



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



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

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 *matinée* 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.

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.

Typeset in Franklin Gothic Book by Harry Rigby

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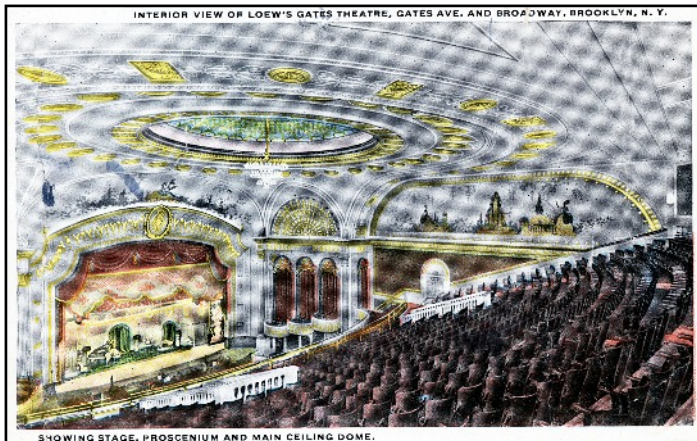
Visits' registration hotline ansaphone : 020 8800 8393

VISITS AND EVENTS

A Brooklyn Bite of the Big Apple

Illustrated talk by Cezar Del Valle

Saturday 28 March



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.

A Double Bill of Illustrated Talks

Saturday 16 May

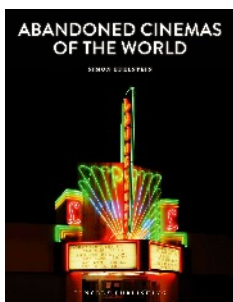
Abandoned Cinemas of the World

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).



Most visits are for members only
details in the full Bulletin

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.

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.*

More Casework in the full Bulletin

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.

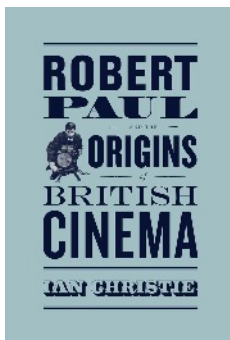
Also Available (but not from the Sales Officer)

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.

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.

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/vopsmgs]; 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/1dgLEDdFddk]. The CTA saw an excellent restored version at their 50th birthday party at the Regent Street Cinema in January 2017.

Vintage News – 21 February

CIRCUIT HISTORIES AVAILABLE

REDUCED PRICES

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

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

CARTOON CORNER



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

London's West End Cinemas

by Allen Eyles with Keith Skone.

Large format paperback, 210 pages, fully illustrated with over 400 pictures, including 71 in colour.

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.

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.



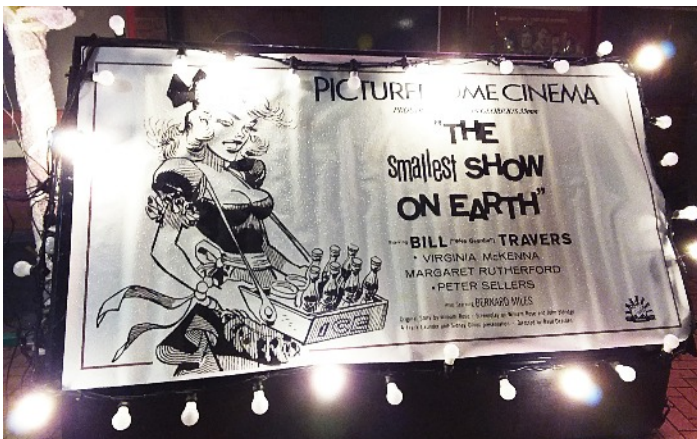
Adam Cunard outside the Picturedrome



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.cineplexx.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]



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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by Richard Gray

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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.

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

Four more pages of newsreel
in the full Bulletin

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.

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

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

More letters in the full Bulletin

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.

