



CINEMA
THEATRE
ASSOCIATION

www.cta-uk.org

BULLETIN

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Bingo at the former Plaza Stockland Green, Birmingham, which will not reopen after the current closure – photo taken March 2008



The Regent at Redcar (Cleveland) which will be demolished and replaced with a three-screen cinema – photo taken July 2006

FROM YOUR EDITOR

As a Lancastrian, I was ashamed at my typing error in the last sentence of the item on the back page of the last Bulletin about the first ABC 'Luxury Lounge'. Lancaster is the County town and not just a 'country' town. Must get a new keyboard.

I see that we now have to wear masks in cinemas, although in most places you can take them off once seated. I understand the industry is hoping this will bring back audiences; what are your thoughts? I don't know about you but it has the opposite effect with me. I hate having to wear one in shops and I won't use public transport whilst the regulation is in force.

I have quite a few cuttings and reports about drive-in and open-air cinemas, which are popular during the current pandemic. I will try to mention them if I think they illustrate something different but I am minded of the CTA's Mission Statement [see opposite] that we are interested in all aspects of cinema buildings so I can't cover them all.

I have run into the dreaded 'multiple of four pages' problem again this time so I have had to omit one or two things you have sent. They weren't time critical so I'll try and include them next time.



We spent a pleasant few days in Woodhall Spa in July. I was able to visit the Kinema in the Woods and view their [relatively] new 74-seat screen ③, which only opened last year – very nice indeed, photo above. Thanks to Dave Gilks for showing me around. They have recently reopened after the Covid-19 closure. Dave told me that the hand sanitizer they have provided is taking the coatings off the door handles! They were worried that drops might do similar things to their bespoke carpet.

Just a couple of Bulletin 'housekeeping' reminders. My preferred formats for submissions are Word or plain text documents and good resolution jpg images. However I can open virtually any file or image format so don't worry too much if your program does something different. Also I put Internet and email addresses in [square brackets] just to make them stand out and to avoid the DTP program converting them into links as I type. Remember not to type the [square brackets] when putting the address into your browser or email program.

Finally, nothing to do with cinemas but another little story I hope might amuse. Unable to find one locally, I ordered a tea cosy from Amazon. Those of you who have used Amazon will know that they send a follow-up email asking you to rate the item. One of the questions they asked me about the tea cosy was, "What do you use this item for?" Answers on a postcard, please.

Harry Rigby, CTA Bulletin Editor

VISITS AND EVENTS

Unfortunately, as you all know, we are still in a 'lockdown' mode, despite what the government tells us. So all our visits and events are still on hold for the foreseeable future. If the situation changes we will announce our plans on the CTA website [www.cta-uk.org] or on the CTA e-News page for those members signed up to receive it, or by an updated message on the CTA Visits' Hotline (ansaphone) 020 8800 8393 otherwise hoping for better news in the next edition of the Bulletin.

Ken Roe

**DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE
TUESDAY 20 OCTOBER**

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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HERITAGE CASEWORK

By Tim Hatcher

Grade II* Listed

The Association instigated a Freedom of Information request of Thurrock Council, which has been declined. This relates to the revision of the approved plans relating to the **State** at Grays, which former includes additional fenestration as previously reported. Specialist advice confirms that an appeal against this refusal may – and indeed will – be instituted, in order to ascertain the exact nature of the proposal prior to the submission of any requisite interposition.

The scheme for renovation of the **Granada** in Walthamstow has been granted planning permission. A written recapitulation, accentuating points raised in previous discussions with the relevant parties, has been forwarded by the CTA; this emphasises the importance of complete restoration of the dual-console Christie organ, the significance of which has been endorsed by Historic England. Overall the scheme is acceptable, with the exception of a new plant-room injudiciously located at the rear of the circle. Advice will continue to be proffered upon surface finishes.

Despite its request for additional funding, communication with the Trust responsible for the **Picture House** in Paignton has proven to be somewhat elusive. It has been indicated that Historic England would regard the support of the Association as politically advantageous, yet it remains of import to determine the objective which is intended to be advanced by any potential further financial provision and the prospect of its resultant efficacy.

Grade II Listed

The CTA's comments concerning proposed alterations to the **Savoy** at Burnt Oak have been furnished, alongside those of Brent Council, to the relevant development company. It is to be hoped that it will consent to these and render an amended proposal with alacrity, as the building has deteriorated significantly during its period of desuetude.

In a distressing scenario, the Nepalese community, which is renovating the **Ritz** in Nuneaton, has allegedly been defrauded by a contractor; this has resulted in a paucity of funding necessary to continue the undertaking. Following enforcement action by the local Council (initiated by the CTA), a new project manager has been appointed, whose primary objective is to ensure that remedial measures to the roof are undertaken in order to prevent further internal deterioration.

See AGM Supplement with last Bulletin for photos of all five of the above.

Unlisted



The latest design for the site of the **Regent/Odeon** in Bournemouth has received planning approval. The colonnade of the cinema will be retained in the new structure, which is of a scale more appropriate to its locale than previous concepts. *Photo taken May 2006.*

Somewhat fortuitously, a Conservation Area appraisal is currently in progress in Eastbourne and its Conservation Officer has agreed in principle to extend its boundaries to encompass the **Picturedrome** and the **Luxor**

More Casework in the full Bulletin

PUBLICATIONS

Back Numbers Available

PICTURE HOUSE MAGAZINE

The full list of back issues in print was published in the last *Bulletin* and will be repeated in the next one. A copy can be obtained by SAE or email from the Sales Officer or Bulletin Editor.

There are also available a few second-hand copies of out-of-print issues of *Picture House* 9, 10, 14/15, 20 & 23, priced £5.00 each, plus postage. A list of their contents was printed on p4 of Bulletin 52/2 or can be obtained by SAE or email from the Sales Officer or Bulletin Editor.

BULLETINS

We can supply back numbers of most Bulletins from Volume 21 (1987) to date. Prices for issues from 1987 to 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.

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.

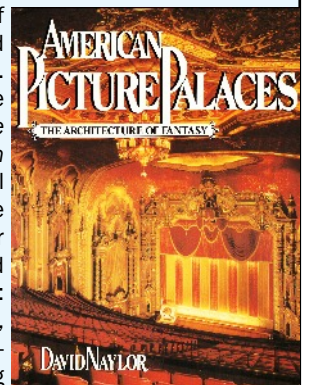


Price: £6.00 per binder, supplied in a special postal carton. Please add £3.00 to your total order for post and packing.

Ordering details below.

Second-Hand Book Sale

We have cleared out duplicate copies of several books from the CTA Archive and these are now for sale to members. There are many rare and collectable titles, such as *Odeon*, *Cathedrals of the Movies*, *The Picture Palace*, *American Picture Palaces*, etc. To receive a full list, containing around 85 titles, please send an email to the Sales Officer [sales@cta-uk.org] with 'Second Hand Books List' as the subject. Or write to: Sales Officer, 34 Pelham Road, London, N22 6LN (an SAE would be appreciated). Thanks to Archive volunteer Doug Raynes for help in sorting and listing the books.



Recently Published (reviewed in recent Bulletins)

The Matcham Directory – £10.00 plus postage

Abandoned Cinemas of the World – £29.50 plus postage

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BEHIND THE SCENES

By Mike Whitcombe

Many of the movie houses built eighty or more years ago during the golden age of cinema building were spectacular places. It didn't matter whether their façades were imperially grand or sleekly modern, they were built to impress and to woo a cinema-going public spoilt for choice when it came to where they could watch Gable and Harlow sexually smoulder or Tracy and Hepburn verbally spar.

Today, any cinema to have survived on our High Street is considered a grand old dame, once beautiful but now a little weathered and unfashionable. Yet when they were built they were the brash new upstarts, screaming a world of possibilities where equality and innovation would eventually realise such fanciful dreams as free health care and a man on the moon.

Imagine a British High Street in the 1930s. It would not be architecturally challenged. Most of the compact street-lined stores would date from the past hundred and more years, evoking a sense of timeless tradition and noble virtue. But then a building plot is acquired by one of the new, fast expanding cinema chains. Several Dickensian buildings are demolished and in a matter of months a stunningly futuristic art deco cinema is constructed, dominating its surroundings. The High Street suddenly got sexy.

The interiors of these dream palaces were equally impressive. Nowadays they are only a memory – and a black and white one at that if all we have to go on are interior shots by men like John Maltby (1910-80), one of the country's finest architectural and social photographers. But even from these we can sense the glamour, opulence and plain jaw-dropping beauty of many auditoria that would have come alive when playing to a full house.

These picture palaces were well-built. Odeon's Oscar Deutsch and ABC's John Maxwell might not have been extravagant spenders – woe betide a designer or builder that didn't stick within the original no-frills budget – but they demanded the best and nearly always got it. Their cinemas were extremely well built. They were intended to last for decades while entertaining thousands of regular patrons a week. Shoddy craftsmanship was not tolerated.

This even applied to those areas closed to the public. Behind forbidding solid oak doors marked 'Private' were corridors, staircases, stock rooms, staff rooms, offices, workshops, dressing rooms and boiler houses cunningly fitted into every available inch of space. These out-of-

bounds areas might have been built plainly without decoration but they still boasted high levels of craftsmanship. Beautiful brick work enclosing a stairwell that ascended the height of the building was commonplace – even if those stairs were only going to be used by a handful of projectionists who were forbidden to use a public entrance.

The craftsmanship of those skilled tradesmen from the 1930s should not be underestimated. I worked behind the scenes at three traditional High Street cinemas for twenty years and until the day the sites I worked at were closed down, some seventy or eighty years after being built – most of the original oak doors still opened silently on original hinges; the same can't be said for doors at many recently-built multiplexes.

The photographs that accompany these words reveal a closed world that those of who were fortunate to work in cinemas would be familiar with and where I personally spent many happy hours inhabiting. Behind auditoria crowded by patrons wanting an escape from their everyday life, existed an unseen world full of as much drama and excitement as any big screen blockbuster. It truly was a magical place behind that door marked 'Private'.



This stairwell led to the Boiler Room, deep underground at the ABC Portsmouth. Note the rounded bricks edging the staircase. Most architects and builders wouldn't be so thoughtful nowadays!



This corridor [L], photographed in 1997, led from the original projection box at the ABC Portsmouth to a private staircase that allowed projectionists to enter and exit the building unseen by the public. Note the fine brickwork, the oak doors and handrail to ensure projectionists wouldn't stumble up or down the solitary step. This area became redundant in 1967 when the projection box was moved to the rear circle to allow 70mm presentations to be screened.

The organist always looked a glamorous chap dressed in his dinner jacket as the organ emerged. At the ABC Portsmouth he got to the organ along this dimly-lit corridor [R], deep underground, which ran the width of the building. The organ was situated in a chamber on the left. A dressing room for the organist was situated on the right.



Even projectionists need a place to do paperwork. Here was my office at the ABC Cosham [top], situated next to the original projection box. At the Odeon Portsmouth I converted a derelict room under the rear of the circle into my office [bottom], using the back wall to show off an ABC sign I rescued from the ABC Portsmouth (which now sits behind a bookcase in my study at home!)



Roofs were obviously out of bounds to the public but they were still fascinating places. These photos show how you gained access to the roof at the ABC Portsmouth and what was comically called the swimming pool at this site. After a heavy downpour it would often fill up with water, meaning somebody had to climb down and unblock the drain. The projectionists' staff room lay underneath.



Everyone smoked in the 1930s! Signs telling you to put out that ciggie were commonplace in any area not seen by the public. Both these photos were taken in the original area behind the main screen at the ABC Portsmouth in the 1990s. The sign for the car park must have been there for thirty years as the land it was on was compulsory purchased by the Council for a road widening scheme in the 1960s.



Twelve hour shifts were the norm after I took over the projectionist rota at the Odeon Portsmouth so it was important we had somewhere to eat. When I transferred to the Odeon in 2001 my first job was to turn a derelict storage room next to the original projection box into a projectionists' rest room – at the time I was replacing my kitchen at home, which proved handy! We had a fridge, freezer and, most importantly, a Baby Belling cooker (that travelled with me from site to site) which cooked a lovely roast or a tasty fry-up.

If a film went on late it was because I was still eating a meal!

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



Boiler rooms were one of the most important areas of the cinema, particularly in the winter when you needed to keep a huge building heated. At the ABC Portsmouth the boiler room was deep underground; a cold, damp, brick-faced space that always smelt of oil. The two boilers pictured were relatively new and installed at great expense. They were expensive to run as well!



[L] A large building needs heated or cooled air to be distributed evenly around and to do this a plenum chamber is used. At the Odeon Portsmouth, the original plenum system was used everyday from when the building opened in 1937 until it closed in 2008. It was located in a room under the former circle. To increase or decrease flow a cast iron knob had to be turned. When turned to maximum the whole room would hum. An amazing toy!

[R] The oak door at the top of these stairs led to the original projection room at the ABC Portsmouth and the only access to the roof. On hot summer nights, when the main feature was well underway, a couple of us would often climb these stairs with a cuppa, so we could sit on the roof where we would enjoy views over the City and the naval dockyard while being cooled by a welcome sea breeze.



Big capacity cinemas always had a number of rooms unseen by the public. At first they were in constant use but as the decades passed and staff numbers declined many of these spaces were not needed and were simply forgotten about. At the rear of the ABC Portsmouth were several rooms that became obsolete in the 1980s when the male and female staff rooms were relocated to the main building. Some of the rooms were used to store carpet or auditorium seats. Others, like the one pictured, were left to slowly disintegrate.

A NICE NAME FOR A CINEMA?

By Allen Eyles

You can still buy Corona beer and Corona cigars and stay at Corona Hotels in London, Blackpool and elsewhere but it's perhaps fortunate that none of the British picture houses named Corona still operate – otherwise they would almost certainly be contemplating a name change as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. As a Latin word for a crown or garland, Corona had some appeal to café proprietors by the 1910s but has been less popular than Coronation and Coronet where the naming of picture houses is concerned, though seemingly ahead of the word Crown. (In actual fact, the Corona name has been defunct as far as British cinemas are concerned for over fifty years but I won't let that stop me.)



The Corona Felling, circa 1920: as in Frank Manders' book; courtesy of PG Haywood.

Research into the pre-WWI period has been restricted by the current circumstances but Frank Manders, in his book *Cinemas of Gateshead*, relates that a local company acquired a site in Felling, near Gateshead, for a cinema: "In October 1911 a competition for a name for a new cinema was held, with a prize of £1: in 1911 it was hardly surprising that two people came up with the name 'Corona'; they were awarded 10/- each at the opening on 14 November." The Corona Picture Hall came under the control of local circuit operator Edward J Hinge in 1924. The 600-seat cinema seems to have been the first in this country to adopt the name and never changed it, closing in November 1960 after nearly fifty years and being later demolished.



The derelict Corona Gorton circa 1984, photographed by Allen Eyles. The attractive name sign may well be an addition from its later club days. Also colour photo top next column [L]

A striking façade makes the Corona at Gorton, Greater Manchester, a more interesting cinema from a design point of view. Opened in April 1915 with around 1,000 seats, it was part of the Gaumont circuit for many years but was last operated by the Snape circuit, which closed it on 4 October 1958. It was then a club and music venue before being demolished in May 1985 after several years of standing derelict.



[R] Corona Gorton, circa 1946, showing *The Woman in the Window*, with its name in a vertical sign on the right corner, missing the initial letter, as well as on the front of the canopy. (Author's collection)



Corona Crosby, circa 1946, showing *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*. Note GB sign (Gaumont British) added above the name. (Author's collection)

The Corona at Crosby opened in May 1920 with 1,200 seats but Harold Ackroyd's *The Dream Palaces of Liverpool* records that construction had started before World War One. The local architects were Fraser and Ainley. Becoming a minor Gaumont theatre, it was never renamed and closed in December 1956 in a big clear-out of weaker Rank properties. It was demolished, to be replaced by shops.

In London, the Corona at Manor Park opened in September 1921 with 1,197 seats, designed by the practice of Adams and [George] Coles. It was renamed Coliseum in 1923 for unknown reasons and then Essoldo in 1955 after being taken over by Sol Sheckman's circuit the previous year, closing in 1963 for bingo and later demolition, to be replaced by housing.

In September 1927, a very undistinguished Corona cinema opened in Holbrook Lane, Coventry. Quoted by Gil Robottom in his book *Coventry Picture Palaces*, WG Edkins declared: "Only the frontage block was brick, the rest being asbestos sheeting, known as 'The Hut'. [...] The heating system was a coal fire. There was a single projector and a piano provided the music." It had only 347 seats.



Corona Manor Park. Flamboyant artist's impression from an opening newspaper report. (CTA Archive) No opening photographs have been traced.

The Corona name was short-lived: it became the Arcadian Pavilion in 1931 and the Lyric the following year while also being known as the Cinema Palace. It was replaced by a new Lyric from 1937.



Corona Leigh-on-Sea. Exterior at opening in 1929 (author's collection). Note a café entrance to the left.

The Corona at Leigh-on-Sea in Essex, opened in October 1929 to the design of James CE Saunders, an unfamiliar name. With 1,429 seats it was the largest to take the name and had a Christie organ. Acquired by Essoldo in January 1954 along with the town's Coliseum, it was closed in April 1959 in favour of retaining the other cinema. It became a snooker club.



Corona Stretford, circa 1950, showing two British films.

At Stretford in Manchester, a Corona Super Cinema opened in November 1929 on Moss Road. Though its design was handled by a regular cinema architect, J Knight, it was unprepossessing with a mere 796 seats and ceded any Super Cinema status to the spectacular Longford (later Essoldo) in Stretford from 1936, also betraying a lowly status by closing uncommonly early on 21 July 1951, reportedly to become an extension to a social club.

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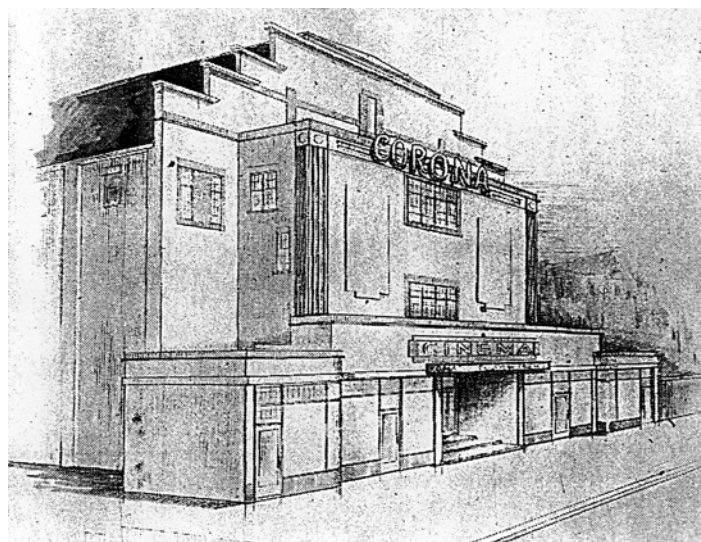
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www.cinema-organs.org.uk

A further Corona cinema operated in Little Lever, near Bolton, in Lancashire. It replaced the Palace circa 1931 and may have been a revamp of this existing cinema. It closed circa May 1957. No photographs have been readily available.



Corona Swanley. Artist's impression and entrance circa 1941. (CTA Archive)

Having become somewhat old-fashioned, the Corona name surprisingly resurfaced in 1938 with the opening of the Corona at Swanley, Kent, in October as an independent with 800 seats that continued to 1965, latterly on two days a week, the rest being given over to bingo, then being demolished to make way for a shopping centre. The last to take the name, it was the last to close with it.

However, the Corona name lingers on at Leigh-on-Sea, having been bestowed on the block of 21 flats where the cinema stood, with the sales brochure emphasising its origin in the 1920s cinema, although the design is otherwise completely modern. I wonder how the residents feel about the name.

In both the US towns named Corona in California and New York State, movie theatres took the place name. The word Corona survived in California as part of the marquee when a church took over the Spanish Mission-style cinema (1929-82) and advertised its services in changeable letters below the name. Little is known about the New York State movie theatre: it seems to have opened in 1927 and after closure had its entrance opened up for retail use.



Corona Leigh on Sea. Poster with crown motif, from 1934, on display at the CTA Archive (donated by Roy Dilley, photographed by David Simpson).

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]

ABERDEEN

The Belmont Filmhouse shut its doors in March due to the coronavirus pandemic lockdown. To help it through this period, it has launched a fundraising campaign, which hopes to raise £25,000. They have asked members of the public to donate £40 – the price of a membership – to the cinema to help it get back on its feet, or whatever amount people can afford. It will also have to invest extra money into making the building safe when it does open. To donate to the fundraiser, visit: [gofundme.com/f/belmont-filmhouse]. {26736}

Aberdeen Evening Express – 29 June; photo taken September 2008



BANGKOK (Thailand)

The 900-seat Scala cinema closed in July with a showing of *Cinema Paradiso*. It opened in 1969 with John Wayne in *The Undefeated* and was equipped for 70mm films. The coronavirus is blamed for the closure, although the lease was up at the end of this year. An 'open house' was arranged for people to view the cinema before the closure. {32785}

The i Newspaper – date unknown; sent in by Keith Taylorson

BEESTON (Notts)

The current pandemic has delayed work on the new eight-screen Arc cinema. It will now be ready for fit-out in December with the opening date projected to be June 2021.

East Midlands Business Link – 31 July; sent in by Terry Hanstock

BELFAST

The ten-screen Movie House on Dublin Road closed on 17 March, earlier than the announced date of 26 April, due to Covid-19. It will become part of an office block. {26684}

Sent in by Tim McCullen

BIRMINGHAM (Central)



There are fears for the future of the two-screen Electric Cinema in Station Street. Staff were made redundant in March and the cinema has been closed since. The local newspaper's attempts to contact the owner have been unsuccessful. The cinema opened in December 1909. {9559}

Birmingham Mail – 7 July; sent in by Trevor Chapman; photo taken September 2005

BIRMINGHAM (Kings Heath)

The former Kingsway closed on bingo in 2007 and was almost destroyed by fire four years later, just leaving the façade. In recent years land at the rear has been cleared for future redevelopment and the site is now being used for pop-up cinema screenings. {19912}

Birmingham Mail – 6 August

BLACKBURN (Lancs)

Work is continuing on the new eight-screen Reel cinema. It was due to be handed over at the end of August with a view to opening in November.

Lancashire Telegraph – 13 July; sent in by Philip Crompton

BOLDON COLLIERY (South Tyneside)



The twelve-screen Cineworld has had a full refurbishment during lockdown and reopened on 31 July. The revamp includes a 17m x 7.3m Superscreen with Dolby Atmos sound and 4k projection. Opening offers were standard tickets at £5 and £9 for the Superscreen. The cinema opened in October 1997 as a Virgin and was later a UGC. {24191}

Chronicle Live – 30 July; photo taken September 2006

BRIDGWATER (Somerset)



Plans have been submitted to remove twelve cylindrical pillars from the roof of the former Odeon. Historically, the pillars have created wind uplift to support the canopy but in recent years cracks in the pillars have led to freeze-thaw action and the move is being made to protect the public. The building opened in July 1936 and became a Classic from December 1967. It was around this time that the roof was removed from the tower, leaving just the pillars in place. In January 1973 the building was subdivided with bingo downstairs and two 250-seat cinemas in the circle, today operated by Scott Cinemas. {16641}

Bridgwater Mercury – 23 June; photo taken February 2006

BRIGHTON

The Palace Pier Theatre hosted some early film shows. The Pier itself became home to open air screenings from deck chairs at sunset, starting on Wednesday 5 August with *Grease*, to be followed by the usual suspects, *Pulp Fiction* and *Dirty Dancing*, among others. Sound is provided by Bluetooth earphones. What price success with tickets costing from £20 to £35?

The Argus – 29 July; sent in by Allen Eyles & Barry Quinton

BURNLEY (Lancs)

There has been another act of [unspecified] vandalism at the Grade II listed derelict Empire Theatre. It happened just days after the Burnley Empire Trust launched another fundraising appeal to save the building, which is on the Theatres Trust 'at risk' register. {36755}

Lancashire Telegraph – 16 July; sent in by Philip Crompton & R David Simpson

BURY ST EDMUNDS (Suffolk)



The Abbeygate cinema began a phased reopening from 10 July. On 31 July the new 180-seat screen ③ opened. Situated in the former bingo area in the original stalls, it has a curved screen with tabs, 4k laser projection and 7.1 sound. Three drop-down chandeliers will be installed in time for Christmas. {24294}

East Anglian Daily Times – 24 July; sent in by Terry Hanstock; photo taken May 2004

CHELTENHAM (Glos)

The new four-screen Tivoli in the Regent Arcade was scheduled to open last April but is now expected to be open by October. Each screen will have between 80-90 seats.

Gloucestershire Echo – 6 August

CIRENCESTER (Glos)



The 200-seat BARN Theatre is to show films as a new way of generating revenue after Covid-19. The project has been partially funded by Cotswold District Council, with Cabinet voting to provide a grant of £10,000 and a loan of £20,000 towards installing the cinema facilities. The total cost for the cinema transformation project is around £80,000 including the BARN's investment into a media studio. However, the venue's website [barntheatre.org.uk] had no mention of this at the time of your Bulletin going to press.

Gloucestershire Live – 16 July; sent in by Chris Snowden

COLCHESTER (Essex)

Historic England has objected to plans to demolish the former Regal/Odeon in Crouch Street and replace it with flats. The proposals include rebuilding the façade. {17575}

Essex County Standard – 10 July; sent in by Terry Hanstock

Plans have been submitted for a development incorporating a twelve-screen Cineworld at the Northern Gateway. If plans are approved, work will begin at the start of 2021, for completion in 2022/23.

Essex County Standard – 4 August

CORK (Ireland)



There is a proposal to spend €4m on converting the former Kino into an arthouse hub. There would be a basement for kitchen and services, a cinema/café/bar on the ground floor, three floors of student accommodation and a roof terrace to act as a community space. The Kino opened in 1996 with 188 seats, a conversion of a snooker hall. There were plans to triple it at one stage but that never happened. It closed in November 2009. {24357}

Irish Examiner – 6 August; photo by David Simpson

CUMNOCK (Ayrshire)

Cumnock Town Hall is to receive £12,612 in Lottery money through Screen Scotland's Cinema Equipment Fund to provide a motorised screen and projection equipment to establish a year-round accessible film programme.

Cumnock Chronicle – 8 July

DUBLIN (Ireland)

The thirteen-screen, 2,200 seat IMC at The Square mall in Tallaght went into receivership in early July and is not expected to reopen. This was a relatively recent replacement for an earlier multiplex, dating only from 2012 and had no local competition in this dormitory town. High rent was cited as a contributory factor. The other IMC cinemas are not affected. {57833}

Sent in by Bob Bradshaw

DUNFERMLINE (Fife)

The Dunfermline Cinema Project is to set up home in the new Ironmongers Studio of the Alhambra Theatre. The cinema will seat 80 on ground level with plans to install an upper gallery to accommodate a further 30. The studio is being converted from a former retail unit directly opposite the main theatre.

The Courier – 6 August

EDINBURGH (Cameron Toll)

Plans for a new ten-screen Empire cinema in an extension to the Cameron Toll Shopping Centre have been recommended for approval. It would be built on what is currently the centre's car park. No time scale has been given.

Edinburgh Evening News – 29 June

EDINBURGH (Central)

The Filmhouse launched a fundraising appeal in June after closing in March due to lockdown. By mid-July they had reached their target of £60,000. The venue was hoping to reopen in September. {23226}

Edinburgh Live – 21 July

GRIMSBY (Lincs)

Grimsby is competing for a £25m share of the government's Future High Streets Fund to create a new cinema, market hall, shops and restaurants. The new cinema is proposed for where the present market hall stands.

Grimsby Telegraph – 26 June, 16 July

Four more pages of Newsreel
in the full Bulletin

LETTERS

JM SCHULTZ

Sad news to hear of the death of Jim Schultz, cinema engineer, as reported in the last Bulletin. I knew Jim for a number of years during my connection with the cinema industry, 35 years with the now defunct Associated Tower Cinemas, Leeds. Jim was a portly gentleman who possessed a dry sense of humour, delivered in a slow expressive manner. In 1979 he installed a pair of Cinemeccanica Victoria 9 projectors at Cottage Road Cinema in Headingley, Leeds, which I was managing at the time. I wonder if he ever wrote his memoirs as they would have made very interesting reading.

Derrick L Todd

I was very sorry to read in the Bulletin that Jim had passed away. I had met Jim many years ago and over the years he did many jobs for me. There was, I believe, nothing that Jim couldn't do or fix. He could be, like myself, very blunt and had a full command of the English language, often with four letters. I once asked him what he was doing living in England but had a German name. Back came his usual reply, followed by the fact that he was a Yorkshireman, "my boy", he declared. Any cinema will tell you of his work and he would go all over the place to help people out, sometimes costing him more in petrol than his charges. I can only say he was one of the best and a bloody good engineer and person. RIP Jim.

Trevor Harris

RELAUNCHING CINEMA

I'd come across the list of 450 suggested old films to fill gaps in schedules on the Film Distributors' Association web site at [www.launchingfilms.com]. It's quite an intriguing selection, ranging from *The Philadelphia Story* to *A Matter of Life and Death*. It might be worth remarking that it is perhaps only because of digital projection that such an imaginative and flexible approach to the current challenge is possible.

Jeremy Perkins

Editor's Note: The list can be downloaded from the above website as a pdf. Use the link "Relaunching Cinema" in the top centre of the home page. The website also contains lots of other information.

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.

Ordering details on p3

MY TIME WITH 16MM FILM

The article in the May/June Bulletin by Charles Morris on the use of 16mm film prints in commercial cinemas brought back some memories for me. Between 1978 and 1990 I worked for Cinephoto Film Productions Ltd in Salford, who primarily produced company or product promotional films on 16mm. I was Production Manager and looked after the preview theatre.

During the first few years everything was shot on 16mm Eastman Negative. This was then processed and a rush print produced. Once edited and sound added, it was then sent to the lab for final projection prints to be made. Later on, Sony U-Matic Video Master tapes would also be produced direct from the 16mm masters as clients were increasingly wanting copies on the new VHS video format for their sales people to use on the road.

At this time the BBC were still using 16mm film for location work and we were often requested to supply mobile facilities for crews to view rushes. For these we used a Magnaflex Double Band Projector, which was based on the Bell & Howell TQ range. Remember those anyone? It was a very ungainly machine with a heavy sound reader slapped on the side.

On one occasion we collected the cans of rushes from Piccadilly Red Star in Manchester and headed off to Wrexham in North Wales. Arriving about 9:30pm we set up and waited for the crew to arrive. The carpets in the room were all nylon and we had been walking around for some time setting up. When all was assembled and I came to switch off the lights to start the show, I received a heavy static belt off the switch. Needless to say a few expletives ensued much to my embarrassment as everyone turned around to look at me. Happy Days!

Over the next decade however, things changed dramatically. With the advent of new portable HD Video Cameras and clients wanting to reduce costs, 16mm gradually fell out of favour. In the early nineties, companies had started to use computers more and Microsoft PowerPoint became very popular, replacing the multiple 35mm slide projector presentations used for many years.

I thoroughly enjoyed my time in the industry, later becoming a corporate member of the BKSTS (British Kinematograph Sound & Television Society) now known as The International Moving Image Society and served as Chairman of the NW Branch for a year.

Richard Hagon

FORUM EALING

Regarding the Forum Ealing, featured in the last Bulletin. ABC cinemas took over in early 1935, the press mentioning the takeover in the February, though it was still advertised as Yapp cinema in March of that year. The Sound system was Western Electric and the projectors were water cooled. Later, Philips FP20s were employed. After the cinema was tripled non-rewind (cakestands) were used. I lived in Ealing for a number of years until 1989 and would often visit. The chief was a chap named Basil but I can't remember his surname.

David A Ellis

PRESCOT PALACE CINEMA

In the last edition of the Bulletin there were one or two mentions of the Palace Cinema in Prescott. I have in my collection a copy of the first National Agreement between the Cinema Exhibitors Association and the National Association of Theatrical and Kine Employees. This came into force on 2 September 1946 for the North West Region. The Palace Cinema Prescott is one of a list of twenty three cinemas classed as Sub Grade B with weekly takings of £50 to £75 per week. I was on the committee for the Union that covered the Merseyside Area.

Mike Taylor

More letters in the full Bulletin

MISCELLANY & CINEMA BUSINESS

GAUMONT BENCH



This bench is located outside the artsdepot cultural centre in North Finchley, London. It is meant to be a representation of the Gaumont, which once stood on the site of the centre and was demolished in 1986.

Sent in by Jeremy Buck

POSTER AUCTION

A collection of 1,773 vintage movie posters realised \$2,312,675 at an auction in Dallas (Texas) in June. A rare 1933 poster for *The Invisible Man* fetched \$228,000.

Metro – 17 July; sent in by Barry Quinton & R David Simpson

OVERPRICED?

Cinematic items for sale on eBay include a large art deco mirror from an Odeon cinema at £350 and a copy of Brain Hornsey's Mercia Cinema Society 28-page A5 paperback booklet on *The Essoldo Circuit* for £5,000 – no, that's not a misprint – plus £4.50 postage!

Sent in by Darron Keeling

Editor's Note: Issue 31 of the CTA's magazine *Picture House* contains a full history of the *Essoldo* circuit and is still available from the Publications Officer (ordering details on p3) for only £7.50 (plus postage).

A BRIDGE TOO FAR?

Newly released documents from the National Archive show that the War Office initially objected to the making of *Bridge on the River Kwai*. "I do not think much of this story. In the first instance it is quite untrue and only very occasionally resembles the facts as they were at the time." In the end, the War Office agreed to offer the RAF's cooperation in the making of the film.

Daily Mail – 12 August; sent in by Barry Quinton

20TH CENTURY FOX'S FINAL REEL

Disney has killed off 20th Century Fox and rebranded it as 20th Television. Disney paid £55m for Rupert Murdoch's Fox Media assets last year. It is thought it wants to distance its studios from Fox News, which remains a Murdoch company.

Daily Mail – 13 August; sent in by Tom Laughlan & Barry Quinton

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

SCOTLAND FUNDING

Screen Scotland's Cinema Equipment Fund, made possible through the National Lottery, has allocated money to 24 projects. The grants include £42,000 to the Eden Court Theatre in Inverness to upgrade its cinema equipment, £22,000 to the Phoenix cinema in Oban and £24,000 for Colintravie Village Hall in Argyll and Bute for its community cinema project.

Press & Journal, Aberdeen – 1 July

POLITICAL CORRECTNESS

Sky has issued warnings over some films, claiming they have "outdated attitudes". Among them are *Lawrence of Arabia*, *Gone With The Wind*, *Aladdin*, *Dumbo*, *The Jungle Book* and *Breakfast at Tiffany's*.

Daily Mail – 20, 27 June; sent in by Tom Laughlan

CINEWORLD SHARES

Shares in Cineworld rose 22.5% after they were told they could reopen their screens. The company has secured £201m in extra funding.

The Sun – 23 June, Daily Mail – 24 June; sent in by Margaret Burgoine & Barry Quinton

BEST BOND EVER

Sir Sean Connery (89) has been voted the best James Bond in a *Radio Times* poll. More than 14,000 votes were cast and Sir Sean got 44%, beating Timothy Dalton and Pierce Brosnan.

Metro – 10 August; sent in by Barry Quinton

UK CINEMAS OPEN

[tinyurl.com/y36aluwa] A list of all UK cinemas currently open. The page was current at 10 August and it is stated it will be updated.

FACE COVERINGS



Aware that Covid-19 has put a dent in my activity and that of all other CTA members, I decided the flimsy 50p masks were a bit boring, so I have designed a CTA-themed mask for use in shops etc. It cost me £6 but is washable and for me is the latter-day version of the green CTA tie that rarely gets an airing.

Martin Tapsell



I believe in proper masking! [item posted on Facebook]

BINGO CLOSURES & REMAINERS

Buzz Bingo [formerly Gala Bingo] announced on 15 July that they will be permanently closing 26 of their bingo clubs. They were initially closed on 21 March due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Out of those 26, there are 8 located in former cinemas (all the others are in purpose-built bingo sheds). Here is the list, with the relevant Cinema Treasures page number:

- ♦ Birmingham, Stockland Green Plaza {39676} *photo on front cover*
- ♦ Bournemouth Odeon {20076}
- ♦ Bridlington Regal {3224}
- ♦ Chorley Odeon {15202}
- ♦ Hereford County / New Regal (Listed Grade II) {48537}
- ♦ Milton Keynes Point (in the basement of the Point) {25085}
- ♦ Salisbury Regal / ABC {2449}
- ♦ Worcester Gaumont {20709}



The interior of the Regal Bridlington – photo taken September 2013



The Grade II listed County/New Regal Hereford – photo taken April 2010



The Gaumont Worcester – photo taken May 2006



The Odeon Bournemouth – photo taken May 2006



The Odeon Chorley – photo taken February 2006



The Regal / ABC Salisbury – photo taken March 2009

The remaining 91 clubs in their estate were due to reopen on 6 August. Of these, 15 are in former cinemas:

- ♦ Aberdeen Kingsway {4591}
- ♦ Aldershot Ritz / ABC {4429}
- ♦ Arbroath Picture House (Listed Grade B) {23217}
- ♦ London, Barkingside State / Ace {14647}
- ♦ Clacton-on-Sea Century {13442}
- ♦ Coventry Savoy {34034}
- ♦ Darlington Arcade {39653}
- ♦ Dover Kings Hall / Gaumont {35681}
- ♦ Dumfries Regal / ABC / Odeon {27022}
- ♦ Keighley Ritz / ABC {6209}
- ♦ Maidstone Granada / Cannon / ABC {29170}
- ♦ Shrewsbury Granada (Listed Grade II) {22680}
- ♦ Slough Adelphi {14760}
- ♦ London, Tooting Granada (Listed Grade I) {9424}
- ♦ Worthing Plaza {23445}

Sent in by David Eve & Gary Donaldson; lists compiled by Ken Roe