



CINEMA
THEATRE
ASSOCIATION

www.cta-uk.org

BULLETIN

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The former Clifton Leamington Spa, a cinema named after its founder; photo taken March 2006 {37473}



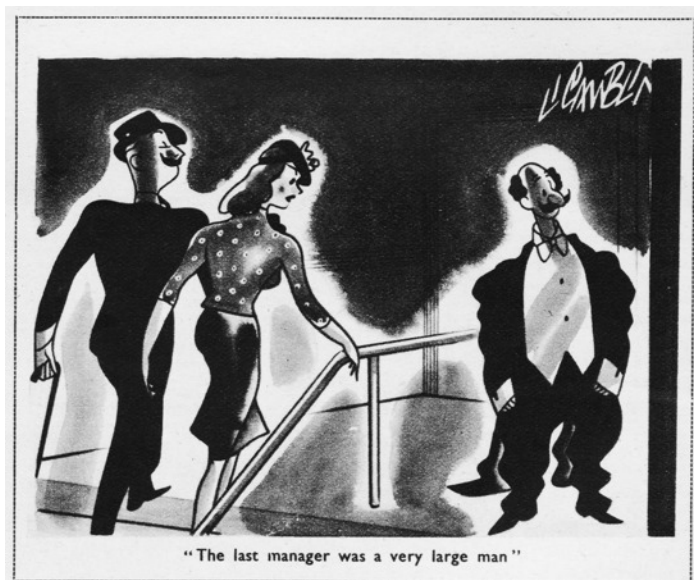
The former Oxford in Undercliffe, Bradford, which was gutted by fire on 28 February; photo taken March 2006 {48081}

FROM YOUR EDITOR

By the time you read this, the date the Government hopes to implement step 3 out of lockdown – 17 May – will be upon us (24 May in Northern Ireland). Because this issue went to press about two weeks beforehand, it will not have been possible to bring you all the up-to-date information. Cinemas will be allowed to reopen but I obviously can't provide details of each individual circuit or cinema's arrangements. I haven't found even one cinema's announcement that mentions how they will implement social distancing. The Government's website says that "some" events will be allowed in indoor venues with a capacity limit of 1,000 people or half-full (whichever is a lower number). This statement is repeated on the *Screen Daily* website but I suspect many cinemas will employ the booking and social distancing measures that they did when the tier system was in operation last autumn. There is a report in *The Guardian* of 25 March that Curzon is looking into separate 'vaccinated only' and 'no jab' screenings. It's all very confusing.

I have requested that you use the Bulletin email address opposite to contact me. Unfortunately some members have been putting the 'org' and the 'uk' the wrong way round [bulletin@cta-org.uk] and, of course, the message gets rejected. Can you please double check you have them the right way round so it reads bulletin@cta-uk.org. The same thing could also happen to other committee members' email addresses opposite. It's an easy mistake to make.

Harry Rigby, CTA Bulletin Editor



Quick Guide to CTA Social Media



www.cta-uk.org



www.facebook.com/cinematheatreorguk



www.twitter.com/Ctheatreassoc



www.instagram.com/cinematheatreorguk



www.ticketsource.co.uk



Zoom talks and presentations platform

Useful CTA Contacts

digital@cta-uk.org : enquires about digital services

visits@cta-uk.org : enquires about talks/events bookings

info@cta-uk.org : general enquires

Amazon Smile link : smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/1100702-0

CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

(Founded January 1967)

promoting serious interest in all aspects of cinema buildings

Company limited by guarantee. Reg. No. 04428776.

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Registered Charity No. 1100702. Directors are marked + in list below.

PATRONS: Alan Baxter; Allen Eyles; Lucinda Lambton

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Overseas (World Standard Air Mail).....	£56
Overseas (Digital CTA Bulletin).....	£33
Associate Membership (UK & Worldwide).....	£10
Life Membership (UK and overseas digital).....	£500
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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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DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE
SUNDAY 20 JUNE

ZOOM EVENTS MEETINGS UPDATE

WHY ZOOM?

As many members will be aware over the past few months the CTA has been promoting talks and presentations by using Zoom as it has not been possible to arrange physical meetings. We are pleased to report that this arrangement has met with growing success as the awareness and audience figures are steadily increasing. If you haven't joined our Zoom meetings yet, why not give it a try – you may be pleasantly surprised!

LAST MONTH'S ZOOM TALK

We were absolutely delighted at the attendance for the April meeting which reached an all-time high of over 200, at which we enjoyed a stunning presentation on the history of Atmospheric theatres, taking us on a worldwide and colourful tour with an informative commentary. The CTA would like to thank our colleagues at the Los Angeles Historic Theatre Foundation (LAHTF) for their generosity in offering the presentation on what was our first international link-up and from the feedback received it was certainly a hit with our viewers from the UK, USA, Europe and as far afield as Australia and Bahrain.

EVENTS BOOKINGS

Members may have noticed that we have introduced an on-line ticket booking procedure for future events using TicketSource. This service is the first port of call to book a Zoom talk or other event (either free or chargeable) and the Zoom link is sent the day before the event date. We have also introduced differential booking charges to offer members a lower charge as a benefit of membership. Naturally, our talks are open to both members and non-members, with everyone welcome.

SOCIAL MEDIA

In addition to using the established methods of Events promotion, the CTA is gradually expanding its presence in the different social media platforms. This helps us in reaching a potential wider audience who may otherwise be unaware of our work and activities, which will help us increase our Membership and influence in the longer term.



CTA VIRTUAL TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS

Zoom Cinema Magazine Programme

Talk No 8: Saturday 5 June at 5:30pm (UK time)

THE PARAMOUNT STORY

By Richard Norman



Paramount Tottenham Court Road, London (1938)

Hollywood's legendary 'Paramount Pictures Corporation' film studios were unique in British cinema history as, just after the coming of talking pictures, they invested in building a small but significant chain of cinemas in the UK in order to showcase their first-run feature films. Built between 1930 to 1937, they were located in the major city centres – Manchester, Newcastle, Leeds, Glasgow, Liverpool, London's Tottenham Court Road and Birmingham, (additionally with a leased theatre in Cardiff).

With their large seating capacities their design was the last word in luxury and patron comfort and entertainment (films and stage shows), as they were heavily influenced by the transatlantic style of movie palaces. These schemes were designed by one of the UK's foremost cinema/theatre specialist architectural practices of the period, Verity and Beverley. These super-cinemas were initially named Paramount Theatres and subsequently from 1939 they were acquired in batches by Oscar Deutsch's combine and eventually rebranded as Odeons.



Additionally, Paramount had an early foray in London with the Plaza Lower Regent Street (1926) and a financial stake in the Carlton Haymarket (1927). Attracted to the UK's strong market for film exhibition, they also had a financial interest in the four London suburban Atmospheric theatres branded Astoria at Brixton, Old Kent Road, Streatham and Finsbury Park.

The introduction to this talk will cover an overview of the Paramount theatres' development in the UK and we will then enjoy a rarely seen video that takes us on a composite tour of these super-cinemas, which has never previously been filmed as a group. By modern standards, this video is considered a 'vintage' recording and has therefore been remastered especially for this presentation. The commentary is spoken by the late Tony Moss, a great authority of cinema history and the CTA's former President.

QUIZ OF UK CINEMA PHOTOS

A guest photographer is invited to provide a dozen photographs from their personal collection for a quiz. Members are invited to participate in the quiz and we open the chat room for participants to offer their answers.

MEMBERS OPEN CHAT SESSION

Why not keep in contact with other members? After the main event and quiz have finished stay on as you are invited to join us in the popular 'pub chat' session discussing cinema-related topics of your choosing that you would like to share with others. If you are shy and don't feel like speaking, then feel free to just enjoy listening! You are welcome in any situation. You don't have to stay to the end and leave whenever it suits you, maybe when dinner is ready! This is an open-ended meeting, closing when either the conversation or the virtual 'pub bar' runs dry!

BOOKING THIS TALK



CTA talks and presentations are open to everyone - members and non-members alike. Booking is done on-line using TicketSource www.ticketsource.co.uk. Simply insert 'Cinema Theatre' in their search box. Tickets are Members: £3 and Non-Members £5.

Please ensure that you complete the registration link that accompanies your ticketsource confirmation.

... next talk overleaf >>>



The Paramount Pictures distribution office in Liverpool in July 2007

Zoom Cinema Magazine Programme

Talk No 9: Saturday 3 July at 5:30pm (UK time)

WHEN CINEMA LET IN THE LIGHT

By Martin Cleave

Light orchestral music formed a significant part of 20th Century popular culture, so unsurprisingly it found its way into the cinema-going experience of the pre-Beatles era. Through historic recordings and vintage broadcasts, this presentation will feature the orchestras of the Commodore Hammersmith and Troxy Stepney, among others, accompanied by images of the cinemas they performed in. It will also feature compositions by theatre organists including Sidney Torch and Louis Mordish. Also, hear how the Pearl & Dean theme sounded after the pillars faded and all about Joan Sims' 'larkly goings-on in the two-and-threes'.

Martin Cleave has a lifelong interest in music. He began learning to play the piano at the age of 7 and is currently Pianist and Music Manager at the Royal Academy of Dance. In his spare time he is conductor for the 'Eltham Park Pleasant Sunday Afternoon Orchestra'. Martin is also a long-time member of the CTA and the Light Music Society.

Please note that this is an illustrated talk with music accompaniment examples. To fully enjoy the music within the talk, it is recommended that you listen with either external speakers or headphones.

[QUIZ OF UK CINEMA PHOTOS](#)

[MEMBERS OPEN CHAT SESSION](#)

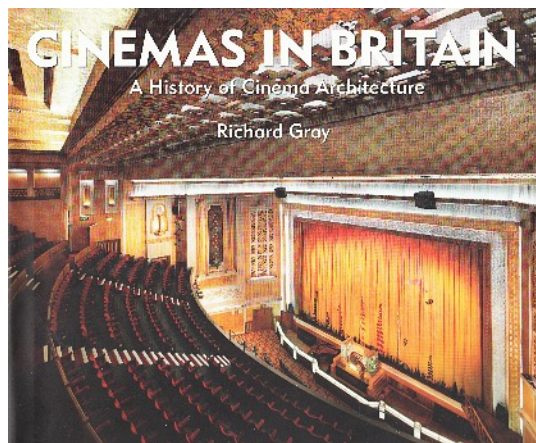
[BOOKING THIS TALK](#)

As for previous event on previous page



A MUST for your collection

CINEMAS IN BRITAIN



A History of Cinema Architecture by Richard Gray

This is the definitive guide to the buildings that were built to show moving pictures, from the earliest origins in 1896 up to the multiplex era. There are many illustrations with several in colour and a 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, normal RRP £45

Special price for CTA members

£29,50 + £3,40 postage from

CTA Sales Officer, address on p5.



The recently revealed façade of the Dominion/Safari Harrow, which will be restored – see Late News p13;
photos by Gary Donaldson at UnrestrictedTheatre.co.uk

PUBLICATIONS

Back Numbers Available

PICTURE HOUSE MAGAZINE

Listed below are the back numbers of *Picture House* that are still available:

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 16	£3.00	Dominion London; 3000 plus; John Broadley remembers.
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 22	£3.50	Burrell, Foley, Fischer; Palace Theatre London; David Nye.
No 24	£4.50	Oldest Cinema - Harringay; Cardiff Round-up; Odeon Miscellany.
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: <i>Essoldo</i> – A Family Business: Sol Sheckman and the Essoldo Circuit.
No 32	£5.00	Harry Myers Photographs; Cinemas at the Coalface; Shaws of Darwin: 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.
No 44	£6.00	Village Cinemas of NE Scotland; William Keys' career; Bernard Snowball's remembers Pt1.
No 45	£8.50	Classic Repertory Cinemas; Blackpool Cinemas; Thomas Jackson; Bernard Snowball remembers Pt2.

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 2019 are £4.00 per year (6 issues), individual copies are £1.00 each. Prices for issues in 2020 and 2021 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

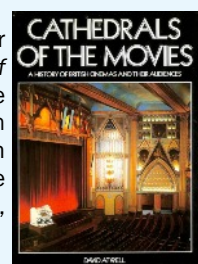
These binders are to a new, revised design, which should allow easier storage for the more recent thicker copies of the magazine. The 'Wirex' system allows copies to be inserted easily and removed if required. There are twelve wires per binder, although the number of copies that can be inserted may vary 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 £3.40 to your total order for post and packing. Ordering details below.

Second-Hand Books

We have a selection of second-hand books for sale, including rare titles such as *Cathedrals of the Movies*, *The Picture Palace*, etc. To receive a full list with around 50 titles, please send an email to the Sales Officer sales@cta-uk.org with 'Second Hand Book List' as the subject. Or write to the Sales Officer, 34 Pelham Road, London, N22 6LN (SAE appreciated). Thanks to Michael Ryder and Maurice Brader for recent donations of books.

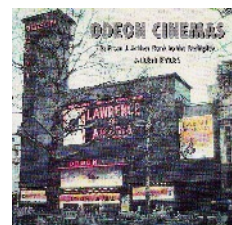
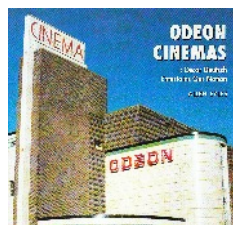


Ordering

For post and packing: total order value up to £20.00 please add £3.40, total order value from £20.01 to £40.00 please add £4.40, total order value from £40.01 to £60.00 please add £6.40. 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.

All you need to know about... ODEON

These two volumes, by Allen Eyles, provide a comprehensive history of the Odeon circuit, from its beginnings in the 1930s up to the multiplex era. Fully illustrated in b/w and colour.



Now at reduced prices!

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)

Also available – THE GRANADA THEATRES – £18.99.

Last few copies!

Please add £3.40 to your order for postage.

Available from the Sales Officer – address on p5.

HERITAGE CASEWORK

By Tim Hatcher

Grade II* Listed



The operator of the nightclub currently established in the former Regal in Uxbridge is to be requested to effect removal of vegetation presently protruding from the upper section of the building's façade.

Photo taken March 2004, which unfortunately doesn't show the offending vegetation.

Current specifications for renovation of the Granada in Walthamstow stipulate that the existing paint scheme shall be consolidated, with only a sole indicative area fully restored in order to exemplify the original palette. This is unsatisfactory to the Association, which supports the inaugural detailing being either revealed or replicated. Bond Bryan Ltd has now been appointed by the local Council to execute the project.

Funding comprising a sum of between four and five million pounds from the government's Coastal Renewal Programme has been allocated to the Dreamland complex in Margate. Present plans encompass reinstatement of the main section of the auditorium as a theatre, last employed as such in 1975; additionally the two cinemas in the former balcony area would be retained.

Grade II Listed

The finalised planning application relating to the Grand in Westbourne has been submitted. Obscuration of the murals will now be obviated by the erection of protective Perspex screens. No original plasterwork will be removed from the foyer block, although a pervasive light grey colour scheme will be effected.

The freehold of the Ritz in Ilkeston has been sold for £660,000. The bingo operation has terminated and related signage has been removed. The local Council recognises the significance of the structure and will alert the CTA to relevant evolving circumstances. See photo on cover Bulletin 53/5.



The planning application relating to the Savoy in Burnt Oak has been approved; this integrates responses to the comments of the Association. It is intended that all notable elements of the cinema shall be retained.

The current owner of the Regal in Kingston-upon-Thames has dismissed his previous architects and planning consultants. It is unknown if the previously approved scheme will be amended within the remit of the current applicable permissions or if a disparate strategy will be formulated.

It is proposed that a low block of dressing rooms to the rear of the Troxy in Stepney be demolished and that the land thus vacated be combined with an adjacent plot upon which dwellings would be constructed. It is stated that the profit from this enterprise would finance refurbishment of the cinema, including partial restoration of the foyer to original designs. *Photo top next column taken September 2004*



Unlisted

The Gaumont in Birkenhead has been purchased by a developer whose intent is to build an apartment block, although the furniture outlet presently occupying the building continues to trade. The cinema is endowed with a distinguished auditorium, the loss of which would prove regrettable; a watching brief will thus be maintained. See photo p22 Bulletin 55/1.

The principle of demolition of the Majestic in Cradley Heath was previously established as permissible by the local Council in its lapsed approval of an unfulfilled scheme. The building is currently being cleared of content following utilisation as a storage facility and the local authority has been contacted to request protection of stained-glass windows. The structure has deteriorated to an unsatisfactory degree and is situated in a neglected section of the town, which currently features many shuttered retail units. It is thus anticipated that the Council would view favourably any proposal which could aid rejuvenation of the area. Another case that will be monitored closely is presented thereby. See photo p6 Bulletin 54/6.

Permission has been granted to demolish the Adelphi in Moston; a stricture that full recording of the structure be undertaken has been imposed. The Manchester Archaeological Society wishes to excavate the site in an attempt to locate foundations of a prior cinema thereon. See photo p22 Bulletin 54/6.

Planning permission to demolish The Point in Milton Keynes has expired; however, a recommendation has been made that a new Certificate of Immunity from Listing be issued. See cover photo Bulletin 54/1.

An application to develop the site of the Premier in Somercotes has been submitted. The frontage of the cinema would be integrated into the contemplated housing block; the original auditorium was destroyed by a conflagration in 1960. See photo p23 Bulletin 54/6.

The Association's press release concerning the Regal in Wakefield has generated considerable local attention, including that from a local businessman who has expressed interest in the possibility of repurposing the building as a live-music venue. See photo p27 Bulletin 55/1.

A local actor had been investigating the prospect of operating the Scala in Worcester as a community performance venue. However, the local Council has purchased that property for theatrical usage and he is therefore now considering the Gaumont as an alternative. The CTA is offering its moral support. See photo p27 Bulletin 55/1.

A small 'time capsule' has been laid at the site of the Odeon in Kensington, for inclusion in which the Association supplied several relevant articles.

Proposed Planning System Changes

The CTA has responded to a consultation upon a series of proposed changes to planning law. A key concern is that permitted development rights to demolish would be extended to locally listed buildings. The Heritage Alliance has convened a working group with the objective of assembling collective opposition to this proposition; the Association will become a signatory body to the resultant expression of disapprobation.

THE EMBASSY CHESHAM

By David A Ellis



The Embassy in Germain Street, Chesham, run by Shipman and King opened for business on 11 January 1937. It should have been opened by Lord Chesham, supported by WF Lowndes JP. Unfortunately both fell ill and at the last moment Mr E Culverhouse, Chairman of Chesham Council deputised. There was also an appearance by film star John Lodge. He asked to be excused for appearing in makeup, explaining that he had come straight from the set. Mr N Guy Walker, the circuit supervisor made the announcement about the change and said that Lord Chesham sent his best wishes.

Following the opening performance many guests of Shipman and King dined in the restaurant. The opening attraction was *Poor Little Rich Girl* with Shirley Temple. The cinema was designed by David E Nye of Tufton Street, London and building work was by Bovis Ltd. In 1981 the CTA paid it a visit and it was reported that the cinema retained some of the best 1930s period fittings and the original carpet.



A fortnight after opening two cats were discovered inside a canopy, through which ran electrical wiring. An opening was made by workmen to allow them to escape.

The cinema also housed a restaurant on the first floor and up in the projection room Western Electric Sound was employed. At the rear of the cinema there was a large car park for patrons. In 1976 the car park was used as a market on Wednesdays from 9am until 4:30pm. This was opened by actor William Roache [Coronation Street's Ken Barlow] on 1 December.

Nineteen sixty-four wasn't a good year for the cinema. In June it was a victim of arson when a fourteen-year-old set it on fire. Two thousand pounds worth of damage was done to the foyer area. Then, in August they had a burglary. In the mid-1970s it was run by EMI. They ran the theatre until 24 April 1982. The last film was *Evil Under the Sun*. In June 1983 the bulldozers came calling and it was demolished and replaced by housing.

Photos from Tony Moss Collection, courtesy CTA Archive



EMBASSY
CHESHAM - Phone 141
CHESHAM'S NEW LUXURY SUPER CINEMA

GRAND OPENING
by the Right Honourable LORD CHESHAM, M.C., J.P.
supported by W. F. Lowndes, Esq., J.P.

on **MONDAY, JANUARY 11th**, at 8 p.m. (doors open 7.45)
SUBSEQUENTLY CONTINUOUS DAILY FROM 2 p.m.

PRICES (including tax): stalls, 6d., 8d., 1/-, 1/6; circle, 1/6, 2/6, 3/6;
REDUCED PRICES OF ADMISSION UP TO 8 p.m.: stalls 6d., 8d.; circle 1/6.

SEATS AT 2/- MAY NOW BE BOOKED FOR THE
OPENING PERFORMANCE

Stars as other patrons may be obtained in the usual way at the Embassy on the opening night.

MONDAY, JANUARY 11th, 1937. FOR THREE DAYS
SHIRLEY TEMPLE in
POOR LITTLE RICH GIRL (U)
MICKEY MOUSE in "MICKEY'S POLO TEAM."

ROCHELLE HUDSON - **PAUL KELLY** in
THE COUNTRY BEYOND (U)

THURSDAY, JANUARY 14th, 1937. FOR THREE DAYS
CICELY COURTNEIDGE in
EVERYBODY DANCE (A)
also **JOHNNY DOWNES** - **SHIRLEY DEANE** in
THE FIRST BABY (A)

CAFE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC • LARGE FREE CAR PARK

CTA VISIT

Nostalgia will surround the visit by members of the Cinema Theatre association to Chesham's Embassy cinema on Sunday. The Association promotes interest in all aspects of the cinema-theatre - architecture, film projection, stage design, music, programming and publicity.

The group will spend about an hour at the cinema before going on to Aylesbury. The organisation has amongst its patrons Sir John Betjeman.

Bucks Examiner - 10 July 1981

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: [\[cinematreasures.org/theaters/nnnnn\]](http://cinematreasures.org/theaters/nnnnn)

BEESTON (Notts)

An opening date of 28 May has been announced for the new Arc cinema. Finishing touches are being applied, including 700 luxury leather electric reclining seats, laser digital projection and Dolby 7.1 sound in six of its eight screens. The remaining two screens will boast 4k laser projection and Dolby Atmos.

West Bridgford Wire – 21 April; sent in by Terry Hanstock

BISHOP AUCKLAND (Durham)

We reported on p22 of Bulletin 55/1 that proposals for a cinema at Tindale seem to have stalled and there were plans for one in the town centre. Now a developer has bought land at Tindale and will invest £50m in a leisure development, to include a seven-screen cinema. It is expected that work at the site will begin towards the end of 2021 with a “grand public opening” at the end of 2022. No operator has been named.

Northern Echo – 5 March

BISHOP'S STORTFORD (Herts)

Local residents have urged the Council to put plans for a new cinema on hold. Covid-19 has impacted councils heavily, so councillors are reviewing their budgets to propose plans which are more financially viable. However, some residents fear they will be ‘stuck’ with the new development for ‘generations’ and have appealed to the Council to wait until it’s financially viable to build a suitable theatre complex to satisfy the needs of the current population.

Herts Live – 1 March

BLACKPOOL (Lancs)



The Empire in Marton is being demolished. It opened as a cinema in August 1929. It was then a small suburban cinema seating 840 but was later enlarged and upgraded to accommodate a new foyer with a new projection room above it. It reopened in August 1939 with an increased seating capacity of 1,094 and a café on the first floor. It closed on 10 October 1959 and became the Sands Casino and Theatre Club. Bingo took over in August 1974. Two years ago planning permission was given to build 14 flats on the site. Last year it was confirmed that it would not reopen after lockdown – see p 12 Bulletin 54/4. {6547}

Sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken June 2009

AE writes: see also Blackpool article in current *Picture House*, page 56.

BRADFORD (West Yorks)

A fire gutted the former Oxford in Dudley Hill Road, Undercliffe on Sunday 28 February; arson is suspected. Six fire crews and one aerial unit battled the blaze for several hours and the roof of the building collapsed within minutes of their arrival.

It opened in April 1914 with 678 seats on a single floor. In 1952 a fire broke out in the projection room during a children’s matinée, destroying two reels of film. The children were led out safely and only that evening’s performance was cancelled.

On 17 October 1955 it underwent a facelift, which included complete redecoration, re-seating, carpeting, new stage drapes and curtains. During the re-fit, seating at the front was removed, reducing capacity from 700 to 500 and the proscenium had to be widened to accommodate CinemaScope presentations; the screen measured 29ft by 12ft. In the operating box was a Western Electric sound system. The conversion took five weeks to complete.

The opening attraction at the converted hall was *The Student Prince*. In December 1962 bingo became the name of the game for three days a week. The douser was finally extinguished on Saturday 8 January 1966 with *The Three Stooges Go West*. It went on to bingo full-time as the Oxford Bingo Club. {48081}

Telegraph & Argus – 3 March; Yorkshire Observer – 10 March 1952, 17 October 1955; additional material from David A Ellis; photo on front cover

BRISTOL

Revised plans to transform the St Catherine’s Shopping Centre in Bedminster have dropped the cinema element. See p21 Bulletin 54/1.

Bristol Live – 1 March

BURNLEY (Lancs)

Planning permission has been granted for the first phase of a £21m development in the town centre. It will include a seven-screen cinema, revised down from eight. It is not stated if Reel will still be the operator.

The Business Desk – 28 March

CHESTERFIELD (Derbys)



The former Regal/ABC is on the market with “price on application”. It opened in October 1936 and hosted many pop shows on stage in the 60s. In June 1971 it closed for conversion into a smaller cinema using the balcony (with a wall at the balcony front) seating 484, together with a Painted Wagon pub in the rear stalls area. The front stalls and stage were not affected by this alteration, nor were they ever used again. In 1993 it became a nightclub, which closed in 2014. The former stalls is in use by Boyes nightclub store, who have indicated their intention to vacate. The building is on a 125-year lease from the Council at an annual rent of £1,000. The Estate Agent’s particulars can be seen at tinyurl.com/yz2f7x88. {18618}

Derbyshire Times – 18 March; photo taken September 2006

DAVENTRY (Northants)

Arc Cinemas has taken possession of the building that is to house their new four-screen cinema. Fit-out will now begin with an opening scheduled for July.

East Midland Business Link – 31 March; sent in by Terry Hanstock

EXETER

A proposal has been submitted to turn the top floor of the former Debenhams store into a four-screen cinema; the foyer would have views over the Cathedral. Tenants would be sought for the ground, first and second floors. No operator has been named.

Business Live – 6 April; East Devon News – 8 March



GREENOCK (Inverclyde)



The Council has purchased the former BB Cinema in the town centre and has applied to demolish it at a cost of £225,000. It opened in January 1913 and was rebuilt and enlarged in 1935. Films ceased in early 1970 then bingo took over, which continued until the late 1990s. It was last used as the Babylon nightclub. {50366}

Inverclyde Now – 14 April; photo taken September 2008

KIRKCALDY (Fife)

A small band of volunteers is hoping to restore the Grade B listed King's Theatre, which closed in December 2000. It had opened in November 1904 with 2,400 seats and had a major refurbishment in 1937. It was renamed ABC in 1963 and tripled in January 1978. Work has been going on for the last five years but in recent weeks contractors have been on site putting a temporary covering on the roof to address the damage sustained in last autumn's storms and eradicate the pigeons that have infested the building. The rubble piled high in the ballroom has been removed, along with the asbestos. A gallery of 22 interior photos can be found at tinyurl.com/55ym47p3. {23081}

Fife Today – 19 April

LANCASTER

The auditorium of the former Palace/ABC is being demolished to build student flats. The façade will be retained. The Palace opened in July 1929 with 1,208 seats. It was the first ABC to get the 'luxury lounge' treatment and closed in March 1974. It has since been used as a bar and a children's play area. The CTA visited in June 2008. See p18 Bulletin 54/2. {6539}

Lancaster Past and Present Facebook Page – 2 April

LEEDS (West Yorks)

Further to the item on p22 of the last Bulletin that restoration work is to start at the Grade II listed Hyde Park Picture House, it has been confirmed that a Lottery grant has been received with match funding from Leeds City Council. A £2.8m contract has been awarded; work was due to start in April and take 57 weeks. The major revamp is to include conservation works to the external façade, expansion of the foyer and the creation of a second cinema room in the basement, underneath the main auditorium. A piled wall will be constructed around the footprint of the site to allow a two-metre dig underneath the building for the second auditorium. Whilst modern facilities will be installed, much of the heritage features will be retained and restored, including the gas lamps, thought to be the only such lights still in operation in a cinema anywhere in the world. The *Yorkshire Post* report at tinyurl.com/7wcjzbt has a one-minute video interview with the projection and facilities manager. {1836}

Yorkshire Post – 17, 20 February, 16 March; *The Business Desk* – 17 March; sent in by Keith Taylorson

LIVERPOOL (Wavertree)

The former Abbey has been recommended for listing at Grade II by Historic England. It opened in March 1939 and was converted for Cinerama in 1964. The 3-strip system was taken out after only a year and 70mm installed. Films ceased in August 1979. The stalls area became a supermarket, which was vacated in April 2020. The building was taken over by Lidl, who wanted to demolish it and build a new supermarket. See p6 Bulletin 55/1. {44856}

Daily Express, Daily Record – 16 April; *Liverpool Echo* – 8, 21 April; sent in by Tom Laughlan, Mark Lees & Mike Taylor



LONDON (Camden)

Curzon Cinemas has signed an agreement to build a 6,000 sq ft five-screen multiplex in the new canal-side Hawley Street development. This could have implications for the nearby Camden Odeon (former Gaumont Palace / Gate / Parkway) which was subdivided (also into five screens) in 1997.

Evening Standard – 9 March; sent in by Ian Mitchell & Anthony Wills

LONDON (Chiswick)

The new Picturehouse cinema is hoping to finally open this spring after licensing changes were approved by the Council. It will have five screens and 420 seats and be housed in the former Ballet Rambert buildings.

Chiswick4.com – 13 March; sent in by Robert Gurd

LONDON (Ealing)

Readers will be familiar with the long-running saga of the Filmworks development on the site of the old Empire (originally Forum) Cinema in Uxbridge Road. The former cinema was demolished in 2009 after closing in September 2008. After lengthy delays the site was purchased by Land Securities following a public inquiry and sold on to St George in 2013. Eventually work started in 2016 on the main Filmworks residential development, which includes restoration of the old Forum cinema façade and provision of a new eight-screen cinema to be run by Picturehouse. Construction delays caused by Covid-19 have meant that the reopening of the cinema itself has been further delayed. However, the façade of the old cinema has been restored and was revealed earlier this year. We understand from St George that the new cinema box – adjacent to Bond Street rather than behind the restored façade – is due to be handed over to Picturehouse in April this year (although the Council suggests the summer) and the Council has also indicated that they expect the new cinema will not now open until Spring 2022 at the earliest. Ealing Civic Society (with the help of the CTA) is currently in discussion with St George about the wording of commemorative plaques to be erected adjacent to the restored cinema façade and the salvaged Walpole Picture Theatre arch (dating from c1908, the rest being demolished in 1981) in Mattock Lane. See photo p22 Bulletin 54/6. {3772}

Sent in by Robert Gurd

LONDON (Golders Green)

Concerns have been raised that the Hippodrome will be lost as a performance venue after its owners applied for change of use to a place of worship. The Centre for Islamic Enlightening said that community uses, such as for cultural events, would be maintained. {29969}

The Stage – 18 March; sent in by Barry Quinton

LONDON (Hayes, Middlesex)

Planning permission has been granted for a four-screen cinema at EMI's former vinyl record factory. Large sections of the pressing plant will be retained, including the brick façade. To be called The Gramophone it will be the first new cinema in Hayes since the Classic opened in June 1972 above a supermarket; it closed in January 1986. No operator or time scale has been given.

Building Design – 25 March

LYME REGIS (Dorset)

The Grade II listed former Regent passed its fifth anniversary of standing empty since it was gutted by fire in March 2016. No official statement on the progress of the cinema rebuild has been released from owners WTW-Scott Cinemas since August 2019, when it was suggested that the cinema could be rebuilt with two high-quality apartments to offset the costs. An open letter has been written to the company, which has five other cinemas in the south-west and has received £230,600 in government funding. {22441}

Lyme Online – 22 March, 2, 19 April

**A further four pages of Newsreel
in the full Bulletin**

LETTERS

MATTERS ARISING - IRELAND

Delighted that Mr Sykes had such a pleasant trip in better times. Just a few comments to add. It is indeed the Odeon Charlestown he saw from the M50 partial ring road. (Sometimes suggested that the M50 was so named because it was twice as bad as the M25!) A small cinema seems to indeed have operated in Tarbert in the late 1960s / early 1970s called the *Shannon*. I have no record of any cinema in Adare or in Foynes. The Compton Organ at the *Savoy* Limerick is no longer extant; it probably was destroyed sometime after Rank closed the cinema in June 1974. With very intermittent use as a concert venue, until the *Savoy* building was eventually demolished in 1989, it could have been at any time in this period. Ironically, the sister Compton from the *Savoy* Cork is indeed in the concert hall of the University of Limerick but long out of use and now in lockdown. I hope that he can make a return visit when conditions permit. Best wishes from Dublin on the second St Patrick's Day of lockdown.

Bob Bradshaw

LYRIC CARMARTHEN

I enclose some more information in relation to the Lyric Theatre, Carmarthen, as featured on page 21 of the March/April Bulletin. I am reliably informed that the leading campaigner whose efforts saved the cinema from closure and who is the main focus of the forthcoming film *Save the Cinema* was a local councillor Liz Evans, who ran a hairdressers in Carmarthen. She is the mother of Welsh tenor Wynne Evans, who many will know better as Gio Compario in the TV advertisement for comparison site *Go Compare*. Apparently, she barricaded herself in the building for a considerable time as a squatter to prevent the demolition of the cinema after it closed in 1993. The last time I remember a film based on a Welsh cinema, which some members will recollect, was *Coming Up Roses*, filmed in the former Rex Cinema, Aberdare, now demolished. Coincidentally, many fittings belonging to the Rex were acquired by the Lyric when it was refurbished in 1986. The Lyric currently operates as a multi-purpose entertainment centre with occasional cinema use, managed by the Council-funded Carmarthenshire Theatres, who also run the modern Ffwrnes Theatre in Llanelli and the Miners Theatre in the listed former Welfare Hall in Ammanford. The Lyric and Welfare Hall were both visited by the CTA as part of the *West is Best* event in April 2010. The film is due for release at the end of this year.

John Skinner

TAUNTON FROM THE AIR



The casework item about the Gaumont Palace Taunton sent me rummaging on my hard-drive for the attached aerial view of the cinema. Taken in May 1932, the location and the direction to its aerodrome can be in no doubt! The reminiscences about the *Classic / Cornerhouse* and *Manchester National Film Theatre* (the title in the photograph) also caught my eye. I vaguely recall the latter was next to or over a discotheque, the noise from which was audible in the cinema, usually towards the end of the show on a Friday and Saturday night. The photo of the main screen at the *Cornerhouse* shows well the minimal rake to the floor, especially towards the screen. I vividly recall seeing *My Beautiful Laundrette* there; or, more accurately, the backs of heads in a full house!

Hector Hill

GRANADA ANECDOTES



Granada were always known to be ultra-hard-nosed business people, as witnessed by Sidney Bernstein's fight to demolish the Granada at Tooting. In February 1970, having started photographing cinemas before they disappeared forever, I took a trip to Edmonton to photograph the Granada, where I had spent many happy hours, particularly watching the Sunday-only horror films. To my dismay it was being torn down [above]. I wrote to Granada saying how sad I was at its demise and asking if I could buy some pictures of it. I was invited to their London headquarters by a Mr John Goodstein. I duly attended his office, where I was given a cup of coffee and a cigarette, quizzed as to my intentions and given several lovely photos but not until I had signed a declaration that they were for private use only. Mr Goodstein's parting words were that one should never be sentimental about bricks and mortar. Several years later, on reading Guy Morgan's book *Red Roses Every Night* about Granada Theatres during World War II, I discovered that Mr Goodstein had been manager at Edmonton during part of the conflict. So perhaps he wasn't quite so unsentimental as he made out.

Several years later I wrote to Granada again, expressing my interest in their theatres and asking if I could copy some of their photos. On arrival at head office I was presented with numerous albums containing photos of their various properties and told that I could copy some but only those I really wanted. Then to my delight the gentleman, whose name I cannot recall, said, "I have to go to lunch. Do you mind if I leave you to it?" Within minutes I had set up the camera and cable release on a tripod, had found the best place for light and had got a production line going. By the time he came back I had copied the lot. When he asked if I had copied just those I really wanted, I was able to truthfully answer in the affirmative. Because, of course, I really wanted them all!

My late friend and former CTA member Monty Meyer worked for Minerva, the burglar alarm company, as a breakdown engineer. One day he was called to Granada's London head office, only to discover that Minerva's name and number on the bell box had been overpainted. He asked why and was told by a Granada staff member that Mr Bernstein would not allow any free publicity on his premises. Monty stressed that it was essential to have the company details visible in case the police needed to contact them but his words fell on deaf ears. However, Monty had the last laugh. Having gone to the gents, he pointed out to the same staff member that the manufacturer's name was still plainly visible on the urinals!

PS: Just look at that demolition man on top of the flytower in the photo above. He was knocking the bricks out from underneath him. Nowadays, Health & Safety would have a fit! {22837}

Kevin Wheelan

LUTON TIME CAPSULE

With reference to the time capsule discovered at the former Ritz Luton, (page 22 of the March/April Bulletin), I can reveal that the H Ambridge mentioned in the time capsule was Herbert Ambridge, often referred to as 'Bertie', who hailed from Ystalyfera, a mining and ironworking community in the upper Swansea Valley but according to the 1939 census was living at 40 Third Avenue in Luton, occupation plasterer and solid heavy worker. What was a plasterer from Ystalyfera doing in Luton in 1937, working at the Ritz cinema? It transpires that Herbert had an older brother called Stanley who had also moved to Luton, residing at 59 Linden Road, occupation foot press operator steel and motor, which suggests that he was employed at the Vauxhall motor works in the town. Did Herbert move to Luton as a result of a brother living there or did they both move at the same time? We shall never know as Herbert died at the age of 74 in 1980. This is an interesting piece of social history as during the Depression years of the 1930s there was high unemployment in South Wales and other heavy industrial areas, causing much migration to find work in the new industries in towns such as Luton and Slough, including opportunities for tradesmen such as Herbert in the boom years of cinema building at this time. I was particularly interested in this item of news as another of my roles is as Secretary of the Ystalyfera Heritage Society and this will be added to our archive.

John Skinner

ODEON STOURBRIDGE MODEL



I thought your readers, especially those who remember the Odeon Stourbridge, would like to see my lockdown model cinema project. It took me the three months of the lockdown to build! My childhood was spent visiting this cinema and introduced me to my love of cinema architecture. It is 1/24th scale and fortunately I had copies of the original Webb & Gray architects' plans plus many photographs to work from. As you can see, I only built part of the stage end of the large fan-shaped auditorium. I would love to have built more but then we would have had to move house! The only slight 'cheat' is that I have made it timeless. Although the auditorium changed very little since opening as the Central in 1929, I have included the Compton organ, which was removed in 1958. The tabs and screen, plus other minor alterations, are how I remember it in the 1960s. Sadly it was demolished in 1995, so I hope that the memory will live on with this model. I attach a photograph and hope it is of interest.

John Griffiths

YOUR SCREEN

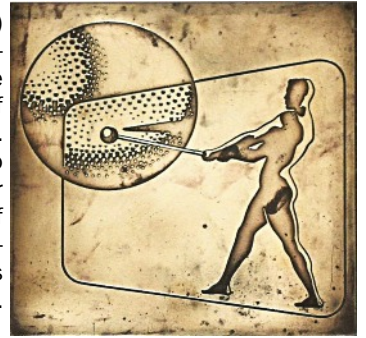
A while ago, during one of the CTA chat sessions, I mentioned something called Yourscreen and David T-J suggested I send you the info for the Bulletin: Yourscreen is an online platform for watching films, which is linked to independent cinemas and film clubs. So if your local cinema is one of the partners, you can get a discount on the ticket price and continue to support them, even if you cannot get to the cinema in person. If your local cinema/club is not a partner, you can still help to support independent film exhibitors by using this platform. watch.yourscreen.net. It should not be confused with Ourscreen which is another online screening platform! www.ourscreen.com. I am aware that there are lots of ways for people to see films online now but Yourscreen does at least benefit 'real' cinemas!

Alexia Lazou

MAN WITH THE GONG

In Bulletin 54/1 (Jan/Feb 2020) Michael Armstrong asked the question about the Rank logo in reverse that he was given: heavy, made of brass but not a printing block... Well, it's a stamping die, used to create the 'Man with the Gong' for each Rank-operated venue, out of much thinner and therefore malleable copper, compared to brass. As such, the item is probably a one-off.

Darron Keeling



Editor's Note: Michael sadly passed away recently so unfortunately he will never know the answer to his question.

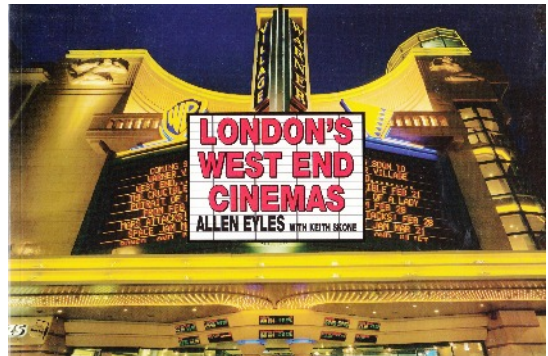
HISTORY OF EARLY CINEMA

I wonder if you can point me in the right direction? I know that your focus is cinema buildings. My interest is in the people who were involved in setting up that business and how they did it. This arises from my discovery in family history research that a number of my ancestors were involved in setting up and running cinemas, from about 1908 to 1930-ish. In particular, I'm interested in a Harry (Henry James) Gale, who opened and operated cinemas in Yeovil, Lowestoft (the Hippodrome), Bideford, Forfar (Reid Hall) and other places in Scotland and Aberystwyth (the Coliseum). Has anyone done any research on these people? Is there anything in print or on line? Has anyone written anything about the business of setting up a cinema? The people I've come across seem to rock up in a town, spot a suitable big building and start a cinema business. Surely it wasn't that easy? Where did they get the equipment – how did they source the films? Were there local authority licences to get? As I say, I know this is not really your focus but I'm hoping you may be able to point me towards sources of information. I have been in touch with the Bill Douglas Centre at Exeter University and I think they may have material in their library but, like everyone else, they are in lockdown.

Mike Whitaker

London's West End Cinemas

by Allen Eyles with Keith Skone.



The history of London's West End cinemas dates back more than one hundred years. This book details all of them, in chronological order, totalling well over one hundred, from 1906 up to 2013. The best of the West End's cinemas were outfitted to a very high standard to match their role as show-cases for new films, hosting press shows and premières, as well as a being a magnet for film enthusiasts anxious to see films on exclusive première runs. Even now, when films are available everywhere at the same time, the West End's cinemas are a vibrant attraction to visitors from all over the world as well as for Londoners having a night on the town. There are interior views as well as exteriors of most of the cinemas and over 50 illustrations are in full colour, together with appendices of club cinemas and theatres used as temporary cinemas.

Large Format paperback, 210 pages, over 400 illustrations, £25.00 plus £3.40 postage, from the Sales Officer.

Published in 2013 in conjunction with English Heritage.

Ordering details on p5

HOLIDAY SNAPS

By Ned Williams

I have just found some 1980s holiday snaps of cinemas – three in Cornwall and two in South Wales – names of the photo files are self-explanatory. I recall being particularly pleased to find the Cameo in Camborne as I had visited it in 1964 on a previous trip to Cornwall. We joined a packed Saturday night house to see a double bill of very cheap Sci-fi films, one of which was called *The Gargon Terror* [aka *Teenagers From Outer Space*].



The Palace Haverfordwest 1983



The Cameo Camborne in 1981 {49949}



The Palace Bodmin in 1981 {40160}



The Tower Launceston in 1981 {50102}



The Empire Milford Haven in 1983 {51149}

Ned also writes: Here is a photo of an example of some book-matches that I recently came across. They are promoting the Shipman & King cinema circuit – and it made me wonder how many circuits issued such items? Has any member collected such things? I am sure I once had a Rank Organisation set.

Your editor replies: I had some pictures of both matchbooks and match-boxes sent in by Ray Dolling in 2012. I think I printed a couple of examples (although I can't locate the Bulletin edition they were in) and kept the rest for use as fillers – but I don't think I used any of them. However, it was the best part of ten years ago so here they are again. Carl Chesworth also sent me a Rank one, which had "Film is Our Future" on the front but I can't find that either!

