venture, £22,000 in total. This seems to have been blocked owing to the ventilation not being complete. At this time the balcony had not been built and would be added later. In September 1918 the building had been adapted to become a factory for aeroplane parts.



The Tower (Rye Lane) Cinema Company eventually opened the cinema on 26 April 1920 with 1,402 seats, 907 in the stalls and 495 in the circle. In December 1926 it was taken over by Associated Provincial Picture Houses and again in February 1929 by Gaumont British. The roof became damaged during World War II and when it closed for repairs on 9 May 1949 it was discovered that one of the girders had

become defective. It remained closed until 17 March 1952 when it reopened as the Gaumont. As well as a new roof and new stage, the shell and steelwork were strengthened, the architects being TP Bennett & Son with remodelling of the auditorium by Clark and Fenn. The colour scheme was deep peach and gold with the proscenium treated in soft green and Pompeian red, intersected by a warm band of grey. Rust-coloured Shirley Dunlopillo chairs and carpets were fitted, while in the projection room GK21 projectors were installed. It was possibly at this time that the auditorium was re-seated to accommodate 1,305 people with 821 seats in the stalls and 484 in the circle. Children's shows were popular in the mid-1950s and the cinema later changed its name to the Odeon in November 1962, remaining open until 22 August 1970 when the last film to be shown was *Airport*.

PROGRAMME FOR MAY 1932		
DATE	FILM	STARS
SUNDAY, MAY 1st (For One Day Only)	EAST IS WEST THE BOUDOIR DIPLOMAT	EDWARD G. ROBINSON BETTY COMPTON
MONDAY, MAY 2nd (For Three Days Only)	NICE WOMEN THE THIRD STRING	FRANCIS DEE, Sidney Fox ALF GODDARD
THURSDAY, MAY 5th (For Three Days Only)	Murder at Covent Garden SALLY OF THE SUBWAY OUR FARMER PRINCE (Interest film of H.R.H. Prince of Wales)	DENNIS NEILSON TERRY, Anne Grey JACK MULHALL
SUNDAY, MAY 8th (For One Day Only)	SEED	JOHN BOLES
MONDAY, MAY 9th (For Three Days Only)	SURRENDER A GENTLEMAN OF PARIS	WARNER BAXTER, Leila Hyams ARTHUR WONTNER, Sybil Thorndyke
THURSDAY, MAY 12th (For Three Days Only)	TOP OF THE BILL THE SECRET SERVICE	EDNA MAY OLIVER, Hobart Bosworth RICHARD DIX
SUNDAY, MAY 15th (For One Day Only)	MOTHER'S MILLIONS	MAY ROBSON
MONDAY, MAY 16th (For Three Days Only)	Around the World in 80 Minutes THE MURDOCK AFFAIR	DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS JAMESON THOMAS
THURSDAY, MAY 19th (For Three Days Only)	THE OLD MAN DEADLINE	MAISEE GAY, Anne Grey BUCK JONES
SUNDAY, MAY 22nd (For One Day Only)	ADIOS THE WIDOW FROM CHICAGO	RICHARD BARTHELEMESS EDWARD G. ROBINSON
MONDAY, MAY 23rd (For Six Days)	FRANKENSTEIN HOBSON'S CHOICE	COLIN CLIVE, Boris Karloff, John Boles LILA LEE, Harry Gribbon
SUNDAY, MAY 29th (For One Day Only)	BIG BUSINESS GIRL THE GORILLA	LORETTA YOUNG, Ricardo Cortez LILA LEE, Harry Gribbon
MONDAY, MAY 30th	CONDEMNED TO DEATH THE RAINBOW TRAIL	ARTHUR WONTNER, Gordon Harker GEORGE O'BRIEN
BRITISH MOVIE TONE NEWS (changed twice weekly) at EVERY PERFORMANCE This Programme is subject to alteration without notice at the discretion of the Management		

In 22 February 1971 it reopened as the Cineclub screening adult films but this was short lived and it closed about four months later. It reopened in July that year as the King's Cross Cinema screening second-run features, although much of the repertoire seemed to be films related to music. Apart from screenings, good use was made of the stage in order to host rock concerts under the King Sound banner. Iggy Pop and Hawkwind were two notable attractions in 1972 and 1974 respectively. The cinema had its licence revoked and closed in 29 March 1975 with *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* and *A Fistful of Dollars*. It reopened briefly as a 300-seat cinema on 1 June 1978 with clubroom lounge, bar and café but that was also short lived.

Two years later, on 1 July 1980, the building reopened as the Primatarium, an exhibition by the International Primate Protection League on the problems facing the world's environment. This followed a lengthy fundraising campaign. The stalls were artificially decorated to resemble a forest and environmental films were screened. The venture failed less than a year later.



On 9 July 1981 the circle reopened as a cinema under the name **Scala** showing a double-bill of *King Kong* and *Mighty Joe Young*. It was masterminded by Steve Woolley, who ran the Scala club in Tottenham Street during the late-1970s and it became home to various film festivals and the 'Shock Around the Clock' all-nighters. It was famous for its double and triple bills such as *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* screened in June 1984, *Bladerunner* and *Trancers* in July 1985, *Truckstop Women* and *Caged Heat* in August 1986 and *Chinatown*, *Still of the Night* and *Carnal Knowledge* in January 1987, along with *Thundercrack* and *Café Flesh*. There were also free preview screenings for *The Worst of Hollywood*, a TV series shown on Channel 4 towards the end of 1983. Rick Baker of Eastern Heroes screened various Hong Kong movies, selling videos in the foyer after the shows. The clientele at the **Scala** was a rather strange mix of professional people, punks, alcoholics and members of the lesbian and gay community. It was reported that customers would indulge in drug-taking during the films and even sex in the back row, which led to the picture house being branded a rather sleazy affair.

As many of the films screened at the **Scala** were made available on video, the business began pushing the boat out and many films banned by the BBFC were screened such as *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, *The Exorcist* and *I Spit on Your Grave*. But it was the decision to screen Stanley Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange*, banned from distribution in the UK, on 1 April 1992 that landed the business in trouble. Manager Jane Giles felt the full force of the law and was prosecuted as a result of the screening in April 1993. Much of the money raised went to fund the court case and as result the business ran out of cash. The **Scala** closed its doors forever just two months later on 6 June 1993 with the same film it had opened with, *King Kong*.



The next six years saw the building empty apart from a few one-off events such as an exhibition of paintings by Chris Gollon in December 1995. All was not lost however and in March 1999 a live music venue opened in the building organised by Sean McLuskey with the help of a £37 million injection from the King's Cross Partnership. The interior was reconstructed to form a new four-floor layout suitable for multiple uses, which means that pretty much all of the original features of the auditorium have been lost, although the staircase areas still have a cinematic feel to them. There are two dance floors, a large stage for live shows and three bars. On entering the **Scala** and going up the stairs the first space you come to is the Foyer Bar with its terrazzo floor and barrel-vaulted ceiling and a lounge area known as 'The Den'. The main room has terraces on each side of the dance floor with the mezzanine level, known as the Glass Bar, fitted with large windows

and overlooking the space. The top room is known as the Balcony Bar and is walled off from the main room. The kitchen is also located on this floor. Artists that have appeared at the venue include the Chemical Brothers, Coldplay, Foo Fighters and Moby. In nightclub mode Simon Hobart's Popstarz had a regular Friday night slot during the 2000s, returning to the venue for one-night events.



Other occupants of the **Scala** building include a takeaway at street level next to King's Cross Thameslink Station and the King's Cross Snooker Club, which occupies the former stalls area, now more of a basement, via the entrance on Gray's Inn Road.

In the autumn of 2011 the repertoire of the former cinema was brought back to life with a film festival called Scala Forever, organised by Roxy Bar and Screen in Southwark and screened at various venues across the Capital, although not at the **Scala**. Highlights included *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp*, introduced by Tilda Swinton, a double-bill of the John Waters films *Female Trouble* and *Desperate Living* (also screened at the **Scala** in 1988), Alfred Hitchcock's *Frenzy* and needless to say *A Clockwork Orange*. The Festival has continued on an annual basis very September as Scalarama, screening a mixture of old **Scala** classics along with newer titles.

First four pictures courtesy of the Cinema Theatre Association;
last two courtesy of Gavin McGrath

London's West End Cinemas by Allen Eyles with Keith Skone.

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Price – £25.00 + £3 postage.



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

Published in collaboration with English Heritage.

THE FORGOTTEN HEROES OF 1930S CINEMA BUILDING

By Ron Knee

It was interesting to see the Art Deco Strenic Stone decorative splay wall panels in situ of the former Radion cinema in Lincoln (p8 Bulletin 53/5) apparently surviving by being boarded over! The Radion was built to the design by WJ King, who was also one of four Directors. King also used his preferred builders, Leightons.

The Radion was opened at 7pm on Monday 27 March 1939 by the Lord Mayor of Lincoln. The film was *We're Going to be Rich* with Gracie Fields. Sadly that was not the case for the Radion, as six months later it was closed due to the outbreak of the Second World War. In September 1939 the cinema was requisitioned by the Army until 1947. The Radion reopened in 1947 and showed films for ten years until its closure. It then became a supermarket and since 1980 it is used as BBC Radio station. There is an interesting and comprehensive article on the architect William James King by Richard Gray in *Picture House* number 28.

The above paragraphs mention two names, Leightons and Strenic Stone; both are unknown to many of us, yet both played a large part in the building of cinemas during the 1930s.

LEIGHTONS (CONTRACTORS) LTD

A small family firm of builders in Lowestoft who were surviving during a recession saw a gap in the building industry. On 29 October 1931 Stanley Ellis Leighton formed the Company, Leightons (Contractors) Ltd. Stanley Leighton and his Chief Engineer, Claude Catchpole, set up their Head Office at Leighton House, Potters Bar, which in 1932 was still in Middlesex.

Leightons' success in cinema building was by using a small team for each new cinema and engaging builders and tradesmen on site; this was helped by the high unemployment at the time. Major contractors were the responsibility of Catchpole and organised direct from Head Office. In 1934 Leightons added offices in London's Victoria Street, Belvedere Road, Lowestoft and Boar Lane, Leeds. During 1935-1936 Leightons were constructing up to four cinemas at a time, building 57 cinemas between 1931-1939 including all of Major King's Ritz cinemas at Southgate, Neasden, Whitton, Ealing, Park Royal, Potters Bar, Seaford and Harringay. Also George Coles' Savoy Hayes, the Northwick Worcester, Studio One Oxford Street and seven large Odeons. The Radion was to be their last cinema in 1939.

As with many other companies, war and building restrictions after saw Leightons slim down to small general building works – a far cry from just a few years earlier, closing their Head Office in Potters Bar and others, leaving just an office in Lowestoft, which also closed in 2008. The Company was dissolved in October 2014.

Leightons were imaginative during the Golden Age of cinema building, a company that was forward thinking, kept a tight rein on their cinema buildings and coming within budget proved how good they were at it. Being innovative they gave small firms a chance to flourish on their many small and large cinema buildings and the Strenic Construction Company was to be one.

THE STRENIC CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

George Head, a 'stone masonry contractor' experimented in 1919-20 with making artificial stone from the rubble that came from the quarries in the Corsham (Wiltshire) area. Stone extraction had started in the 1840s, after the cutting of Box Tunnel for the Great Western Railway by Isambard Kingdom Brunel, revealing rich seams of what became known as 'Bath stone', a light honey-coloured oolitic limestone used in the building of that City from the eighteenth century. Strenic began operations in 1921, with directors including Head, William Gibbons and Richard Yockney and continued in the business of supplying stone and stoneware until the mid-1960s.

A by-product of quarrying massive stone blocks was a considerable amount of waste and Head discovered a method of making 'recycled' stone from this. Not only could stone blocks for construction be made, but all manner of shapes could be moulded from it. The raw material was put through a crusher before being mixed, moulded and finished. Strenic stone was used on buildings widely in England and Wales. During the years 1930-6 more than 12,000 tons of stone waste is recorded as having been processed and 6,000 tons of Bath stone quarried and sold.

The offices of the company (at least until 1930) were in a splendid looking building in Stokes Road, Corsham, a hundred yards from the work yard at the bottom of South Street. This was close to the railway, where there were extensive sidings for the loading of stone blocks. One of the work yards was at the bottom of South Street, opposite the station. Stone blocks and rubble for making the reconstructed stone were taken from the underground workings by means of a tunnel and railway line, next to the main lines: it can be seen in the picture opposite

As mentioned above Strenic stone was used for the Radion auditorium splay wall panels also for the pair of external frontage columns and fluted urns that surmount them. Many other Leighton cinemas featured Strenic stone including:

1. Odeon Ipswich; Pay Box.
2. Odeon Bury St Edmunds; Foyer & Auditorium.
3. Odeon Norwich; Auditorium Splay Walls.

Leightons used Strenic stone, which was very popular at this time, in many of their cinemas. Being reconstituted, it was poured into wooden moulds or templates; when set and finished it gave the appearance of stone, also being much lighter at a fraction of the cost. Similar casting techniques were used with various media – Newbury Trent produced Trent-

crete for his cinemas and Francis Leon Philie invented Plastocrete. There were others using similar variations at this time, now all gone; however, there is one survivor, Thakeham of Storrington.

I would like to thank Martin Head, grandson of George Head and David Gibbons, grandson of William Gibbons, for supplying their archive material that appears in my article. Their help has been invaluable.

Photos on this page from CTA Archive
Photos on opposite page courtesy Strenic Stone



The foyer of the Odeon Ipswich, showing the pay box.



The auditorium of the Odeon Bury St Edmunds



The auditorium of the Odeon Norwich



The Adelphi Slough, displaying 2,000 cubic feet of Strenic stone



The offices of the Strenic Stone Company in Corsham



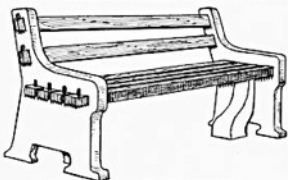
The work yard of the Strenic Stone Company



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NEWSREEL

The items in this section are taken mainly from press cuttings from local newspapers. Although their factual accuracy has been checked by Allen Eyles, there may be minor errors in reporting dates or other detail. Allen has also added comments, where indicated. Photos by Harry Rigby within entry, except where stated. A number in curly brackets {nnnnn} is the reference for the Cinema Treasures website. Go to: [cinematreasures.org/theaters/nnnnn]

ABERFELDY (Perth & Kinross)

The Birks Cinema is seeking planning permission to install dozens of rooftop solar panels. It aims to reduce both running costs and greenhouse gas emissions. The cinema reopened in April 2013. {39010}

Dundee Courier – 28 December

ALNWICK (Northumberland)

The Playhouse reopened in early January after a £3.3m refurbishment. The building now houses a community hub with a café, library and visitor centre on the ground floor. The bar and gallery have also been refurbished and the rebuilt auditorium incorporates features such as hand rails and seats with ample leg room. The famous spiral staircase has also been given a modern facelift. The Northumberland Gazette has a page of 19 photos at [tinyurl.com/woarkaj] {47495}

Northumberland Gazette – 6, 8 January; sent in by Terry Hanstock

ALVA (Clackmannanshire)

A fundraising scheme is underway to purchase a projector so that films can be shown at the Cochrane Hall. The town's previous cinema, the 800-seat Hillfoot Picture House closed in the late 1970s; the building still stands, boarded-up.

Alloa & Hillfoots Advertiser – 8 January

ASHINGTON (Northumberland)

Plans have been approved for a seven-screen 600-seat cinema on Portland Park, south of the Asda Petrol Station. It will be operated by Reel Cinemas. Work could start this spring but no time scale has been given.

The Journal, Evening Chronicle, Northumberland Gazette – 8, 9, 16 January

AYLESBURY (Bucks)



It has been confirmed that the Odeon is to become an Odeon Luxe. 623 hand-made recliner seats are being brought in across six refurbished screens. There will be a 163-seat iSense screen and all standard screens will be upgraded to Dolby 7.1 sound. Work has already started and some screens will remain open during the conversion. The venue opened as an ABC in December 1999. {24120}

Mix96 FM – 16 February; photo taken April 2005

BARNESLEY (South Yorks)

The St John the Evangelist Church Hall in Staincross has received £5,436 from the Co-op local community fund to open a community cinema in the hall, which will be refurbished.

Barnsley Chronicle – 6 December

BASILDON (Essex)

A new contractor has been appointed for the ten-screen Empire after the previous company went into administration. Demolition has continued on the site.

Basildon Echo – 30 January

BEESTON (Notts)

The eight-screen Arc cinema being built at Beeston Square is running 4-5 weeks behind schedule. If it can get back on track, it could still be open by Christmas.

Nottinghamshire Live – 7 February; sent in by Terry Hanstock

BIRKENHEAD (Wirral)

The future of the Woodside Drive-In is in doubt after high winds damaged the cloth screen. The operator approached the Council for funding but has not heard anything. The problem is, the wall where the screen is is Grade II listed because it was part of the old railway. They want to build another wall and whitewash it – if so, they'd only need another metre to become the biggest drive-in in Europe.

Liverpool Echo – 4 January; sent in by Mike Taylor

BLACKPOOL (Lancs)



The former Royal Pavilion is being converted into a Beatles-themed pub by owner Hamish Howitt. He has owned the building since 1997 and ran it as Scot's Bar. It had been a theatre but was actually built as a cinema and showed films for many years. Opened in 1909, it is quite possibly the oldest surviving purpose-built cinema building in Britain, although greatly altered today. In its latest incarnation as *The Yellow Submarine* a grand opening is planned for Good Friday 10 April. {36698}

Sent in by Ray Dolling; photo taken June 2009

BOURNEMOUTH

Modified plans to convert the former Grand in Westbourne into offices have been submitted. This follows a rejection of previous plans – see p 5 & 21 last Bulletin.

Daily Echo, Bournemouth – 14 January

BRIGHTON

Local MP Caroline Lucas has called for urgent repairs to the Hippodrome as it tops the list of the UK's most 'at risk' theatres for the fifth time. The building's current owners unveiled a first look at its plans for the Grade II* listed theatre a year ago – but a promised consultation never took place after Historic England said it needed to build a sustainable business case.

Brighton & Hove News – 29 January; The Argus, Brighton – 6 February; The Stage – 13 February; sent in by Barry Quinton

The Grosvenor Casino in the former Savoy/ABC has had a £5.2m refurbishment. The venue has been renamed 'Pier Nine' and is open 24 hours.

The Argus, Brighton – 16 January; sent in by Barry Quinton

BRISTOL

Plans, reported on p21 of the last Bulletin, for a development at St Catherine's Place have been rejected by the Council. The scheme was to have included a three-screen cinema.

Bristol Live – 24 January

Customers at the Cineworld in Hengrove are having trouble seeing over the new high-back seats that have been installed in screen @. Adults have been using toddler booster seats in the non-tiered auditorium. Staff appreciate the problem and have offered free tickets to customers affected. {24267}

Somerset Live – 4 February

BURGESS HILL (West Sussex)

Plans have been approved for The Beehive, a £5.5m 237-seat theatre and community venue. No time scale has been given.

The Argus, Brighton – 20 January; sent in by Barry Quinton

BURNLEY (Lancs)

Plans for an eight-screen Reel cinema in the town centre have been approved, with some conditions. Work is expected to start later this year with opening scheduled for 2022.

Lancashire Telegraph – 6 January; sent in by Philip Crompton

BURY ST EDMUNDS (Suffolk)

The new *Personal History of David Copperfield* film had a preview at the Abbeygate ahead of its general UK release. Parts were filmed in the town in spring 2018. Proceeds went to phase two of the cinema's refurbishment programme, which will see two extra screens built in the former bingo area.

East Anglian Daily Times – 16 January

CAMPBELTOWN (Argyll & Bute)

The Picture House has created a unique collection box for donations. It utilises an old film reel, Perspex and letters from the display board that was used at the kiosk before the recent restoration. There is an option to insert cash or use a contactless device to donate.

Campbeltown Courier – 17 January

CHRISTCHURCH (Dorset)

The Regent Centre has been named *Best Independent Exhibitor* for 2019 by the Event Cinema Association. The award was presented at a ceremony at the Vue in London's West End on 13 February. Event Cinema refers to the use of cinemas to screen a varied range of live or pre-recorded entertainment, such as sport, opera, musicals, ballet and comedy, which distinguishes it from traditional films and cinema releases. Last year, the Regent Centre has a record-breaking sell-out of *Les Misérables – The Staged Concert* on Monday 2 December when all 480 seats at the Centre sold out in three hours flat.

Daily Echo – 21 January, 20 February; sent in by John R Forster & Phillip Stevens

CLEVEDON (Somerset)

Specialist contractors are due to move on site at the Curzon Cinema on 24 February to begin repairs on the roof of the Grade II listed building. This follows a successful fundraising appeal, reported on p22 of the last Bulletin. Work will start on the top floor where decaying timber will be repaired and replaced, new rainwater goods will be installed followed by all the 12,380 terracotta tiles being replaced. There will be no weekly morning or 1:30pm screenings, due to the noise of the building work, with the cinema focusing instead on its 4:30pm and 7:30pm screenings. The work is expected to continue until August. {846}

Bristol Live – 19 February

CROMARTY (Highland)

A 35-seat cinema opened on 31 January in a yard by the ferry slip. It will be programmed by the Eden Court in Inverness. {61661}

BBC News website – 31 January; sent in by Gavin McGrath & David Simpson

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DERBY

Several key organisations have met to try and save the Grade II listed Hippodrome. It opened as a theatre in 1914 and was converted into a cinema in 1930. Bingo was played from 1962 to 2007. The building was severely damaged in 2008 and there have been several fires since. It is planned that the City Council will approach the current owners to see if it can buy the building in a back-to-back agreement, which would see the Derbyshire Historic Buildings Trust [DHBT] take it on. Photos on 28dayslater website at [tinyurl.com/u9dpdaa]. {14683}

Derbyshire Live – 28 January

DERRY / LONDONDERRY

Plans have been approved for alterations at the seven-screen Brunswick Moviebowl. Two new screens will be added in an extension to the building. The total number of seats will be reduced from 1,087 to 895 to allow for larger, more comfortable seats. {43866}

Derry News – 9 January; Derry Journal – 10 January

DEWSBURY (West Yorks)

The Grade II listed Pioneer House, which has been subject of a £7.5m regeneration in recent years, has been taken over by Kirklees College. A further £16m is being spent on converting it into a Higher Skills Learning Centre, due to open this summer. The building, known to many as the old Co-op building on Northgate, was compulsory purchased by the Council from Stayton Homes after it had fallen into decline. The hall was used as the Pioneer Cinema until closure in 1973. {35664}



Dewsbury Reporter – 30 April 2019; sent in & photo by John West, who writes:

The old Co-op building in Dewsbury had been in decline for some time. The Dewsbury Operatic Society staged the last stage production there. When it was a cinema the projectors were off-centre to the left of the rear of the circle and had to have special lenses to correct the sideways 'keystone' distortion. Classic Cinemas latterly, operated both the old Picture House and the Pioneer Cinema, which were both on the same road. The Pioneer Cinema closed first. I had it 'listed' and won a Public Enquiry, preventing most of it being demolished, except for the clock tower and the façade, in about 1983. The hall was on the second floor. Access was via a staircase in the clock tower. The Cooperative Society inserted the circle at a later date. The stage was created by partitioning off one end of the hall. There was no fly tower, tiny wing space and very limited dressing room accommodation. Latterly, the hall had been used for bingo, when the chapel, which originally housed that business, was demolished to make way for the Dewsbury ring road. The ground floor consisted of Co-op Shops representing various trades. The Cooperative Society moved to a new site adjacent to the swimming baths, on former railway land.

Editor's Note: A 2-minute video on the Kirklees College website has some nice shots of the interior [youtu.be/PtmPCac5PBM].

DONEGAL (Ireland)

Planning permission has been granted for a five-screen 714-seat Cineplex cinema to be built on a site next to Lidl.

Donegal Post – 4 December

DORCHESTER (Dorset)

A man stole and ate sweets from the pick and mix stand at the Plaza before throwing them aggressively at staff. The duty manager was made aware of him by a member of staff and he threw sweets at her. She asked the man to leave but he shouted abuse at her and made her feel scared and threatened. She then took shelter in a cupboard with other members of staff to protect themselves. The man was convicted of being drunk and disorderly.

Dorset Echo – 14 February; sent in by Terry Hanstock

DUDLEY

The Council has asked the developer of the project to transform Cavendish House to drop the cinema part of the scheme. It did not want competition with the Showcase on nearby Castlegate Park.

Dudley Chronicle – 9 January

EASTBOURNE (East Sussex)

The three-screen Curzon closed on 16 January, much earlier than anticipated in the report on p22 of the last Bulletin. The manager said, "A recent screenings of blockbuster Cats had been to four or five people." Eight members of staff have been made redundant. The building is on the market for £2.2m. See Casework p5.

The Argus – 16 December; *Eastbourne Herald* – 15 January; sent in by Margaret Burgoine, Geoff Gill, Barry Quinton & Bob Skinner

ENNISKILLEN (County Fermanagh)

Plans have been submitted for a five-screen cinema on the former Unipork Factory site. No operator or time scale has been given.

Fermanagh Herald – 23 December

GAINSBOROUGH (Lincs)

Savoy Cinemas has submitted a planning application for a four-screen cinema in the town centre. If permission is granted. Lincolnshire Co-op's travel branch and Post Office would be relocated before work starts. Work could start in May this year and be complete in May 2021.

Market Rasen Mail, Gainsborough Standard – 16 January; sent in by Terry Hanstock

GLASGOW (Gorbals)

Plans have been submitted to Glasgow City Council requesting permission to combine two units within the Crown Street Retail Park to make way for a seven-screen 600-seat cinema and a restaurant/bar. The site, off Cathcart Road, is currently being developed. No operator has been named.

Glasgow Live – 17 February

GUILDFORD (Surrey)



The Odeon has put in a planning application to extend its cinema into the vacant Old Orleans restaurant. It would see the nine-screen cinema gain two new, 74-seat auditoria within the existing restaurant unit.

Surrey Live – 17 February; photo taken April 2006

HAILSHAM (East Sussex)



Saturday 1 February marked the 20th anniversary of the reopening of the Pavilion following restoration. It first opened in November 1921 and closed in 1965. Bingo was played between 1967 and 1985 and the building lay empty until 2000. It is Grade II listed. {22446}

Eastbourne Herald – 31 January; photo taken April 2008

HUCKNALL (Notts)

Work continues to convert the former Byron into a four-screen Arc cinema. It is planned to reopen in March. {13428}

Hucknall & Bulwell Dispatch – 31 January; sent in by Terry Hanstock & Ken Roe

KING'S LYNN (Norfolk)

Work has started on the refurbishment of the Majestic. The 245-seat screen ② in the former stalls has closed for 10-12 weeks so it can be split into two. The new screens will feature faux leather tiered seating and allocated seating will be introduced. Screen ① is in the former circle with 313 seats and screen ③ is the former ballroom and has 113 seats. {3262}

Lynn News – 17 January

Work has begun to create a new two-screen cinema in the Grade II listed Corn Exchange. The glazed roof is being replaced with acoustically sealed zinc panels and repairs are being made to the stone façade. Two new screens will be built in currently underused space in the upper foyer and balcony, with 58 and 52 seats.

Your Local Paper, Lynn News – 31 January

LANCASTER



Planning permission has been granted to demolish the former Palace/ABC in Dalton Square and build 33 student flats. It opened in 1929 and closed in March 1974. It was the first ABC cinema to have the 'luxury lounge' treatment. It has since been used as a bar and a children's play area. The CTA visited in June 2008 and was granted full access to the building, when the above picture was taken from the disused circle. {6539}

Lancaster Guardian – 6 February

LEEDS (West Yorks)

The 104-year-old Grade II listed Hyde Park Picture House was due to close in March for a year-long refurbishment. It will have its gas secondary lights and Edwardian plasterwork revamped and a second screen, seating 40-60, installed in the basement. Disabled access will be improved. A local brewery is to launch a special beer *Picture House IPA* and 20% of the profits are to be donated to the cinema's refurbishment [www.thepicturehouseproject.com]. Meanwhile, Dame Helen Mirren has been filming scenes for her new film *The Duke* at the Hyde Park Picture House. The film is expected to be released later this year. {1836}

Yorkshire Post – 24 December, 16 January; photo on front cover

LIVERPOOL (Crosby)

The Plaza community cinema has won the BAFTA 'Love of Film' award for 2020. It was presented in London on 2 February. A full list of winners is at [www.bafta.org].

BAFTA website – 14 January; *The Guide, Liverpool* – 22 January

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LONDON (Camden Town)



A fire broke out on the evening of 6 January at about 9pm in the roof at the KOKO Nightclub (ex Camden Palace). The fire, which seems to have been centred in the copper dome at the front of the building was brought under control by 11pm. The building is currently closed for renovation/restoration work. Details online in the Ham & High newspaper [tinyurl.com/wmztpc4]. {14486}

Camden New Journal – 9 January; 2013 photo by Martyn Hunt; sent in by Tom Laughlan & Ken Roe

LONDON (Catford)

Lewisham Council is planning a “significant refurbishment” which will see the Broadway Theatre close this summer and reopen in autumn 2021. The move means the theatre will be out of action for most of the year Lewisham is London’s Borough of Culture. The Grade II* listed venue opened in June 1932 and has 845 seats in the main auditorium and a 102-seat studio. The CTA visited in May 2018 – see p7 Bulletin 52/5. {30219}

News Shopper – 19 February; sent in by Philip Stevens

LONDON (Chadwell Heath)

Planning permission for a change of use of the former Embassy to a wedding venue has been refused for a second time. It is apparently already operating as the Mayfair Venue and the owners have said they will appeal the decision. 80% of local residents who responded to letters sent out by the Council were in favour of the venue remaining open. {14646}

Ilford Recorder – 11 February

LONDON (City)

The Barbican hosted *Alternate Realities*, a pioneering digital art strand, in January, which included interactive installations along with some film screenings in the cinema. [tinyurl.com/rdv7sbp]

Sent in by Gavin McGrath

LONDON (Ealing)



The Ealing Filmworks development continues to rise, with priority being given to the residential elements. Offering a reminder of what once was, the original cinema façade has recently been uncovered, presumably as its incorporation into the new build approaches. Representatives of Ealing Civic Society met one of the directors of Picturehouse Cinemas and their architects (Lyons Sleeman Hoare) just

before Christmas when they indicated that Picturehouse would not gain possession of the shell of the building on Bond Street, which would house the new cinema, until the middle of 2020 and that fit-out was unlikely to be completed until the middle of 2021. So there is still some way to go. The Society hopes to arrange a follow-up meeting with the architects later this year to discuss possible design options to incorporate into the new development some salvaged artefacts from the old Empire cinema, in particular light fittings and possibly stained-glass windows from the former landing area.

Sent in & photo by Robert Gurd

LONDON (Eltham)

It has been confirmed that the former Gaumont in Eltham Hill is not one of the venues targeted for closure. It has been a bingo hall since 1967; the lease is due for renewal in September 2021. {14991}

Bingo Daily – 4 January

LONDON (Hammersmith)

The Riverside Studios closed in 2014 for extensive renovation and has now reopened with a two-screen cinema (208 & 48 seats), two theatre spaces (500 & 200 seats), a television studio and café/bar. The space built a name for itself in the 1950s and 60s when the BBC acquired the former warehouse to make TV programmes such as *Z-Cars*, *Top of the Pops* and *Blue Peter*. {61641}

What's On Stage – 20 January; sent in by Russ McDonald, Gavin McGrath & Ken Roe

LONDON (Harrow)

Plans to redevelop the Dominion/Safari have been approved by the Council. As part of the scheme, the metal cladding covering the building will be removed and its 1936 art deco design restored. There are also plans to build 78 flats – though none of these will be affordable – in a block up to 11 storeys high, while its cinematic heritage will be maintained through the installation of a new Art House cinema. {21135}

This is Local London – 27 January; Harrow Times – 30 January; sent in by Mike Collins

LONDON (Homerton)

The Castle Cinema celebrated its third birthday on 3 February. To celebrate, tickets were £3 – popcorn and prosecco were too! The CTA held their AGM there last year. The cinema hosts *Ciné-Real* an ongoing event in which Ümit Mesut screens 16mm films. Mesut has a shop in Lower Clapton Road, which stocks all manner of projectionists’ hardware. [tinyurl.com/wansxls]

Sent in by Tom Laughlan & Gavin McGrath

LONDON (Mortlake)

Massive plans to redevelop the former Stag Brewery site have been approved by Richmond Council. There will be a stand-alone cinema at the entrance to the site. Most of the current buildings will be demolished. But its large size and complexity will mean it will be a number of years yet before anything is built, especially because the Council rejected the application to make traffic changes at nearby Chalker’s Corner.

My London – 30 January

LONDON (Southall)



There are plans to demolish the former Century cinema and build housing. It opened in 1910 and eventually closed in 1980. For the past 30 years it has been used as the Tudor Rose, a Caribbean nightclub. The nightclub is going to fight the proposals. {28090}

Sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken April 1999

LONDON (Streatham)

The Grade II listed **Streatham Hill Theatre** celebrated its 90th birthday by launching a crowdfunding campaign for a viability study to examine its future for community use. It was designed by GWR Sprague and had over 2,500 seats. It was bombed in WWII but was rebuilt and reopened in 1950. It was bingo from 1962 to 2017 and is currently empty, although the foyer is used as an amusement arcade. A video is available at [youtu.be/8tucEEB-1hY] with some nice shots of the interior. {31611}

Friends of Streatham Hill Theatre Press Release

LONDON (Walthamstow)

The Mirth bar which has been in the foyer of the Grade II listed former **Granada/EMD** in Hoe Street closed on 5 January. This is to enable restoration work to begin on the building, which is owned by Waltham Forest Council. It will reopen as a live theatre, performance & movies venue in 2022. The Victoria pub, a gay bar located in the former cinema restaurant, remains open but its future is uncertain. A later report reveals that the expected cost of restoration has risen from £17m to £22m after asbestos and damage was found in the building. {9397}

East London & West Essex Guardian – 2, 21 January; sent in by Ken Roe

LONDON (Waterloo)

Film season was back again at the **House of Vans** underneath Waterloo main line railway station. A selection of nearly a dozen romcoms was screened between 6 February and 1 March including *When Harry Met Sally* and *Pretty Woman*. The venue is a skateboard park, exhibition space and music venue with café.

Time Out London – 4 February; sent in by Gavin McGrath

MANCHESTER (Belle Vue)

Showcase cinemas is looking for a new site after the Council revealed plans to buy their existing fourteen-screen operation and build a secondary school. The cinema opened in October 1989. {25061}

Manchester Evening News – 6 February; photo on front cover

MANCHESTER (Central)

Situated close to Piccadilly station, **Dulcie Street Warehouse**, a Grade II listed former railway goods store, has been converted into an aparthotel, fitness centre and Cultureplex. The latter includes events spaces, meeting rooms, a restaurant and bar/lounge – and the inevitable 38-seat bijou 'mini-cinema'. Equipped with 4k projection and digital sound, this opened on 26 September 2019.

Sent in by David Simpson

MANCHESTER (Chorlton-cum-Hardy)

Campaigners hoping to save the former **Gaumont**, where the Bee Gees made their first appearance in 1957, have been given more time to develop an alternative plan. It is currently a funeral parlour run by the Co-op, who wants to sell the site to a private developer of retirement flats. See p 25 last Bulletin. {33843}

BBC News website – 24 January; Manchester Evening News – 26 January

MANCHESTER (Stretford)

Something has finally happened at the Grade II listed former **Essoldo**, which has been boarded-up for over 23 years. Listed building consent has been granted for additional heating and ventilation in the auditorium itself, although it is unclear why this is needed; the suggestion is for 'occasional artistic roller dance use'. Window openings on the left side have been reopened having been boarded-up since closure. It is possible the window frames were there before and this would be why no visible planning permission has been obtained.

See [longfordcinema.co.uk] {13796}

Campaign website – 4 January

NEWMARKET (Suffolk)

The Council has deferred plans to build a new cinema because the Government has increased the interest it charges on such loans from 0.8% to 1.8%. It is to look at alternative funding sources.

Newmarket Journal – 26 December

NUNEATON

The Council has confirmed that talks are underway with a cinema operator with a view to opening a venue in the former Co-op department store.

Coventry Telegraph – 23 January; Nuneaton News – 29 January, 12 February

PAISLEY (Renfrew)



The fourteen-screen **Showcase** has been refurbished and rebranded a **Showcase de Lux**. Each screen has electric reclining seats. Prices have remained the same. {27100} *photo taken July 2009*

Paisley Daily Express – 16 December; Ayr Advertiser – 24 December;

PEMBROKE

A blue plaque is to be erected in April on the former **Haggar's Cinema**, to commemorate its founder. William Haggar opened the cinema in 1910 and it closed in the summer of 1984. The building is now Paddles nightclub. {13029}

Western Telegraph – 5 January

PETERHEAD (Aberdeen)

The five-screen **Arc** cinema in the former **Regal** is scheduled to open at the end of April. It will have a total of 422 luxury leather armchairs and Dolby 7.1 sound. Bingo ceased here in January 2018.

Press & Journal, Aberdeen – 6 February

PLYMOUTH

Plans have been submitted to turn the former **Royal/ABC/Reel** into a hotel and flats with an 'events space'. It opened in July 1938 and was tripled in 1977 with bingo underneath. The cinemas closed in February 2019. Meanwhile, security has been strengthened as urban explorers were reported to have entered the building. {24749}

The Herald, Plymouth – 4 February

RAMSGATE (Kent)

The former **Kings Theatre** opened in November 1910 and closed in November 1982. By early 1989 it had been converted into the King's Church. The church moved out in 2016 and in 2017 it became a Hindu Temple. The building has not aged well and now the Temple is appealing for help. It is estimated repairs will cost around £300,000.

Isle of Thanet Gazette – 31 January; sent in by Margaret Burgoine

RAWTENSTALL (Lancs)



The **Picture House** opened in December 1920 with 1,309 seats. It was tripled in 1975 and later closed and reopened, finally closing in 1996. It was converted into an indoor market but has been vacant for some time. Now plans have been submitted to turn the building into 42 apartments. The design will keep the key elements of the Art Deco building, including the retention of the distinctive façade. {43550}

Lancashire Telegraph – 7 February; sent in by Philip Crompton; photo taken June 2005

REDCAR (Cleveland)

Drawings have been released showing how a replacement for the Regent could look if plans to demolish it are approved. It would seat 184 people in three screens, with capacities of 34, 56 & 94. The existing cinema was closed in April 2018 for public safety. The plans can be seen on the Council's website at [www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk].

Northern Echo – 4, 7, 9 January; *Darlington & Stockton Times* – 10 January

ROTHERHAM (South Yorks)



The former Regal/Odeon went to auction on 20 February with a guide price of £600,000+. The cinema opened in December 1934 with 1,825 seats and films ceased in September 1983. It is now let to Mecca Bingo and said to produce an annual income of £125,950. The building failed to sell, with the final bid of £590,000 being just shy of the reserve. {18509}

Network Auctions website – 7 February; sent in by Ray Duns; photo taken February 2005

SLEAFORD (Lincs)



The nightclub in the former Picturedrome has closed and the building is boarded-up. The cinema opened in November 1920 with 900 seats. A second 60-seat screen was added in the former café in 1980. The main screen closed in 1984 and became a snooker hall but the small screen continued for a while. {18430}

Sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken November 2004

STAFFORD

The three-screen Stafford Cinema (ex Odeon) failed to sell at auction on 12 February at an asking price of £350,000. Stafford Borough Council had previously said the site could potentially be transformed into a multi-storey development with shops on the ground floor and homes above. Cinema tenancy holder Sam Lavington previously said he was "hopeful" the 1930s cinema would remain open but that he could not keep up the financial costs alone. Mr Lavington has the lease until October 2022. {22874}

Express & Star – 30 January, 12 February; sent in by Allan Pointon

STOWMARKET (Suffolk)

The Regal was due to close on 23 February for a £3.6m upgrade. The work will see three cinema screens, a café and a bar added onto the venue, which last year attracted 70,000 visitors. Completion is estimated for the end of the year. Some films will be shown at the John Peel Centre in Church Walk from the beginning of April.

Bury Free Press – 30 January; sent in by Terry Hanstock

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON (Warks)

The Picturehouse closed on 5 January. It opened in May 1997 with two screens on the first floor in a conversion of a former garage. It will be demolished soon and an 81-room Travelodge built on the site. {21199}

Stratford-upon-Avon Herald – 5, 12 January; sent in by Terry Hanstock

THURSO (Highland)



Merlin cinemas is to develop the former bowling alley adjacent to the two-screen Thurso Cinema (ex All Star Factory) to provide three extra screens with a total of 112 seats.

Press and Journal, Aberdeen – 6 February; photo taken September 2008

TORQUAY (Devon)

Work has started on the conversion of the former BHS store into a thirteen-screen cinema; the screens will have between 23 and 120 seats. It is hoped some screens will be open before the summer. The four-screen Central cinema (ex Odeon) will close once the new cinema opens.

Herald Express, Torquay – 22 January

WHITLEY BAY (Tyneside)

The Jam Jar cinema welcomed more than 19,000 admissions in the last quarter of 2019, up on 11,000 in the same period in 2018, following a recent refurbishment. Two more screens were added as well as a new foyer. {43338}

Newcastle Chronicle – 18 December, 23 January

WIMBORNE (Dorset)



The Tivoli Theatre has been given a new ultra-modern canopy and frontage with, in the words of the planning application "programmable LED segmental screens". It is certainly very visible at night but a pity that the screen projecting at a right angle from the centre of the canopy, behind an Art Deco motif and advertising all the coming attractions, is only visible from the town centre. Coming from the other side it presents as a featureless box with a few protruding cables.

The Tivoli is an interesting building from several architectural eras. The facade is a mid-18th Century building of five bays, brick arches and keystones above the windows. It was listed Grade II in 1952 and features in the Dorset volume of Pevsner's *Buildings of England* (1972) in which the compiler, John Newman, sniffingly refers to its being "savagely mauled". This was presumably on its conversion to a cinema in 1936 and it retains an exquisite Art Deco auditorium behind the façade. It survived a road building scheme in 1979 and closure as a cinema in 1983, when the renewal of the listing suggest-

ed that the “façade was worthy of restoration now that cinema use has closed”. It now appears to be a thriving venue with plays, concerts as well as films – I hope to see *1917* there in the next few weeks. It has largely escaped the attention of the CTA with references only in the Bulletins of May/June 2009, re a special screening of *Brief Encounter* (with photo of the building) and in November/December 2014 with a contribution about love seats in the circle. {25848}

Sent in and photo by Tim Sedgwick-Jell

AE writes: In fact, there was a six-page article on the restoration of the Tivoli Wimborne by David Trevor-Jones in *Picture House No 18*, Winter 1992/3 (pages 25-30). A CTA visit organised by David Eve in September/October 2015 included attending an evening *Blues Brothers* show – a wonderful chance to see the building in lively use, a pity about the show. See p12 Bulletin 50/1.

WOLVERHAMPTON

Plans, reported on p27 of the last Bulletin, for a three-screen cinema in the former Argos store inside the Wulfrun Centre, have won approval. The auditoria will have 164, 97 & 87 seats. No operator has been named.

Express & Star – 14 January, 4 February; sent in by Ivan Harris

WORCESTER



The Odeon has celebrated its 70th birthday. The 1835 Empire Theatre on the site was demolished in 1939 and the shell of the new cinema was complete when WWII broke out in September 1939. The building was requisitioned by the Government for use as a storage facility and handed back in 1948. The design was simplified and work began fitting out and the Odeon opened on 2 January 1950 with *The Rocking Horse Winner*. Seating was for 938 in the stalls and 750 in the circle. It was tripled in March 1974 and now has seven screens. The CTA visited in September 2012. {25870}

Hereford Times – 3 January; photo taken May 2006

YORK



The three-screen City Screen celebrated its 20th birthday on 14 January. It is housed in the former *Yorkshire Herald* offices on the banks of the River Ouse and is operated by Picturehouse. {2787}

The Press, York – 6, 14 January; photo taken June 2006

MISCELLANY

CINEMAS ON TV

Much of the action in *Grantchester*, which is set in the 1950s, on ITV1 on 24 January took place in a fictional cinema called *The Beaumont*, supposedly located in Cambridge. The exterior and foyer scenes were filmed at the Everyman (ex-Odeon) Muswell Hill and the auditorium used was the Phoenix East Finchley. The projection room was a studio mock-up, dressed with two period projectors [GK18s with President arcs] by our friends at the PPT. Robson Green asked the perennial question, “Why are there two?” Also, Michael Portillo’s *Great Railway Journeys* on 7 January visited the Dominion in Morningside, Edinburgh.

Sent in by Jeremy Buck; additional information from Dion Hanson & Harry Rigby

THE LAST PICTURE SHOW

The beautiful 1,184-seat Avalon cinema on Santa Catalina Island, off the California coast, closed on 31 December. It opened in May 1929 as part of chewing-gum tycoon William Wrigley Jr’s Catalina Casino and is still owned by the same family; they said that the operating costs were too expensive. It will be maintained as a special events facility with occasional screenings of silent movies – the organ is still in situ. Tours of the building will be available. The CTA visited in 2002. {22}

LA Weekly – 7 January [tinyurl.com/vopsmsg]; sent in by Bob Bradshaw

CAT FOUND IN CINEMA



Sophie, a missing cat, was found in a boarded-up former cinema in Lockerbie (Dumfries & Galloway), presumably the Rex [pictured above]. The Scottish SPCA was alerted and got the police to phone the building’s owner, who gave them access to get the cat. Vets were stunned when a scan of her microchip revealed she had been missing for a year. She was reunited with her owners. PS: The cinema opened in 1932 and had closed by 1985. It was last used as a Tandoori restaurant.

Daily Record – 10 February; sent in by Tom Laughlan; photo taken August 2009

GREATEST MOVIES

Readers of *Empire* magazine have voted *Mad Max: Fury Road* as the best film of the last 20 years. The top five also included *Fellowship of the Ring*, *The Dark Knight*, *Inception* and *Moonlight*. The magazine editor said, “Some films you’ve forgotten by the time you get to the car park. Others seem to follow you around for the rest of your life.”

Daily Record – 18 January; sent in by Tom Laughlan

THEATRE TO BE RENAMED

Blackpool’s North Pier Theatre is to be renamed in honour of Joe Longthorne. The entertainer, who died last year [see Necrology p9 Bulletin 53/6] first appeared there in 1987. The theatre on the Grade II listed pier has a capacity of 1,400.

The Stage – 30 January; sent in by Barry Quinton

UPSCALED TRAIN

The first movie ever made, The Lumière Brothers’ *Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat* in 1895, has been digitally remastered in 4k resolution at 60fps. You can see the new version at [youtu.be/3RYNThid23g] and the original version at [youtu.be/1dGLEdFddk]. The CTA saw an excellent restored version at their 50th birthday party at the Regent Street Cinema in January 2017.

Vintage News – 21 February

ACTION MOVIE

Scientists claim that watching a film burns off the same amount of calories as a gentle workout. A study tracked 51 people who went to see Disney's live action version of *Aladdin*, recording their heart rate, body temperature and sweat. It discovered viewers were in the 'healthy heart rate zone' – between 40% and 80% of their maximum healthy heart rate – for around 45 minutes. The researchers also found that watching a film at the cinema – but not at home – could benefit your memory and concentration because it allowed for a rare period of 'undivided attention' in our busy lives. The research was commissioned by Vue cinemas.

Daily Mail - 13 January; sent in by Tom Laughlan

CINEMA BUSINESS

UK CINEMA ADMISSIONS ROCKET

UK cinema visits are at their highest in 50 years. The country's box-office took more than £1.25 billion last year as admissions exceeded 176 million; that matched 2018's figures. Takings have jumped 27% from £988m in 2010. More than 20 new cinemas opened last year. Sales of tickets in January rose by 22% compared to the same month in 2019.

Daily Star, Daily Mail - 16 January, 11 February;
sent in by Margaret Burgoine, John R Forster & Barry Quinton

EVERYMAN PROFITS

Profits at Everyman rose 30% to £12m in the 52 weeks to 2 January. 3.2m customers visited and revenues jumped 25% to £65m, which included seven new cinemas that opened in 2019. Everyman now has 33 locations with an average price of £11.37 for a ticket. The chain will open another four venues this year.

Evening Standard - 15 January; Daily Mail - 16 January;
sent in by Margaret Burgoine, Tom Laughlan & Barry Quinton

LONDON RESORT LOSSES

The company behind plans to build Britain's biggest theme park has made total losses of £54.8m before even applying for planning permission. The £3.5bn movie-themed London Resort, billed as Britain's answer to Disneyland, is due to be built on a 535-acre former landfill site between Gravesend and Dartford (Kent).

Evening Standard - 6 January; sent in by Tom Laughlan

DOLITTLE'S TAX BOOST

Universal Studios has been handed £21m by the taxman for choosing Britain as its filming location for *Dolittle*. Production firms can claim back up to 25% of their costs in Britain, provided that at least 10% of the total was spent in the country.

Mail on Sunday - 9 February; sent in by Tom Laughlan

NETFLIX TAX HAVEN

Think-tank TaxWatch estimates that £860m of revenues paid the Netflix's 10m UK subscribers goes to the Netherlands. They claim that globally Netflix moved between £250m and £330m of profits to tax havens in 2018. TaxWatch also says that two UK Netflix entities were given £611,000 tax relief on their productions over 2017-18.

Daily Record - 14 January; sent in by Tom Laughlan

THE SHOW CAN'T GO ON

Sir Cameron Macintosh has postponed the reopening of the Sondheim Theatre after Stephen Sondheim injured himself in a fall. The venue, previously known as the Queens Theatre on London's Shaftesbury Avenue, was due to reopen on 14 March. The 1,127-seat theatre has been refurbished as part of a ten-year £220m investment programme.

Daily Mail - 8 January; The Stage - 16 January; Sunday Times - 26 January;
sent in by Tom Laughlan & Barry Quinton

UK CINEMA AWARDS

The UK Cinema Association's awards party was held in London on 28 November 2019. The Cinema of the Year (24 screens or under) award was won by the Rio Cinema in Dalston, London with the Campbeltown Picture House highly commended. Cinema of the Year (25 screens or over) went to Picturehouse Cinemas for their West Norwood Picturehouse with the Odeon Luxe Leicester Square highly commended. Dame Judy Dench was honoured for her Outstanding Contribution to UK Film. Rob Younger, who runs the Parkway Cinema in Barnsley (South Yorks) was given a special award for 40 years' service to the industry.

UK Cinema Association website; Barnsley Chronicle - 4 January

OBITUARY

PETER KING 90

I have belatedly learnt of the death on 24 October 2018 of Peter King, aged 90. He was the only son of Sam King, who with his brother-in-law Alf Shipman, founded Shipman and King Cinemas in 1920. Peter was educated at Marlborough and studied law at Oriel College, Oxford. He was called to the Bar in 1952 but in 1956 joined the family firm becoming Film Booking Manager in 1959. In 1964 he was appointed Joint Managing Director with his father and in the same year was elected the youngest ever President of the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association.



In April 1966 the acquisition of Shipman and King by the Grade Organisation was announced and Sam King retired. Peter King now became sole Managing Director but left in 1968 to head, first Paramount Pictures (UK) and then in 1970, EMI Cinemas and Leisure – formed to run the former S&K and ABC cinema circuits. Peter left EMI in 1974 and in 1975 bought the trade paper *CinemaTV Today*, which he relaunched as *Screen International*. This he sold in 1989.

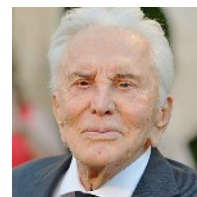
Peter King was a Patron of the CTA from 1972 to 1984 and chaired a number of the Annual General Meetings when they were held in London. He also made several donations to the archive, mainly of items relating to Shipman and King.

Ray Dolling; photo taken 9 August 1954

NECROLOGY

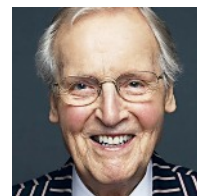
KIRK DOUGLAS 103

He made his cinematic debut in 1946 in *The Strange Love of Martha Ivers* and appeared in more than 90 films. He was acclaimed for his role as a boxing hero in *Champion* (1949) but is probably best known for starring in *Spartacus* (1960). His son is the actor Michael Douglas.



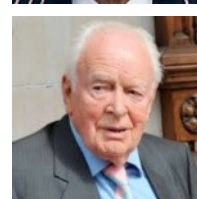
NICHOLAS PARSONS OBE 96

He was the long-running presenter of the comedy radio show *Just a Minute* and hosted the game show *Sale of the Century* during the 1970s and early 1980s. He was the 'straight man' to comedian Arthur Haynes for ten years. His first film role was as an uncredited passport officer in *To Dorothy a Son* (1954) and he went on to appear in about 20 more.



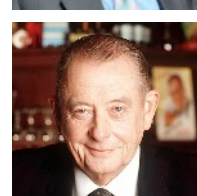
TONY BRITTON 95

He appeared in numerous British films, including *Operation Amsterdam* (1959), *Sunday Bloody Sunday* (1971) and *The Day of the Jackal* (1973). He also appeared on stage and TV. He is the father of TV presenter Fern Britton.



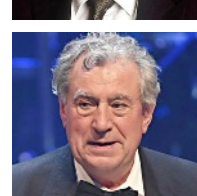
DEREK FOWLDS 82

He appeared in several films prior to becoming familiar to British television child viewers as 'Mr Derek' in the children's series *The Basil Brush Show*. Also on TV he was in *Heartbeat* and *Yes Minister*. Basil Brush read a eulogy from the pulpit at Derek's funeral.



TERRY JONES 77

A member of the *Monty Python* team, Terry directed three of the *Monty Python* films, two of which were initially banned in Ireland, along with *Personal Services*, which he also directed.



NICKY HENSON 74

His films included *Witchfinder General*, *There's a Girl in my Soup*, *The Bawdy Adventures of Tom Jones* and *Vera Drake*. He played many Shakespearean characters on stage. His TV appearances included *Minder*, *The Bill*, *Lovejoy* and an episode of *Fawlty Towers*.



LETTERS

HAVE I GOT NEWS FOR YOU?

The David Ellis 'nostalgia' clippings are always welcome but his *Liverpool News Theatre* coverage in the Jan/Feb Bulletin had particular resonance for me. I was born eight days after the *Tatler* opened in 1934, first venturing there with a school pal in 1943. Our Mersey Ferry excursion to Liverpool would invariably include a bookshop and News Theatre. The *Tatler* then operated from 10:30am (until 10pm), with a 75-minute show for 10d (or 1/6). Programmes were then very puritanical in only including a single cartoon, the item we most anticipated. All that changed in December 1946 when the *Liverpool News Theatre* came on the scene with three successive weeks of all Disney shows! I think then that the *Tatler* relaxed, certainly there were some classic *Laurel & Hardy* shorts in later years before, rather tiring of the News Theatre formula, we adolescently chased up feature films, sneaking into [A] certs from 1948.

However, the transformation of the *Liverpool News Theatre* into *Gala/Jacey* for the decade from 1962 brought me back to the site. These were the years of the French New Wave with good coverage of leading exponents (Chabrol, Godard, Truffaut), invariably in splendid double-bills. At random, European doubles also included *Au Hasard Balthazar* plus *Le Bonheur*, *Knife in the Water* plus *Innocent Sorcerers*, *Hiroshima Mon Amour* plus *Shop on the Main Street*, *Il Mare* plus *Alphaville*. After the *Jacey's* closure such catholicity was rare on Merseyside until this Century, when we have the more settled policies of Picturehouse (at FACT) and the Everyman... but some of us lament the demise of the double-bill as much as we once rejoiced in an hour of *Donald Duck* back in the 1940s!

Graham Fisher

HANMER BOTHERS

David A Ellis mentions Philip Hanmer in his article on the *Jacey Film Theatre* Liverpool. (Bulletin 54/1) For the record here's some further information about the Hanmer brothers and their connection with Liverpool cinemas.

Philip Marsden Hanmer (Birkenhead 1899 - 1970 Prestatyn) had three brothers and four sisters. His eldest brother, Bryce Meredith Hanmer (Toxteth Park 1883 - 1955 Southport), a chartered accountant (as was his father, Thomas), was initially involved in cinema ownership when, in 1922, he was appointed company secretary of the enterprise behind the proposed *Elite Picture House* in Liverpool (*The Bioscope* 4 May 1922). In 1925 he was part of the syndicate that purchased the *Savoy Cinema* in Blackburn and later the same year was appointed company secretary of the *Netherfield Picturedrome Company Ltd* (*The Bioscope* 19 February 1925, 24 December 1925). By the following year he had established Bryce Hanmer & Co, chartered accountants, who were reported as being "intimately associated" as company secretaries with cinemas in the Mersey district (*The Bioscope* 26 August 1926). In 1927 they were now described as "controlling" a number of cinemas in Liverpool (*The Bioscope* 29 February 1927). At various times Bryce Hanmer was also the managing director of the *Popular Theatre Ltd* ("owners of a number of Liverpool cinemas"), the chairman and managing director of the *Cavendish Picture House* (Derby) Ltd and a director of the company operating the *Plaza Cinema* in Great Crosby (*Derby Evening Telegraph* 28 August 1935, 29 December 1937; *Liverpool Evening Express* 1 September 1939).

As for Philip Hanmer, also a chartered accountant by profession, he was appointed secretary of *Regent Enterprises Ltd* in 1923 and was employed by Bryce Hanmer & Co as a programme booker for *The Coliseum* Paddington, Liverpool in 1926 (*Kinematograph Year Book* 1954; *The Bioscope* 20 May 1926). By 1931 he was the general manager of *Regent Enterprises Ltd*, owners of seven cinemas in the process of being sold to *Associated British Cinemas Ltd* (*The Bioscope* 13 May 1931). In 1938 - still general manager of *Regent Enterprises Ltd* - he sold more of the company's Liverpool cinemas to *SM Super Cinemas Ltd* for £90,000 (*The Era* 24 March 1938). In 1939 he became managing director of the company operating the *Plaza Cinema* in Great Crosby before selling it to the *Odeon* circuit in 1943. Another cinema was bought by *SM Super Cinemas Ltd* - leaving *Regent Enterprises* with sixteen cinemas (*Liverpool Evening Express* 1 September 1939; *Liverpool Echo* 5 March 1943). In 1947 he was listed as the managing

director of *Regent Enterprises Ltd* and "18 kinema companies", although by 1954 the number had been reduced to 12 (*Kinematograph Year Books* 1947 and 1954). The trail goes cold after that date...

Terry Hanstock

GAUMONT FRIEZES



Further to the article on Gaumont friezes that have survived, I thought that you might find the above image of interest for the Bulletin? The image is of *Castle Lodge* residential home built on the site of *Chippenhams* former *Gaumont/Odeon/Classic/Goldiggers* night club. Whilst the [cinema] architecture is attributed to *WE Trent* in collaboration with *W Sydney Trent*, I am not certain if the carved stonework was by *Newbury Trent*? The important issue is that it has been preserved for future generations to at least see and be reminded of what was on the site. The panels represent *The Spirit of the cinema* in the centre with her attendants *Light* and *Sound* on either side. Also the large front windows that were part of the original façade were reinstated.

When the future of the *Gaumont* was very much in doubt a group of us in *Chippenhams* started a campaign call *POGGS* (*Preservation of Gaumont Goldiggers Site*) where we had a public consultation on its future, which resulted in local residents wanting the building kept as an entertainment venue - sadly, as in all these cases, money from the land sale won over sentiment and the building was lost! I would like to think that as a result of this campaign these original features were reinstated in the *Castle Lodge* development. Interestingly a ladies' hairdressing business called *Goldiggers* has recently opened up in one of the shop units in memory of the nightclub that operated there until 2002. Page 77 in *Allen Eyles' Gaumont British Cinemas* shows the building in its former cinema days.

David Reeves.

ROH LIVE CINEMA

I recently visited my local *Empire* cinema (ex-Odeon) in *Sutton Coldfield* to see a *Royal Opera House* 'live cinema' presentation of *La Bohème*, one of my favourite operas. I wonder if other CTA members have experienced these ROH events in other locations and share my disappointment at the visual (technical) quality of the presentation, or whether my experience was purely local.

The image quality on the decent size screen was underwhelming, in particular: poor resolution (akin to best VHS quality) with very little fine detail even in medium close-ups and poor contrast (especially blacks). Certainly my own opera Blu-rays projected onto a 7ft wide home cinema screen yield far superior image quality. In addition, side masking was left at full *Panavision* width, so the 1:1.85 projected image was not properly side masked (top masking was adjusted). Sound was OK, although certainly louder than if you were in the stalls at the *Royal Opera House*.

The shared atmosphere with other (largely elderly) audience members was good but the technical shortcomings for me were a big distraction from the generally excellent performances. I shall not be returning in a hurry for another performance if my experience is typical of what to expect from *ROH Live Cinema*. Or perhaps I should just choose another venue in future? CTA members' views welcome.

Graham Fee

FILM MUSIC

With the sad announcement of the death of Kirk Douglas, a piece of music from one of his films *Top Secret Affair* from 1957 came to mind. The title music was used in a great number of Pathé News items during the early 1960s, especially film awards, Miss World contests and several variety club items. A very familiar piece, which several members and film addicts will instantly recognize. The theme, composed by Roy Webb, has never been issued on disc but can be heard on a DVD available on the Warner Brothers archive label. If any member would like the title music for their own private collection, please contact me via e-mail [beeps46@ntlworld.com].

John R Forster

FOUR SUPPLEMENTS

I'd like to supplement some of the always interesting items in the Casework, Newsreel and Letters pages of the January / February 2020 issue.

I have good news about the terracotta plaque on the flank wall of the now demolished Pyke's Cinematograph Theatre in Shepherd's Bush, London (page 5). I am a member of the Hammersmith & Fulham Historic Buildings Group and we successfully fought to have the plaque preserved for use in the 8-storey Dorsett Hotel extension that will be built on the Pyke's site. The plaque will be located on the south side of the new building and easily visible. The frontage of the new building will incorporate the façade of the demolished cinema building. The adjacent Dorsett Hotel was constructed behind the elevation of the original Pavilion Cinema (later Odeon) facing Shepherd's Bush Green.

My first outing to the Standard Cinema in Coventry (page 22) was in 1959 with my parents to see the 1959 film *Hercules Unchained* – the first heavily promoted exploitation film. The film was terrible but the cinema was full. We sat in the very steep circle and the building was drab, probably as a result of the war. The cinema was named after the nearby Standard Motors factory. As the Godiva it had a luxurious auditorium with a huge screen. A new projection room was built at the back with seating either side as well as in front. The owner would not show [X]-rated films and only booked 'family' pictures. This did not result in sufficient business, hence its first conversion to a Bingo Club.



The newly-named Picturehouse on London's Fulham Road (page 23) may still only have six screens but they have been transformed, as have all the foyer areas. The refurbishment has been a massive and very stylish upgrade. The foyer areas – which include the original Forum projection room at the back of the stalls – are on three levels and there is an entirely new kiosk and box office. A bar and café are on the upper levels plus a room that had fallen out of use being made a Members' Bar. Every screen has been re-stepped and new very comfortable blue velvet seats installed. All screens have had a new wall treatment, which echoes 1930s décor. The two largest screens, formed out of the original circle, have been re-stepped and reconfigured, improving the angle of viewing. Their projectors have also been moved to give a better picture. It all looks expensive. The main evening adult ticket price is now the same as Picturehouse Central at Piccadilly Circus, £16.90. Photo above.



The Adelphi Slough was the nearest cinema to Pinewood Studios (page 29). Even though it was owned by Granada at the time, Rank used it for test screenings of many of their film productions. I believe it was equipped for double-head projection for this reason. Many years later, the then Gallery Cinema in Slough was also equipped with double-head projection, as was the main screen of the Odeon Wimbledon. This was done as a result of David Putnam lobbying for these facilities in the UK. I was instrumental in the use of the Gallery and the equipment was installed in screen ⑤, the former Planet Theatre, now, as the Empire Slough, its Impact Screen (page 8).

Tony Williams

CONCESSIONS

On the letters' page in the last Bulletin regarding the appropriate use of terminology, the writer is often correct in describing kiosks as 'concessions' as they tend to be outsourced and seldom run by the cinema itself especially with the big chains. Think Ben & Jerry's for example; even the Odeon's website describes these as concessions. The letter has described the meaning of the word rather well so the penny should have already dropped. Now, is 'chains' the correct word or should that be organisations or even circuits?

Gavin McGrath

WHO DO YOU BELIEVE?

I protest. I thought I had established at the start of an article *Truth, Myth and Supposition at the Electric in Picture House* issue 26, Summer 2001, pages 41-44, quoting the leading trade paper, *The Bioscope* (issue dated 29 December 1910, page 13), that the Electric Portobello Road, Notting Hill, opened on Thursday 24 December 1910. Yet almost twenty years later, our own CTA Bulletin uses an opening date of 28 February 1910 for the *Happy Birthday* column (last edition, page 31).

The Electric Cinema's own website declares: "Designed by architect Gerald Seymour Valentin on the site of a timber yard, the Electric Cinema Theatre opened its doors on 27 February 1911, with 564 seats, for its first public screening, a twenty minute silent film of *Henry VIII* starring Sir Herbert Tree. This film has not been seen since and it is thought to have been trashed, sadly." This statement is based on a careless interpretation of an advertisement or flyer (reproduced on the cinema's website and in my article) in which it is stated that this film is being "shown for the first time, in addition to the usual programme". As I pointed out in the *Picture House* article, this announcement is not about the cinema opening but about a first run special attraction. The phrase "in addition to the usual programme" indicates that the cinema has been up and running for some time.

Furthermore, when Martin Tapsell was researching the oldest operating cinema in the UK, he informed me that the Electric was licensed on 23 December 1910. The advertisement for *Henry VIII* appears because the cinema sought to draw audiences from a wider area. There might be earlier advertisements for the cinema that no one has yet unearthed (what were the local newspapers for this area in 1910?) – or it might well be that the cinema didn't advertise in the press and relied on posters and local walk-in trade.

When the Electric re-opened in February 2001, its opening date was given as 23 February 1911. My subsequent correction ought to have been welcomed, as it makes the Electric even older and puts its opening in the preceding year. I drew the article to the attention of the Electric and its website at that time was amended to add that "maybe" the cinema had opened in December 1910 instead of the date it was still giving. In other words, the then owners weren't prepared to check my conclusions and accept them or disprove them. Now the website inexplicably gives a February date four days later. For such a significant and rare survivor of the early period of cinema construction, it is important to get the date right. The official listing description for this Grade II* listed building is no help: it merely states "1910-12". And now, to add to the confusion, the last issue of this Bulletin claimed that the Electric opened on 28 February 1910, much earlier than anyone else has ever stated.

Allen Eyles

ASHINGTON (Northumberland)

On p21 of the last Bulletin there was a report that the Gala Bingo Club in the former Pavilion had closed. It was visited by the CTA on one of our tours a few years ago – it did rather look on its last legs!

Tim McCullen

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

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

100 years

Pavilion 19 George Place, Bathgate. Opened 25 March 1920.
Architect John Fairweather. C(s) listed. No historic image available.



Cinema / Classic 57 Kirk Road, Wishaw. Opened April 1920.
Architect James L Ross. C(s) listed.

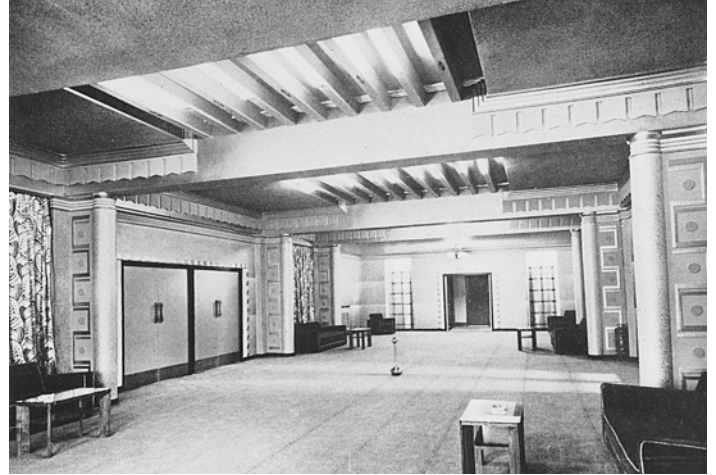
90 Years



Richmond / Odeon 72 Hill Street, Richmond. Opened 21 April 1930.
Architect Julian R Leathart / WF Granger (Leathart & Granger).
Grade II listed.



85 Years



Dreamland Marine Terrace, Margate. Opened 22 March 1935.
Architect Julian R. Leathart / WF Granger (Leathart & Granger).
Grade II* listed.



Odeon Westborough, Scarborough. Opened 28 March 1935.
Architect Robert Bullivant / J Cecil Clavering / Harry Weedon.
Grade II listed.



Broadway 80 Main Street, Prestwick. Opened April 1935.
Architect Alistair G MacDonald. C(s) listed.

QUOTATIONS

Another cinematic quotation from the list sent by Gavin McGrath:

♦ I would love to work with Barbra Streisand again,
in something appropriate, perhaps *Macbeth*.

Walter Matthau



Plaza Talbot Road, Port Talbot. Opened 25 March 1940.
Architect Howard Williams. Grade II listed.

ARCHIVE

ARCHIVE REOPENS

The Archive is now fully open in its new premises near Southend on Sea. It is recognised that many members will be keen to visit the Archive to see the new facilities and an open day will be arranged in 2020 with tours and exhibitions for this purpose, which promises to be very interesting. As we need to assist the many researchers who have been waiting for the reopening, we cannot therefore accept casual visitors at present and visiting is by appointment only.

If you wish to make an enquiry/request for material, please visit the CTA website and use the enquiry form on the Archive pages to tell us about your research request. We will only accept enquiries using the form; if you do not have access to the Internet please phone 07971 752807 to request the form by post. The Archive website pages at [cta-uk.org] are currently being redesigned and updated and will soon contain a great deal more information, including lists of some of the collections in the Archive.

We do not want to waste your time visiting the Archive when we may not have the material you seek. Therefore your enquiry/request will be assessed against our knowledge of the material in the Archive and if there is a substantial amount of material or your enquiry requires a lot of personal research time you will be invited to the Archive to undertake your own research on one of the Saturdays the Archive is open.

So we can help those needing to undertake research, visiting the Archive is by appointment only for research purposes. In most cases we can deal with your enquiry without you having to visit in person; we will scan the material you need and provide this as a link via email where you can view and download the material you requested.

To help support the cost of maintaining the Archive some reasonable charges are levied:

- Making an enquiry – free
- Visiting the Archive – free
- Each image/A4 area scanned – £1.50
- Each Image provided on CD-ROM by post – £5.00
- Photocopying – b/w 25p or colour 50p each
- Using your camera/device – £5 per visit

For general enquiries (not formal enquiries/requests) please email Clive Polden [archive@cta-uk.org].

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].

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

Please note new information!

Brian Hall posts regular weekly sets of unidentified cinema photographs on the CTA-UK Google Group. Please consider joining this group [groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/cta-uk] and help us to identify cinemas. It's great fun! If you're having trouble signing in, email me at [archive@cta-uk.org].

Member Darron Keeling has produced an album on Flickr of past 'mystery' pictures. [tinyurl.com/uomjyom]

Clive Polden, CTA Archivist

MEMBERSHIP

NEW MEMBERS

We offer a warm welcome to the following new members:

Keith Fawkes, Katherine Lees. Mark Johnston and Anna Kulakiewicz.

DONATIONS

Once more members have displayed their generosity by adding a donation to the renewal of their subscriptions. Our sincere thanks go to: DA Abbott, KR Bailey, W Banks MBKS, PJ Bennett, M Breeze, B Campbell, GH Catterick, D Daniells, AT Davies, R Deahl, MM Dupré, VA Edwards, KJ Finch, JR Forster, RA Franklin, GW Gill, H Hamblet, GF High, AP Jowett, AS King, PJ King, TC Leman, AC Llewellyn, DJ McIntyre, JJ McWilliams, TA O'Sullivan, N Pemberton, S Quick, DJ Reeves, PD Regan, TJ Rhodes, DA Riddett, TR Sedgwick-Jell, EH Senat, CB Simmonds, BJ Steer, C Syner, P Tipping, EM Trott, CW Turner, PJ Walters and JHC Williams.

IN MEMORIAM

We are sorry to report that long-standing member Peter Good of Derby passed away recently at the age of 90. Peter joined the CTA in 1983 and was a regular contributor of items for the Bulletin. Our sincere condolences are sent to his family and friends. Many thanks to member Christopher Smith for reporting this sad news to us.

CTA MEMBERSHIP

This issue of the Bulletin marks my baptism into the ins and outs of the role of being your new membership secretary. It has been quite a learning curve taking over the position from Neville, who has taken twenty plus years to perfect a database and other associated procedures including the Bulletin and Picture House distribution. I would be pleased to take any communications from members if I have made any errors or mishaps so that I may correct them as soon as possible. I must thank Neville Taylor for his hard work over the years for the smooth running of the membership role and for his ongoing assistance when it may be required.

Ray Ritmeester, Membership Secretary

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

Four Swallows and Two Elephants – the latest book by CTA member Ned Williams is normally £13.50 – but to members of the CTA it is now £10 (including postage!). Part of the book reveals the stories of how Irving Boscoe and Ben Kennedy pioneered early cinemas in the Black Country – adopting 'ciné-variety' as a means of keeping the audience in their seats. Also a chapter on Arthur Sellman, who wrote a column in *World's Fair* and was obsessed with the Bioscopes that he had known in his youth.

Contact Ned Williams at 23 Westland Road, Wolverhampton, WV3 9NZ or email [nedwilliams1944@gmail.com]

INSIDE THE GAUMONT PALACE

By Jeremy Buck

There was a rare chance for members of the public to see inside the former Gaumont Palace at Wood Green, North London, on 23 January, when the Mayor of London's 'Peoples Question Time' was held there. The building now houses the Dominion Centre, used for religious meetings and it is not generally easy to gain access. Although I was unable to attend the event myself, CTA member Michael Jones did go and took some pictures inside. These are reproduced below together with some photographs of the Gaumont in its original state.

The Gaumont Palace opened on 26 March 1934, designed by WE Trent and Ernest Tulley. There were 2,556 seats in stalls and circle, a fully equipped stage and a Compton organ. The cinema was renamed Odeon in 1962 and tripled in 1973. It closed in 1984, becoming a Top Rank Bingo Club, with tripling removed, then a Mecca Club, until closure in 1996. It was empty for the next eight years before reopening as the Dominion Centre in 2004. The building was listed at Grade II in 1990 and the listing was raised to II* in 2000. The organ was removed in 1967 and is now at Thorngate Halls, Gosport.

I have fond memories of the Gaumont, my local cinema since childhood days at Saturday Morning Pictures. It's good to see it has been so well restored and hopefully one day a CTA visit can be arranged!

Michael Jones writes: The hanging ceiling globe lights have replaced what I recall as being inverted saucer-like chandeliers. The foyer box-office has, obviously, been removed. To the left, where you see the edge of a blue sofa, a confectionery counter was against the wall. My recollections are from the mid-1970s. As the Gaumont there was a huge tea room upstairs. Also, there was a dance studio/school run by a well-known national, Arthur Murray. My most memorable moments at the Gaumont: *Shane*, for which we had to stand until the end of the film before we got a seat – a full house and that for the afternoon show; as you know, films were continuous performances then. *The Black Shield of Falworth* was, I think, the cinema's first CinemaScope film and the CinemaScope screen's area size was substantially smaller than the cinema's standard ratio screen, which was huge.

