



CINEMA  
THEATRE  
ASSOCIATION

[www.cta-uk.org](http://www.cta-uk.org)

# BULLETIN

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July / August 2021



The Grade II listed former Odeon in Loughborough, where Beacon Bingo will not reopen; photo taken May 2004



The Electric Birmingham, which will not reopen



The Empire Great Yarmouth, which may become a street hub



## FROM YOUR EDITOR

Here in Harrogate the Nightingale Hospital has been stood down and the oxygen tanks that were hiding the façade of Matcham's Royal Hall have been removed – see photo p2 Bulletin 54/4. I understand the conversion cost £32m and it was never used for its intended purpose! In my last editorial I thought a Scottish member had made a typing mistake by referring to having a 'jag' instead of a 'jab'. It turns out that this was untrue and the two words are interchangeable north of the border. I'm sorry for jumping to conclusions.

I must also apologise to Anthony Smith for my typing error in his letter *Regent Redcar Memories* on p32 of the last Bulletin. His cinema career spanned 28 December 1965 to 24 March 2016 – not 2006 as I put. I know I've said this before but I must get a new keyboard!

I have had a tremendous response to the *What's in a Name* article in the last issue with dozens of additional unusual names sent in. Unfortunately I have run into the 'multiple of four pages' problem yet again so I have decided to leave all the replies until next time, as I probably won't have as much material available. I hope the results will be worth the wait! There are also a couple of holiday snaps and other items that I have had to hold over.

If you would like an electronic copy of any photo you see here in the Bulletin, please just email me (address opposite) and I will send it as an attachment, at the full resolution I have available.

Finally, thanks to 'TS' for the letter with encouraging comments about an article in Bulletin 55/2. I hope there is something of interest in this issue.

Harry Rigby, CTA Bulletin Editor

## NECROLOGY

### OLYMPIA DUKAKIS 89

She won an Oscar at the age of 56 for best supporting actress in *Moonstruck*. In 1969 she played the mother of Dustin Hoffman in *John and Mary* and was Jack Lemmon's wife in *Dad* in 1989. In the same year she won acclaim for her role in *Steel Magnolias*.



### HELEN McCrORY 52

Her film debut came in 1994 with the role of '2nd whore' in *Interview With The Vampire*. In the *Harry Potter* films she played Draco Malfoy's mother Narcissa. Bond fans will remember her as Home Secretary Clair Dower in 2012's *Skyfall*. She was Cherie Blair in *The Queen*. On the small screen she has been in *Peaky Blinders*.



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## CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

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Please state if you require items to be returned and enclose SAE,

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## DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

FRIDAY 20 AUGUST

# CTA VIRTUAL TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS

Please note that there are no talks or events scheduled for August as we take a summer break.

## Season of Talks:

### Notable Cinema Architects

September starts a fascinating season of monthly Zoom talks, each showcasing notable cinema architects and their works. Talks will be given by key presenters including lecturers and partners in well-known practices associated with award-winning cinema designs. These talks will range from the pioneering iconic designs from the twenties and thirties through to contemporary and innovative styles used for the latest multiplexes etc. All talks are fully illustrated and include rare source material.

**Talk No 10, Saturday 4 September at 5:30pm (UK time)**

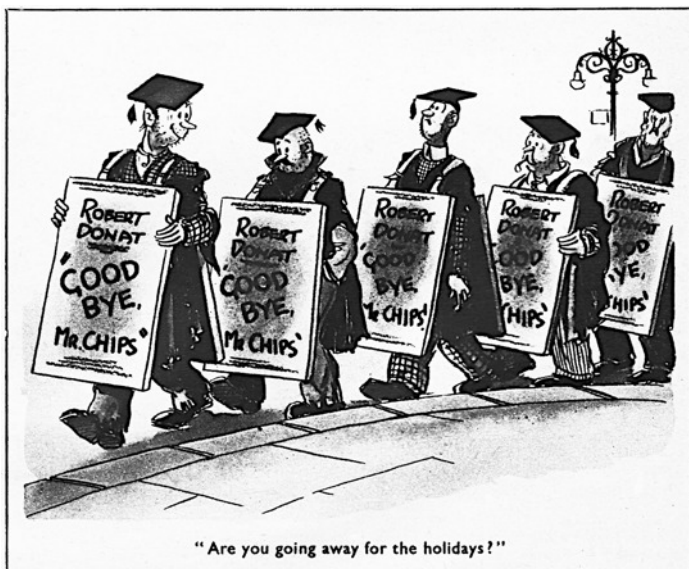
**CURVES AND STREAMLINES – THE WORKS OF ARCHITECT FRANK E BROMIGE BY BRUCE PETER**



Dominion Harrow at opening in 1936 (latterly ABC / Safari)

The recent de-cladding of the spectacular frontage of the former Dominion cinema in Harrow provides an opportunity to re-assess the career of one of the more lively of 1930s cinema architects in Britain – Frank E Bromige, who in the latter 1930s attracted attention for the bulging, expressionistic façade designs he produced, usually also involving the use of large expanses of Crittall glazing and original fonts for the name signs.

## CARTOON CORNER



"Are you going away for the holidays?"

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



Many of Bromige's distinctive works were associated with a group of cinemas bearing the title 'Dominion' (and he was also active with cinema designs in some of Kent's seaside towns). Also, who can forget the Rio Dalston as one of his impressive conversion schemes?

This presentation will consider the design origins and inspirations behind Bromige's designs and how they addressed popular ideas of modernity, as also found in the details of filmsets themselves. It will consider the re-use of his more important buildings, several of which survive and with their important design features intact.

Finally, it will briefly address Bromige's subsequent career as a designer for Stead & Simpson and WH Smith.

Bruce Peter is Professor of Design History at The Glasgow School of Art. He became interested in Bromige's work when a postgraduate student in London in the mid-1990s.

### OPEN CHAT SESSION

Once the main event has finished, stay on and join us in the popular 'pub chat' session discussing cinema related topics of your choosing that you would like to share with others; feel free to join in, or just enjoy listening – you are welcome in any situation. This is an open-ended session so you can leave whenever other activities call. The session closes when either the conversation or the virtual pub bar runs dry!

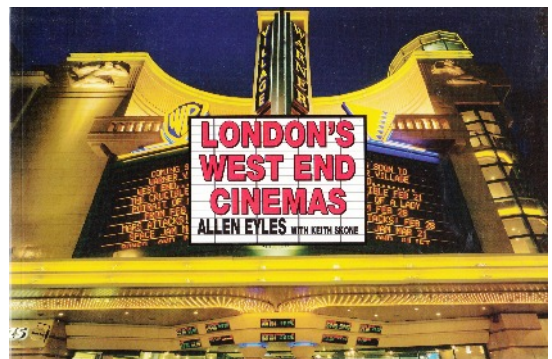
### BOOKING THIS TALK

CTA talks and presentations are open to everyone – members and non-members alike. Booking is done online using TicketSource [www.ticketsource.co.uk](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk) Simply enter 'cinema theatre' in their search box. Tickets are Members: £3 and Non-Members: £5 (per device). Please ensure that you complete the registration link that accompanies your TicketSource confirmation.



## 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 showcases 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 p4



# 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 | Holophone 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 <sup>th</sup> 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

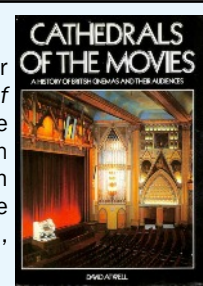
These binders are to a new, revised design, which should allow easier storage for the more recent thicker copies of the magazine. The 'Wirex' system allows copies to be inserted easily and removed if required. There are twelve wires per binder, although the number of copies that can be inserted may vary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

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## 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](mailto: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).



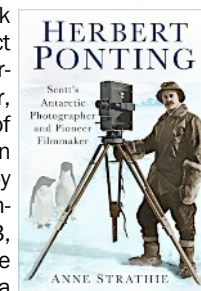
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For post and packing: total order value up to £20.00 please add £3.40, total order value from £20.01 to £40.00 please add £4.40, total order value from £40.01 to £60.00 please add £6.40. For larger orders and overseas, please contact the Sales Officer, email: [sales@cta-uk.org](mailto: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](http://www.cta-uk.org) where you can also place your order using PayPal. A sales list is sent with every order.

## Also Available (but not from the Sales Officer)

**Herbert Ponting – Scott's Antarctic Photographer & Pioneer Film-maker by Anne Strathie.** ISBN: 9780750979016. Published by the History Press. 272 pages, paperback, RRP £16.99. (but cheaper through Amazon and usual sources)

Herbert Ponting (1870-1935) was a young bank clerk when he bought an early Kodak compact camera. By the early 1900s he was living in California, working as a professional photographer, known for stereoview and enlarged images of America, Japan and the Russo-Japanese war. In 1909, back in Britain, Ponting was recruited by Captain Robert Scott as photographer and film-maker for his second Antarctic expedition. In 1913, following the deaths of Scott and his South Pole party companions, Ponting's images of Antarctica were widely published and he gave innovative 'cinema-lectures' on the expedition. When war broke out, Ponting's offers to serve as a photographer or correspondent were declined but in 1918, he, Ernest Shackleton and other Antarctic veterans joined a government-backed Arctic expedition. During the economically depressed 1920s and 1930s, Ponting wrote his Antarctic memoir, re-worked his Antarctic films into silent and 'talkie' versions and worked on inventions. Like others, he struggled financially but was sustained by correspondence with photographic equipment magnate George Eastman, a late-life romance with singer Glæe Carrodus and knowing that his images of Antarctica had secured his place in photographic and filmmaking history.



The author visited the CTA Archive for research and the CTA is acknowledged. Anne wrote to our archivist, Clive Polden: "Many thanks for help at the archive. For what it's worth you can assure your members that there are plenty of early cinemas in the book, including the Regent Street Polytechnic (Ponting's last film was shown there in 1933, by which time it had been fully fitted out as a cinema), early cinemas round Oxford Circus, Marble Arch Pavilion and the purpose-built Southport Cinema (c.1915-6)".

# HERITAGE CASEWORK

By Tim Hatcher

## Grade II Listed



It is reported that the Central Picture Theatre / King Edward in Blackpool is to be converted into an 'artisan market' as part of a comprehensive redevelopment scheme. The 'Arts and Crafts' style exterior constitutes the cinema's most notable extant feature; minimal internal detailing survives. An acceptable utilisation of the building may thus be advanced by this enterprise. [photo taken September 2003](#)

Unauthorised work at the Ritz in Ilkeston has culminated in the destruction of the plasterwork embellishing its foyer. Following discovery of this mutilation, the CTA contacted Erewash Borough Council, the enforcement officer of which halted any further injurious activity pending submission of a related planning application. It is reported that the objective of the new owner is to employ the structure as an office and training facility.

The gratifying report concerning the listing of the Abbey in the Wavertree area of Liverpool has been somewhat tempered by the perpetual inconsistency of Historic England in its criteria for assessment: cinemas of equal or greater architectural merit, exemplified by the Regal in Sunderland, have been declined this status routinely. It is evident that associative value assumes greater import during evaluation than architectonic quality – the Abbey has links to a popular music ensemble. The Association is to confer with The Heritage Alliance, raising the possibility of a joint approach by its constituents to Historic England on this recurrent issue.

The Odeon in Loughborough closed in March. Operator Beacon Bingo is concentrating its endeavours within purpose-built venues and is consequently leasing out its other properties. Currently no applications for alterations to the aforementioned building are under consideration. [photo on front cover](#)

The scheme for the Carlton, now Empire, in London's Haymarket is to proceed, yet with a delayed commencement date of early 2022. The Crown Estate has been urged to publicise its plans for the area on the surrounding hoardings, specifically including recognition of the original cinema's incorporation within the enterprise.

An online presentation to the local Civic Society detailing the latest proposals for the Regal in Kingston-upon-Thames has been conducted. Resultant opinion upon the updated designs is less than favourable.

The local Council has received no request for pre-application discussions concerning reconstruction of the Regent in Lyme Regis since 2017. The Association has issued a press release in an attempt to stimulate publicity from media outlets serving the region.

A similar media campaign by the CTA relating to the Granada in Shrewsbury has met with a degree of success, as a proposition to subdivide and restructure the cinema's interior as apartments has been aborted. Meanwhile, it is not known if the previously functioning bingo operation will resume following relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions.



The Grand in Southport remains unoccupied; its deterioration and security elicit disquietude. It is reported that the current owner has approached the local Council with a tentative plan for reuse; a watching brief will thus be maintained. [photo taken July 2007](#)

## Unlisted

Refurbishment of the Brontë in Haworth has been promulgated by a potential operator, who has contacted the Association for advice. As previously reported, this cinema has been included as a local asset on a draft Neighbourhood Plan. The structure has lain empty for several years, although extant attributes are believed to include the original proscenium and paybox.

It had been intended that the shell of the only surviving section of the original structure of the Regent in Hinckley should remain following a conversion exercise; the auditorium block was lost some years ago. However, removal of the domed ceiling from the surviving upper crush foyer during this process has caused structural instability; work has thus been halted whilst the situation is assessed.

Save Britain's Heritage has convened a working-group to formulate potentialities for reutilisation of the Sandonia in Stafford, which the Association has previously attempted to safeguard with an emphasis upon retention of the impressive neo-classical white stone façade. Concurrently a local campaign for its conservation is also making some headway. See photo p5 Bulletin 52/6.

The Imperial in Walsall originated as an agricultural hall in 1868, was later converted to a cinema and has recently operated as a hostelry of the JD Wetherspoon chain. This operation has now terminated and concern arises for the building's future prospects. By virtue of the age of the edifice, the CTA will work in tandem with the Victorian Society on this case.

## Demolitions in Brief

- ◆ Permission has been granted to demolish the auditorium of the Palace in Lancaster, although the frontage, facing onto Dalton Square, will remain. Loss of the audience chamber is regrettable as it features attributes of definite quality.
- ◆ An application has been made to raze the early (1911), yet significantly altered, Cinematograph in Edmonton.
- ◆ Prior to the CTA becoming aware of the situation, permission was granted to demolish the Adelphi in Moston [Manchester], which is to be replaced by an apartment block. See photo p22 Bulletin 54/6.
- ◆ Although the façade of the Premier in Somercotes [Derbys] is to be preserved, permission for redevelopment of the remainder of the cinema into multiple dwellings has been granted, with a proviso that a sign on a flank wall shall be incorporated into the new erection. See photo p23 Bulletin 54/6.
- ◆ A development propounded for the site of the Majestic in Gravesend is intended to integrate the façade and frontal block into another ubiquitous block of flats, which is destined to replace the auditorium. Regrettably this unsatisfactory outcome represents the best such attainable in this case.



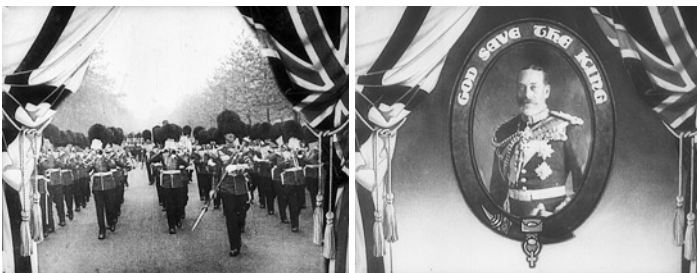
# NATIONAL ANTHEM TRAILERS

By Kevin Wheelan

Playing the National Anthem at the end of a performance is said to have started at the Theatres Royal in Drury Lane and Covent Garden in 1745. It is, therefore, not surprising that the tradition was carried over to the cinema.



Whether the Anthem was accompanied by film of the two monarchs of the silent era, Queen Victoria and Edward VII, I have been unable to establish. However, National Anthem trailers were made for all those of the sound era – George V, Edward VIII, George VI and Queen Elizabeth II. They usually consisted of pictures of the Monarch but there were generic versions with the Union flag or military bands. Most had the National Anthem on the soundtrack but mute ones were available, which would be played in conjunction with a record on the non-sync



George V

The most prolific supplier of National Anthem trailers was National Screen Service Ltd [NSS]. Opened in 1926 as the UK arm of an American company, NSS soon cornered the market in the production of film trailers, announcements and miscellaneous short films. Long and short versions of the National Anthem were available in black and white or Technicolor, in Academy ratio, Widescreen and, later, CinemaScope, to which could be added 'playouts', lengths of pictureless film with a musical soundtrack, lasting a couple of minutes, which obviated the need to run the non-sync while patrons left the theatre. Sales of National Anthem trailers must have been good in 1936, the year of three monarchs!

When George VI died in February 1952, NSS rushed out a black and white National Anthem trailer for Elizabeth II. This was known as the 'Emergency Queen'. They also produced what is referred to as the 'Condolence Trailer', paying tribute to the late King and welcoming the new Queen. The story goes that NSS sent out, unsolicited, copies of the 'Condolence Trailer' to all their clients in the knowledge that, given the tragic circumstances of the King's death, no cinema proprietor would refuse to pay for it!

The audience would stand and sometimes sing along to the Anthem, particularly during the Second World War. After the War people in general and the younger generation in particular, became less deferential and overtly patriotic and by the 1950s many patrons would make a mad dash for the exits as soon as the feature film finished to avoid having to stand whilst the Anthem played out. Such a scene occurs in the 1957 comedy *The Smallest Show on Earth*. By the 1960s the post war generation, of which I was one, considered playing the National Anthem old hat, a relic of their parents' era and it is my personal experience that it was largely abandoned in that decade, although I believe some cinemas continued the practice.

Frame enlargements are from the author's 35mm collection.



Edward VIII

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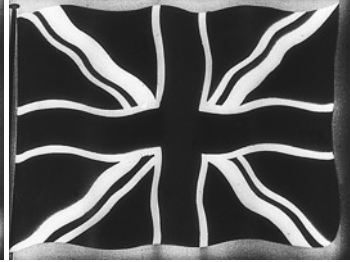
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NASCRENO HOUSE · SOHO SQ. · LONDON W.1.  
Telephone: GERRARD 4851/5 Telegrams: NASCRENO, WESDO, LONDON.

National Screen Service advertisements in the *Kiné Year Book* – 1948, 1953 & 1956

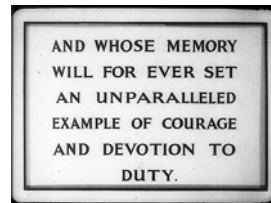
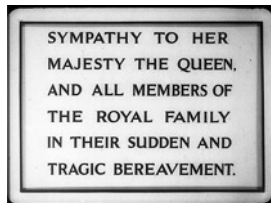




Emergency Queen



George VI



Condolence Trailer



Elizabeth II



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]

AYR



The Category B listed former Green's Playhouse sold at auction in June for £432,500, against a guide price of £375,000. It opened in July 1931 and with 3,104 seats was the third-largest cinema to be built in Scotland. Films ceased in the late 1960s in favour of bingo, which continues today; Mecca has a lease on the building until 2026 at a rent of £166,498 pa. The CTA visited in July 2009, when the above picture was taken. {23270}

Daily Record – 8 June

## BARNSTAPLE (Devon)

Plans have been approved to extend the Green Lane Shopping Centre to create a new seven-screen cinema. The space occupied by the former BHS store will stay as retail but the upper two floors plus an additional new floor above will house the cinema. It will be a replacement for the current four-screen Central Cinema [ex Gaumont] run by Scott Cinemas, which is Grade II listed. {22744}

North Devon Journal – 20 May

## BATH (North Somerset)

Plans, reported on p15 of Bulletin 54/3, to convert the former Scala at Oldfield Park into 92 student flats have been thrown out by the Council. {28722}

Somerset Live – 6 May

## BEESTON (Notts)

The new eight-screen Arc cinema opened on 28 May with a total of 720 seats. Six of the screens have digital laser projection and Dolby Digital 7.1 Surround Sound, and there are two premium 'Hypersense' auditoria, with 4K laser projection, Dolby Atmos Surround Sound and giant wall-to-wall screens. Each is fitted out with luxurious reclining leather seats with generous legroom. {65227}

LeftLion – 2 June; sent in by Terry Hanstock



The former Windsor in Bearwood, Birmingham

## BIRMINGHAM (Bearwood)

The former Windsor was due to go to auction on 19 May with a guide price of £475,000 but was sold prior to auction for an undisclosed amount. It opened in September 1930 with 1,750 seats in stalls and circle. There was a stage with eight dressing rooms and a Compton organ. It closed in February 1960 and later became an ice rink, a nightclub, a snooker club and a bar. {41358}

Express & Star – 5 May; photo [bottom previous column] taken June 2008

## BIRMINGHAM (Central)

It has been announced that the Electric in Station Street will not reopen. It is thought that its 88-year lease was due to expire. It opened in December 1909 and a second screen was added in the 1970s. It had several changes of owner and programming policy before it closed in 2003. It was restored and reopened in 2004 until closed by the pandemic. {9559}

Sent in by Ken Roe; photo [on front cover] taken September 2005

## BISHOP AUCKLAND (Durham)

We reported on p24 of the last Bulletin about plans for a cinema at Tindale. It has now been confirmed that the operator will be Reel, although the new report states six screens whereas the previous one gave seven. It is due to open in October 2022.

Northern Echo – 5 May

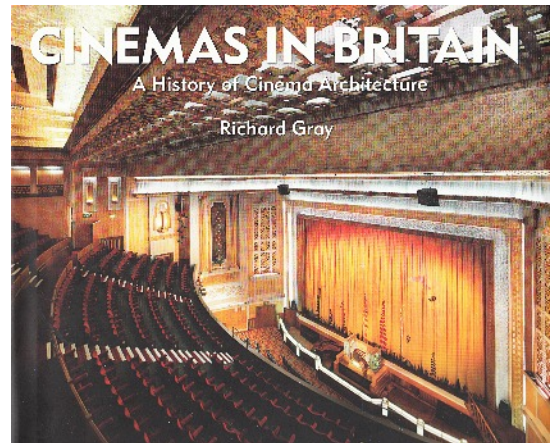
## BLACKBURN (Lancs)

The new eight-screen Reel opened on 17 May with a total of 695 seats. Two of the auditoria with 90 seats and 66 seats are named Reel Lounges which offer plush sofas and armchairs and a drinks & food service. There are six Premier Lounge (regular) screens with seating for: 72, 113, 97, 113, 72 & 72. There is a car park below the cinema which has free parking for up to 4 hours for cinema patrons. {65130}

Lancashire Telegraph – 11 May

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## BRISTOL



The former Broadway at Filwood Park is to be demolished. It opened in 1938 with 1,163 seats but films ceased in 1971 in favour of bingo. The building has been empty and boarded-up for about the last 30 years. {47281}

*BBC News website – 19 June; photo taken March 2006*

## CHIPPENHAM (Wilts)



There are plans in place to build flats on the site of the former Palace Cinema in Station Hill. The frontage would be retained with the auditorium area demolished to build the flats. The Palace opened in 1910 by the Chippenham Public Hall and Skating Rink Co Ltd – this was roller skating, which seems to have been all the craze at the time. The cinema section was subsequently leased to Albany Ward and he modernised it to provide “a theatre of adequate size and appointments to suit modern requirements” as recorded in the directors’ report of April 1915. It was taken over by Provincial Cinematograph Theatres [PCT] in 1920 with Albany Ward staying with PCT and his subsidiary company known as Albany Ward Theatres. PCT was purchased by Gaumont in 1928 and as such the Palace closed in November 1936 when the new Gaumont opened in Timber Street.

Over the years it was used for many things: a warehouse, workshop and in later years part of the Westinghouse engineering works. It reopened as a nightclub ‘Buds’ in 2015 and then the ‘Karmas’ club but this closed in 2019 and the building has been up for sale since then. Interesting to see what happens here – the former skating rink is a Dorothy House distribution centre – parking has always been an issue here. The local Civic Society would like to see it saved as a public amenity of some description! {48863}

*Sent in by David Reeves; photo taken June 2013*

## DARLASTON (Walsall)

It has been confirmed that the twelve-screen Showcase will not reopen and will be converted into a car supermarket. The cinema opened in August 1989 and had 2,870 seats. {17102}

*Birmingham Live – 7 May; sent in by Philip Crompton & Ken Roe; photo [top next column] taken April 2007*

## DERBY

We reported on p21 of Bulletin 55/2 that the Showcase at Foresters Park would not reopen. Now plans have been submitted to demolish it and build a car dealership. {21129}

*The Business Desk – 10 June*



The Showcase Darlaston

## DONCASTER

The new six-screen Savoy opened on 17 May. One of the screens has laser projection and Dolby Atmos sound. All screens are equipped with electric recliner and rocker seats. There is a 44-second video of a glimpse inside the cinema at [youtu.be/c4HfvnRDA0A](https://youtu.be/c4HfvnRDA0A) [savoydoncaster.uk](https://savoydoncaster.uk) {65131}

*Doncaster Council Press Release – 19 May*

## DURHAM



The former Majestic has been sold after the current owners concluded that the bingo operation was not viable. An application has been submitted to demolish it and build 138 student apartments. The cinema opened in August 1938 with 906 seats in a stadium plan. It was damaged by fire in 1956 but reopened within a few months. Films ceased in December 1961 in favour of bingo. {47268}

*Northern Echo – 11 May*

## GLASGOW (Riverside)

Cineworld has announced that it will be surrendering the lease on the IMAX cinema in the Glasgow Science Centre. Workers at the cinema have complained that many of them only found out about this on social media after it was announced on Twitter. The IMAX boasts the biggest cinema screen in Scotland and was the first of its kind in the country. It sits in a large, modern, titanium structure as part of the Glasgow Science Centre and was opened in 1999. The rest of the Science Centre will remain open. {27084}

*The Scotsman – 13 May*

## GRAVESEND (Kent)

Plans have been submitted to build a nine-storey building containing 47 flats on the site of the former Majestic/EMD. The auditorium was demolished following a fire in 2009. The façade remains and would be converted into six flats. {37337}

*Gravesend Messenger – 6 May*

Three more pages of Newsreel  
in the full Bulletin



# LETTERS

## CINEMA IN KETTERING

The article on the Kettering Gaumont in the May/June Bulletin did an excellent job of bringing the cinema to life through text and illustrations. The refurbishment in 1953 would seem to have been one of the first carried out by Rank post-war, resulting in one of its smallest cinemas. Although there was no photograph to show the original auditorium with its exposed roof trusses, it sounds as though the interior was not worth preserving.

Rank is blamed for the closure of the Gaumont six years later. I recall that around this time the company revealed there were two places in the country where cinema attendances had declined far more dramatically than anywhere else, without obvious explanation: Chichester and Kettering. Both towns had two good Rank cinemas but were over-seated for their population. When the Gaumont Kettering closed, Rank was disappointed that attendances at the Odeon did not improve.

During the 1950s Rank was required to keep the weekly releases on the Odeon and Gaumont circuits separate as a condition of being allowed to form Circuits Management Association to run them both. Otherwise, Rank might well have shifted the more popular Gaumont releases into the much larger Odeon and made the trading position of the Gaumont worse. There was an increasing shortage of attractive 'product' available to the Rank circuits, exacerbated by the feud between Rank and 20th Century-Fox, which kept the latter's CinemaScope output off its screens for several years.

In the eventual switch of the company's better cinemas to a new Rank circuit, the Gaumont was inevitably placed among the leftovers on the new National release, which was soon shunned by distributors. No doubt, it did poorer business as a result and was therefore closed. The loss of the two Rank cinemas directly helped Kettering's other cinemas – the Granada and Savoy – carry on for many years, as indicated in the article.

Allen Eyles

Some further information on Ezekiel Charles Shapeero (Galicia, Austria 1880 - 1930 Nottingham) and George Victor Hutton (Cobley Hill, Worcestershire 1862 - 1934 Leominster), co-owners of the Kettering Electra Pavilion. (May/June Bulletin, p8)

Prior to moving to Nottingham, Shapeero was a general dealer in Blackburn, where he became a naturalised UK citizen in 1903. By 1911 he was the managing director of Sharples & Co, a firm of opticians. He apparently took up film exhibition as a 'hobby', with an investment in Leno's Picturedrome in 1914. His hobby escalated and he built up a substantial portfolio of cinemas in Nottingham and the Midlands. He was also a delegate to the Cinema Exhibitors Association General Council and three of his sons, Aaron, Cyril and Isidore, eventually followed him into cinema management. In 1928 Denman (Midlands) Cinemas bought the Shapeero Circuit, as it then was, on behalf of the Gaumont British Corporation, for the sum of £250,000. This was a vast amount at the time and doubtless ensured that Shapeero was able to leave an estate valued at £111,000 on his death two years later.

Hutton started in business as a mantle and fur dealer but by 1921 was described as a picture house proprietor, obituaries calling him a pioneer of the Nottingham cinema industry. He and Shapeero were in partnership during the 1920s, the company being referred to at various times as Hutton & Shapeero Ltd and the Hutton-Shapeero Circuit. His son, John Victor Hutton, was also involved in the business for a time, although he later returned to the retail clothing trade.

Terry Hanstock

## JAGS V JABS

Reading the editorial in the newest Bulletin reminds me to provide some clarification. It seems that jag is a Scottish term (and perhaps also Irish) for jab, as well as being the favoured transport of burly northern pugilist former politicians! Thought I'd mention it in case you get any offended Braveheart types writing to you from amongst the hordes(!) of Scottish members! Indeed, the usage of the word once vaccinations started actually prompted several newspaper editors to fill entire columns with the jags vs jabs debate up here – like there's nothing more important such as a global pandemic going on. Anyway, fine work on the Bulletin as ever, hope all is well – I'm still waiting on that second jag!

Gary Painter

## RE: BEAU NASH ARTICLE PART 2

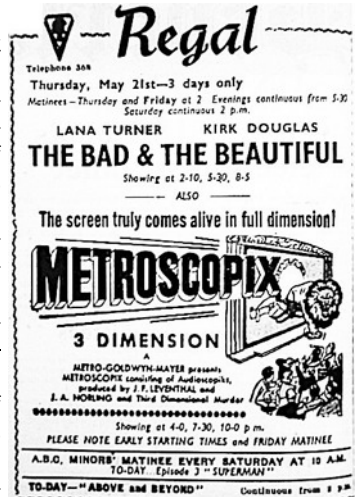
I have enjoyed reading Ben Doman's two-part article about the Beau Nash Picture House and was interested to see the newspaper advertisement for the screening of *Metroscopix* (on P17 of Bulletin 55/3). The advert says "Polaroid glasses are supplied free" when this in fact was a single-strip anaglyph 3D film requiring red/green glasses. I attach a larger advert for the same programme, screened at the ABC Regal in Beverley, East Yorkshire in 1953, which makes no mention of the glasses, so I assume this was added by the exhibitor in the Beau Nash advert. In fact, the 24-minute *Metroscopix* film was a compilation of three earlier anaglyph 3D novelty MGM short films; *Audioscopiks* (1935), *New Audioscopiks* (1938) and *Third Dimensional Murder* (1941). It was clearly put together quickly to cash in on the 3D craze of the early 1950s, allowing cinemas not able to show polarised 3D films (using two synchronised projectors for the left and right eye images) to join in and attract customers with something in 3D. The final *Third Dimensional Murder* sequence was available as a Super 8 home movie from Perry's Movies Ltd in the 1970s, advertised as *Murder in 3D*. I still have my copy and note that it cost me £29.95 for the pleasure!

Steve Oldfield

## BALLYBUNION

When reading the article *Wanderings in Ireland* by Hugh Sykes in Bulletin 55/2, I was as they say 'Gobsmacked' to see the Savoy Ballybunion featured. I thought I was the only one who not only knew the cinema but indeed Ballybunion itself! I came across this wonderful place whilst touring the Ring of Kerry in May 1996 and seeing the name as we approached, I was quite amazed at the magic of it. Ballybunion? Surely not. Have they made the name up especially for me? Is Will Hay filming here? I was soon brought down to earth by the photographs in the hotel reception area showing the owner shaking hands with about every famous golfer in the world. It turned out that Ballybunion has what is reputed to be the best golf course in the world! I was soon wrapped up in the wonder of the place and fulfilled an ambition of having a pint of Guinness on the West Coast of Ireland in the Railway Bar, just yards away from a small building what I was to discover as the Savoy cinema. I have attached a photo from 1996 and you can see the cinema, which I think was closed even then, has now had a makeover. When I say makeover, I mean a different colour coat of paint! A wonderful memory and thanks to Hugh Sykes the magic has been re-born.

Terry Rourke



The Savoy in 1996



The Railway Bar, Ballybunion



## GRANADA

The letter from Kevin Wheelan in the last Bulletin reminded me that Sidney Bernstein wanted the logo of Wall's Ice Cream to be painted over on the side of fridges in our Miss Candy stores. However, it was pointed out that Wall's supplied the fridges free of charge, so nothing more was said.

In 1988 Granada Film Booking closed in Golden Square and the cinemas themselves were sold to Cannon at the start of 1989. I was told Mr Sidney was looking for someone to make all his travel arrangements and I was asked if I would like to apply. I went to see Sidney in his penthouse at the top of 36 Golden Square, which was lined with Granada paperbacks (the company had just gone into publishing). I didn't get the job, which was perhaps a relief because I knew he could be a hard taskmaster. Although at 89, I think Sidney's days of travel were receding.

I have recently written articles about stage shows that Granada Theatres booked, in the British Music Hall Society Journal *The Call Boy* (Spring & Summer 2021 editions, 44 & 40 pages respectively). Anyone interested can obtain copies (£5 including p+p for each edition) from David Reed, 6 New River Crescent, Palmers Green, London, N13 5RF. I worked for Granada Theatres from 1964 to 1988.

R David Simpson

## RITZ LUTON

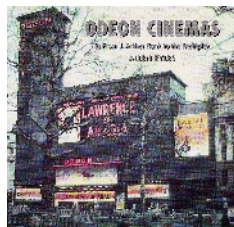
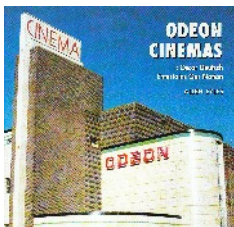


I attach a photo I took on 8 April of the former Ritz Cinema. It's the first time I have been to have a look at the work on the building since the lockdown. There was a lot of activity on site with workmen and deliveries so I was limited in what photos I could take. At least these give you an idea of what is happening.

Margaret Burgoine

## All you need to know about... ODEON

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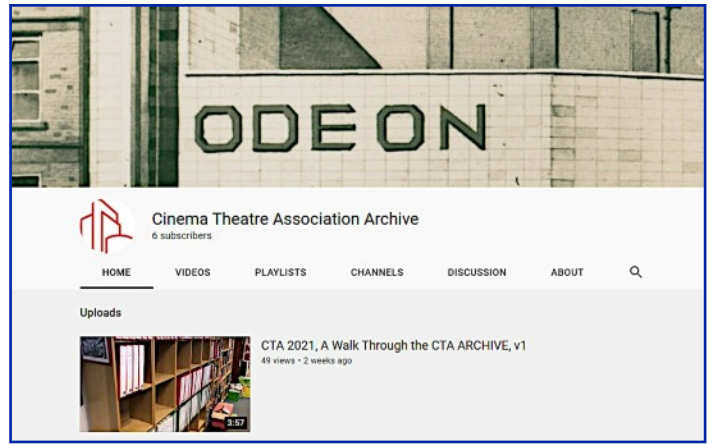
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## NEWS FROM THE ARCHIVE



I am pleased to announce that the Archive has created a YouTube Channel where videos will be added featuring different material and collections from the Archive. I will report new videos in the Bulletin or if you wish you can seek out the Channel and subscribe to receive notifications of new content. The first video on the Channel is a walk-through of the Archive and is available now to view at:

[tinyurl.com/r6zbmu23](https://tinyurl.com/r6zbmu23)



The Archive Team will shortly be embarking on a major new project to catalogue and reorganise the many slide collections held at the Archive. This long overdue project is very exciting and if you want to be involved or perhaps you have a collection of slides you are thinking of donating, now is the time to get in touch.

Clive Polden, CTA Archivist



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Display rates: eighth page – £15; quarter page – £25;  
half page (horizontal or vertical) – £45; full page – £80





# THE SAVOY HULL

This article was inspired by solving unidentified photo INT062 on p23 of the last Bulletin

By David A Ellis

The Savoy Cinema Hull had a makeover in 1937, having originally opened on 29 October 1923 at 6:30 with the film *Manslaughter*. The owners were Savoy's (Hull) Ltd. There was a daily matinée at 2:30 and continuous from 6:30. There was an orchestra under the direction of Mr Efim Libine. He was described as the greatest violinist in this part of the country. The cost of the Savoy in 1923 was around twenty-six thousand pounds, which included the four-thousand-pound organ. A grand piano was also a feature.

There were 650 balcony seats and 950 in the stalls. At the time the balcony was the largest in Hull. The cinema was designed by Blackmore Sykes and Co of Ruskin Chambers, Scale Lane, Hull. There was a large crush hall with settees and chairs. There was also a welcoming fireplace. The operating box was at the back of the stalls. Apart from the two projectors there was a slide lantern for advertisements. When talkies arrived on 19 August 1929 minor alterations had taken place and a new proscenium curtain was installed.



The first talkie was *The Singing Fool*, which had first been shown at the Cecil Hull for a month. At the Savoy the film attracted 26,000 patrons in a week. Western Electric sound equipment was employed. It was the fifth hall in Hull to be wired for sound.

The new-look Savoy opened on 1 November 1937 after a two-week facelift with the film *Camille*. In attendance was the Cecil orchestra, assisted by a London organist on a new Hammond organ. New seating was installed, upholstered in blue velvet.

The colour scheme of the auditorium was blue, beige and gold. The same architects from 1923 were employed. A huge canopy 12 feet in width was constructed across the whole of the front of the building. Seating became 515 in the balcony and 885 in the stalls.

The wide proscenium and stepped stage formation, successfully introduced at the Dorchester, was developed for the transformed Savoy. The opening was conducted by magistrate JR MacDonald.

The cinema closed for business on 10 July 1960. It was later demolished and the site used for retail.

Images [except #] courtesy Roger Shone



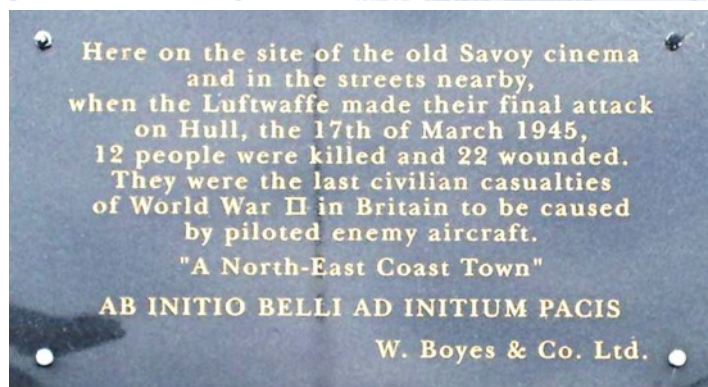
The interior of the Savoy at reopening in 1937

## EARLY FILM DAYS RECALLED AT HULL REOPENING

Reference to the early days of the kinema industry was made by JR Macdonald, Hull Stipendiary Magistrate, at the reopening of the Savoy Cinema Hull, on Monday. Also present at the ceremony were Nancy Burne, film star and Messrs E Seaton and Brinley Evans of Savoy's (Hull), Ltd, owners of the Savoy.

Mr Macdonald recalled the days when films provided a finale to the old music-hall show; days which, without any reflection on the modern screen artist, some people would wish to have recalled. The standard of modern films, he said, was very high, too high some might think, since patrons nowadays expected every film to be a masterpiece. That, of course, was impossible but so far as the new Savoy was concerned, high quality entertainment would always be the aim.

Kiné Weekly – 4 November 1937



12 people, many leaving the cinema after a film, were killed on 17 March 1945 when a German Heinkel 111 opened fire with machine guns as it flew across the City; there is a plaque [above] on the site. †