



CINEMA
THEATRE
ASSOCIATION

www.cta-uk.org

BULLETIN

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July / August 2022



The Rex Elland, which has hosted a wedding – see p21; photo taken June 2005



The Odeon Luxe Darlington, which was due to close on 30 June – see p20; photo taken September 2006

FROM YOUR EDITOR

My request in the last issue for more material produced a good response. Thanks to everyone who sent things in. However, I ran into the 'multiple of four pages' restriction again so I'm afraid I had no room for holiday snaps. They're not time-sensitive so I'll put them in as soon as I can. A few Newsreel and Business items came in just as I was completing the layout of this edition. For the same reason as above, I couldn't fit them in so I'll do so next time. I would also like to thank Neville Taylor for proof-reading.

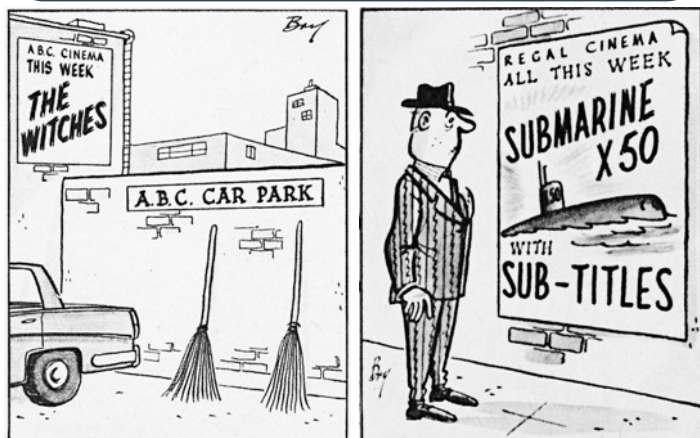
Particular thanks to Hector Hill, author of the article on p14. Hector says there existed a couple of cinemas that had seats on both sides of the screen. In the days of silent films, seats on the 'wrong' side must have been cheaper, for those who could read captions backwards! Putting loudspeakers behind the screen for sound obviously stopped this practice. Hector also suggested that a suitable topic for an article would be 'Cinemas on Ships'. I know some of our members are also members of the Ocean Liner Society – so, how about it, shipmates?

In previous editions I have printed some cinematic quotations, sent in by Ben Doman. I'm nearing the end of his list so why not send me your favourite quotations? Mine is by Robert Morley in *Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines*, who says, "The trouble with these International affairs is that they attract foreigners!"

I would still like to relinquish the reins of the Bulletin. There is a letter from Richard Hagon on p24 to this effect. If you would like to take over, please contact me to see what is involved. I don't want to get to a point where I just have to resign, with no obvious successor.

Harry Rigby, Editor CTA Bulletin

CARTOON CORNER



From ABC Film Review; sent in by Ben Doman

Quick Guide to CTA Social Media



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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

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BULLETIN: Members are invited to submit items for possible publication to the Bulletin Editor. However, it is stressed that the publication of an item does not necessarily imply that it reflects the views of the Cinema Theatre Association, its Committee or its Bulletin Editor.

It is assumed that submissions are for publication, unless stated otherwise; items may be shortened or edited at the discretion of the Editor.

Please state if you require items to be returned and enclose SAE, otherwise everything will be passed on to the CTA Archive.

VISITS: Members and non-members are reminded that they attend visits entirely at their own risk and no responsibility can be accepted by the Cinema Theatre Association or the owners of the buildings for any accidents or injury sustained during the course of any visit.

PRODUCTS: The Cinema Theatre Association does not necessarily recommend or endorse any products or services advertised in the Bulletin or in any flyer or document included in any mailings to members.

Typeset in Franklin Gothic Book by Harry Rigby

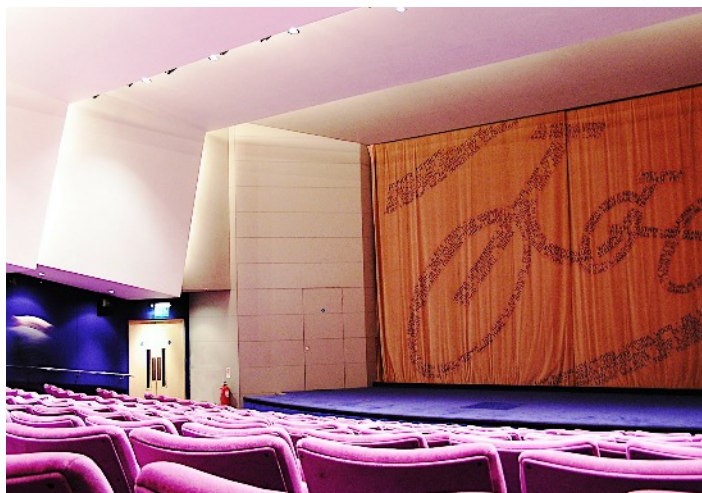
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DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE
SATURDAY 20 AUGUST

VISITS AND EVENTS

A Tricycle mysteriously mutates into a Kiln

Monday 15 August, 1:30pm, Kiln cinema,
269 Kilburn High Road, London, NW6 7JR
(at the eastern end of Buckley Road)
arranged by Richard Gray and Ray Ritmeester



The auditorium of the Tricycle in September 2006

Originally the Tricycle cinema, built as an adjunct to the Tricycle theatre (the conversion of a late Victorian fraternity headquarters), opened in 1998 and filled a gap for film-goers in the area after the 202-seat cinema in the restaurant of the nearby Gaumont State closed in 1990. The architect was Tim Foster and he created one of the most attractive cinema auditoriums of relatively recent years, avoiding the ubiquitous black box look of the average multiplex. It relies on overlapping wall planes to house cove lighting and reinterprets the visual ethos of 1930s cinema interiors. The single-level seating is arranged in stepped formation, affording excellent sight-lines, while above a box seats an extra eleven Kilburn-ites. The screen curtain had decoration representing the outline of a tricycle but on closer inspection this could be seen to be formed from the names of the sponsors, patrons and film stars supporting the venture. In 2018 the Tricycle closed for refurbishment (with the unfortunate loss of the cove lighting and the screen curtain) to reopen under the new name of Kiln, both for the cinema and theatre, the invention of the artistic director who thought the word 'associative with Kilburn' and that Kilns 'have a relationship with culture across the world ... melting pots'.



The Gaumont State Kilburn in September 2006

Following the Kiln we will visit the Grade II* listed Gaumont State at 3pm. This will give enough time for people to look at the Kiln, perhaps have a cup of coffee at the café there and then walk down to the State, which isn't very far.

The Gaumont State 195-9 Kilburn High Road, opened in 1937 for Hyams Theatres in collaboration with Gaumont and was designed by George Coles in an elaborate Classical style. It was largest cinema in England - with 4,004 seats - and it remained as such. This figure fell in 1960 after the rear stalls had been partitioned off as a ballroom. The State later went over to bingo and is now a church. The Wurlitzer survives, although now in poor condition.

We also hope to visit the Grade II listed former Grange at 234 Kilburn High Road but this is subject to negotiation with the church that occupies the building.

Booking: To book a place use the Visits email address, visits@cta-uk.org or if you are unable to access the Internet please use the events registration line 020 8800 8393. In both cases please leave contact details so that we can update you on any changes to times of visits to venues. Updates can also be found on the Visits page of the CTA website – click on **MEMBERS' AREA >** to login. There will be a small charge for administration and notes, payable on the day.

Getting There: The nearest Tube station is Kilburn on the Jubilee line, from where turn right and walk down Kilburn High Road. The Kiln is on the right-hand side with a secondary entrance on Buckley Road. Those using Brondesbury Overground station will have a slightly shorter walk using the same route. There are also numerous bus routes in Kilburn High Road.

Coming Soon

Projected Picture Trust [PPT] Collection, Cinemas of Halifax and Morecambe Winter Gardens

28-30 September 2022

The CTA is proposing a visit to the home of the Projected Picture Trust [PPT] Collection at Dean Clough Mills, Halifax, West Yorkshire, along with a walking tour of town centre cinema and theatre buildings on 28 & 29 September, including; Regal, Picture House, Odeon, Theatre Royal, Playhouse & Victoria Theatre, with pre-planned interior visits where possible. Halifax is also home to the historic Piece Hall and Calderdale Industrial Museum, which are both nearby.



The Odeon Halifax in August 2011

This event is being planned to coincide with the Frank Matcham Society visit to the Morecambe Winter Gardens on Friday 30 September, with a guided tour of the building in the afternoon. We will endeavour to arrange transport between Halifax and Morecambe to allow greater convenience for members.

Further details of some of these venues may be found via the following web pages:

- ▶ theppt.org
- ▶ www.thepiecehall.co.uk
- ▶ www.morecambewintergardens.com

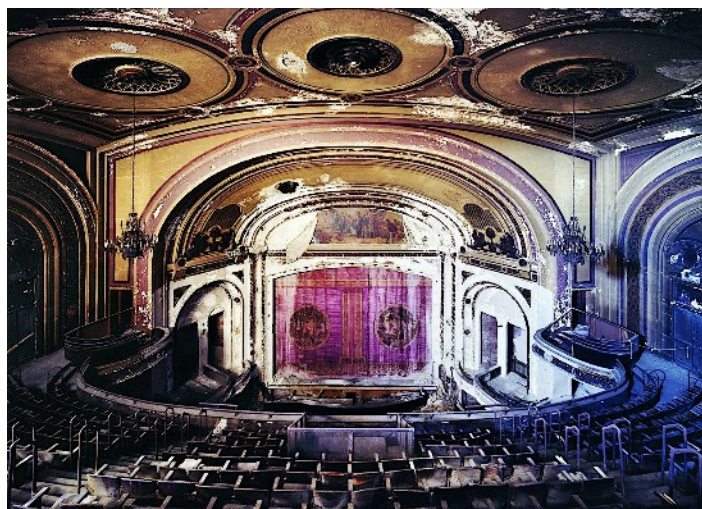
To enable details of this visit to be finalised please email Rob Chesterfield [beverleyparks@gmail.com] or telephone 07917 468 209 to express your interest and register for further information by Monday 1 August.

CTA VIRTUAL TALKS

This is to advise that there is no Zoom talk arranged for the month of August.

Advance details of Zoom talks later this year:

SATURDAY 3 SEPTEMBER AT 5:30PM



MOVIE THEATERS – marking the book launch earlier this year of their ‘gigantic’ and lavishly photographed survey of numerous American movies theaters. This talk will be given by the joint authors Yves Marchand and Romain Meffre.

OCTOBER (date to be confirmed)

IMAX AT THE SCIENCE MUSEUM – A talk about the recently upgraded IMAX installation at the Science Museum, South Kensington, London.

Further information and booking details will be given in the next edition of the Bulletin.

CTA's Virtual Talks

CAN YOU CONTRIBUTE YOUR SKILLS?

Many of you have now enjoyed our varied programme of virtual talks and presentations on the CTA's Zoom channel. Our audience interest and support is expanding and we are looking forward to arranging more talks but to achieve this we need to enlarge our small friendly support team.

If you are enthusiastic and would like to volunteer your technical, digital or other skills, please do get in touch, particularly if you can assist in any following areas – we'd love to hear from you:

- ▶ Talks programming
- ▶ Introducing a talk programme on-line
- ▶ Video production and editing
- ▶ On location video camera recording
- ▶ Familiarity with Zoom operations
- ▶ Familiarity with On-line Ticketing systems



INVITATION TO PRESENTERS – HERE IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY

As the variety of our cinema related subjects broadens, we would be pleased to receive offers and suggestions for more talks and presentations.

If you have an interesting subject or a story to share with our audience and would like to showcase it on the CTA's Zoom channel, we can help with its production and presentation.

OR – perhaps you have already created and presented your story with images (stills/movies) on social media, YouTube etc, and would like it to be seen by our audience of cinema enthusiasts.

Please contact: Richard Norman

Mobile: 07974 159801 or

Email: RichardNormanCTA@aol.com

POSTPONED ARCHIVE VISIT

The visit to the Archive and the Palace Theatre Westcliff-on-Sea, advertised on p3 of the last Bulletin, had to be postponed because of a rail strike. It has been rearranged for Saturday 23 July so it is still possible to book a place on the tour on this revised date. Assuming further strike action has not been called, the visit will go ahead that day.



Volunteers working at the Archive

The cost will be £20 per person, to include coach between the venues, driver's gratuity and refreshments. Booking can be done on-line using TicketSource: www.ticketsource.co.uk. Simply enter 'Cinema Theatre Association' into their Search Box.

For full information please see p3 of the last Bulletin. Further details are also available on the CTA website cta-uk.org/visits-events/forthcoming or by phone to the organiser, David Simpson, on 01702 464733 or 07754 391163.

COMING SOON

Here are provisional details of some 'in person' events planned for the remainder of the year:

October	Plaza Stockport to celebrate 90 th Anniversary of opening on 7 October 1932. Plus: Rex Wilmslow, Savoy Heaton Moor and possibly Buxton Opera House. Probably a weekend visit.
Late October OR November	IMAX Science Museum, South Kensington. Plus: Institut Français Ciné Lumière
November	Alan Baxter's Gallery, Farringdon. A cinema music presentation entitled <i>When Cinema Let In The Light, Part 2 – The Organist Entertains</i> by Martin Cleave.
December	Christmas Party –date to be fixed

OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

not organised by the CTA

The Film Fair

Saturday 23 July & Saturday 1 October, 10:30am to 4pm
Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, WC1R 4RL

A selection of quality stands loaded with film memorabilia & collectibles, classics, lobby cards, photographs, books, posters, soundtracks, press books, autographs etc. www.midnight-media.net

London Film Fairs

Sunday 11 September & Sunday 6 November
Royal National Hotel, Bedford Way, London WC1H 0DG

The conventions presents dealers from all over the UK, Europe, US, Canada, Australia and South America that specialise in vintage and modern film memorabilia. Items cover the history of cinema from the silents to present day blockbusters. londonfilmconvention.co.uk

Exhibition: Wonderland – Birmingham's Cinema Stories

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, Chamberlain Square, B3 3DH
Open now until 28 October, free admission, daily 10-5.

Wonderland explores how cinema has shaped the streets, social lives and dreams of Brummies over the past 125 years. The display will showcase unseen photographs and cinema memorabilia, alongside historic magic lanterns and optical toys from Birmingham's Collection. A unique 3D map created by SpacePlay will set the scene for a treasure hunt across the City and visitors can get involved by sharing their own cinema-going memories, watch film screenings or take part in drop-in activities. More information: flatpackfestival.org.uk/projects/wonderland

HERITAGE CASEWORK

By Tim Hatcher

Grade II* Listed

Following many postponements, remedial work is finally commencing at the **State** in Grays, which process will include the entire replacement of the roofing; the budget for this renovation scheme has been increased by the promoter. Progress of the enterprise will be closely monitored by the Association in order to ensure compliance with details and conditions of the approved designs.

At a meeting convened between heritage and other interested bodies concerning issues surrounding the restoration process propounded for the **Granada** in Walthamstow, mixed progress was secured. As an exemplar, the original fascia of the balcony is to be retained, yet the rail to the orchestra pit will be substituted by a replica. Limited advancement to repair of the organ was reported. A future site visit is proposed, during which it is anticipated that further melioration may result.

Grade II Listed

Planners at Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council are seeking legal opinion concerning the feasibility of linking planning permission for refurbishment of the **Odeon** (now **Empire**) to that relating to the proposed development on the site of the cinema's car park. The CTA is supporting this approach.

A planning application has been made to convert two floors of the foyer block of the **Ritz** in Ilkeston into a licensed hostelry. The Association is offering qualified support for the scheme whilst requesting that detailed conditions be applied to any resultant planning consent.

Liverpool City Council has placed the **Forum** with its Property Asset Management Service for marketing. It is unknown if the intention is to lease the building or to relinquish its freehold; further enquiries concerning the intended disposal will follow. Coincident with this announcement, a theatre company has expressed sedulous interest in utilisation of the structure.

A proposal has been submitted to erect three small residential blocks upon the car park area of the **Majestic** in Mapperley. This scheme includes no reference to the venue itself, although a Planning Officer at Nottingham City Council is advocating that any development should include its restoration. This stance is endorsed by the CTA



The Grand Casino Southport in June 2021

The Mikhail Hotel and Leisure Group has submitted an application to refurbish and repurpose the forward section of the **Grand Casino** in Southport, which concept features a new structure within the current auditorium. The Association envisions a more integrated strategy for the cinema and thus objects to this proposition.

Unlisted

The **Granville Theatre** in Ramsgate, within which one section of its subdivision is equipped for cinema exhibition, has been placed on the Association's 'At Risk' register following a request from a local campaigner. See p12.



The Odeon Bridgwater in February 2006

Following the Twentieth Century Society's decision not to support a national listing application for the **Odeon** in Bridgwater, a campaigner is attempting to secure local listing for the property.

A local councillor has sought support from the Association in his endeavour to prevent redevelopment of the **Redfield** in Bristol; this has been proffered.



The Danilo Hinckley in 2010

The **Danilo** in Hinckley is now 'under offer', having been placed on the market at an asking price of £330,000. The local Conservation Officer shares the view of the Association that the façade and Germanically-inspired corner composition should be retained.

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Dolby House, Barrington Gate, Holbeach, Spalding, PE12 7DA
or email: membership@cinema-organs.org.uk
www.cinema-organs.org.uk

PUBLICATIONS

Second-Hand Book List

These titles were available when this list was prepared but please note there are only single copies of most titles, so a book may have sold out by the time you order. Please add £3.40 to your order for post and packing. Overseas orders – please email sales@cta-uk.org for postal charge, or use credit/debit card.

To order by post: Please send orders to Jeremy Buck, CTA Sales, 34 Pelham Road, London N22 6LN. Please enclose a cheque/postal order payable to Cinema Theatre Association, or send your credit/debit card details, including expiry date and security number.

To order online: please send your order to sales@cta-uk.org Your order will be confirmed and instructions given how to make payment by PayPal.

TITLE	AUTHOR	£
Amber Valley Gazetteer of Greater London Suburban Cinemas 1946-86 (softback, black and white cover)	Malcolm Webb	12
ABC Turnpike Lane 50 years	D Jones & K Whelan	1
ABC Mile End the First 100 Years	D Jones & K Whelan	1
Ace Rayners Lane 50 Golden Years	Mercia CS	2
A Cinema Near You (Derbyshire)	Ashley Franklin	3
American Picture Palaces (softback)	David Naylor	10
Best Remaining Seats – The Golden Age of the Movie Palace (softback edition)	Ben M Hall	10
Birmingham Cinemas – Films & Stars 1900-60	Victor Price	15
Black Family of Sunderland: Circuits and Cinemas	Frank Manders	2
Boston & Spalding Entertainment	Mervyn Gould	3
Cathedrals of the Movies (hardback)	David Atwell	15
Cathedrals of the Movies (softback)	David Atwell	10
Cinemas in Britain (1 st edition 1996)	Richard Gray	5
Cinemas of Croydon (1989 edition)	A Eyles & K Skone	3
Cinemas of Essex	Bob Grimwood	5
Cinemas of Lincoln	George Clarke	2
Cinemas of the Black Country (1 st edition 1982 softback)	Ned Williams	3
Cinemas of Portsmouth	Barker, Brown, Greer	3
Dream Palaces of Liverpool (1988 edition)	Harold Ackroyd	4
Dream Palaces of Richmond-on-Thames	Fred Windsor	2
Enter the Dream House: South London	Ed. M O'Brien	5
Empires, Hippodromes & Palaces (Frank Matcham)	Jack Read	5
Fading Lights Silver Screens (Belfast)	Michael Open	4
Frank Matcham Theatre Architect	Ed. Brian Walker	30
From Grand to Grove: South Bedfordshire	Eddie Grabham	8
Gaumont British Cinemas	Allen Eyles	20
Granada Woolwich: Opening souvenir booklet	Various	5
Harwich Electric Palace	Chris Strachan	10
Kalee Model Eleven Projector – handbook/catalogue 1933	Various	4
Kinema at Kinver	B Parker & N Williams	1
London's Suburban Cinemas 1946-80	MAF Webb	2
Mercia Reference Guide	A Eyles & K Skone	4
London's West End Cinemas (Hardback 1991)	A Eyles & K Skone	3
London's West End Cinemas (Paperback 1984)	A Eyles & K Skone	3
London's West End Cinemas (Paperback 1991)	A Eyles & K Skone	3
Long-Gone Cinemas of Swale (Kent)	John Clancy	2
Mercia Bioscope: The Paramount Astorias	David Jones	2
Mercia Bioscope: Typical Odeons in Review	n/a	2
Odeon Muswell Hill: 50 th Anniversary programme	Various	7
Picture House in East Anglia	Stephen Peart	3
Picture House Rugeley Golden Jubilee Souvenir	Chris J Ingram	1
Picture Palace – A Social History of the Cinema	Audrey Field	2
Picture Palace & Other Buildings for the Movies	Dennis Sharp	15
Picture Palaces Remembered (Dover, Deal, Folkestone)	J Roy & T Thompson	5
Rotherham's Film Pioneers 1898 to 1911	Stuart Smith	1
Shazam! Regal Cinema, Evesham	Rob Hemming	5
Shepperton Studios – A Personal View	Derek Threadgall	2
Sound Film Projection (1949)	Molloy/Campbell &c	4
Souvenir of Savoy Leyton (reprint of opening brochure)	n/a	1
Talking Pictures (1932)	Bernard Brown	5
Temples of Dreams: Eastbourne	Peter Hodges	4
Theatres Trust Guide to British Theatres 1750-1950	Various	4
The Projectionist's Handbook (1933)	Pitchford/Coombs	5
West Yorkshire Cinemas & Theatres	Peter Tuffrey	5
York Cinemas	Mervyn Gould	5

Back Numbers Available

PICTURE HOUSE MAGAZINE

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

- Nos 6, 8 – £1.50 each
- Nos 16, 17, 18 – £3.00 each
- Nos 19, 21, 22 – £3.50 each
- Nos 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 – £4.50 each
- No 30 – £5.00
- No 31 – £7.50
- Nos 32, 33, 34, 35 – £5.00 each
- No 36 – £6.00
- Nos 37, 45 – £8.50
- Nos 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 46 – £6.00 each

For details of contents, see Bulletin 56/2, or online at www.cta-uk.org/publishing/picture-house

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 2020 are £4.00 per year (6 issues), individual copies are £1.00 each. Prices for issues in 2021 and 2022 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.

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.

Also Available (but not from the Sales Officer)

London's Lost Music Venues 2, by Paul Talling.
Paperback, 292 pages, illustrated. ISBN 978-1916232716.
From Amazon and bookshops, £14.99

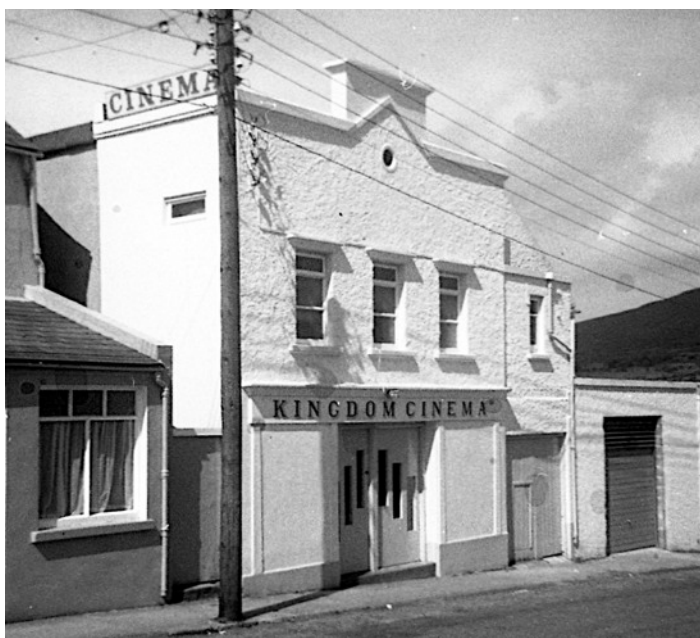
The second volume of the photographic guide to the iconic lost live music venues of London, as they are today. The first volume, issued in 2020, featured over 100 lost smaller venues from all over London. This second volume features over 140 more, focusing on the larger halls and theatres of London's musical past as well as a few smaller venues not included in the first volume plus some more recent losses. This book takes a look at some of the iconic venues of the last 60 years with images, flyers and modern-day photos of what they are now. Venues include Hammersmith Palais, Earls Court, The Borderline, The Lyceum and many more. Featuring photos, adverts & tickets, this book is a reminder of a less homogenised London, taking you back to the City's halcyon days of Rock 'N' Roll, Jazz, Blues, Rock, Punk, Indie and more. Several ex-cinemas are included, including the Granada Woolwich, Odeon Romford, Astoria Charing Cross Road and the Rainbow Finsbury Park.



IRISH CINEMA COMPARISON



The Adelphi Athlone (Co Westmeath) {52023}



The Kingdom Cinema Cahersiveen (Co Kerry) {52036}



The Regal Youghal (Co Cork) {31087}

By Kevin Wheelan & Harry Rigby

In 1971 Kevin's parents, Henry & Doris Wheelan, toured Ireland. Kevin asked them to take photos of any cinemas they came across and this resulted in 58 pictures. Three are presented here on the left. Below are the same three cinemas, in the same order, as photographed by Harry on a tour of Ireland in September 2018, 47 years later. You can see how they have changed. We have given the Cinema Treasures reference numbers so you can look up their history. We hope to include some more in future Bulletins.



YOUGHAL (Co Cork)

The Horgan family were early cinema pioneers in Youghal but their long-closed Regal cinema there has shown recent signs of a roof collapse. The building has been out of all commercial use since 2012. The cinema originally opened in 1917, with a major fire and reconstruction in the 1930s.

Sent in by Bob Bradshaw

THE LONDON PAVILION

By Tim McCullen

*A Cinema in the West End that did not get developed?
Would it have survived if it had? The building's exterior
dates from 1885 with films being shown in 1908
and it became the last West End Music Hall.*

The building underwent an almost complete reconstruction to form a new cinema with three levels; stalls (716) circle (242) and upper circle (251) total seating 1,209 and opened as the London Pavilion on 5 September 1934. It was designed by FGM Chancellor of the late Frank Matcham's practice for AE Abrahams with Cecil Masey representing. The venue was operated by United Artists. It had a fairly uneventful life but was used for a Charity Premiere of *The Bed Sitting Room* (1969) as well as a number of Beatles films.



The cinema closed on 26 April 1981 with *The Idol Maker* when it seated stalls (511) circle (241) and upper circle (252) and was still operated by United Artists. Theatre-managements were keen to use the venue as a theatre; however, it was planned to convert the building into a shopping mall with two cinema screens, seating 578 and 406, at the top of the building with escalator access.

The building stood empty for many years and the cinemas were never built, possibly due to the rent demanded making such a venue unviable. Also at that time, the early 1980s, there was a severe economic downturn, cinema admissions were falling and there was a lot of other cinema competition in the Leicester Square, Haymarket and lower Piccadilly areas, where there had already been subdivisions.

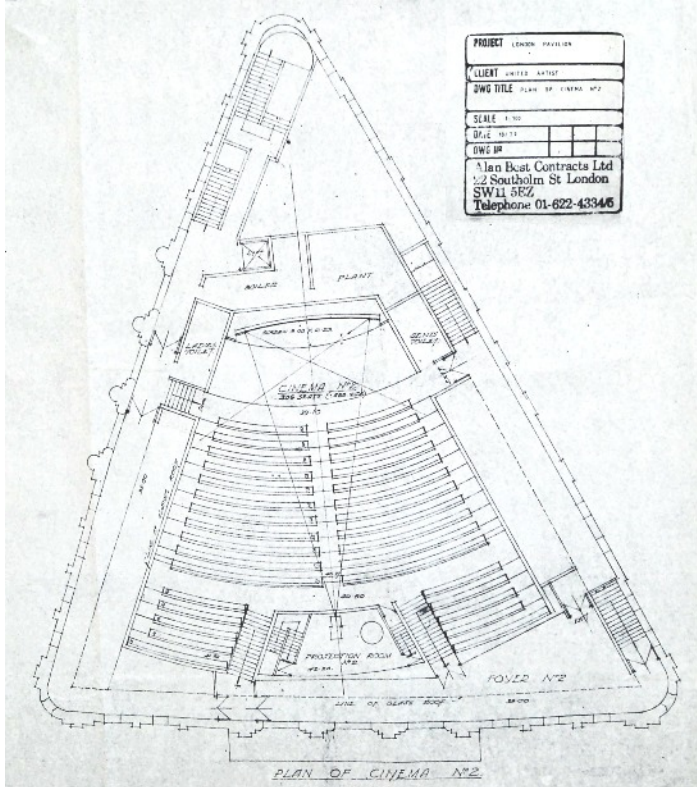
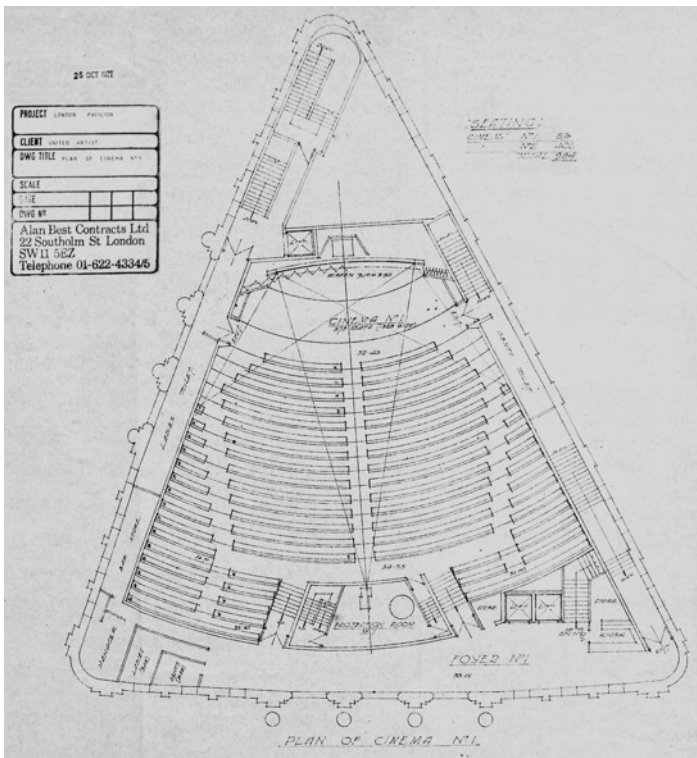
Almost opposite, in Lower Regent Street, the Plaza had four screens and it is understood that two more screens were to be added at the top of that building. This was never done. If anyone has any further information, plans etc, the Archive would like to have them.

Internal reconstruction began in about 1986 and a new shopping complex opened in about 1989 with the cinema space being used by Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum, Ripley's 'Believe it or Not' and latterly Body Worlds (now permanently closed). The London Pavilion name just survives at the tops of several windows on the corner.

The building faces redevelopment again, possibly becoming a hotel, although I have read that interest had been expressed in its reuse as a theatre. That seems unlikely as the building was gutted internally to build the shopping centre. Would a hotel be suitable use for the building? Not too far away the Regent Palace hotel closed in 2006 for mainly internal redevelopment, although a former art deco restaurant in its basement survives as Brasserie Zédel. I feel that that might be over the top even for my art deco interests.



The exterior (c1935) & three interiors (CTA 1975 visit)
of the London Pavilion –visit photos by Sid Ray



Plans dated 1979 for the proposed twin cinemas at the London Pavilion



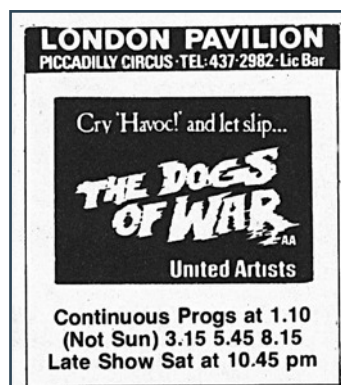
The London Pavilion in March 1966 –photo by Harry Rigby



The CTA visit on the roof of the London Pavilion in May 1975



The London Pavilion in February 1982, shortly after closure



Would the two-screen cinema have survived in the long-term? With 578 + 406 seats they may have been too large at the time; would they have been split up again and who would operate them now? The CTA visited the building on 18 May 1975 (see pictures) as well as the National Film Theatre at Waterloo and plans for the shopping arcade/cinema developments dated from October 1979. Would the visit have happened, knowing these plans were in the pipeline?

If anyone has photos of the building from the 1980s, the Archive would like to have them.

Images from CTA Archive

THE (1970) GOOD CINEMA GUIDE

By Ben Doman

No 29 – CAMEO TOLLCROSS, EDINBURGH

"There is no doubt that the well-run independent cinema has an advantage over the chain house. There is that measure of freedom for the management, which enables them to put their own ideas into practice and although they are in a less satisfactory position so far as films are concerned, they have every opportunity of cashing in on the amenity side of cinema entertainment." So starts Louis Lowenthal upon his visit to the Cameo Tollcross, Edinburgh, in January 1970. Originally opened in 1914, the auditorium was constructed in the back court area of the surrounding tenement buildings that had formerly been used as a riding school, with the entrance and foyer through a former shop. The cinema was taken over by the Poole family in 1948 and renamed Cameo, with a policy of continental films and seating for 673.

At the time of Mr Lowenthal's visit, the cinema was being run by Mr Jim Poole and the building is described as warm and pleasant. In the main foyer there was a kiosk next to the cash desk and access to the auditorium was through a second foyer "...with attractive cream panelled walls hung with cameos to carry out the theme of the theatre's name. It is well carpeted and furnished with chairs and sofa and up a staircase there is a small bar...". Of the bar, "...there is no food available and to my recollection there do not appear to be many restaurants in the near vicinity." With his trademark focus on catering, Mr Lowenthal remarks, "I should have thought that some form of light snack should be provided." In fact, he was so underwhelmed at the lack of catering facilities that the cinema failed to score a single one of the ten points available for this. Mention is also made of the fact that the cinema printed its own "...well laid-out programme of advance notices, which although not extravagant is produced with taste..."

On entering the auditorium, "Seats were most comfortable and, although the cinema is small, all seats were well spaced, giving plenty of legroom and perfect vision from anywhere in the house. It is in every sense of the word the intimate theatre and is carpeted, I am pleased to say, under the seats." Mr Lowenthal found the auditorium "...kept well – no overflowing ashtrays, stained carpets or broken seats."

No ice cream vendor appeared between the main films; apparently they did not come on duty until 5:45, but there was still no sign at 6pm. A few marks lost here. "The staff were all most polite and helpful... The usherettes in their tartan skirts performed their duties efficiently." Overall, the cinema scored 34 out of 40.

Mr Jim Poole retired in September 1982, when the cinema was closed. Reopened in 1986 by new owners, two extra screens have been added either side of the original auditorium and is currently operated by Picturehouse Cinemas. In 2005 it was announced that the then owners, City Screen, wanted to sell the building, with a restaurant planned for most of the existing auditorium. Due to public pressure this plan was withdrawn and in 2006 Historic Scotland upgraded the listed status of the whole block to category B.

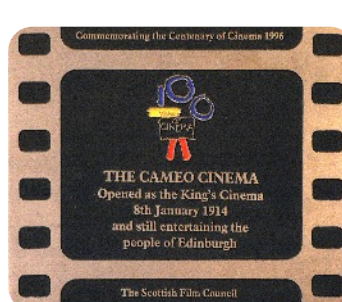
Taken from Today's Cinema issue 9770, additional information from Cinema Treasures and Scottish Cinemas and Theatres websites.



A view from the foyer to the street – photo by Gary Painter



The entrance to the Cameo in October 1970 – photo CTA Archive



A modern view of the main auditorium of the Cameo Edinburgh – photo by Gary Painter

No 30 **CLASSIC** NOTTING HILL GATE (London)

Having found himself working in London for the week, Louis Lowenthal picked the **Classic**, Notting Hill Gate, for a January 1970 visit. "It is in a first-class situation, right on the main road and the title of the cinema is well picked out in attractive lights." The building dates from 1861 and before conversion to a cinema in 1911 (known as the **Electric Palace**) the ground floor was a restaurant. From around 1934 it was known as the **Embassy News and Interest Theatre**, being taken over by Capitol & Provincial News Theatres in 1944 and renamed **Embassy Cinema**. The cinema was renamed **Classic** in 1957.



"This is a friendly house and the atmosphere generated from the moment one enters the doors from the street is one of cordial welcome. The foyer (which had been rebuilt in the 1950s after war damage) is minuscule but bright and cheerful. On the left-hand side as one enters is the well-lit confectionary kiosk, with the pay desk at the end. There are the usual pictures on the wall announcing forthcoming attractions and the impression is one of colour, movement and general liveliness."

Unusually, given the usual disdain Mr Lowenthal gives towards any 'old fashioned' cinemas, no mention was made of the wonderful Edwardian coffered ceiling and wall decoration and instead just that the walls were "panelled and painted in a light colour". It was noted, however, that there was no clock visible, "This I think is a pity because one often wants to know how the time is going and it is frustrating to attempt looking at one's watch in a darkened house."

"This is a comfortable theatre. The seats are well-planned and extremely comfortable in themselves, well-padded and of good size with just the right amount of give in them. The leg room is adequate and the rake satisfactory. I am pleased to report that there is carpet under the seats; I believe this is **Classic's** general policy. It certainly makes a difference from having to rest one's feet on the bare composition floor... The cinema was very clean and bright. The seats had been well cared for, as had the carpet and the ash trays were clean. There was a general air of good housekeeping about the auditorium and I do not doubt that there was a sense of pride in the administration of the theatre."

Although the screen was noted as being small, the picture and sound were good, as was the temperature and atmosphere. "One surprising incident; at the interval there was an advertising film for ice cream and fruit drinks, exhorting the audience to buy but there was no one to offer the goodies." Presumably there was an outbreak of flu at the time as this was noted and Mr Lowenthal remarked that if a slide had been shown the audience would have been sympathetic and made their way to the kiosk. It was also remarked that only one member of staff seemed to be present but the gentleman, who was presumed to be the manager†, issued the ticket and escorted patrons to their seats in a very efficient and friendly manner.

† The gentleman referred to is our very own CTA committee member Ken Roe, who was manager at the **Classic** Notting Hill in the late-1960s – early-1970s. The visit (during the afternoon) was a 'secret shopper' type operation by **Classic Cinemas'** head office. The lack of an ice cream girl was due to staff shortages on that day. Ken had no idea the visit had happened until H/O phoned to say they were pleased with the report, apart from the lack of a sales assistant.

There was no catering to speak of but "there is a small café that abuts the entrance to the cinema and there is an excellent restaurant, The Garland, a few doors up the road. Indeed, I was surprised to see neither of these advertising on the screen: I should have thought it profitable to them."



The cinema as the Gate c1979 – photo CTA Archive



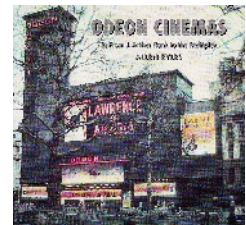
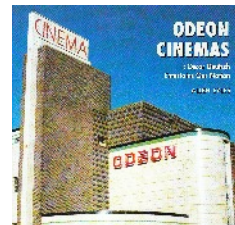
A postcard of the interior of the Gate given out on the CTA visit in April 2004

The **Classic** became the Gate Cinema in 1974, closing in 1985 before reopening in 1986. It is currently operated by Picturehouse Cinemas and is grade II listed. In the 1970 article the cinema was given an overall score of 34 out of 40.

Taken from Today's Cinema issue 9772, additional information from Cinema Treasures.

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.



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THE BID TO SAVE THE GRANVILLE RAMSGATE

By Jan Dunn

Unlisted, 1914,

Cinema designed by Rowlett & Taylor of Broadstairs 1997



The Granville Pavilion c1920

The building began its life as the newly-created **Granville Concert Enclosure** with a partial roof and windbreaks in 1914, upgraded with a new canvas awning in 1920. The building's primary purpose was in offering a summer season Concert Party. This was a music-hall mix of musicians, singers and comedy acts. The opening show took place on Saturday 30 May 1914 according to the *East Kent Times* newspaper, by welcoming Mr LJ Roxburghe Reely's Concert Party, 'The Comedies', appearing in the new concert enclosure every afternoon and evening during Whitsuntide. The show included the artists Miss Doris Dainton, Miss Gladys Mitchell, Miss Rita Harvey, Miss Edith Payne, Mr Leslie Gordon, Mr Stanley Greenward and Mr Roxburghe Reely himself. Tickets were priced at 2d, 4d and 6d.

In 1924 The **Granville Concert Enclosure** was given a brand-new roof, offering "now complete shelter from the wind and rain" and a new name as The **Granville Concert Pavilion**. During the second world war and considering where it is situated directly above Ramsgate's Main Sands, it suffered terrible bomb damage and was rebuilt in 1947 by recycling as many bricks as possible that could be saved from the pavilion due to the shortage of bricks at the end of the war. It was given another new name of the **Granville Theatre** at its reopening in June 1947. In the early 1950s a Compton Melotone organ was installed and Gardenia Wells and her sister Veronica, who still live in the town, remember listening to the popular organist who used to play it but it was removed in the late 1970s. Joyce Dudely, who also still lives in the town today, remembers ice skating with her girlfriends at the **Granville Theatre** in the 1960s. Films were first screened from May 1986 on Sundays only, initially using 16mm projection equipment with 35mm later installed, becoming a full-time cinema from 1991. In 1997 two cinema screens were approved and the **Granville Cinema** was redesigned by Rowlett & Taylor of Broadstairs, retaining one screen for dual theatre/film screenings.



The theatre auditorium, showing the safety curtain



The state of the loos and a grand piano backstage

The **Granville Cinema** is Ramsgate's last remaining cinema of the three that used to be in the town including the **Odeon** and the **King's** cinemas and the only theatre. The **Granville Theatre** auditorium closed in 2019 due to health and safety concerns, followed by the second cinema screen in March 2021 due to Covid. It has never reopened and is falling into further disrepair, including a continually leaking roof and with constant plumbing issues. The building is owned by Thanet District Council which, along with the previous two tenants over two decades, have allowed the building to deteriorate. Ramsgate based charity Kent Film Foundation, which was founded by filmmakers and whose patron is the BAFTA winning actress Brenda Blethyn, are currently attempting to save the building and have been pursuing acquiring it in order to do so since 2017. As an established charity with an excellent track record in its community work using film, the foundation is in a good position to raise funding to undertake a considerable rebuild, transforming the building into the town's first and much needed Arts Centre, retaining the theatre and including three cinema screens and a café opening up onto the roof. Obviously as with all community arts groups they do not have unrestricted hard cash to offer upfront but an incredible highly-skilled team with a proven track record that can raise funds once they own the building either as freehold or long lease. Sustainability shall be at the heart of the project and undertaken as a Green Build. Their bid to acquire the building as a Community Asset Transfer was rejected by the Council in February 2022. Not only were they the only community group to submit an application but they also bring with them other arts community groups and creatives. This has caused public outrage, especially given that they had no competitors by the deadline of applications for the CAT.



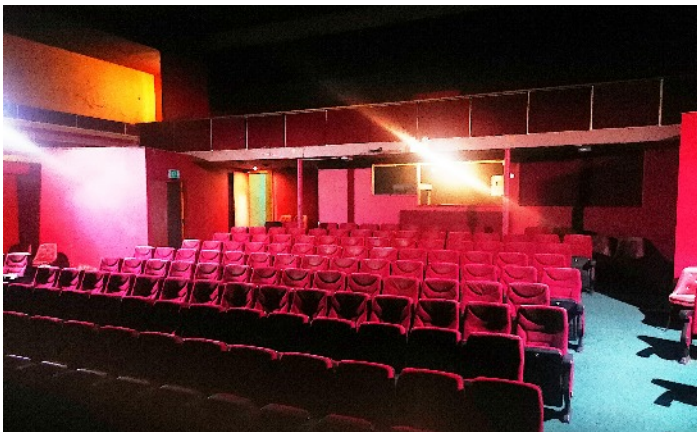
Backstage rope rigging



The Granville in 2022

The foundation originally registered interest to Thanet District Council in becoming next tenants of the cinema in April 2017. The organisation was aware that the tenant who occupied it at the time was not going to renew their agreement with the Council due to the likely costs of maintenance with neither party willing to spend the considerable amount needed to undertake the comprehensive refurbishment. In 2019 the foundation managed to get the building approved as 'An Asset of Community Value' [ACV] in the hope and with the aim of eventually acquiring the building via a Community Asset Transfer [CAT]. The foundation brings with it a number of other locally-based community arts groups that shall also benefit from the building and include Ramsgate Arts, Ramsgate International Film & TV Festival, Ramsgate Festival of Sound, Freedom Road, Ramsgate Music Hall and a film distribution company. Their team of Trustees include members with decades of experience in running cinemas and their plans to rebuild include support from the Theatres Trust and The Cinema Collective. Their advisors also include award-winning cinema owners and those who are operational officers of major and respected venues in the UK. The local community and creatives are utterly shocked at the decision made by the Council since its cabinet approved for the building to be put on the disposal list for Community Asset Transfer consideration at a Council meeting on 29 July 2021. The reason for the rejection has been given as a score sheet result around a criteria scoring that no applicant had access to during the application process, nor the headings it related to. Instead, Kent Film Foundation designed their bid and business plan around the Ramsgate Town Plan and the list of things to include that were highlighted in the brief application form. Their plans also showed the strength of their team and the excellent track record they have in the community work they have been doing for youth and in relation to the excellent audience numbers they attracted to the event screenings they ran on occasions at the theatre with the high level of speakers they can access.

After their application for the acquisition of the building was rejected, the public rallied around in support of Kent Film Foundation's aims by setting up a petition through [change.org](https://www.change.org), which has garnered over 5,500 signatories so far, not bad for a town of 40,000. Residents also organised a public 'wraparound' of the building but on an afternoon midweek only a few hundred were expected to turn up. However, 1,500 people turned up to support the proposals and plans that Kent Film Foundation have for the building, which include a £3-5m Green Build creating the new Arts Centre. Their plans include considerable economic regeneration, job creation and Kent Film Foundation's strong track record, as with the partner organisations involved shows excellent skills in building new audiences and their team has high level grant and public fundraising experience.



The theatre auditorium, looking to the rear

After Thanet District Council rejected the only Community Asset Transfer bid for the building that came from Kent Film Foundation, they have now put the cinema on the open market for a six-week period. Due to public pressure the deputy leader of Thanet District Council, Cllr Reece Pugh has confirmed that the building will not go to the highest cash bid but what the bidder will bring to the community of Ramsgate shall also be taken into consideration. Cllr Pugh is also the Council's cabinet member for economic development; his profile on the local conservatives' website tells us he is keen to "promote economic regeneration for the local area paired with a strong entrepreneurial spirit within the community" and that he believes the "voices of the local people must always be heard". They have invited Kent Film Foundation to resubmit through the Right to Bid process but a spokesperson for Kent Film Foundation has pointed out, "This is very confusing as we understood that the RTB process had to be undertaken during the same moratorium period as the CAT, where we were the sole applicants but the whole process has been very confusing to say the least. If this is really what they are looking for, there is absolutely no reason why they cannot turnaround the decision they made regarding bids from the community for a Community Asset Transfer to be passed over to the foundation, especially given that both our application and business plan confirmed that we were happy to negotiate the bid. We have always been concerned that the person (officer) who made the decision to reject our application outright without even meeting with us first has no understanding of the difference in business models between a cinema exhibitor, distributor or production company, let alone the right skills needed to run an arts venue. Our team and the skills our trustees have to raise large funding and to hire the right people appear to have not been understood at all or at the very least completely disregarded. We were also told by the estate's team prior to the deadline that if any further documents or details were needed that they would follow this up prior to the decision. These unique skills and the foundation's track record was outlined in the business plan but was unrelated to the questions within the simple application. It would appear that the only decisions regarding a score sheet criteria we were unaware of, related to areas that made our application ill-informed."

Brenda Blethyn (Patron of Kent Film Foundation) writes:

As a child it was always a treat to go to the Granville Ramsgate. And as an adult too. But half a century has taken its toll on the building. I firmly believe that the Kent Film Foundation have the right skills, knowledge and enthusiasm to bring the Granville back to the community in a modern way. They have the required expertise and professional contacts to bring this to fruition. And it would be so lovely to have the cinema open once again and for the theatre to be flourishing as a proper venue to invite professional companies to. I do so hope TDC will reconsider their application to save this building and for residents to be proud of it again.



The proposed Sandcastle Arts Centre

THINGS BRIGHT & BEAUTIFUL

By Hector Hill



The BB Cinema Greenock

Greenock's BB Cinema, whose demolition was reported on p9 of May/June's Bulletin, was opened on 18 December 1913 by James Joseph Bennell's company the Greenock BB Cinema Ltd. With 1,300 tip-up seats, Simplex machines projecting 110 ft to a 24 by 20 ft screen, a five-piece orchestra and a Hepworth Vivaphone (synchronising retail records to films of performers miming to those recordings), it marked Bennell's departure from the 1,300-seat Empire theatre leased since August 1909.



Mr JJ Bennell

In 1907, a Glasgow contact from the choir days persuaded Bennell, now in his late fifties, to run his own shows in the 2,800-seat Wellington Palace on Commercial Road in the Gorbals. The early weeks were difficult but by 1910, trading as BB Pictures ('Bright & Beautiful' in adverts), Bennell was exhibiting in venues in Airdrie, Coatbridge, Dundee, Greenock and Perth, plus running a film hire business with a Manchester branch. By 1910 he was the Scotland agent for Motiograph projectors. At the Wellington Palace his had a 100 ft throw to a 34 by 22 ft screen.

In October 1910 he floated The BB Pictures Ltd to acquire and run his existing businesses and to add further halls. He was the managing director and the Wellington Palace the registered address. Large stocks of hire films were kept under the venue, until the authorities intervened after a fire at Gaumont's 140 Trongate premises on 15 August 1912. The film hire business, offices and registered address moved to 81 Dundup Street, which also housed the

THE
MOTIOGRAPH

Are you prepared for
the coming Winter ???

FOG DEFIED.
SMOKE DEFIED

by the Motiograph Projector
Shower. Show it in.

Over 50 per cent. increase of light on
your screen.

Mr. J. J. Bennell, of Wellington Palace, Glasgow, has now installed the Motiograph
in all his theatres, including Glasgow, Dundee, Perth, etc. At Glasgow he is
showing a 30 ft. PICTURE, which is absolutely flickerless.

Mr. J. J. Bennell is now Agent for The Motiograph for Scotland.

The Bioscope - 22 Sept 1910

The B.B. FILM HIRING SERVICE
GLASGOW AND MANCHESTER

is a carefully conducted, conscientious Service.

What we say we do, we do do.

We add every week to our stock ready state film of the
World's best production, every picture being carefully
selected. Fitted size, from 16, per List B, per week special.

LISTS ON APPLICATION.

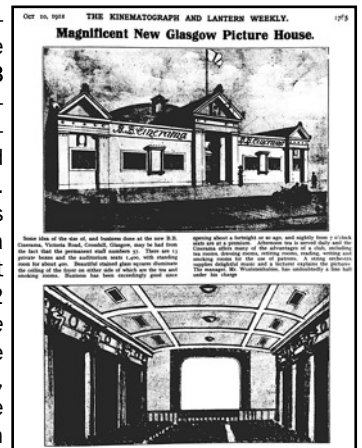
Branch Office: WELLINGTON PALACE, COMMERCIAL ROAD, GLASGOW. Telephone: 1011.
Branch Office: A GREAT BRICK STREET, LONDON. Telephone: 1011.
Branch Office: 40 & 41 CANNON STREET, W.C. Telephone: 1011.

The Bioscope - 24 August 1911

BB Scottish Variety Agency, a private theatre and the cinema equipment business. The telegram address was 'Bennell, Glasgow'. There was a film production business which made some dramas plus 'topicals' including the *BB Budget of Scottish News*.

The BB Pictures Ltd named some halls Cinerama: forty years before the widescreen format premièred in New York in September 1952. The OED defines Cinerama only as 'A system of screening motion pictures in which the image is projected onto a wide and deeply-curved screen offering a 146° field of view' and cites, as the word's earliest use in print, an article in the 1949 *Journal of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers*. Cinerama traces back to at least 1910, when Gabriel Kaiser opened his 500-seat Cinérama-Théâtre in Paris. The *Kinematograph Weekly* first mentioned the venue on 9 March 1911. An early example of Cinerama in a UK context is in *The Stage* of 25 July 1912: a report about FB Woolstenhulme leaving the management of Dundee's Gaiety theatre to manage the 'BB Cinerama House in Glasgow'.

On 10 October 1912 the *Kinematograph Weekly* devoted a page [R] to Glasgow's 1,400-seat BB Cinerama, which had opened recently in the former American Roller-Skating Rink on Victoria Road ('The Rendezvous of the Elite'). Later, the leasehold premises were acquired for housing and a 1,900-seat replacement built nearby. It opened in August 1922 as the BB Cinerama. *The Bioscope* of 10 August reported that, like the old hall, it had back projection, with seats on both sides of the screen. This was abandoned in late-1931 when the auditorium was extended at the screen end, giving a 165 ft throw from the new operating box. It reopened 30 November as the 2,662-seat New Cinerama. Renamed Odeon in 1964, the venue closed in 1981.



Glasgow BB Cinerama
As opened in 1922, with back projection



Post-1964 as the Odeon
Back projection removed and auditorium extended in late-1931
By now the screen-end entrance had been moved to the side

Opened in 1843, St Leonard's Church on Victoria Street, Perth was bought by Brady & Sons in 1887 for an auction saleroom. In September 1909, lessee Kenmarks Ltd opened it as the Victoria Roller Skating Rink but converted it into a cinema in 1910. Bennell launched it as the BB Picture Palace on 22 August, with pompous ceremony involving a Bailie and a Lord Provost. In 1914 The BB Pictures Ltd switched screen and projection ends and refurbished the place, reopening it on 17 August as the 1,190-seat BB Cinerama. Guttled by fire on 17 January 1922, it was rebuilt with a balcony and 1,300 seats and reopened on 19 March 1923. Ownership later changed but the name included Cinerama until bingo came in 1962.

In Dundee, Bennell ran film shows at the Empire theatre (which described his films commencing 8 June 1908 as 'Spleet New to Dundee') and at Gilfillan Hall, where he began with shows throughout September 1908. On 2 August 1909 he opened 'permanent picture

B.B. CINERAMA
THE HOUSE OF COMFORT
VICTORIA STREET

MATINEES ON WEDNESDAYS AND SATURDAYS at 3 p.m.
MUSIC HALL ORCHESTRA - SPACIOUS WAITING ROOM.

TODAY (SATURDAY) - SPECIAL FEATURE:
Ivor Novello and Mabel Poulton in "The Constant Nymph."

MONDAY, TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY - TWO BIG FEATURES:
EMIL JANNINGS in
"THE WAY OF ALL FLESH"
A powerful drama of intense interest. Certainly Jannings' greatest picture
and one of the greatest films of all time.
Rudolf Rittner in "THE FIREMAN"
A powerful story of natural love.
TOPICAL BUDGET.

The House is in being with the Picture - THE DAILY
P. C. CALLAGHAN, DIRECTOR.

Perthshire Advertiser -
17 November 1928

entertainment' at the Palace theatre, behind Nethergate's Queen's Hotel. Later, the *Dundee Directory* 1911-1912 listed him running the BB Picture Palace at 160 Nethergate and leasing the Empire. Sources claim that, 'circa 1919', The BB Pictures Ltd acquired the Tay Street Cinema (in the former St John's Church), ran it as the BB Cinerama and sold it to the 'Pennycook Circuit' in 1922. In fact, it was the Tay Street Cinema from its opening on Monday 24 June 1918 until Saturday 12 March 1921. The following Monday, 14 March, it was managed by Thomson Pennycook as the Cinerama, its name until closure in 1962. In June 1920, The BB Pictures Ltd neither owned, nor planned, a Dundee hall (see later).

TAY ST. CINEMA. LAST 2 DAYS.
AUCTION OF SOULS
 Actual Times Showing Daily,
2.30, 7, and 9

CINERAMA, TAY STREET.
 Manager—T. PENNYCOOK.
 Continuous Performance from 6.30 till 10.30.
DOUBLE FEATURE PROGRAMME.
 MON. TUES. WED.
"WITH EDGED TOOLS."
 From the Novel by H. Seton Merriman, in 6 Acts.
 Also, JACK HOLT in
"THE BLACK SHEEP"
 in 5 Acts; and **LATEST 2-ACT COMEDY.**
 Prices, 3d, 5d, 7d, and 9d.

**Dundee's Tay Street Cinema
 becomes Cinerama –
 Dundee Evening Telegraph –
 11 & 14 March 1921**

Unconnected to Bennell, in April 1921 the flotation prospectus for The Scottish Central Theatre Co Ltd mentioned land for an Edinburgh 'Cinerama' at the junction of Annandale Road and Haddington Place on Leith Walk (opposite Pringle's Picture House). First proposed by The Cinerama (Edinburgh) Ltd in 1914, it did not happen.

THE NORTH END CINERAMA,
 STAMSHAW ROAD
 (END OF NORTH END AVENUE,
 IS NOW OPEN.
CONTINUOUS PERFORMANCE.
SPECIAL CHRISTMAS PROGRAMME
FOR DEC. 23rd & DURING THE WEEK
COMMENCING EACH EVENING at 6.30
MATINEES BOXING DAY, FRIDAY, &
SATURDAY at 2.0.
 Prices: Hall, 5d. and 6d. Children half price.
 Balcony 9d.

THE COSY THEATRE.

NORTH END CINEMA.
 MONDAY NEXT and during the week.
CHARLIE CHAPLIN in his Third Million Dollar Success
"SUNNYSIDE."
 Also showing Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday,
"SWEET LAVENDER."
 Featuring ALMA TAYLOR, CHRISIE WHITE, VIOLET HOPSON,
 STEWART ROMIE and LIONEL HOWARD.
 THURSDAY, FRIDAY and SATURDAY:
GRAND VARIETY PROGRAMME.

**Portsmouth Evening News –
 [L] 26 December 1912
 [above] 24 January 1920**

Beyond Scotland, the only UK example of a Cinerama so far found, is Portsmouth's 350-seat North End Cinerama ('The Cosy Theatre') which opened on Stamshaw Road ahead of Christmas 1912. In January 1913 the *Portsmouth Evening News* called it the North End Cinema. The last newspaper example of it being called Cinerama is a job vacancy advert in December 1914. By 1920 the place was advertising as the North End Cinema.

After March 1914, the BB Scottish Variety Agency ceased being mentioned in *The Era* and *The Stage*. The BB film hire business, already without the Manchester branch, was sold to the Argosy Film Co Ltd in September 1917. That month, in the *Kinematograph Weekly*, Bennell regrettably confirmed the deal, blaming losing staff to 'the Military' (more to blame was the industry's new system of film hire). Incorporated in June at 24 St Enoch Square, Argosy moved into 81 Dunlop Street in December.


ARGOSY FILM CO., LTD
 81, DUNLOP STREET
GLASGOW
 Phone—Central 1698 Grams—"Argofil," Glasgow

The Bioscope – 10 April 1919

Partly to fund Glasgow's replacement BB Cinerama, in June 1920 The BB Pictures (1920) Ltd was floated to acquire the assets of The BB Pictures Ltd, declared to be: halls in Coatbridge, Glasgow and Perth; 1,100 £1 shares (11%) in Greenock BB Cinema Ltd; land and property for new halls in Coatbridge, Hyndland and Perth; and the equipment business. Bennell's age and recent bowel cancer diagnosis probably explain his shared managing-directorship with John Bennett Lawton.

Bennell died on 15 December 1922 aged 73, shortly after Glasgow's replacement BB Cinerama opened. He left a £4,977 estate. His full-page obituary in *The Bioscope* on 21 December, by a fellow Glasgow exhibitor, explained BB was Bennell's tribute to his helpmate second wife Blanche Bennell (née Driver). They married in September 1905 in Cheetham Hill Manchester. He married his first wife, Elizabeth (née Ritson) in 1878 in Bradford. She died in 1903. They had two sons and then a daughter. Ritson, the younger and surviving son, entered the business, ending as the Scotland area-manager at Gaumont British. The BB Pictures (1920) Ltd began voluntary liquidation in 1963. It concluded in 1971.

TIVOLI WIMBORNE

By Tim McCullen



I can add a little more to the feature of the page 12 of the last issue of the Bulletin. The CTA has done three visits to this building, on 19 April 1992, 20 March 1994 and 3 October 2015. I went on the first two visits and the first one was most interesting and was the final visit on the very successful 1992 Bournemouth trip (see pictures) when its rebirth was in its early days. The second visit was the CTA AGM.

When on the first visit, it was mentioned that the cinema had never been unviable – it was just that a road widening scheme and a compulsory purchase closed the cinema on 26 April 1980. Also mentioned was that during the campaign to save the Tivoli, an exhibition was held in the town and a group of teenagers were asked what the pictures of the Tivoli were, as they thought that it had "gone long ago" as in demolition. I wonder how old they are now?



On the second visit for the CTA AGM, the building, although open, was still in the restoration stage. I asked, would the neon Tivoli sign be going back up at the front and found out that the local Council did not want it back up there. I understood that the neon Tivoli sign still existed at the time and would be hung up inside the foyer. An interior virtual tour on Google shows no hint of the sign. The exterior picture of the building looks great but would that not be enhanced by the Tivoli sign at the top?

Pictures CTA Archive 19 April 1992 by the author

BRIDPORT'S PALACES

By Mike Whitcombe

The sound of seagulls screeching their familiar refrain echoes constantly around the streets of the historic market town of Bridport. Nestling on the edge of the Jurassic Coast, it was once famed for its rope making. The long, wide High Street is testament to when Bridport rope, used by the Royal Navy to defeat Napoleon and carve out an Empire, was laid in lengths to dry. Nowadays, Bridport is an important social and economic hub for an area of West Dorset, where tourism and agricultural both play vital roles. Situated just a mile north of the English Channel, Bridport is within walking distance from what was once known as Bridport Harbour but is now better known as the seaside resort of West Bay, familiar to millions as the location where Broadchurch, the television crime drama starring David Tennant, was filmed. The lauded poet and author, Thomas Hardy, set his romantically tragic Wessex novels in the surrounding area and based the fictional town of Port Bredy on Bridport. Bordered by beautiful rolling countryside and hidden hamlets, particularly in the nearby Marshwood Vale, Bridport is an easy place to fall in love with.

Cinema-going has proved to be an essential part of life in Bridport since the silent days of one reelers. It was more than a century ago, just before the beginning of the First World War, that Bridport's first cinema, the **Bridport Electric Palace Cinema**, opened in Barrack Street. It was located in a hall that had been built in 1746 as an Independent Chapel, following the Independents' split from the Unitarians. Rebuilt in 1777 and then twice enlarged in 1798 and 1815, it was further altered in 1836. In 1860 the Independents moved to the grander new United Reformed Church in East Street. After this the building became a Temperance Hall, the Liberal Hall (an engraved plaque stating this is still visible over the round-headed entrance door), the headquarters for the Royal Field Artillery and, finally, a cinema. Opening night was 26 February 1912 and the first programme for the **Electric Palace** included such titles as *Maiden of the Pie Faced Indians*, *Niagara Falls* and *Siege of Calais*.

The proprietor was Mr C Sheppard. To open the building as a cinema, Sheppard had to install what the local newspaper called an 'electrical power plant' as mains electricity didn't arrive in Bridport until 1929, following the creation of Bridport Borough Electricity Undertaking. At the start of the 1920s highly flammable nitrate film was stored near the gas engine that was used to produce electricity for the building. Not surprisingly the film stock ignited and the duty projectionist Bill Ryan had a lucky escape when fire broke out.



The 'new' Electric Palace South Street today

By the mid-1920s cinema-going was hugely popular in Bridport. JC Palmer, a local brewer of some standing in the community who had always wanted to build an opera house in the town, decided it was time a modern building was built to exploit this and created a company to do so. After naming himself Chairman of the Directors, he engaged architects Messrs Frederick Cooper & Sons of Bridport to design an art deco cinema that could also host stage shows. A site in South Street previously used as a coal yard was soon purchased. The main building contractors were Jesty and Baker of Weymouth.

Projection and stage equipment was supplied by Walturdaw Ltd. With mains electricity still a dream for Bridport, the cinema, like the original **Palace**, boasted its own power plant powered by twin gas engines. Even after mains electricity arrived, this power plant continued to generate power for the cinema for many years. To accompany the silent films, a unit known as The Phantom Orchestra, which consisted of two piano roll players and sound effects, was installed.



A close-up of the entrance doors to the Electric Palace

Palmer was a shrewd businessman. He believed Bridport would struggle to support two cinemas and persuaded Sydney Sheppard, son of C Sheppard, to close the **Electric Palace** in Barrack Street to maximise the profits of his new cinema, which would also be called the **Electric Palace** (it was actually called the **New Electric Palace** on advertising material for three months until the 'New' was dropped in the August). Palmer persuaded Sheppard by offering him the job of manager, a post he held until 1959. On 29 May 1926 the original **Palace** screened its last programme. A cartoon with *Felix the Cat* was followed by *Siege*, a Universal Pictures film starring the American actress Virginia Vallis. Sixteen days later on Monday, 14 June, the new **Electric Palace** opened. Seating 543 in circle and stalls, it was declared open for business by Bridport Mayor Mr F Weeks. After the show, Palmer entertained local dignitaries to dinner at the Greyhound Hotel, which today does good business as a Wetherspoon pub.

The main film on opening night was *Madame Sans Gene*, a silent romantic comedy-drama about a French washerwoman who becomes a duchess and friend of Napoleon. It was filmed on location in France and starred the gorgeous Gloria Swanson, who was then the biggest female movie star in the world. It attracted full houses to the new **Palace** and prompted the *Bridport News* to report that the **Palace** "will mark another milestone in the van of progress of which this little town of ours is taking so prominent a part and, moreover, it will provide those who seek relaxation and pleasure with a building handsome in appearance and admirable in design".

For its second week, the main feature was *Sally of the Sawdust* directed by DW Griffith no less and starring the imitable WC Fields. In local advertisements of the era, the **Palace** was often called the 'Cosiest Little Theatre in the County' and patrons flocked to the cinema from the surrounding area. Special evening bus services tailored to the programme times at the **Palace** were run by several bus companies and allowed folk from nearby villages such as Beaminster, Burton Bradstock and Charmouth to travel to Bridport and see the latest movie without worrying whether they would miss the last bus home. When Talkies arrived in 1931, business continued to flourish. A year later, local artist George 'Tricky' Biles, who was well known for painting inn signs and doing signwriting for Palmers Brewery, was commissioned to paint ten murals depicting pastoral scenes to decorate the rather plain walls of the **Palace's** foyer and auditorium. The auditorium ones were sadly painted over in the 1950s but the foyer ones still remain. Biles then designed and painted the scenery for Bridport Amateur Operatic Society's *The Pirates of Penzance* as well as other locally produced theatrical productions staged at the **Palace**. His work was so good that some of them were used seventy years later in a 2007 production of *Cinderella*.



The entrance to the Electric Palace

Palmer's vision to build and open the **Palace** quickly proved to be a wise one. He was wrong, however, that the small market town of Bridport could only sustain one cinema. With the Talkies and Hollywood now conquering the world, another cinema was needed to satisfy public demand. In 1934 a Mr Church and a Mr Stevenson decided to reopen the original **Palace** in Barrack Street, which had stood empty for ten years. After purchasing some projection equipment from the mobile Hayes Theatre – which had toured the area for years before finally coming to rest in a field outside Bridport – they renamed the old building the **Lyric Cinema** and opened for business on 17 December. The opening night double-bill was the hit Warner Brothers musical *Footlight Parade* starring James Cagney, Ruby Keeler, Dick Powell and Joan Blondell accompanied by the Fox-produced revue the *George White Scandal* with Rudy Vallée, Jimmy Durante and Alice Faye. Capacity for the **Lyric** was around 200, all on one sloping level.

During 1940 both the **Palace** and **Lyric** were purchased by The Dorchester Cinema Company, which owned the **Plaza** in Dorchester. With the many servicemen billeted in the area, particularly after America entered the war, both cinemas continued to make money. Frank Crescioli, chief projectionist at the **Palace** during this time, later recalled how both cinemas would share the same programme on a Sunday. To ensure reels of film were transported on time between the two closely located cinemas, programme times had to be strictly adhered to.

The late 1950s saw hundreds of cinemas across the land close. Despite its wealth that is showcased by some fine Georgian and Victorian buildings, Bridport has never been a densely populated town; even today the population is only 13,000. In 1962 the *Bridport News* reported that the management of the **Lyric** "consider that one cinema in the town is sufficient" and that they would close shortly. Palmer's belief more than thirty-five years before that one cinema was all Bridport needed was finally proven to be correct. On 1 September 1962 the cinema closed for a second time with a screening of *The Secret Partner*, a British thriller about a wealthy London-based shipping magnate who is blackmailed, directed by Basil Dearden and starring Stewart Granger.

The 'new' **Palace** was now the only cinema in town. But the 'old' **Palace** still made headlines while entertaining the town when in the mid-1960s it reopened as a strip club called the Conchord Club. It ran for five years until it was closed down after allegations of underage drinking. A poster from the period lists the acts for one evening. There was laughter from comedian Peter O'Farrell and even folk music from Alan Briers. But the headline acts were a 'Torch and Fire Dancing Act' called Corienne, which was billed as 'too hot to handle' and exotic dancing by Amber Lee, who came direct from a London nightclub called Tantalising Tease. Just what the seventeenth century Independents would have made of their building being used for such frivolity is anyone's guess! When it was being converted into a strip club, the sloping floor of the cinema was removed to reveal a parquet floor. This proved invaluable from 1971 when the hall was taken over by the Bernard Gale School of Dancing. This was a hugely popular local club, which made full use of the building until 2006 when it closed. Four years later a property developer threatened to redevelop the hall into apartments. Fortunately for Bridport's cultural spirit, Niki McCretton bought the building in 2010. In 2011 she reopened it as the **Lyric Theatre** and it's now an artistic venue and home to the Stuff and Nonsense Theatre Company. They are currently on a national tour with their version of *Pinocchio*.



The Lyric Bridport

After the **Lyric** closed as a cinema, the **Palace** had no competition and continued to present all the latest main stream movies. Ownership of the cinema changed to the Miles Byrne group of county town cinemas during the 1960s before passing to Reeltime Entertainment in 1992. Reeltime invested in updating the cinema but in 1999 catastrophe struck. Concerns were raised after a structural survey revealed rusty steelwork meant the balcony was unsafe. Rumours abounded around the town that the balcony was indeed safe but rumours count for nothing and the cinema was unceremoniously and suddenly closed. Cinema-going in Bridport had now come to an end.

A 'Save The Cinema' campaign managed to get the building listed soon after but it wasn't until 2003 when Peter Hitchin bought the derelict **Palace** that a belief grew that this cherished picture palace might reopen. Hitchin commissioned a survey that declared the building was structurally sound and in 2007 belief became reality when the **Palace** reopened. Hitchin had worked tirelessly in the preceding four years, gaining the patronage of National Theatre director Sir Richard Eyre as well as radical movie director Mike Leigh among others and reinvented the cinema for a modern-day audience. He put an art deco style bar at the back of the auditorium, commissioned new murals for the auditorium and encouraged a belief that the building should be used for anything of artistic benefit to the local community. This meant films as well as regular music events, plays and comedy would all play an important role in keeping the **Palace** financially viable.

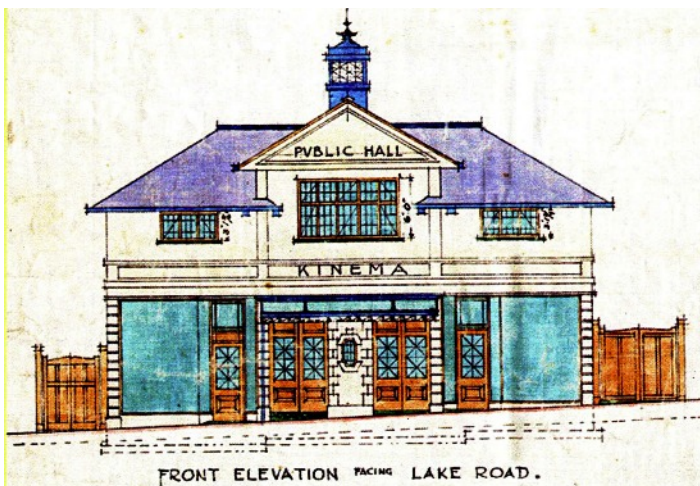
His plan worked and when he decided to put the **Palace** up for sale in 2015 for offers over £550,000 – he felt a fresh face was needed – there were several interested parties. Hitchin eventually sold to local man Alasdair Warren, who had grown up in nearby Melplash. £60,000 was spent in the following year on a new digital projector, better sound and a new cinema screen. It proved to be money well spent. Audiences continue to flock, particularly for stage presentations, which attract well-known acts. During the summer of 2022, for instance, you can see in person comedian Reginald D Hunter, poet John Cooper Clarke, the BBC Radio 4 *Any Questions* panel and the musical *Anything Goes* by the Bridport Musical Theatre Company as well as Hollywood blockbusters *Top Gun: Maverick* and *Downton Abbey* on the big screen – truly something for everyone!

In April 2022 Bridport once again became a two cinema town ... if only for an afternoon. The occasion was the *Bridport Film Festival, From Page to Screen*. The only film festival to celebrate the art of adaption, it attracted more than 1,500 film fans to 21 screenings over five days. The **Palace** screened *Operation Mincemeat*, the recent hit based on a true story of World War Two deception and espionage starring Colin Firth and Matthew MacFadyen, to a sold-out audience. The **Lyric**, transformed back into a cinema for the first time since 1962, screened Disney's original 1940 version of *Pinocchio*.

It's now been 110 years since the silver screen first came to Bridport and drew gasps of astonishment from a rural population who still lit their houses by candlelight. Those black and white one reelers are now long forgotten but the **Electric Palace**, opened when silent movies were the most popular form of entertainment the world has ever known, has not been forgotten and remains that touch of luxury and escapism that every community needs.

All photos by the author, May 2022

95 AND GOING STRONG



Bowness's iconic **Royalty** cinema has reached its 95th birthday and celebrated it in style. Two events were held on Saturday 21 May; an afternoon concert on the Wurlitzer organ by renowned organist Howard Beaumont, well-known to visitors to Scarborough and an evening screening of the silent comedy *Safety Last* starring Harold Lloyd, also with live organ accompaniment.

The **Royalty** was built by public subscription and opened as the **Public Hall** in 1927. The opening programme included a variety bill plus the film *The Wanderer*, a silent film drama from 1925 directed by Raoul Walsh and starring Wallace Beery and Tyrone Power (snr). The broadcasting entertainer Billy Barnes provided piano accompaniment.

The **Public Hall** was built with a stage and flat maple floor downstairs. Dances were held in the early years and there were professional theatre productions as well as amateur performances. Windermere Grammar School presented Gilbert and Sullivan operettas there for many years.

The **Royalty** has had several proprietors over the years, among them Ronald Cowpe and John Bailey. The present proprietor Charles Morris has been at the helm for thirty years and was responsible for creating the two extra screens. "I opened my first cinema at Elland, West Yorkshire, in 1988," said Mr Morris; "But my wife made it a condition that if I was to run cinemas, she wanted a house in the country, preferably in the Lake District. So, when the lease came on offer, we jumped at it. We've had thirty happy years up here and I've been proud to run the **Royalty**."

A few years ago, it became known that South Lakeland Council had put the **Royalty** before the planning board for consideration for redevelopment. "There was an outcry and the idea was soon dropped," recalls Mr Morris.

The **Royalty** is almost unique in possessing its original auditorium structurally unaltered and still with stalls and circle seating. It also has a Wurlitzer theatre organ, the only one in a functioning cinema in Europe. This was rescued from storage and lovingly restored by a volunteer group, the Furness Theatre Organ Project, which arranges concerts and silent films with organ accompaniment.

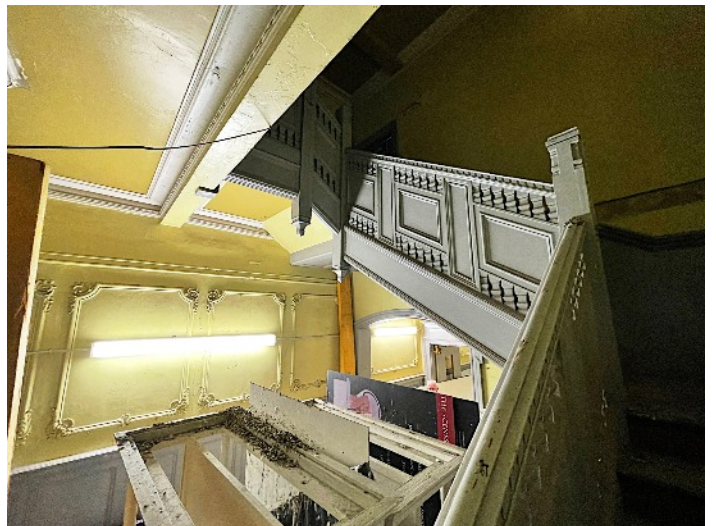
The **Royalty** must have entertained hundreds of thousands of patrons, both locals and visitors. Lots of people come and remark how they visited the cinema as children when on holiday with their parents. A delightful tale is told of the 'Windermere Boys', the Jewish children rescued from the concentration camps after the war, who were brought here to recuperate and begin new lives. Apparently one of them would buy a ticket and then let the others in through the side exit. In fact the management knew all about it and just told the hosts how many children had come in that way and a cheque would follow for the amount due! Recently the **Royalty** welcomed the 45 Aid Society, a charity that was formed by these survivors. They saw a film that was made to celebrate the 75th year of their freedom. Some of the original 'children' were there, together with their own children and grandchildren. "I was very glad to welcome the Society as part of their reunion," said Mr Morris; "The film was very well made, moving and most informative; I was very glad to have been part of the event."

Royalty Cinema Press Release

MISTAKEN IDENTITY REVISITED

By Gary Painter

You might remember the story on p29 of Bulletin 55/3 (May/June 2021) about the case of mistaken identity leading to the discovery that an early cinema in Edinburgh presumed demolished for 17 years was, in fact, partially intact. Gordon and I managed to get in a few months ago and get some photos. Interesting, as it seems to have started life as a very early cinema, which closed before being converted to sound. The front half has been demolished, leaving only the entrance, balcony and a tiny section of rear stalls.



SMALL ADS

The rate for small ads from members is £3 for 25 words with name and address free, plus 15p for each extra word. Non-members rates: £5 & 25p respectively. Please send cheque or postal order (payable to the Cinema Theatre Association) to the Bulletin Editor, address on p2. Please quote membership number. Advertisers are requested to reply to all respondents who supply SAE for that purpose.

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

CINEMA BUSINESS

PROPHET MOVIE PULLED

Cineworld has cancelled all showings of *The Lady of Heaven* after protests by Muslims. They said the £12m film, about the prophet Muhammad's daughter, was "blasphemous". The movie was still being shown at some Vue cinemas, although it is understood others have cut screenings following protests.

Daily Mail, Daily Express, Sky News – 8 June; Evening Standard – 9 June; sent in by Margaret Burgoine, Tom Laughlan & Barry Quinton

ANIMATION FILM OUTLAWED

Animated movie *Lightyear* has been banned in the United Arab Emirates for featuring a lesbian kiss. Saudi Arabia has also blocked screenings of the *Toy Story* prequel and Malaysia may also follow suit.

Metro – 14 June; sent in by Tom Laughlan

MAXING IT OUT

IMAX Chief Executive Richard Gelfond received \$9m (£7.2m) compensation last year, up from \$6.9m as IMAX made its bold return. It comes after the firm defied estimates, raking in \$108.6m revenue in 2021.

CityAM.com – 29 April; sent in by Tom Laughlan

IS THIS THE END OF OUR STREAMING LOVE AFFAIR?

Netflix suffered a 37% fall in its shares in a week, sending out a signal that the squeeze on household budgets is set to play a major role in the fortunes of many similar companies on both sides of the Atlantic. About 200,000 subscribers cancelled their Netflix subscriptions in the first quarter of 2022 – the company expects that 2 million more will depart worldwide this year. The share price [in April] was \$227 but had been as high as \$700 in November 2021.

Daily Mail – 23 April; sent in by Tom Laughlan

TOP GUN

Paramount is facing a lawsuit after the family of the writer whose article inspired the 1986 original hit claimed that Paramount did not reacquire the rights to the story for the latest film. They say that Paramount lost the copyright for the article in January 2020. Paramount says it will defend the claim. The new movie *Top Gun: Maverick* raked in \$548m (£428m) globally in its first 10 days. On the back of these results, shares in Cineworld rose 16% and in IMAX 8%.

CityAM.com – 31 May, 8 June; sent in by Tom Laughlan

BEM FOR PAT



Pat Church, who is synonymous with the Abbeygate Cinema in Bury St Edmunds and this year marked his 60th in the industry, has been awarded a British Empire Medal [BEM] in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for services to the community. He joined the cinema in Hatter Street, aged 19 as a second projectionist – having started his career as a 12-year-old, working three evenings a week at a cinema in Peterborough before becoming full-time aged 15 – and was instrumental in saving the venue from closure several times.

Suffolk News – 1 June

ELIZABETH'S JUBILEE

Showcase cinemas were offering anyone with the name of Elizabeth a free cinema ticket or popcorn over the Queen's Jubilee weekend. All cinema-goers needed to do to claim the offer was show a valid photo ID, such as a driving licence or passport, at the cinema box office.

Showcase Cinemas Website

BFI PRESENTS: IN PARTNERSHIP WITH VUE

The BFI is partnering with Vue cinemas for an exciting new monthly programme. Screening at all of Vue's 88 cinemas across the country, *BFI Presents* will showcase newly released and award-winning British and international films, hidden gems and restored classics. *BFI Presents* kicked off on 18 May with special previews of *Benediction*, a biographical drama about Siegfried Sassoon written and directed by Terence Davies and starring Jack Lowden as the British poet. *Benediction* was one of the hits of the 2021 BFI London Film Festival in partnership with American Express. Other films coming up include *Brian and Charles*, a comedy from British director Jim Archer.

BFI Press Release; sent in by Allen Eyles

ODEON AND IMAX

Odeon Cinemas Group has expanded its pact with IMAX by setting locations for new giant screens across five European markets. Odeon will upgrade six IMAX theatres in the UK with laser projection systems, while also setting locations for nine previously contracted new theatres across Europe; that includes four new theatres in Spain, two in Italy and one theatre each in Germany, Sweden and the UK. All locations are set to be open by 2025.

Hollywood Reporter – 20 June; sent in by Terry Hanstock

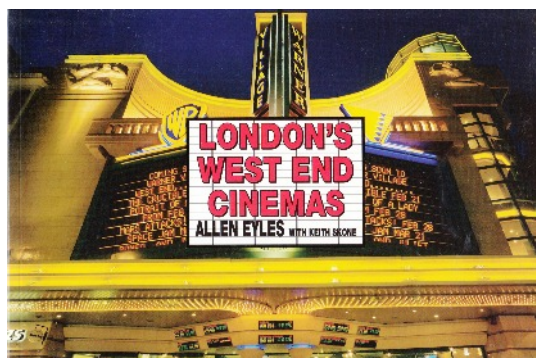
ODEON CINEMAS IS EUROPE'S TOP EXHIBITOR

Odeon Cinemas Group, the UK-based European subsidiary of AMC Theatres, currently ranks as Europe's largest exhibition circuit in terms of number of screens, followed by Cineworld (UK), Vue International (UK) and Les Cinémas Pathé Gaumont (France). Odeon Cinemas now has 2,493 screens in 286 locations across the UK and Ireland, Finland, Germany, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Spain and Sweden. Cineworld has 2,142 screens at 230 sites and Vue has 1,972 screens in 227 locations. The full list can be seen at tinyurl.com/screen-count.

Variety – 9 June

London's West End Cinemas

by Allen Eyles with Keith Skone.



The history of London's West End cinemas dates back more than one hundred years. This book details all of them, in chronological order, totalling well over one hundred, from 1906 up to 2013. The best of the West End's cinemas were outfitted to a very high standard to match their role as show-cases for new films, hosting press shows and premières, as well as 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 p6

NEWSREEL

The items in this section are taken mainly from press cuttings from local newspapers. Although their factual accuracy has been checked by Allen Eyles, there may be minor errors in reporting dates or other detail.

Allen has also added comments, where indicated.

Photos by Harry Rigby within entry, except where stated.

A number in curly brackets {nnnnn} is the reference for the Cinema Treasures website. Go to: [cinematreasures.org/theaters/nnnnn]

ABERDEEN

Everyman has confirmed it will open its third Scottish venue at the Bon Accord centre in 2024. It will be in the space vacated by Laura Ashley. It will bring a fifth cinema to the City, all within a half-hour walk of each other. Planning permission allows for up to four screens.

Evening Express, Aberdeen – 26 May

ASHFORD (Kent)

Cineworld has opened two new screens – an IMAX and a 4DX. Work on the extension housing the screens began in March 2020 but Covid delayed the construction. All screens in the original part of the cinema have been upgraded with new seating – one has been converted into a 270° ScreenX. {24116}

Kentish Express – 7, 21 April

BANBURY (Oxon)

The new seven-screen Light cinema at Castle Quay opened on 10 June. Seating capacities range from 141 to 52.

Bicester Advertiser – 10 June

BIRMINGHAM (Central)

A new Everyman cinema opened on Friday 27 May with *Top Gun: Maverick* at 116 Wharfside Street in the central Mailbox complex. It has three screens seating 96, 91 and 141, all with 4K digital projectors, with a bar located in the lobby of screen ③.

Sent in by Allen Eyles

BLYTH (Northumberland)

The Phoenix Theatre has started showing films in its 300-seat auditorium. There are three showings a day on Wednesdays and Sundays. The town's last cinema, the Wallaw, closed in 2004 and is now a Wetherspoons pub. www.thephoenixtheatre.org.uk

Evening Chronicle, Newcastle – 30 April

BRADFORD (West Yorks)

Two men have been sentenced to 12 months in prison over an arson attack on the Alhambra Theatre that caused more than £20,000 worth of damage. The pair were found guilty of having set fire to bins at the back of the theatre in January 2020.

The Stage – 2 June; sent in by Barry Quinton & R David Simpson

BRISTOL

The Everyman has added a fourth screen, seating just 37. The venue is the former Whiteladies and is Grade II listed. {849}

B24/7 – 30 May

BRYNMAWR (Blaenau Gwent)



The future of the Market Hall cinema has been secured thanks to the group fighting to save it finally taking ownership of the building. A second screen is due to be added. There is a video of the rebuilding

history at youtu.be/HZNTSyxRFCY. The venue opened as a Market Hall in 1894 and currently has 320 seats. The recent history of the Market Hall was recalled at length with numerous illustrations in Picture House No 45, pages 86-97. {26576}

Nation Cymru – 28 May; photo taken April 2010

COALVILLE (Leics)

A Councillor has said it is no longer possible to fulfil a pledge to bring a cinema to the town in the next twelve months. The Council lost a bid last year for funding for an arts centre. It is now said to be in “detailed negotiations with people who can provide cinemas.”

Leicester Mercury – 17 May

COLCHESTER (Essex)

The former Odeon in Crouch Street was due to be auctioned on 25 May, having been withdrawn from a sale in April. At the time your Bulletin went to press, the auctioneers' website was showing the result as 'coming soon' but was headed 'July Auction', suggesting it may have again been carried forward. The guide price is £2,250,000 {17575}

East Anglian Daily Times – 15 April

COVENTRY



The former Brookville Picture House in Holbrooks was the subject of frantic bidding at an auction in May. It sold for £905,000, almost doubling its guide price of £500,000-£550,000. It opened in November 1928 with about 1,000 seats and was damaged in a WWII bombing raid in 1941 – only the front of the building remained standing. The owners reduced the height of the auditorium walls to a single storey and it was converted into a factory. It has been a carpet shop since 1987. {47223}

Coventry Live – 31 May; photo taken March 2006

CUMBERNAULD (North Lanark)

A new 84-seat cinema opened at the Lanternhouse on 30 April, in addition to the 300-seat main theatre. It will show current releases as well as special events. It is hoped that “affordable pricing” will reduce barriers and provide better access. The town previously had the County cinema, which opened in 1978 but only lasted a few years before continuing life as a bingo hall. lanternhousearts.org

Daily Record – 27 April

DARLINGTON

The three-screen Odeon Luxe was due to close on 30 June. It opened as the Regal in January 1938 with 1,620 seats and was renamed ABC in 1961. It was tripled in 1977 and refurbished as the Odeon Luxe in December 2019 with a reduced seating capacity. The town is home to a nine-screen Vue. {20950}

Northern Echo – 16 June; photo on front cover

DEAL (Kent)

The former Regent suffered a small fire on 7 June, thought to be arson. The building dates from 1928 and films ceased in July 1963 in favour of bingo, which closed in January 2009. Plans were put forward to reopen it as a cinema but these seem to have stalled. The condition of the building is said to be worsening. {32928}

Sent in by Ken Roe & Martin Tapsell

EASTBOURNE (East Sussex)

The independent 84-seat Towner cinema reopened on 14 May after a six-month closure. It was founded in 2017. townereastbourne.org.uk

bournefreemag – May; sent in by Barry Quinton

ELLAND (West Yorks)



A couple has been married inside the Rex. Their wedding had to be postponed twice due to Covid and their original venue closing. Mildred, the cinema's resident organist, played *Here Comes the Bride* as the bride walked down the aisle. Around 75 guests enjoyed the ceremony. {3669}

Halifax Courier – 15 June; sent in by Charles Morris;
interior photo taken April 2010, exterior photo on front cover

FAREHAM (Hants)

Fareham Live will see the existing Ferneham Hall redeveloped into an 808-seat main auditorium and a 120-seat studio space. The project was originally estimated at £12.57m but this rose to £13.35m in late 2020 due to increasing construction costs. In November 2020 the project was paused for six months due to the pandemic. Now costs have risen again by 30% to £16.69m. The local authority anticipates that work will begin again later this year and the venue will launch by the end of 2023.

Southern Daily Echo – 19 May; *The Stage* – 26 May;
sent in by Ian Patterson, Barry Quinton & R David Simpson

HARROGATE (North Yorks)



The freehold of the Grade II listed Odeon has been put on the market with offers over £7m invited. It opened in September 1936 with 1,674 seats and was first subdivided in August 1972; it was refurbished in 2008 and currently has five screens. Odeon has a 25-year lease so will continue to operate the cinema. {1834}

The Business Desk, Bdaily – 25 April; sent in by Terry Hanstock;
photo taken June 2022

HARWICH (Essex)

The Grade II* listed Electric Palace featured in the new *Downtown Abbey: A New Era*, pretending to be a cinema in Yorkshire. This brought in vital funds to assist in the restoration of the venue. electricpalace.com {2597}

Time Out – 28 April; sent in by Margaret Burgoine, Terry Hanstock & John West

ILKESTON (Derbys)

Three of the four shop units in the side of the former Ritz are being refurbished. Now there are plans to open a pub and micro-brewery in the fourth unit, the former foyer. See Casework p5. {22173}

Nottinghamshire Live – 7 May; sent in by Terry Hanstock

IPSWICH (Suffolk)

The two-screen cinema in the 1882 Corn Exchange has been renamed the King Street Cinema. Its last name was the Ipswich Film Theatre, which it had since 2013. Seating capacities are 209 and 40. {24780}

Ipswich Star – 10 June; sent in by Terry Hanstock

LEIGH (Wigan)

Built by community volunteers, the Leigh Film Factory is expected to open this summer in the former Spinners Mill. All the cinema seats are in place and the hospitality area is nearing completion. The seating capacity has not been given but from photographs released, it looks about 100.

Manchester Evening News – 5 May, 17 June

LEISTON (Suffolk)

Manager Wayne Burns celebrated 30 years at the Leiston Film Theatre with a special screening of *The Smallest Show on Earth* on 25 May. The building opened in October 1914 and currently has 350 seats in its single screen. {24966}

East Anglian Daily Times – 12 May; sent in by Terry Hanstock

LICHFIELD (Staffs)

The former Debenhams store could be transformed into a new cinema. Other schemes have been put forward in recent years, including a Light cinema but none has come to fruition.

BBC News website – 30 May; *Birmingham Mail* – 31 May; sent in by Terry Hanstock

LONDON (Camden)



The Koko nightclub in the Grade II listed former Camden Palace reopened on 29 April after a three-year £70m redevelopment, delayed by a rooftop fire and the pandemic. The damaged copper dome has been reinstated. To put it into context, £70m is one fifth of the cost the original contractor quoted for building The Shard. {14486}

Evening Standard – 29 April sent in by Tom Laughlan; photo taken September 2004

LONDON (Ealing)

The three-screen Ealing Project was due to open on 30 June. The screens have about 105, 65 and 65 seats. It is located on the ground floor of the Ealing Broadway centre and is the first cinema in Ealing in over 14 years. It is offering £6 tickets throughout July.

ealingproject.co.uk

Evening Standard – 16 June

LONDON (Holloway)

Planning permission is being sought for alterations to the Grade II listed seven-screen Odeon Luxe. These include repairs to the roof slab above the fly tower and partial demolition of a failing brick parapet wall to the north elevation at high level. Application numbers P2022/1177/LBC and P2022/1180/FUL. {4300}

Islington Gazette – 21 April; sent in by Tom Laughlan



LONDON (Hornchurch)



The Queen's Theatre has been listed Grade II to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. It was opened in 1975 with 506 seats and screens films occasionally, usually on Sunday when there is no live performance. {30243}

Theatre Weekly – 24 May; *The Stage* – 2 June;
sent in by Terry Hanstock & Barry Quinton; photo Wikimedia Commons, public domain

LONDON (Hounslow)

The new ten-screen Cineworld in the High Street Quarter opened on 5 May. There is a Superscreen with Dolby Atmos and a 270° ScreenX.

Cineworld Press Release; sent in by Terry Hanstock

LONDON (Park Royal)



The former nine-screen Vue has been rebranded as an Odeon Luxe and will reopen later this year, following refurbishment. It will have a total of 800 seats and will be known as the Odeon Luxe Acton. The venue opened in December 1994 as a Warner and closed in March 2020, when the lease only had a few months to run. {21132}

The Sun – 17 May; sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken April 2006

LONDON (Shepherd's Bush)

The restored Palladium façade has been nominated for the top prize in the Hammersmith Society's 60th Anniversary Environment Awards. It opened in March 1910 and it closed in October 1981 as Odeon2. It was converted into a *Walkabout* pub, which closed in 2013. The building was then used as a construction site office for workers converting the former Pavilion/Odeon next door into a hotel. It was demolished in May 2019, except for the façade, which has been used as the entrance to a block of flats built on the site. {3776}

shepherdsbushW12.com – 9 May

LONDON (Waterloo)

The new entrance to the BFI Southbank (formerly NFT) has gained the RIBA London Award 2022 and RIBA National Award 2022 from the Royal Institute of British Architects. The venue was built in the 1950s burrowed beneath the arches of Waterloo Bridge and its entrance had become outdated. The new entrance “blurs the territory between the Southbank promenade and the BFI, welcoming and alluring the public to step inside.” {19981}

RIBA Press Release – sent in by Terry Hanstock

LONDON (West End)

Plans for a six-screen cinema on the site of the former Odeon Marble Arch have been scrapped. The building may become an art gallery.

Sent in by Ken Roe

MARGATE (Kent)

The Dreamland cinema sign has been reinstated after it was temporarily replaced for filming *Empire of Light*. The building is listed Grade II*. The shooting was estimated to have brought £4m into the Thanet economy. A scene with mods and skinheads depicting unrest was shot on Margate seafront on 27 April. {15123}

Isle of Thanet News – 27 April, 17 June; sent in by Margaret Burgoine & Philip Stevens

MARYPORT (Cumbria)



Plans have been submitted for the redevelopment of the former Carlton. The proposal includes the full demolition of a neighbouring property and removal and replacement of part of the external walls of the Carlton. It sets out plans to revitalise the building, which was originally built in the 1830s, making it a community asset and a key visitor attraction. {46126}

Cumbria Crack – 11 May; photo taken February 2007

MONTROSE (Angus)



The three-screen Montrose Playhouse opened in October last year and has been a resounding success. Built in the shell of a former swimming pool, it welcomed 45,500 guests in the first six months. Screens ① & ② have 150 seats each and screen ③ has around 100. montroseplayhouse.co.uk {66039}

Dundee Courier – 26 April

MORECAMBE (Lancs)

Nearly 200 people enjoyed an evening of silent films at the Winter Gardens. The season, celebrating the venue's 125th anniversary, continues on 24 July with Hitchcock's *The Lodger: A Story of the London Fog*. Pantomime will return to the theatre from 10-24 December this year for the first time in 50 years. {4537}

Lancashire Post – 30 May; *Lancaster Guardian* – 6 June; sent in by Philip Crompton

Editor's Note: The CTA is hoping to visit in September – see p3.

PLYMOUTH

The 118-seat Plymouth Arts Centre has received an emergency grant of £45,054 from the Culture Recovery Fund. The venue moved from the now-closed Arts Centre to the Plymouth College of Art in 2018/19. It has now had more than £100,000 from the fund, in addition to other grants from the Council and the government. {59089}

The Herald, Plymouth – 8 April



PORTSMOUTH



The **Eagle Picturedrome** was demolished around 2021 but news has only just reached us. It opened in August 1911 with about 200 seats. It was short-lived, closing in January 1920. The building was initially converted into a bakery, then a butchery. Eventually it was used for light engineering. Housing has been built on the site. {64149}

Sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken March 2009

PRESTON (Lancs)

The eight-screen cinema in the new **Animate** centre is to be operated by Arc cinemas. Building work on the site of the former Market Hall is expected to begin in October with a target completion date of summer 2024.

Lancashire Evening Post – 25 May; sent in by Philip Crompton

The former **Odeon** suffered two fires in May. A Fire Brigade spokesman said the blazes are being treated as “suspicious”. Two 14-year-old boys have been arrested. Demolition of any auditorium walls that survived the fire commenced immediately; the street entrance and foyer are still standing. There is a short video and a photo gallery on the Lancashire Live website at [tinyurl.com/preston-odeon-fire](https://www.lancashirelive.co.uk/preston-odeon-fire). The venue opened in September 1928 and was subdivided in 1962/3. It closed in September 1992. See p19 last Bulletin. {6542}

Lancashire Post – 14 May; itv news – 20 May;
sent in by Philip Crompton, Darron Keeling & Terry Hanstock

REDCAR (Cleveland)

We reported on p29 of the last Bulletin that tendering was in progress to operate the new three-screen **Regent**, being built on the seafront. It now appears that the tendering process has been cancelled “due to a single poor submission”. The building was handed over to the Council earlier this year. The Council now says officers are in talks with an “experienced” national cinema operator.

Northern Echo, Evening Gazette, Teesside – 5 May

SALISBURY (Wilts)



Everyman has applied for planning permission (ref [PL/2022/04133](#)) to convert the former **Regal/ABC** into a four-screen cinema. The plans aim to “restore and highlight” art deco features, with “the foyer, lounge and waiting areas furnished with loose sofas, tables and other furniture”. The building opened in February 1936 with 1,608 seats in stalls and circle. Films ceased in January 1969 and it became bingo. This closed in March 2020. {2449}

Salisbury Journal – 5 June; sent in by Tim Sedgwick-Jell; photo taken March 2009

SHEFFIELD (Nether Edge)

The **Abbeydale Picture House** has been closed after the group running events there claimed it has been evicted. They say this follows an ongoing dispute with the building’s landlord around repairs to the roof of the main auditorium, which has been closed since December 2021. Events have since been staged in the **Fly Tower** at the rear of the building and have included film shows and weddings. The team say they are still hopeful that an amicable settlement can be reached. The 25-year lease was said to include complex and unique provisions regarding the tenant actively seeking restoration funding. {22681}

The Star – 12 May; sent in by Terry Hanstock

THIRSK (North Yorks)

The former **Gaiety** was converted into a showroom for an exclusive range of Land Rover vehicles – see p24 Bulletin 55/2. Now the owners have applied for permission to extend the building to create a “high level” hospitality suite and bedrooms for the exclusive use of its clients. The firm has already replicated the original screen from the 1914 cinema for motoring-themed events. {3369}

Yorkshire Post – 26 May; sent in by Terry Hanstock

WALTHAM CROSS (Herts)



The former **Embassy** was demolished in May. It opened in November 1937 with 1,700 seats as part of the Shipman & King circuit and had interior decoration by Mollo & Egan. It was [badly] tripled in 1972 and closed in September 1993. It was de-tripled and plainly decorated for bingo use, which ceased in January 2017. {2505}

Sent in by Jeremy Buck & Ken Roe; photo taken April 2006

Late News

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE



The Grade I listed **Tyne Theatre & Opera House** has been granted £242,000 by The National Lottery Heritage Fund. As part of the work the theatre will restore its Victorian stage machinery as well as develop a performance calendar database by researching all the performances that took place between 1867, when the theatre first opened and 1919, when the theatre was converted for cinema use. The project will run for twelve months and also see the acquisition of ‘missing’ machinery, which has been in store for over forty years. The CTA visited in October 2011.

Tyne Theatre Press Release; photo taken August 2007

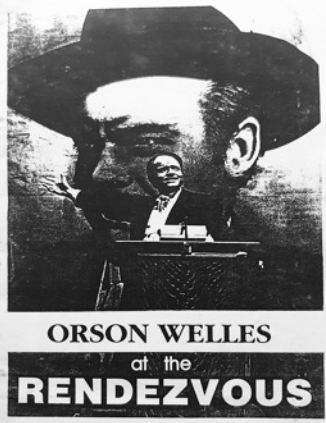
LETTERS

RENDEZVOUS RECOLLECTIONS

Memories came flooding back when I saw in the last Bulletin a cutting sent in by Richard Hawkins advertising the former independent *Rendezvous* Cinema in Portsmouth. I volunteered, pretty much full-time, at the *Rendezvous* from around 1986 until 1989 when I began working at the ABC Portsmouth. The *Rendezvous* was a magical place to be at back then; at least it was if, like me, you were in your late teens and mad about movies, especially foreign ones. Don't forget, this was at a time when cinema-going had reached its lowest point, cinemas were closing and even in a City as densely populated as Portsmouth, we were starved of culture. There was no Internet as such back then and even hearing about a foreign language film or an intriguing British or US independent movie was exciting.

At the *Rendezvous*, a shoe box of a cinema with around ninety seats, you actually got to see these films – even if someone standing up in the back two rows would cast a shadow on the screen! I still managed to watch subtitled classics such as *Jean de Florette*, *Manon Des Sources* and *Under the Sun of Satan* – two of which starred a young Gerard Depardieu – and believing true genius was possible. Apart from a couple of full-time employees who booked films and took care of the technical side, the *Rendezvous* was volunteer-run. I started just before one of the previous full timers did a moonlight flip with the petty cash! As this was the 1980s and we were an independent art house cinema, those of us who volunteered – and we were only a handful – were all left-wing radicals. Imagine our excitement when we booked a series of short comedy films, one of which starred Alexei Sayle, then billed as the Marxist Comedian. His film, about a missing bike I think, arrived without the last reel. Panic! Instead of cancelling it we found around two minutes of old adverts, scratched and incomplete and spliced them onto the end. It made no sense, of course but one of the local intelligentsia – make that patronising snob – gushed how wonderfully avant-garde the film makers were ... if only he had known!

The *Rendezvous* was only one part of an art centre called the Hornpipe, located in the former Oddfellows Hall, which boasted a large hall where bands, alternative theatre groups and the latest up-and-coming stand-up comics all performed. I still remember chatting one afternoon to a young Julian Clary (I had no idea who he was, only that he was performing that night) after I befriended his pet dog who was running amok in the building – it really was that kind of place. One of our most memorable 'seasons' was a three-film retrospect on the legendary Orson Welles. We screened *Citizen Kane*, *The Third Man* and *Someone to Love*, Welles' final film appearance where he was directed by his close friend Henry Jaglom. At the time – indeed, they remain so today – my heroes were two great film critics and writers: Barry Norman and the *Observer's* Philip French. In a youthful attempt to aspire to their noble calling, I wrote and produced a sixteen-page booklet for the occasion and thirty-five years on I still have a copy. Apart from doing writing and publicity for the *Rendezvous*, it was the place where I learnt to tear and sell tickets, project a film and deal with the great British Public. This all proved to be great experience for working in the cinema trade as I did for the next twenty years but it was the opportunity to embrace radical, progressive film from around the world which the *Rendezvous* really instilled into me. Thirty plus years later that passion still burns bright.



Mike Whitcombe

THE FUTURE OF THE CTA BULLETIN

As a member, this month I was once again in receipt of the excellent Bulletin magazine produced by Harry Rigby. In previous issues periodically, Harry has indicated that he would like to hand over the job to someone else. As nobody has written to the Bulletin about this, I thought it was time to start a discussion.

So, let's start by saying this will not be any easy act to follow! As with a lot of sole editorships Harry has made the Bulletin his own by gradually perfecting the layout and programming the Serif PagePlus Publisher software he uses to carry out the more mundane layout and formatting tasks. His knowledge of the industry and vast photographic archive contribute massively to the quality and success of this publication. A good many of the members will not have this knowledge. Even the most computer savvy members may find Serif Software not the easiest to get their heads around, I know I certainly didn't when I looked at it.

Whenever this transition takes place, it is my view that both Harry and the Members are going to have to accept possible changes along the following lines:

- 1) Cost of production may well increase.
- 2) The Bulletin will look completely different.
- 3) The number of issues may be reduced.
- 4) The standard and quality of the content may be very variable.
- 5) It may not always be published on time.

With all this in mind, in order to support Harry, I think it's about time that the other Officers and Committee start to seriously look around for a suitable successor; they may of course be already doing so. This may be from within the society or more likely someone who is employed in the printing and publishing industry. It is my view this it too large a task to be handed over to one person.

It will be interesting to hear the views of other people.

Richard Hagon

Editor's Note: Although I currently use *Serif PagePlus*, any DTP program capable of producing a CMYK pdf should suffice. It takes between 40-60 hours to produce each edition, depending on the size.

PALACE DEVIZES



Following on from your question in the last Bulletin regarding the Palace Devizes. I took some images in February 2019 when the bingo hall section in the old stalls was being removed. The foreman was very 'guarded' about the plans for the cinema but there was a desire to bring back live entertainment alongside film shows. The Palace has a very large stage area with a fly-tower and several dressing rooms and store area, which had been turned into a bar/kitchen. What I did not realise was that the stalls floor area had been raised up to the level of the stage (some 7-8 feet) with a large 'vault-like area' under the floor, which was to be removed and the rake of the original stalls reinstated.

What I could not work out was where would the box go? I realise that in today's world of digital not a lot of space is required for the projector but it has to be sited somewhere to get the best sightlines from the seating and a reasonable sized picture on screen! The overhang from the 1970s circle cinema – just over 200 seats – protrudes almost over all the old stalls area and placing a box in front of that could be difficult.

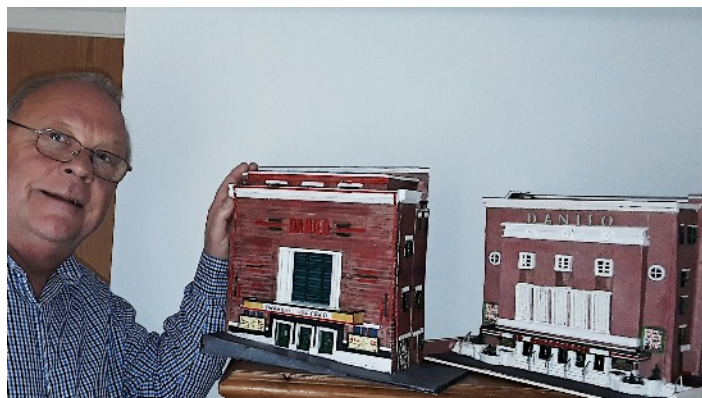
The cinema has been closed for some time because of Covid but when I was in Devizes in March this year work seems to have gone on apace. Sadly, I could not raise anyone to have a look inside. On my

previous visit in February 2019, I was under the impression that the circle cinema would be retained. I have emailed the cinema as you have done and like yourself had no response. It is quite reassuring to see the new owners spending money on the building and bringing the stage area back to entertainment use. When I first got in projection work at the **Palace** in the 1960s, the screen would be flown into the fly tower for stage shows and in the early days of bingo before the Zetters 1970 bingo conversion.

I am really unsure as to whether Devizes can support a single screen – the original seating of the old **Palace** was some 700 seats – it remains to be seen what the end result is?

David Reeves

TWO DANILOS



I thought readers might be interested in seeing my two latest models – much smaller scale than my usual and just the frontages. A rare sight of two **Danilos** together (the very first at Brierley Hill and the last one ever built at Stourbridge). In the real world, Stourbridge was sadly demolished last year but Brierley Hill is hopefully awaiting re-use and can be saved.

John Griffiths

OPERATION MINCEMEAT

I hope you managed to see this excellent film about the deception the allies played on the Germans by using a body as a decoy about the allied landings. The story was previously told in a film called *The Man Who Never Was* in 1958 but surprisingly this was not mentioned in press reports about the recent version. The credits at the end of the film had a statement to the effect that the film company was not paid any money for the smoking. Many films of previous eras had lots of people smoking, which they did during the war but this is the first time I have seen this statement on a film's credits.

Ian Patterson

DOWNTOWN ABBEY

I was glad to catch *Downton Abbey: A New Era* just before it finished its run at one of my cinemas. I was intrigued to try and identify the projector used during the film making sequences. I am fairly sure it was an early Kalee (5, 6 or 7) but what was interesting was that it was driven by a vertical coupling from beneath. This implies the projector was attached to a soundhead, which would be an anachronism as it was a silent film being produced. And even though they re-shot scenes for sound, they were using a disc cutter. What I am sure of, however, concerns the scenes shot at the Thirsk cinema (actually the **Electric Palace** Harwich). There were three shots facing the back of the auditorium. In one of them there were very clear 'exit' signs, in letters, above the doors. In the other two they were definitely 'running man' signs.

Charles Morris

GRAND RYHOPE REBUILD AT BEAMISH

We carried articles on the proposed rebuilding of the Grand cinema Ryhope [Sunderland] at Beamish Open-Air Museum in Bulletins 52/3 and 54/6. Here are two letters from members involved in the project.

It's a few months since I made any contact with you to let you know the progress (or the lack of it) regarding the rebuild in the 50s new area at Beamish.

We had the last meeting around early February. I had strong objections that some clever 'amateur' was going to move the original projection room from under the stalls where it always was and up stairs into the circle for wheelchair access by a lift – of all ridiculous ideas – and only have two rows of seats in the circle! I told them that

no cinema in the 'sticks' in the 50s had two rows of seats in the circle and if they did that then they would get no more help from me. The outcome was they brought in new architects who agreed with me and went back to the original (under the circle in the stalls area).

The original Kalee 8s would be of no use as no spares would be available. I remember when I closed the **FairWorld/Carlton** in Guisborough at the end of August 1982. For the past 40 years, Ken Fellowes, who was my manager and lives in Guisborough, has been looking after the Kalee 19s, which were installed new in about 1954. The owner of the property, Brian Bielby, whose mother owned it when we leased it with **FairWorld** had left it to the two brothers. Although the auditorium is now used for furniture sales, the projection room is a separate entrance and fully intact thanks to Ken! I had arranged for these two mechs to be donated to Beamish for installation when the **Grand** is rebuilt there! However, Beamish say they have no plans to collect the projectors at the present time. I am fed up with the attitude regarding this excellent offer and the manner in which these matters are being dealt with.

Bill Mather

I have to assert that I agree wholeheartedly with the points raised and the comments made. The visit to the former **Carlton** cinema, Guisborough on 14 April, having been delayed for two years following the Covid Pandemic, was for Beamish personnel to ascertain if in fact the two Kalee 19 projectors are required for installation in the **Grand**, having been offered 'free and gratis' by the **Carlton's** owners some considerable time ago.

The original response from Beamish was "Unfortunately this is not something the museum is looking to collect at this time", as I recall. It was emphasised by Bill and me that this was an inappropriate response, given that Beamish does not have two working projectors. If technical authenticity is of paramount importance such items are a 'must have'. If Beamish were a 'theme park' as opposed to a 'living breathing museum' it would not matter so much but a museum it happens to be ...

Re the actual visit. Beamish indicated that a large number of personnel would attend on the day at 12 noon. At 12:30pm three people arrived (no apologies for lateness offered), namely 'Connor' (whom we had met on one previous occasion), 'Cassie' and a third person, a tall bespectacled gentleman, supercilious and aloof in manner and bearing. This person did not introduce himself nor did it occur to either of the other two people present to introduce him to either the building's owners (who had kindly made the place accessible), former manager, Ken Fellowes (who has maintained the projectors in working order for the last 40 years) or to Bill or me. Not one solitary word was uttered at any time by the gentleman in question.

When Geraldine [from Beamish] discussed this particular 'event' with us she advised us that, factored into the day's activities, would be a meeting (to include the **Carlton's** owners, Ken Fellowes, Bill Mather and the undersigned) at a café or similar following the visit to the **Carlton's** Projection Suite. The building's owners, aware of this, had kindly arranged for us all to visit the nearby Cricket Club for light refreshments and coffee; not only would this have been more conducive than a local café but it would also have entailed no extra cost to Beamish. This offer was rather ungraciously turned down.

Beamish is, of course, an extensive organisation requiring Management with a wide variety of skills but it would be nothing at all were it not for the goodwill of certain dedicated members of the public. That day in Guisborough tested such goodwill to the very limit.

To summarise:

- Beamish Personnel 30 minutes late and no apologies made.
- No thanks given to the building's owners nor to former Manager, Ken Fellowes who has maintained the 'mechs' for four decades.
- No introduction to third Beamish person.
- Post visit 'meeting' did not transpire and no thanks or apologies made re the 'light refreshment' arrangement.
- No word received re the projectors to this very day ...

I would point out that Connor did at least appear to show some genuine interest although perhaps less so in the case of Cassie (who did at least speak to us).

Terry Charnock

PS: Geraldine had mentioned that special safety shoes would be ordered for Bill and me to facilitate visits to the **Grand** site – I assume that this has been overlooked also.

CTA ARCHIVE

The Cinema Theatre Association Archive is open for research visits and for enquiries from members and the general public. Located in a modern building on the outskirts of Southend-on-Sea, the Archive offers all the facilities and resources you would expect from a modern archive. The Archive contains an extensive collection of material that has been steadily growing since its inception in 1967. This includes books, periodicals, articles, newspaper cuttings, photographs, plans and drawings, many donated or acquired from leading architects or industry figures and supplemented by personal collections and research. The breadth of the collection is such that there are very few topics related to cinema history, architecture, design or operation that are not represented.

MAKING AN ENQUIRY OR ARRANGING A VISIT

Please visit the new Archive website for full details or to make an enquiry: cta-uk.org/archive. The *Exploring the Archive* page of the website includes catalogues and lists for various collections along with indexes for periodicals including the Bulletin and Picture House. You may find these lists useful in identifying material for research. As the catalogues can only provide a brief snapshot of a small part of the Archive, please use the enquiry form that can be found on the *Making an Enquiry* page to tell us about a project you are undertaking or subject which you are interested in researching – or maybe it's a photograph that eludes you. Visiting the Archive is not normally necessary and material can simply be sent to you.

DONATING MATERIAL TO THE ARCHIVE

Please visit the *Donating Material* page of the website. Almost everything held in the Archive has been donated and is the main way that the collection grows. The Archive will not turn down material which is on subject and adds to the breadth of its holdings so please do not hesitate to contact us if you have something which you think should be preserved. If the material includes books or magazines, please first prepare a list and submit it to us, so we can determine which copies are not already held. We will occasionally accept books that are already held if they are in good condition, on the understanding that they will be sold to raise funds. Please do not post items to the Archive address as there is no facility to receive parcels when it is closed and they may be lost or returned to you as undelivered. Please contact the Archivist, who can provide a safe address. Although we always prefer to receive original material, if you cannot part with the originals we are happy to accept scanned material or copies of your digital photographs.

ARCHIVE TWITTER

You may be interested to know that the Archive regularly posts messages, often including photographs, on its Twitter account – [@CTA_Archive](https://twitter.com/CTA_Archive). Please feel free to follow us if you use Twitter, alternatively you can view these messages via the link on our website or by visiting twitter.com/CTA_Archive.

VOLUNTEERING AT THE ARCHIVE OR FROM HOME

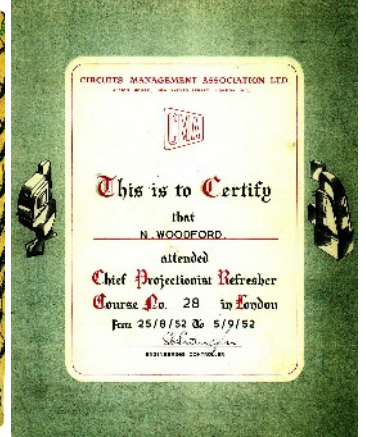
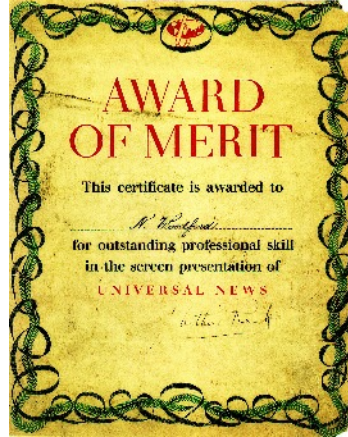
The Archive is maintained entirely by volunteers. Volunteering can be a very interesting and rewarding experience and you do not have to be a member to be a volunteer. Volunteers might file, organise and sort the collections, deal with enquiries or undertake special projects. You don't need any experience or particular skills. If you cannot easily visit the Archive and have computer skills, a scanner or access to Word or Excel at home, you can still volunteer as we have plenty of work that can be undertaken remotely without visiting the Archive.

PHOTO IDENTIFICATION

Richard Burke has identified the ladies in mystery photograph on page 25 of the last Bulletin as Patricia Burke (left), Petula Clark (centre) and Brenda de Banzie (right). They all appeared together in the 1954 film *The Happiness of Three Women* and it is no doubt in connection with the promotion of that film that this photo originates. It is therefore possible that the gentleman on the left is the film's producer David Dent. Alternatively, Ross Campbell has suggested that the gentleman might be Bill Kerr; although he has no connection with this film, he was appearing alongside Patricia Burke in the radio version of *Hancock's Half Hour* at this time. Please let me know if you think this is David Dent or Bill Kerr.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

A substantial collection of photographs taken by the late Robert Cook has recently been donated to the Archive. These span from the 1980s to 2000s and around half are black and white images. In total there are around 2,000 plus images in this collection, which is presently being catalogued and digitised before being placed in the Archive. It is our aim to catalogue and digitise all photos being donated to the Archive as soon as they arrive.



A personal collection of papers from the career of projectionist Norman Woodford has been donated. He was a projectionist at the Odeon in Morecambe from 1938 until October 1950, when he transferred to the Odeon Accrington to take up the post of Chief Projectionist, which he held until 1960. The collection contains many photos of both cinemas, some dating from their opening. Perhaps the most interesting item is a typed list, in alphabetical order, of every film he ever projected at both the cinemas, complete with the dates.

Member Rob Metcalfe acquired at auction the archive of JP Mayer, author of *The Sociology Of Film* and *British Cinemas & Their Audiences*. There is much correspondence from the writing of his books, including with cinema chains but perhaps of most interest are the hundreds of 'cinema diaries' kept by filmgoers and submitted to Mayer in the 1940s. While he used some of these in his books, there are many more which likely haven't been read since he received them. They provide a remarkable first-hand experience of British cinema.



Demolition of the Picture House Salisbury, showing the balcony front design; photo kindly shared by Frogg Moody

A piece of decorative plasterwork, which formed part of the balcony front of the Picture House in Salisbury, has been donated to the Archive. The cinema became the **Playhouse Theatre** in later years before being demolished in 1979. During demolition this piece was acquired by Christ Abbott, who has now kindly donated it.

CONTACTING THE ARCHIVE

To make an enquiry please use the enquiry form on the website. For any other matter, such as donations or volunteering, please email archive@cta-uk.org; if you do not have Internet access call 07971 752807.

Clive Polden, CTA Archivist



MISCELLANY

FILM AUCTIONS

An extremely rare original Stormtrooper helmet from the first *Star Wars* film could be yours for £460,000. The white plastic prop was one of just six made – only two are known to still exist. This one was plucked from a skip after filming had finished.

A rare *Star Wars* toy figure, bought at Tesco for 99p, fetched £2,000. The total collection raised £37,500.

Dungarees worn in the first *Star Wars* film have fetched £9,000. The seller, who paid £5 for them at a charity shop in the 1970s, only recently realised the movie link.

Judy Garland's blue and white checked gingham dress from the 1939 classic *The Wizard of Oz* is expected to fetch at least £1m. It was thought to be lost for years until it was discovered in a shoe box at the Catholic University of America's drama school.

An Aston Martin DB5 owned by the late Sean Connery is expected to fetch more than £1m. A philanthropy fund set up in his name will donate proceeds to charities. Also in the auction is a £15m Picasso painting *Buste d'homme*.

A 007 poster for *Goldfinger*, made to satisfy the Irish censor in 1964, was tipped to fetch £10,000. Instead of a bikini-clad woman, it shows a gold hand.

Unopened VHS tapes of 1970s and 1980s Hollywood blockbusters are expected to sell for thousands of pounds. A first issue box set of the *Back to the Future* trilogy already has a bid on it of £20,000. A collector is also willing to pay £17,000 for a mint copy of *Star Wars*. Other VHS tapes being sold in the Dallas auction include *Jaws*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and *Ghostbusters*.

Daily Mirror – 23, 29 April, 31 May, 9 June; *Metro* – 25 April, 23 May, 1 June;
sent in by Tom Laughlan, Barry Quinton & R David Simpson

FILM SECRETS

Star Wars fans can learn movie secrets behind the Millennium Falcon in an exhibition in Pembroke Dock, Wales. It was built in an aircraft hanger in the town by dozens of workers sworn to silence. It took three months to make the craft, which was then moved to Elstree Studios, where in 1980 *The Empire Strikes Back* was filmed.

Daily Mirror – 21 May; sent in by Barry Quinton



MOVIE CHALLENGE

A film fanatic who lost his job in lockdown has beaten his challenge of watching 1,000 movies in a year. The 47-year-old man from Yeovil managed 1,028 – sometimes viewing seven movies a day. His favourite was 1988's *Cinema Paradiso*.

Metro – 31 May; sent in by Tom Laughlan

CARRY A CINEMA SCREEN ON THE END OF YOUR NOSE

Mobile Operator EE is launching augmented reality glasses that can be hooked up to a mobile phone and used to watch films on an "IMAX-sized" virtual screen. They have a built-in OLED display that casts images streamed via 5G onto a 201-inch screen that appears before the wearer.

Metro – 26 April; sent in by Tom Laughlan & Richard Hawkins

FILMS IN CONCERT

The Royal Albert Hall is staging a series of films with a live orchestra. These include *Superman*, *Titanic*, *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* and *Harry Potter* and the *Half Blood Prince*. Details at tinyurl.com/RAH-films. There is a 2-minute video about conducting such an event at youtu.be/6B-K2Afx40.

Time Out – 26 April; sent in by Tom Laughlan

FORT CINEMA

Spitbank Fort is one of three forts in the Solent constructed in the 1860s/70s to protect the British Navy from French warships and was also used in the two World Wars. It is a 15-minute boat ride from Portsmouth. It has been the subject of a £4.5m refurbishment taking two and a half years to create a property with nine bedrooms – and a cinema! There is a 360° virtual tour at solentforts.com.

Metro – 26 April; sent in by Richard Hawkins

MEMBERSHIP

NEW MEMBERS

We offer a warm welcome to the following new members: Christina Horsepool, Robert Tapsfield, Martin Deboo, Tatenda Jamera, Linda Smyth, Richard Vaughan and The Kent Film Foundation.

DONATIONS

Once more members have displayed their generosity by adding a donation to the renewal of their subscriptions. Our sincere thanks go to: CG Behr, TE Benton, AL Body, GM Booth, ME Burgoine, RD Burke, LR Carter, B Claussen, MR Cleave, GR Cooper, L Culver, MR Cunningham, IJ Drummond, JD Elliott, RK Fuller, IP Green, MP Greenslade, CD Harrison, RJ Hawley, SP Hobbs, A Hodson, SB Kay, RA Lascaut, TDC Laughlan, AV Mabey, CA Mackay, JL May, P Mellor, PG Moules, B Palmer, IJ Patterson, GJ Richards, RW Short, BH Snowball, M Taylor, DR Threadgall, PF Thomas, WJB Thomson and RF Wilson.

IN MEMORIAM

We have been sorry to learn since the last issue of the Bulletin of the deaths of the following members:

Clive Thirlwall from Winchester, a member since 1991 and Mark Wooffindin from Castleford, who joined in 2009.

Ray Ritmeester, Membership Secretary

NECROLOGY

BO HOPKINS 84

He appeared in more than 100 film and television roles in a career of more than 40 years, including the major studio films *The Wild Bunch* (1969), *The Bridge at Remagen* (1969), *The Get-away* (1972), *American Graffiti* (1973) and *Midnight Express* (1978).



VANGELIS 79

Born Evángelos Odysseás Papathanassiou, he composed the music for *Blade Runner* (1982) and *Chariots of Fire* (1981) for which he won an Oscar, although he missed the ceremony through fear of flying. Earlier in his career he formed the band *Aphrodite's Child* with Demis Roussos and collaborated with Jon Anderson, the lead singer of Yes on four albums as *Jon and Vangelis*.



INTERNET CORNER

- ★ tinyurl.com/world-indy From *Screen Daily* – 15 indie cinemas from around the world that are thriving post-pandemic.
- ★ tinyurl.com/man-lost From *Manchester Evening News* – Manchester's lost City-centre cinemas; 9 b/w photos.
- ★ www.memorylane.co.uk Free access to 147,379 photos taken as far back as 1878. A search for 'cinema' brings up 153 entries.
- ★ youtu.be/rBRM51lavaw A collection of Odeon/Gaumont (Rank) interstitials.
- ★ youtu.be/sZ_oSky646Y A 38½ minute 'Spoolbox' video on the former ABC Blackpool. {25501} sent in by David Kay
- ★ youtu.be/CZ1pjDVfDXI A 47¾ minute 'Spoolbox' video on the Odeon Dickson Road, Blackpool [now Funny Girls]. {1833}
- ★ tinyurl.com/aberdeen-cinemas From *Press & Journal* – Aberdeen Cinemas – 16 photos.
- ★ tinyurl.com/usa-abandoned From *Love Property* – 31 photos of abandoned USA cinemas. The photos can be magnified by clicking on *Expand View* at the top then using the arrows.
- ★ tinyurl.com/leeds-moortown From the *Yorkshire Evening Post* – memories of the Corner House cinema in Moortown, Leeds, which only lasted for two years 1938-1940. 4 photos. {48052}
- ★ tinyurl.com/odeon-darlington From the *Northern Echo* – pictures and history of the Odeon (ex Regal/ABC) which was due to close on 30 June. See Newsreel p20 and photo on front cover.

WHAT'S IN A NAME – TITLE CHANGES

By David Evans

It's 1967 and somewhere in the USA someone is thinking about going to their local Loew's Theatre to see a Walter Matthau / Jack Lemmon picture called *The Fortune Cookie* and somewhere in the UK someone is thinking about going to their local Odeon to see the same pair in a film called *Meet Whiplash Willie*. Were these different movies? The answer is a resounding "no" as it was the same Billy Wilder – directed picture with different titles for two different English-speaking markets where the distributors feared that British audiences would be unfamiliar with what a Fortune Cookie was and so they gave the movie a title based on the nickname of one of the characters.

During the Golden Age of cinema buildings that the CTA and its members cherish so much, changes to a film's title were quite common on both sides of the Atlantic – many based on place names, history, terminology and, sometimes, to avoid misunderstandings when words were associated with different meanings in either country. A good example of the latter is *Hallelujah I'm a Bum* (1932) in the USA and *Hallelujah I'm a Tramp* in the UK. Later, in 1944, *Fanny* by Gaslight, highlighting the innocent charms of a young girl, Fanny, played by Phyllis Calvert, in Victorian London, switched its emphasis to the villain of the piece, James Mason, when it became *Man of Evil* in the USA, where the original title could have had a totally different meaning to the one intended!



The UK and US posters for *I Live in Grosvenor Square*

Place names gave rise to numerous changes with, for example, the British *I Live in Grosvenor Square*, 1945 becoming *A Yank in London* for its US release, even though Grosvenor Square was a hive of American activity during the latter part of the Second World War.

When my parents took me, in 1954, to the Century Leyton to see what I thought was a very exciting Alan Ladd picture called *O'Rourke of the Royal Mounted*, I had no idea that in the 1970s I would catch the same film on TV in Toronto, under its North American title, *Saskatchewan*. It would seem that although familiarity with Commonwealth geography was probably higher in 1954 than it is today, its original title was deemed to be too difficult for Britons.

As for *Whisky Galore* (1949) being released in the US as *Tight Little Island*, it can only be assumed that the original title was deemed to be just a little too "uncritical" for American consumption. However, it seems perfectly natural for Columbia to have called Lucille Ball's *The Fuller Brush Girl* (1950) by a different title in the UK where it was presented as *The Affairs of Sally* as Britons were unfamiliar with the doorstep sales approach of the company in question.

Probably the most "controversial" aspect of title changes is when the ethos behind a film is seemingly changed by such action as was the case with the British *They Made Me a Fugitive* (1947) where Trevor Howard is pursued for the crimes of others. However in the USA it was released as *I Became a Criminal* and thereby lost this sense of unfairness towards its principal character.

For me, the most striking example of this change of ethos is Britain's *Tomorrow We Live* (1942) an heroic story of the French Resistance, which ran into difficulties for its American release as that title had



The Century Leyton c1960 – photo courtesy Ron Knee

already been used twice for US pictures. So the distributors there gave the picture another title, which turned the whole idea of hope encapsulated in its title on its head when it became, of all things, the downbeat *At Dawn We Die!*

PS: *The Hot Rock* (1972) (US) was released in the UK as *How to Steal a Diamond in Four Uneasy Lessons*. What about that for a snappy title?



The UK and US posters for *Whisky Galore*

Editor's Note: You may remember reading in a previous Bulletin that I helped run a 16mm cinema at my students' hostel in the mid-1960s. We hired a film called *Separate Beds*, starring James Garner and Lee Remick. Its US title was *The Wheeler Dealers* and, indeed, that was the song played over the credits. It didn't make sense.

The Projected Picture Trust

Dean Clough Mills, HALIFAX, HX3 5AX

The Projected Picture Trust exists to locate and preserve projectors and related film equipment, both professional and domestic. Since 1978 enthusiastic volunteers have been happy to help restore these items and so preserve THE MAGIC OF CINEMA.

The Trust provides help and assistance to non-commercial community cinemas and museums exhibiting film related artefacts.

The Museum of Cinema Technology has perhaps the largest collection of all types of film equipment in the UK. The Data Archive holds over 3,000 items including press cuttings, manuals and film related technical documents. We are presently looking to strengthen our management team...

PLEASE CONTACT US IF YOU ARE ABLE TO HELP
or if you would like to become a member only.

contact@theppt.org

www.theppt.org