



CINEMA
THEATRE
ASSOCIATION

www.cta-uk.org

BULLETIN

Vol 55 No 6

ISSN 1479-0882

November / December 2021



The Pavilion Hailsham (East Sussex) which celebrates its 100th birthday on 28 November; photo taken September 2021



The nine-screen Cineworld in Hull, seen here as a UGC in July 2005, which has just had a major refurbishment

FROM YOUR EDITOR

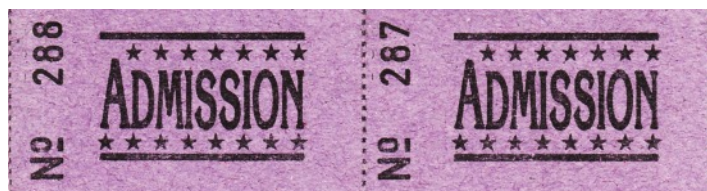
I owe an apology to Richard Hawkins. He kindly sent me a photocopy of a souvenir programme issued to mark the 50th anniversary of the Savoy/ABC Portsmouth in 1987. I'm afraid I put it to one side to deal with later and have only come across it again whilst reviewing the material for this edition. I will scan it in case I can use any of the illustrations in a future Bulletin and pass the original photocopy onto the archive. Thank you Richard.

Richard also wonders why I didn't use an item he submitted about plans to demolish the auditorium of the Odeon North End in Portsmouth and build flats. Unfortunately it was old news and had already appeared on p22 of Bulletin 53/6 (Nov/Dec 2019). I try not to duplicate items like this, unless there is significant additional material associated with it. This often happens so please don't be disappointed if I feel unable to include something you send me. I do try to print everything I get, if possible.

I am very pleased to see that our friends at London's Cinema Museum, Martin Humphries and Ronald Grant, have been given the prestigious international Jean Mitry award for their work. The museum has also won the *Time Out* 'Most Loved Local Culture Spot' award. The petition to save the museum has reached almost 60,000 signatures at the time of writing and will be delivered on 5 November. The museum itself reopened on 19 October. Further details and their full programme of events can be found on their website: www.cinemamuseum.org.uk.

Finally, it only remains for me to wish you all the compliments of the season; there is a suitable graphic on the back page.

Harry Rigby, CTA Bulletin Editor



The 2021 edition of our annual *Picture House* magazine is progressing well and should reach members before the end of the year.

Allen Eyles

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.

Registered address: 59 Harrowdene Gardens, Teddington, TW11 0DJ.

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

PATRONS: Alan Baxter; Allen Eyles; Lucinda Lambton

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Full Membership (UK).....	£33; under 25 (with proof of age) £16
Overseas (Europe Standard Air Mail & World Economy).....	£43
Overseas (World Standard Air Mail).....	£56
Overseas (Digital CTA Bulletin).....	£33
Associate Membership (UK & Worldwide).....	£10
Life Membership (UK and overseas digital).....	£500
65 & over (with proof of age).....	£400
Life Membership (Overseas).....	Air Mail £840; Economy Mail £645

All membership and subscription enquiries should be sent to

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Ray Ritmeester subs@cta-uk.org

66 Woodside Road, High Wycombe, HP13 7JB

Items for possible inclusion in the Bulletin should be sent to

BULLETIN EDITOR: Harry Rigby bulletin@cta-uk.org

65 Tennyson Avenue, Harrogate, North Yorks, HG1 3LE

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN: David Trevor-Jones + chairman@cta-uk.org

47 The Street, Old Basing, Basingstoke, RG24 7BX

VICE-CHAIRMAN: Ian Meyrick +

11 Tarrant Avenue, Witney, OX28 1EE

SECRETARY: Adam Unger + honsec@cta-uk.org

59 Harrowdene Gardens, Teddington, TW11 0DJ

TREASURER: Neville C Taylor + accounts@cta-uk.org

Flat One, 128 Gloucester Terrace, London, W2 6HP

CASEWORK COMMITTEE – Chairman: Richard Gray + casework@cta-uk.org

45 Arnold Road, Bow, London, E3 4NU

Members: as main committee plus Rob Chesterfield, Tim Hatcher,

Jane Jephcote, Peter Lea, Mark Price, Vicky Simon & Peter Wylde

ARCHIVIST: Clive Polden archive@cta-uk.org

14 Ivychurch Gardens, Cliftonville, Margate, CT9 3YG

ASSISTANT ARCHIVIST: David Simpson

PUBLICATIONS & SALES OFFICER: Jeremy Buck + sales@cta-uk.org

34 Pelham Road, London, N22 6LN

WEBMASTER: Rachel Woodforde web@cta-uk.org

69A Mill Street, Kidlington, Oxford, OX5 2EE

VISITS CO-ORDINATOR: Ray Ritmeester visits@cta-uk.org

66 Woodside Road, High Wycombe, HP13 7JB

PICTURE HOUSE EDITOR: Allen Eyles picture.house@cta-uk.org

13 Tennyson Court, Paddockhall Road, Haywards Heath, RH16 1EZ

CTA SCOTLAND: Gordon Barr, Gary Painter scotland@cta-uk.org

11 Merker Terrace, Linlithgow, EH49 6DD

CTA CYMRU/WALES: John Skinner, Jon Williams wales@cta-uk.org

3 Swan Lane, Ystalyfera, Swansea, SA9 2JB

CTA NORTH: vacancy

CTA WESSEX: David Eve, Gary Trinder wessex@cta-uk.org

Far Ends, 28 Courtenay Road, Lower Parkstone, Poole, BH14 0HD

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Emma Beeston, Kevin Gooding, Lynda Hillman, Rachel Marks, Richard Norman, Tim McCullen, Ken Roe.

Please use info@cta-uk.org if uncertain to whom to address an e-mail enquiry; this address will be monitored and e-mails redirected if necessary.

© CTA BULLETIN – published six times yearly by the 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

Printed by The Ludo Press Ltd, 18 Wimbledon Stadium Business Centre, Riverside Road, London, SW17 0BA www.ludo.co.uk

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE
MONDAY 20 DECEMBER

CTA VIRTUAL TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS

Celebrating Our First Year Of Virtual Talks

The CTA is delighted to announce that we have now reached the first anniversary of presenting our monthly virtual talks using Zoom and expanded our use of social media to promote the Association's excellent work and reach new audiences. Benefiting existing members and non-members, who we hope will join our membership as they enjoy our series of talks and presentations, especially arranged to appeal to enthusiasts of traditional cinema settings.

Your Christmas Treats

- ★ Our Members' Own Christmas Show held on Saturday 4 December will be **FREE** to view on Zoom (details below). We hope that this will appeal to members who have not considered joining us previously on our Zoom talks.
- ★ New Members enrolling during the month of December 2021 are offered a starter package of authoritative specialist books *Odeon 1 and 2* by cinema historian Allen Eyles (published by the BFI and CTA) – at the special price of **Two for the Price of One** (£15 + p/p for the pair) – see advert on p5.
- ★ Membership rates are shown on p2 and you can enrol online at www.cta-uk.org or by postal application to the membership secretary (address on p2) or enquiries email: subs@cta-uk.org. A form will be enclosed with membership confirmation to purchase the books on special offer.

Saturday 4 December at 5:30pm
(UK time) (Zoom talk No 13)

MEMBERS' OWN CHRISTMAS ONLINE SHOW

This is the opportunity to share with other enthusiasts your short presentations of cinema-related subjects and interests. The coverage is wide-ranging consisting of personal recollections, photos, videos or short movie clips highlighting cinemas and cinema-related experiences. These short contributions will make up an entertaining programme of immense variety, making it an evening that appeals to the widest cross-section of cinema-lovers – not to be missed!

APPLICATIONS WELCOMED

Do you have an idea for a short contribution? Share your passion! We want to hear from you! To apply for inclusion to present an item please email Richard Norman: RichardNormanCTA@aol.com as soon as possible and not later than 28 November. Technical assistance will be gladly given for the preparation and this can be pre-recorded for presentation if preferred.

SOME SUGGESTIONS

- ★ You have a short cinema experience or story to share
- ★ You've posted a video on YouTube
- ★ You've seen interesting images on social media
- ★ You have a collection of artefacts/ephemera to share
- ★ You worked in the cinema industry

We'd love to hear from you to help make the show.



THIS IS A FREE EVENT (BUT BOOKING IS NECESSARY)

CTA talks and presentations are open to everyone – members and non-members alike. Although there is no charge for this event you still need to book a place on-line using TicketSource www.ticketsource.co.uk. Simply enter "cinema theatre association" in their search box. Please ensure that you complete the registration link that accompanies your TicketSource confirmation.



Saturday 8 January 2022 at 5:30pm

(UK time) (Zoom talk No 14) NB: Date moved from 1 Jan

Continuing the series of Notable Cinema Architects

THE WORKS OF VERITY & BEVERLEY BY DAVID BUTCHER

David Butcher, former senior partner in architects Verity and Beverley, this year celebrating their 150th anniversary, will talk about the history of the practice and in particular their cinemas built between the two world wars. The distinguished firm was founded by Thomas Verity in 1871 when he won an architectural competition to design the Criterion in Piccadilly Circus and he subsequently designed a number of other London theatres including the original Empire in Leicester Square. After Verity's son, Frank, joined the firm they were responsible for the rebuilding of the Scala Theatre in Charlotte Street in 1904. After Thomas' death, Frank Verity retained his theatrical and cinema connections with the commission for the Shepherd's Bush Pavilion, considered the first such to be treated as 'serious architecture'. Samuel Beverley, Frank's son-in-law, joined early in the 1920s and thereafter they were responsible for Paramount's UK cinemas together with a number of Union Cinemas. Most of this heritage has now sadly been lost but we will be able to revisit their former glory in this talk.



Shepherd's Bush Pavilion by Frank Verity; photo taken April 2006

The talk will conclude with a Q+A, followed by the usual Open Chat where you're invited to join us in the popular 'pub chat' session discussing any cinema-related topics of your choosing to share with others.

BOOKING A TICKET

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



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 Darwen; Edward A Stone.
No 33	£5.00	Theodore Komisarjevsky; Circuit & other releases of 1956; The case for saving the New Victoria Bradford.
No 34	£5.00	Beaufort Birmingham; Granada Tooting in 1934; Rank in post-war Scotland; J Braddon's Cinema life.
No 35	£5.00	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 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.



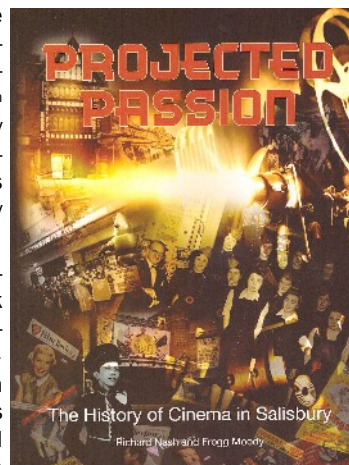
Price: £6.00 per binder, supplied in a special postal carton. Please add £3.40 to your total order for post and packing.

Ordering details below.

New Publication

Projected Passion – The History of Cinemas in Salisbury by Richard Nash and Frogg Moody. 150 pages, A4 paperback, illustrated. £12.95 (plus £3.40 postage)

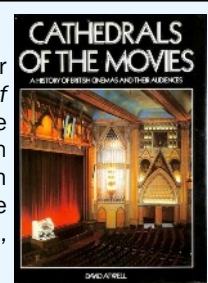
This book tells the story of the cinemas in Salisbury from the earliest showings at the annual charter fair up until the end of the 20th Century. Cinema pioneer Albany Ward is covered and his beginnings with local garrison theatres and the Plaza at nearby Amesbury are also featured.



Salisbury once had three fine cinemas and the latter part of this book relates in some detail the campaign to save the last of these – the Gaumont Palace / Odeon – in the 1980s. This cinema, with its Grade I listed foyer and Grade II auditorium, was threatened with closure and demolition. Members may recall that the late Alan Richardson, who was once a CTA committee member, was the leading light in this campaign, which resulted in a public enquiry at which the campaigners were successful and the Odeon is still open today. It is good to have this battle recorded here, together with much other fascinating information and a wealth of interesting photographs.

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).



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.

HERITAGE CASEWORK

By Tim Hatcher

No meeting of the Heritage Casework Committee has been convened during the intervening period between deadlines for the previous and current editions of the Bulletin. The appended report therefore comprises brief particulars detailing cases that are currently active.

Grade II* Listed



The Carlton Islington in October 2014

Proposals for alteration to the Carlton in Islington and development of adjacent land have been propounded somewhat regularly over a number of years. The current scheme envisages tolerable construction on ground situated to the rear of the cinema; however, the concept of levelling the rake of the stalls is unacceptable.

An investigation is ongoing into a report of vegetation growing atop the façade of the Regal in Uxbridge.

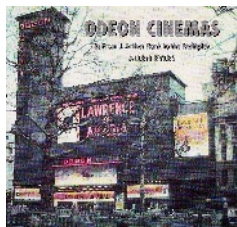
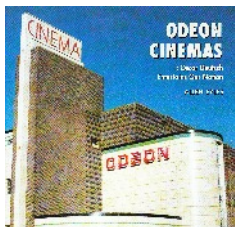
Grade II Listed

It transpires that the latest plan for the Regal in Kingston-upon-Thames envisages residential and office accommodation above the auditorium. It has been suggested that the design team should visit the Granada at Clapham Junction in order to inspect the successful integration of the stanchions within the historic original fabric of that cinema, which proved necessary for support of an equivalent structure.

The Association is to contact the conservation and regeneration staff of Liverpool City Council in an attempt to promote progress on the apparently dormant plans for rehabilitation of the Forum.

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 p4.

The decision of Scott Cinemas Limited not to rebuild the Regent in Lyme Regis has stimulated formation of a pressure group advocating reinstatement of the building.

Progress on refurbishment of the Ritz in Nuneaton has stalled following the regrettable deaths of two leaders of the religious movement undertaking the project.

Unlisted



The Odeon Bridgwater as a Scott Cinema in February 2006

A new cinema is currently under construction in Bridgwater, which places the future of the Odeon in doubt. Unfortunately, The Twentieth Century Society has declined to apply for listed status for this notable building, which exhibits the distinctive style of architect T Cecil Howitt.



The St George's Hall / Granada Bristol in March 2006

A local campaign that aims to preserve the St George's Hall Electric Palace in Bristol's Redfield area is gaining momentum.

A proposal to redevelop the Regal in Colchester, which would have included a facsimile of architect Cecil Masey's front elevation, has been rejected by Colchester Borough Council.

The latter-day cladding has been removed from the façade of the Dominion in Harrow and concurrent demolition of the auditorium has been initiated. A degree of disquietude arises concerning stability of the frontage during these operations, prior to its integration into the new structure.

An organisation providing support to young persons currently occupies The Point in Milton Keynes and aspires to purchase the premises.

The CTA has responded to Historic England's consultation report upon listing of the Regal in Rotherham.

In concert with the local conservation officer and Save Britain's Heritage, the Association is canvassing against total demolition of the Sandonia in Stafford and pressing for retention of the elegant faience façade.

BACK TO THE WEST END

A report of the CTA visit to London's West End on Monday 27 September 2021 by Adam Unger

This was our first physical event in over 18 months, on a bright sunny afternoon, commencing at the flagship Odeon Luxe Leicester Square. We were welcomed by the resident organist, Donald MacKenzie, who had invited us to a tour inside. Unfortunately, the Compton organ couldn't be played, due to a fault with the lift motor but we were able to tour at stalls and circle level.



The foyer of the Odeon Luxe Leicester Square [2]



The auditorium of the Odeon Luxe Leicester Square [3]

The Odeon, which opened in 1937, was the collaboration of several architects; Harry Weedon, Andrew Mather and Thomas Braddock, who designed a distinctive coal black exterior and a well-conceived auditorium of ribbed plasterwork, with the famous 'flying ladies' by Raymond Briton Riviere. In 1967 a major modernisation scheme destroyed much of this original decoration, leaving just the ribbed covered plasterwork intact at circle level. The building has undergone several makeovers since then and this latest reincarnation is the best so far. At stalls level, much use has been made of wood on the walls, which has greatly assisted the acoustics of the organ and the sound system, which is Dolby Atmos along with the Dolby Vision system.

The 'flying ladies' have been reinstated again, albeit to a smaller scale. Luxury recliner seating and the enlarged entrance foyer has reduced seating capacity to 800 from 1,683 previously. A surprise was being shown a surviving remnant of the Alhambra Theatre, previously on the site, which was a blocked-up window, high up on an exterior wall.

We made our way across to the newly completed Odeon Luxe West End, on the site of the former Leicester Square Theatre / Odeon West End, which forms part of the Londoner hotel development. The exterior is clad in blue tiling with a vertical emphasis, with the Odeon signage featuring prominently on the corner. It is most regrettable that the original frontage wasn't retained, which could have been easily restored and incorporated in the new scheme. You descend several levels by escalator to the two screens, arriving in the bar and foyer. This development is an 'iceberg' scheme, being very deeply excavated.



The Odeon Luxe West End [4]

Before we went in, Richard Gray gave a history on the Leicester Square Theatre, which opened in 1930, designed by Andrew Mather. The two-balconied auditorium was remodelled in 1968, then in later years renamed and twinned, before closing in 2015 for redevelopment. The largest screen has 168 seats featuring recliner seating, Dolby Vision and Dolby Atmos, with a predominant use of black throughout.



The Empire Leicester Square [4]

Coming up to surface, we viewed the exterior of the Cineworld, formerly the Empire. When opened in 1928 as MGM's showcase, it was the largest (over 3,000 seats) and one of the most opulent cinemas in the West End, designed by the American cinema specialist, Thomas W Lamb in conjunction with FGM Chancellor of the Frank Matcham practice. The High Renaissance style interior was gutted in 1961 and replaced with a new cinema at circle level with a Mecca ballroom below. The 1962 auditorium, by architect George Coles, was subdivided into two new screens, opening in 2014. The strong American influence can be seen in the Venetian arch façade, which is a near copy of Lamb's design for the Albee Theater Cincinnati, Ohio. An interesting survivor is the exit on Leicester Street, the frontage of which dates from the 19th Century Empire Theatre.



The Warner/Vue in April 2016 [3]

The Warner/Vue of 1938 was designed by Edward A Stone and Thomas Somerford for Warner Brothers, with a well-composed façade, featuring a concave front, setback tower and bas reliefs by Bainbridge Copnall, representing Sight and Sound. The Vue must have undergone the most makeovers of any cinema in the West End, from modernisation as a single auditorium, through to twinning and further subdivision; the most extensive being demolition, save for the façade, for nine screens in 1993. Unfortunately, the façade wasn't sympathetically handled, with the insertion of a glazed corner, along with the treatment of the stonework, giving it an artificial sheen. In 2017 it underwent a makeover, including installing Sony Finitiy and Dolby Atmos.



The Rialto Coventry Street [4]

Moving on out of the Square, to the north side of Coventry Street is the former Rialto, which became a casino in 2002. This was one of the earliest 'deluxe' cinemas in the West End when it opened in 1913 as the West End Cinema, being renamed Rialto in 1924. The architect was Hippolyte Jean Blanc, responsible for the tall narrow exterior, the large arched window was previously partially obscured by advertising when a cinema. Horace Gilbert did the interior, which featured a particular good Edwardian Baroque auditorium, oval in plan. Incorporated in the basement was the famous Café De Paris nightclub. Twentieth Century Fox took on the Rialto in 1954 in addition to the Carlton Haymarket, that year. It is now a listed building.

Almost opposite, is the Prince of Wales Theatre, designed by Robert Cromie as a live theatre in 1937 and, of course, known for his many cinemas. This rather streamlined exterior in artificial stone has a corner cylindrical tower. Unfortunately, it was subjected to a refurbishment in 2004, resulting in heavy alterations to the exterior and its good art deco auditorium, despite being Grade II listed.

Arriving in the Haymarket, the bland looking block once housed the Capitol, which opened in 1925, designed by Andrew Mather, incorporating the Kit Kat Club below. The exterior, in Portland stone, was in an imposing but somewhat antiquated style, even for that date, being more Edwardian Baroque, as was also the elaborate auditorium. Subsequently, it was reconstructed in 1937 and renamed the Gaumont, designed by WE Trent. This in turn was replaced in 1962 by the single-floor Odeon (the Gaumont having closed in 1959) in the basement – the rest of the building was converted to offices. The exterior was shorn of all its decorative work and new windows inserted. Sadly, the Odeon closed in 1999 and lies disused.



The foyer of the Carlton/Empire Haymarket [4]

A short walk down, we arrived at the Carlton/Empire of 1927, designed by Frank Verity and Samuel Beverley for Paramount Pictures, intended for both film and live theatre use. It opened with the play *Lady Luck*, becoming a full-time cinema in 1930. In 1954, Twentieth Century Fox acquired the Carlton and it closed in 1977 for subdivision, with the stage being demolished for offices. It reopened as the Classic in 1979. Since then, it has been taken over by other operators and, under an exchange deal, it was renamed the Empire in 2017. The Italianate exterior is in Portland stone, with the Paramount trademark in the window pediments. The impressive entrance foyer is in the Adam style and has been sympathetically treated with chandeliers reinstated. We made our way up to the main screen ①, in the former upper balcony, the other two screens being in the former stalls area.



Screen ① auditorium at the Carlton/Empire Haymarket [4]

Much of the original plasterwork has remained intact in screen ① and you gain a real sense of the scale and atmosphere of the original auditorium. The principal decoration lies in the main ceiling and a deep frieze along the side walls, in the Italian Renaissance style. The beamed ceiling has laylights, which were originally illuminated and still retains two of the Lalique style glass light fittings. A larger screen has been installed in recent years. The Empire became a major campaign and success for the CTA casework team, when under threat of demolition by the freeholder, the Crown Estate, for a shopping precinct, it was granted Grade II listing in 2018. Since then, they have announced that the cinema will be refurbished and the casework team will continue to be consulted on this.



The London Pavilion Piccadilly Circus [4]

Along to Piccadilly Circus, where we stopped opposite the London Pavilion, which must have been the most photographed of all cinemas, appearing on countless postcards of the Circus. Dating from 1885 as part of the new street plan for the newly created Shaftesbury Avenue, the architects were James Ebenezer Saunders and RJ Worley, with films first shown in 1908. The stucco exterior features a colonnade on the principal frontage – however it is in a poor state of repair, along with tacky plastic signage. The interior was remodelled for United Artists in 1934 by FE Chancellor in a restrained art deco style with two balconies, becoming a full-time cinema. It closed in 1981 and was converted to retail use.

A short distance to Lower Regent Street took us to the former Plaza, one of the West End's most important cinemas and certainly one of its greatest losses. Built for Paramount, it was the first West End outlet to be built for an American studio. It opened in 1926, designed by Frank Verity. The fine stone exterior in the Italian Renaissance style is listed, incorporating a dome on the corner – atop its lantern is the Paramount trademark. We learnt that there was originally a water display that cascaded down the wave-patterned dome but not surprisingly this ceased early on. The interior was also in the Italian Renaissance style with very fine elaborate plasterwork, with two balconies like its sister theatre, the Carlton. This all survived until 1967, when the building was gutted for two new auditoria. In 2004 a comprehensive redevelopment took place with offices, a cinema complex and a Tesco on the ground floor. The CTA was involved, at the time, in the salvage of plasterwork, which is now on display in the foyer of the new offices in Jermyn Street.

We made our final visit to the former New Gallery Regent Street. Westmorland House by Sir John Burnet, Tait and Lorne was built in the early twentieth century, forming part of the redevelopment of Regent Street. It's a striking exterior, described as 'proto-Modernist', part of which is the entrance to the cinema, which opened in 1925, designed by Charles Nicholas and JE Dixon-Spain for Provincial Cinematograph Theatres, a rebuild of an earlier one of 1913. An early West End closure in 1953, it became the Seventh Day Adventist Church, who vacated in 1990. After some disuse, it became a Habitat shop and currently is a Burberry store, with the organ surviving.

On our visit, we also passed the sites of former newsreel theatres, including the Monseigneur News Theatre Leicester Square and Eros Piccadilly Circus. Although covering a relatively small area, we had viewed some ten cinemas in the space of three hours, such is the density in this part of London.

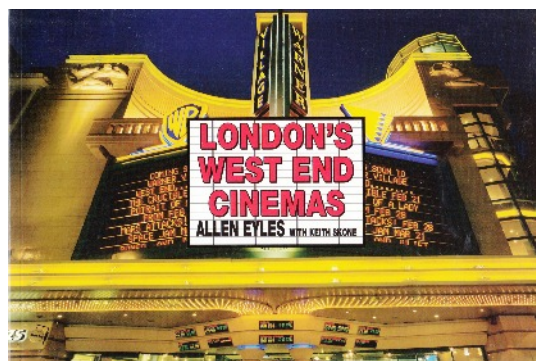


The Plaza Lower Regent Street [4]

Our thanks to Richard Gray for organising and leading this walk and to Ray Ritmeester for the visit notes and getting us access to the Odeon Luxe West End and Empire Haymarket – also to the staff and management who made us feel so welcome.

Photos: [1] the author; [2] Brian Peters; [3] Harry Rigby; [4] Ian Francis

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

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)

ALNWICK (Northumberland)



The Playhouse has reopened after being closed since autumn 2018 for a £2.5m refurbishment. It first opened in December 1925. The auditorium is now on the first floor. There is a 3¾ minute time-lapse video of the get-out process at youtu.be/L51M-nlf7ho. www.alnwickplayhouse.co.uk {47495}

Sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken March 2016

ASHFORD (Kent)

The long-promised extension to the twelve-screen Cineworld is set to open in March next year. It will feature both IMAX and 4DX screens. Ten of the existing screens have already been refurbished, along with the foyer. {24116}

Kent Online – 16 September, 1 October; sent in by Terry Hanstock

BASILDON (Essex)

Construction of the new ten-screen Empire has been completed and is being fitted out ready to open in February next year. It will have the largest screen in Essex and the second largest after Leicester Square. Basildon already has a sixteen-screen Cineworld.

Essex Live – 19 October

BLACKPOOL (Lancs)

A ground breaking ceremony has been held to mark the start of the contract for redevelopment of the Tower Street car park, which includes a nine-screen cinema. The first phase of the project will be completed by winter 2022 but no date has been given for the eventual opening.

Lancashire Live – 27 September

BOLTON (Greater Manchester)

The Council could use money from the government's 'Town Fund' to create a pocket park on the site of the former Odeon. It is hoped this new space would be used as a 'day-to-day space' for town centre workers, students and visitors, a venue for the food and drink festival and "one-off events such as outdoor film shows". The Odeon opened in August 1937 and films ceased in January 1983. It became a bingo hall, which closed in November 2007. The building was demolished in February 2007. {18619}

Bolton News – 14 September; sent in by Brian Hall

BOURNEMOUTH

Approval has been given in principle for 670m² of lower and mid-ground level commercial units, 65 apartments and 61 parking spaces at the site of the former ABC. The consent allows for "substantial demolition" of the site. However, the report goes on to say that four storeys are to be added on top of the existing building and the façade will be retained. Before more progress is made, a detailed planning consent will have to be drawn up and approved. Libra Homes bought the ABC and Odeon sites in 2017 for a reported £6.15m but saw its first applications to develop them rejected.

Daily Echo, Bournemouth – 28 August; sent in by John Forster

BRANDON (Suffolk)

The former Avenue has been demolished. It opened in 1934 and had become a full-time bingo club by the mid-1970s. This had closed by 2007 and the building laid empty since. See photo p15 last Bulletin. {27169}

Sent in by Darron Keeling & Ken Roe

BRIGHTON

The Grade II listed Duke of York's cinema celebrated its 111th anniversary on 22 September. It hosted a special screening of *Everybody's Talking About Jamie*. {2433}

The Argus, Brighton – 23 September

BRISTOL



The former Broadway in Filwood Park is set to be demolished and housing built on the site; planning permission for the demolition was granted in 2019. It opened in 1938 with 1,163 seats and was refurbished in 1961. Cinema use ended in 1971 and it became a full-time bingo club, which had closed by 1994. The cinema was designed by Dennis Hurford and FGW Chamberlain in a late art deco style that matched the shopping parade next to it and it was supported by a £7,000 loan from the Council. However, in return for the money, the cinema had to have a separate doorway at the back, with its own paybox, intended for working class people to use. {47281}

Bristol Live – 25 August; photo taken March 2006

The former St George's Hall / Granada in Redfield closed as a Wetherspoon's pub on 19 September. A developer wants to buy the site with a view to building flats. However more than 2,000 people have signed a petition to save it. The venue opened in 1912 and was extended in 1927. It became the Granada in July 1935 and films ceased in December 1961. It became a bingo club, which continued for about 30 years. The narrow frontage led to a long foyer with a 767-seat auditorium at right angles behind it. The Wetherspoons pub only used the foyer area; the auditorium was used for storage and is said to be largely intact with a balcony holding about 130 seats. {27949}

Bristol Post – 15 September; photo on p5



Planning permission has been granted to demolish most of Hengrove Leisure Park and build new homes. The site includes a fourteen-screen 2,654-seat Cineworld, which opened in December 1997. {24267}

Bristol Post – 23 September; photo taken March 2006

BURY ST EDMUNDS (Suffolk)

The Abbeygate has embarked on the final stage of refurbishment, bringing much-needed toilets to the foyer. The cinema is starting a three-month fundraising drive to raise money for the next part of the development, with building work expected to cost around £40,000. {24294}

East Anglian Daily Times – 18 September

CANTERBURY (Kent)



The new Marlowe Theatre reached its 10th birthday on 4 October. It replaced the previous theatre of the same name, which was converted from the former Odeon, which opened in August 1933. Films ceased in October 1981 and the building was extensively altered for theatre use, opening in July 1984. It was demolished in 2009.

Kent Online – 4 October; photo taken September 2021

CHELTENHAM (Glos)

The new Tivoli cinema opened in Regent Arcade on 24 September. It has four screens with a total capacity of 358 (74, 83, 94 & 73) all with sofa seating and a 32-seat Screening Room, which can be hired out for private events & parties. There is a café & licensed bar. There are some photos on the newspapers' websites at tinyurl.com/3pax4xn9 and tinyurl.com/4n8saj69. {66000}

SoGlos – 23 October; Gloucestershire Live – 24 September; sent in by Anthony Wills

CUMBERNAULD (Lanark)

The Lanternhouse officially opened on 2 October. It will host theatre, cinema, music, comedy, dance and a variety of community arts projects.

The National – 26 September

DERBY

Plans to return the Grade II listed Hippodrome to a working theatre have been shelved in favour of it becoming a live music venue, according to a new report from consultants. It is estimated that construction costs would be around £6.5 million and a total project cost of £8 million, excluding site acquisition. The 1914 theatre was maliciously damaged in 2008. {14683}

Derbyshire Live – 28 September; The Stage – 14 October; sent in by R David Simpson

DUMBARTON



Residents have launched a drive to reopen the former Rialto, which most recently operated as the Carlton bingo hall and is lying empty after closing down in August last year. It opened in 1914 with 1,245 seats and was rebuilt in 1981 with bingo downstairs and two small cinemas upstairs. The cinemas closed in 1989 and a brief reopening in 1993 was unsuccessful. {34870}

Daily Record – 9 September; photo taken September 2008

GLASGOW (Govan)

A developer has appealed after his bid to revamp the B-listed Lyceum was rejected – see p 23 last Bulletin. Under the plans, ground floor space would be turned into a concert hall with a separate entrance and capacity for 1,000 people standing, 800 sitting and 700 around tables. A 90-seat restaurant would be situated on the ground floor, also with a separate entrance, plus a 30-seat cafeteria and a first-floor cinema with nearly 500 seats. The applicant says he could address the issues raised by the Council's rejection of the proposal and listed building application. The notice issued by planners said there were various "inappropriate alterations". These included the loss of original entrance gates and the formation of new doors flush with the building line; removal of existing doors and stairs, the introduction of a full-height masonry partition in the foyer and addition of roller shutters on the east elevation. {15565}

Scottish Construction Now – 21 September

HAILSHAM (East Sussex)



The Grade II listed Pavilion celebrates its 100th birthday on 28 November. The architect was Henry W Coussens from Hastings and the cinema became notable for being the first of the Shipman and King circuit. The opening film starred Charlie Chaplin in *The Kid*. The cinema closed in 1965 but reopened as a bingo club in 1967 and this continued until 1985, when the building was left empty and neglected. June Bourne, a former Mayor in the town, was successful in bringing the community together for years of fundraising and, with the aid of some grants, the cinema was beautifully restored and reopened in 2000. The Pavilion is operated as a charity with the loyal support of a large number of volunteers providing a popular asset in this rapidly expanding town. {22446}

Sent in and photo [February 2008] by Colin & Margaret Hide; exterior photo on front cover

HARPENDEN (Herts)

A new culture centre has been named after the late comedian Eric Morecambe. The Eric Morecambe Centre includes a 511-seat theatre. Eric lived in the town at the height of his fame in a comedy double act with Ernie Wise, until his death in 1984. The centre's website includes a reference to films but your editor has been unable to find details of any films showing.

BBC News Website – 17 October; sent in by Margaret Burgoine

HULL (East Yorks)

The nine-screen Cineworld reopened on 29 September after a refurbishment that began in June. It opened as the UGC in May 2000 and was rebranded Cineworld in November 2005. It boasts a Superscreen, the circuit's 18th in the UK, with 395 seats, 4k laser projection and Dolby Atmos sound. There is also a 4DX screen, the circuit's 33rd in the UK and a 270° ScreenX, the 19th installation. The updated venue also features refurbished standard screens with new seats, premium seating and updates to the foyer and concession stands. {24772}

Hull Daily Mail – 17 September; photo on front cover

**Five more pages of Newsreel
in the full Bulletin**

LETTERS

CORRECTIONS

I must correct Tim McCullen on three Welsh names in his list of cinema names as they appear in the September/ October Bulletin. Brynammon (correct spelling Brynamman), Caerphilly and Cwmillgm-fell (correct spelling Cwmlllynfell) are all names of places in South Wales, not names of cinemas. He could have included the name of the cinema in Brynamman which is the **Public Hall**. I would like to add three names of Welsh cinemas to the list, two of which were taken from the name of the proprietor, namely the Rex Aberdare, after Rex Willis, son of the proprietor, who represented Wales at rugby in the 1950s and the Maxime Blackwood and Sketty (Swansea) after the owner of the chain, Maxwell Corne. Also, an unusual name for a cinema was the **Dorothy** in Llangollen but I cannot confirm the origin. Can anyone supply further information?

John Skinner

As a very new member (I joined CTA at the beginning of this month) I feel rather guilty about drawing your attention to an error (but I felt I should!). Living in Kingston-upon-Thames until I was 10 and then Surbiton until I was 24, the photo at the bottom of page 18 popped out at me for two reasons; 1) the Odeon Surbiton was one of the cinemas I frequented in the 1950s and 1960s and 2) my dad was appearing in the film that was showing when the photograph was taken! The photo is from 1971 or later, not the 1950s as stated. The cinema is advertising the (first) film version of *Dad's Army* as showing 'Today'. The film came out in 1971. My dad, stage name Edward Sinclair, played the part of The Verger in the TV series and the film. I'm enjoying reading the two editions of the Bulletin and enjoyed the Zoom presentation on Frank E Bromige.

Keith Perry

Editor's Note: My mistake. Clive at the Archive sent me two images and I put the wrong caption on the one I used.

MATTERS ARISING

Concerning the recent correspondence concerning Dufay Colour. The *Radio Parade* of 1935 is one of the best recreations of music hall and variety material I have come across. However I have two copies, one is under copyright control with a [U] certificate and the other copy is in the Public Domain with a [PG] certificate! The Public Domain copy has these words on the outside: "This Film is in the Public Domain; it does not affect any other copyrights". It is not clear how a film falls into the Public Domain or whether it affects the marketable value. It is not known whether a television channel – such as *Talking Pictures* – can show a Public Domain copy as I have not seen this annotation on a film. It is also not known if cinemas are licensed by the local authorities to show Public Domain films. Doubtless there are some CTA members who do know.



Recent correspondence has also covered the problem whether it is a good idea to use the façade of a cinema when the auditorium has been demolished. Opinions are divided on this subject. However a good example of a successful conversation is the former Evington cinema [above] in Leicester. The auditorium was demolished after a fire and housing was built behind the façade. This photo, which I took some time ago, shows the attractive conversion, which won an architect's award. The subject of retaining part of a building which has lost its original purpose applies to Southampton, which was extensively bombed during the war. The only part of bombed Southampton that is

retained is a small part near the Central station known as Blechynden. Although tidied up a few years ago, it is still not a particularly attractive area. I am in two minds about whether it would have been better to have cleared the area completely.

Ian Patterson



Further to the articles about old theatres and cinemas in Leicester I am enclosing a photograph of the cinema in nearby Abbey Street under the later names of **Belle Vue** and **City** cinema [above]. Further information has come to hand about the other old theatres. The **Pavilion** on the corner of Belgrave Gate and Wilton Street started as the **Old Cheese** in 1864 and was renamed **Paul's Concert Music Hall** in 1876. It subsequently was renamed the **Prince of Wales Theatre** and the **Midland Music Hall** but was destroyed by fire in 1889. The new building on the site was renamed **The Prince of Wales Theatre of Variety** dating from 1890 but changed hands in 1892, being renamed **The New Theatre of Varieties**. Moving pictures were first shown there in 1896. The new theatre was wound up in 1898. In 1891 it became the **Pavilion**. It became known as **The Old Pav**. It closed in 1930 and was demolished for road widening. Older residents remembered it as a rowdy dowdy music hall where the audience used to throw coins at the performers. Things sometimes got out of control and the police had to be called; the police station was just nearby! The **Hippodrome** on the corner of Wharf Street and Gladstone Street dated from 1862 but changed its name to **New Oxford Music Hall** and was rented out in 1869 to the **Hallelujah Band**. Subsequent name and other changes were:

1880 Gladstone Hall

1883 Gaiety Palace of Varieties

At this time the Elephant Man Joseph Merrick exhibited himself.

1896 Moving pictures were first shown there.

1908 Empire Theatre showing films full-time.

1921 Hippodrome Cinema

1940 Cinema Closed

The building narrowly escaped the slum clearance of the 1960s and remained under other ownership until very recently, when it was demolished. The Wharf Street area was a thriving area of small businesses. There is some interesting information about the area on the *Leicester Mercury* website www.leicestermercury.co.uk.

Ian Patterson

QUERIES FROM LAST BULLETIN ANSWERED

The **Darncombe Kinema**, Moss Side (p17), was opened in 1910 by Harold Ernest Buxton, a dyers' traveller and Fred Hargeaves, an electrical engineer. The **Cinema**, Polperro (p28), was owned by Edwin Pearn (1888-1949) a Looe coal merchant, who also owned the **Regent Cinema** in Looe. His will describes him as a **Cinema Proprietor**. It was referred to as the **Polperro Cinema** in 1955 and at that time was operated by Edwin Pearn's son, Keith and his widow, Susan.

Terry Hanstock

Two more pages of letters
in the full Bulletin

BIRTH OF A STAR

By Tim McCullen

In a letter on p30 of Bulletin 47/6 [Nov/Dec 2013] I asked if anyone had information about the former **Stella** cinema in Bantry, County Cork, Ireland. There was no response from the membership but that may have been because I wrote 'Botany Bay' instead of 'Bantry Bay'. The answer is to be found in *Irish Cinemas* by Jim Keenan. I wrote to Jim and he gave permission to print an extract from his book [below]; he also kindly sent some photos and a copy of the local newspaper report of the opening in April 1927 [opposite]. {52035}



The Stella Bantry operating as a cinema in the 1970s

Founded by John M Murphy, the **Stella Cinema** opened on 26 April 1927. It seated about 500 and the first film shown there was *The Midshipman*, Under the heading 'A rat goes to the pictures', the *Irish Press* reported on 27 October 1955 that "Women screamed in Bantry's **Stella Cinema** when a rat got into the parterre during a showing of *Sabrina Fair*." Early on the morning of 15 July 1942, a serious fire occurred at the cinema, which completely destroyed it, leaving only the outer walls standing. It was rebuilt but by the late 1970s the cinema had deteriorated badly and the roof leaked. It closed for a major renovation and opened again on 25 July 1980 with *The Empire Strikes Back*. The newly-refurbished cinema seated 203 (124 in the stalls and 79 in the balcony). It continued to operate throughout the 1980s but was put up for sale in 1990. In recent years the building was used as a furniture store then offices for the Bantry Show. it had no connection to the **Stella** in Rathmines in Dublin.



The Stella Bantry in September 2017

Stella Cinema, Bantry

We have been instructed by the Reps. of the late Mr. William Rex Murphy to offer for sale as a going concern the **Stella Cinema**, Wolfe Tone Square, Bantry. The cinema is currently enjoying a good business as it has a contract for the supply of all the latest releases. The premises is ideally situated in Wolfe Tone Square to lend itself to any type of business, such as shopping complex incorporating small cinema, etc.

SOLR: O'Donovan, Murphy & Co. Bantry
Full particulars and appointment to view:
KEY PROPERTIES, ESTATE AGENTS, BANTRY
TEL: (027) 501111 FAX No. (027) 51601

BIRTH OF A STAR

On the very kindly invitation of the proprietors and the management of the new picture hall, the **Stella** in Bantry, a press party attended at the opening ceremony on Tuesday evening. Editorial and reportorial, we were all asked to the party and those of us who were able to call round received a real stellar welcome.

It was a big night in the town of the famous lyric. Every lassie to her sailor lad (or possibly to her bank clerk or Civic Guard) was handing out the glad eye and when the saxophonist, with a soft note tuning, weighed in at about 9-o'clock, there was no thought of that third minor verse of that great song and the ending that must come to us all.

The **Stella** is a real addition to Bantry. Occupying a fine site and structurally very imposing, this latest addition to the amusement venues of West Cork immediately catches the eye of the visitor to the town. Inside, everything is of the best and cosiest. No detail that might make for the comfort and enjoyment of patrons has been overlooked. Undoubtedly the Bros Murphy have in the **Stella** a very definite and distinguished achievement to their credit. A real nice trio of boys they are too, deserving success which is attending their enterprises in Bantry, Skibbereen and Bere Island.

The hall is fitted to seat five hundred people but there were about five hundred extra in the vicinity of the **Stella** on Tuesday evening. I pitied the box-office man and all the rest of the staff who were doing their best to cope with the crush. Those who were too late and who had, perforce, to remain in the square, would have filled any cinema in West Cork bar the **Stella**.

I liked the picture but, better still, I liked the music. Mrs Baldwin was at the piano and our friend Denis Murphy was bringing the harmonics out of the violin. Denis plays in the Skibbereen Cinema and at most of our local dances. A new chum, a friend of Jack Murphy, came along with his saxophone and was responsible for applause in the hall. The picture, *The Midshipman* was good but when Joe and his sparring partner on the effects, Reggie Williams, got going, all the audience forgot the screen and wanted to do a Charleston over the tip-up chairs.

Mr Walter Prendergast, the most efficient and assiduous of managers, was moving around seeing to the comfort of all. Here is a citizen whose business acumen, possibly, has not yet been quite appreciated in West Cork; his good nature and gentlemanliness have been perceived for months back by some of us. Mr Tom Hurley, the man who (when all is said and written) puts the pictures before us, was also on the ground. The projection on Tuesday evening was perfect. Personally, I like that big bloke, Tom Hurley; he reminds me of Buck Jones.

At the conclusion of the programme, Mr PJ Cullinane, UDC Skibbereen, wished good luck to the house. His remarks, expressed in a sporting spirit and in sporting language, were very favourably received. Mr Michael Murphy replied in appropriate terms.

Southern Star - Saturday 30 April 1927

