



CINEMA
THEATRE
ASSOCIATION

www.cta-uk.org

BULLETIN

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The auditorium of the Gaumont State Kilburn, visited by the CTA on 15 August; photo by Kevin Gooding – see p10



The Alhambra Dunfermline, which has celebrated its 100th birthday – see Newsreel p22; photo taken March 2004

FROM YOUR EDITOR

This edition will mark 24 years since I took over as Bulletin editor. Back then, edition 32/5 was 20 pages and printed in black and white, although with spot colour on the front and back pages. Since then we have gone to full colour and the number of pages has increased – the most we have had is 36, on several occasions. Thank you all for your continued support over the years.

On p10 you will find a report of the CTA visit to Kilburn. I thought Kevin's photos were so good that I have put one on the front cover and made two occupy the whole of p11. Unfortunately that meant I had no room for the photo of the upper lobby at the Grange – so here it is:



I have managed to find room for a few holiday snaps this time. I have run out of overseas ones so any that you have taken will be more than welcome. I will repeat my request for articles, as I have nothing held over. Please remember to illustrate them with photographs, preferably taken in 'landscape' mode rather than 'portrait'. Again, at the risk of repeating myself, please send photos at the highest resolution possible and don't 'doctor' them. Please send them as attachments rather than embedded in messages or documents.

Finally, nothing to do with cinemas but something I read recently that I hope will amuse. When Lady Astor was campaigning for her first parliamentary seat in Plymouth in 1919, a senior naval officer was appointed to chaperone her as she went round door-to-door canvassing. One door was opened by a small girl. "Is your mother at home?" Lady Astor enquired. "No," the child replied, "but she said if a lady comes with a sailor to use the upstairs back room and leave ten bob!"

Harry Rigby, Editor CTA Bulletin

Quick Guide to CTA Social Media



www.cta-uk.org



www.facebook.com/cinematheatreorguk



www.twitter.com/Ctheatreassoc



www.instagram.com/cinematheatreorguk



www.ticketsource.co.uk



Zoom talks and presentations platform

Useful CTA Contacts

digital@cta-uk.org : enquires about digital services
visits@cta-uk.org : enquires about talks/events bookings
info@cta-uk.org : general enquires
Amazon Smile link : smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/1100702-0
Visits' registration phone hotline: 020 8800 8393

CINEMA THEATRE ASSOCIATION

(Founded January 1967)

promoting serious interest in all aspects of cinema buildings

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

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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.

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DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE
THURSDAY 20 OCTOBER

VISITS AND EVENTS

Film Exhibition in South Kensington

Tuesday 8 November at 11am:

organised by Richard Norman and Marion Kennett

Hidden away in the heart of South Kensington's Museum-land are two film exhibition installations that are not so well-known to the general public but represent some interesting and different examples of film presentation. We'll visit the Institut Français' Ciné Lumière theatres in their Art Deco designed centre and, after a lunch break, we will visit the nearby Science Museum's recently upgraded IMAX auditorium and see an IMAX 3D film. Our visit to these two venues is a first for the CTA.

**Institut Français, Ciné Lumière,
17 Queensberry Place SW7 2DT at 11:00am**

Our first visit of the day is to the Cultural Centre of the Institut Français. The centre's cinemas are open to the public, where they operate regular films shows, having gained a successful reputation for programming mainly international films. We will visit both of their cinemas housed within an impressive Art Deco building.

We'll meet and receive the day's itinerary in Ciné Lumière II, the smaller auditorium located on the lower ground floor. This is a very comfortably furnished space seating 32 and is the latest addition to the Cultural Centre. The intimate space is not only used for cinema but for private screenings, corporate workshops, press conferences etc. Next, we'll visit Ciné Lumière I, a spacious and elegant Art Deco auditorium, originally built as a theatre and situated on the first floor. Its seating capacity is 220. These facilities with a stage also lend themselves to other uses including presentations, recitals and arts performances. A recent renovation has stripped the interior back to its original design. The shallow balcony has been adapted to house a modern projection box to accommodate a wide variety of media including 35mm film. The space is reached either by the elegant staircase from the foyer, or by lift.



Art Deco foyer and entrance to Ciné Lumière II



Ciné Lumière I auditorium

Science Museum, Exhibition Road SW7 2DD
(meet at 1:45pm prompt, outside Group Entrance,
Imperial College Road, off Exhibition Road)

PRESENTED BY MARK CUTMORE, SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP

Keeping pace of developments in the field of high-tech film exhibition, we are privileged to visit the latest IMAX installation at London's Science Museum, situated within their Ronson Theatre complex. Our visit will include a background talk about the new IMAX installation and – time permitting – a behind the scenes look into the projection box to see the latest IMAX GT dual-laser projection system. It is also equipped with an option to show IMAX 70mm film prints, making it, in a technical sense at least, one of the most flexible cinemas in the world for picture quality. The screen dimensions are 24.3m by 16.8m. We will then have an opportunity to join an audience for a screening of one of their regular and popular IMAX 3D documentary films.

Our presenter Mark Cutmore is Head of Commercial Experience for the Science Museum Group. He is responsible for film exhibition at five sites controlled by the Science Museum Group, In London, Mark has overseen the latest IMAX refurbishment scheme and also manages their film programming. The Science Museum group also manages the Pictureville cinema in Bradford.



London's famous Science Museum



Representation of an IMAX 3D presentation

**Please note booking must be received by
not later than Saturday 5 November**

Booking On Line: To book a place use the Visits email address, visits@cta-uk.org state 'Kensington Visit' in the subject header and your name and contact phone number in the content section.

Booking By Telephone: Use the Events registration phone line 020 8800 8393 clearly stating 'Kensington Visit' and your name and contact phone number. Updates can also be found on the Visits page of the CTA website – click on **MEMBERS' AREA** > and log on. There will be a small charge for administration and notes, payable on the day.

Notes continue overleaf...

Important – Entry to the Science Museum: Special arrangements have been made for our group visit and it is necessary to conform with their registration procedure on arrival. Only members whose details we have received in advance (via booking) will be permitted entry. Also, we must enter as a group (meeting at 1:45pm prompt) outside at the 'Group Entrance' in Imperial College Road; latecomers may not be admitted. Further details will be announced when we initially meet on the day. Please note that there will be a long walk through the Museum's galleries and steps are involved to reach the IMAX Ronson Theatre.

Getting There: The Cultural Centre of the Institut Français is situated at 17 Queensbury Place, SW7 2DT. The nearest Tube station is South Kensington (District, Circle & Piccadilly lines). After mounting the station's exit steps to street level, turn right through the short arcade and then turn left, cross the road to Harrington Road (opposite) and the Institut Français is a short walk on the right hand side. Turn right into Queensbury Place; the entrance to the cinema is located a few yards down. The following bus routes are in close proximity to the venue. Buses: 14, 414, 49, 70, 74, 345, 360 and C1.

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

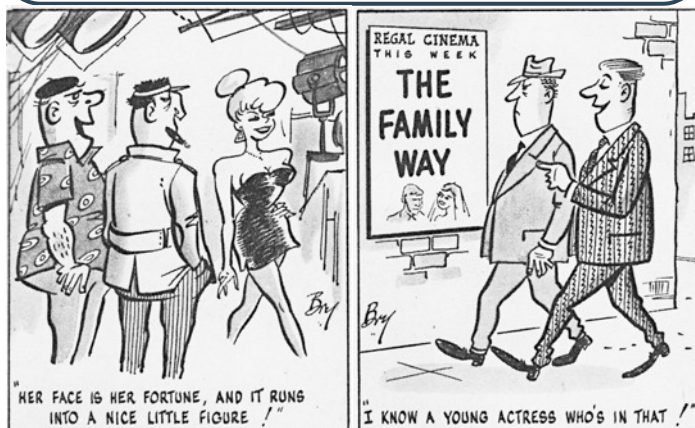
As the variety of our cinema related subjects broadens, we would be pleased to receive offers and suggestions for more talks and presentations.

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

CARTOON CORNER



From ABC Film Review; sent in by Ben Doman

COMING SOON

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

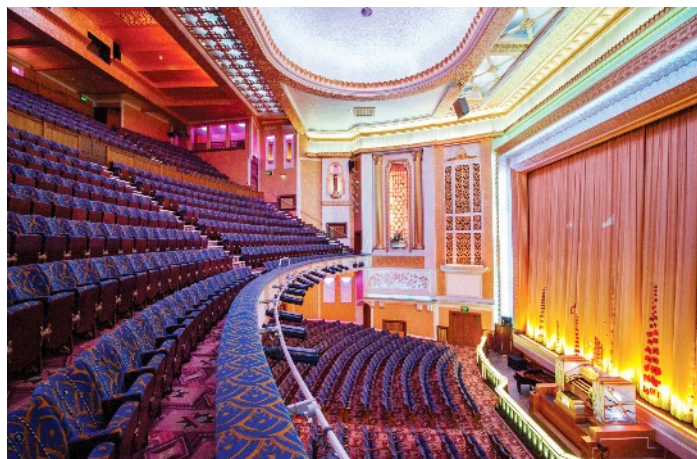
December Christmas Party –date to be fixed

OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

not organised by the CTA

The Plaza Stockport turns 90

Saturday/Sunday 8/9 October



The Plaza Stockport opened on 8 October 1932 and the venue is holding events to mark the occasion. One is a performance of the film *Save the Cinema* (the story of the rescue of a cinema in South Wales) at 7:30pm on the actual day (Saturday 8 October) and then a presentation entitled *Silver Screen* featuring well-known actors Robert Powell and Liza Goddard, at 7:30pm on Sunday 9 October. The Plaza's website describes this as 'an affectionate and nostalgic romp through the first hundred or so years of cinema'. There are also concerts on the Compton Organ at 11am and 2:30pm on Saturday 8 October.

Please see the Plaza's website for details, costs and how to book tickets. stockportplaza.co.uk/whats-on/in/2022

The Film Fair

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 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 (some supplied by the CTA Archive) 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

Tim Hatcher has decided to take a well-earned rest from writing the Heritage Casework report. Tim has been writing the reports – in his own inimitable style – for 11 years and we are very grateful to him for all the hard work producing it every two months. It has involved attending the bi-monthly casework meetings in London, closely following the progress of the English and Welsh cases and providing a précis of the latest developments. This is a highly skilled and demanding task but Tim, with his enormous in-depth knowledge of the history and architecture of cinema buildings, carried it off with ease. His is a hard act to follow but Mike Whitcombe, whose writings often appear in these pages, has very kindly agreed to take on the responsibility.

By Mike Whitcombe

The CTA Casework Committee is continually involved in securing a positive future for many endangered cinemas, both present and former. Here is a summary of their current work load.

Grade II* Listed

GRANADA WALTHAMSTOW, LONDON

Along with the manager for the project, construction project manager and The Theatres Trust, the CTA attended a site visit. The access stairs and the front side wing, which formerly housed the Victoria pub, have been demolished due to instability in the structure. More had to be taken down than first thought. The historic roof pantiles have been preserved and will eventually be put back with matching new ones. The good news is that the historic detail in the auditorium looks intact. The photo [R] shows where a section of the ceiling coving under the balcony has been removed to reveal the steel raker above, as part of the Granada's conversion to a performance venue; it will be fully reinstated.



Grade II Listed

EMPIRE SUTTON COLDFIELD, BIRMINGHAM

The Empire has been closed since the beginning of the pandemic. The CTA and Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council have objected to the sale of the car park for housing.

RITZ ILKESTON

The CTA is supporting the local Council, Erewash, to push the owners of the Ritz on their intentions for the building and to call a halt to further degradation.

FORUM LIVERPOOL

It is still unclear whether Liverpool Council is intending to sell the freehold or lease out the Forum. The Theatres Trust is in contact with a theatre company who might want to take on the building.

CURZON MAYFAIR, LONDON

The CTA was approached by the Mayfair Neighbourhood Forum who have submitted an application for the Curzon to be designated an Asset of Community Value. The CTA has written to Westminster Council supporting this. The Head of Properties and Development for Curzon Cinemas will now be approached for news of possible Change of Use.

MAJESTIC MAPPERLEY, NOTTINGHAM

It is believed Nottingham Council will want to refuse the Listed Building Consent application for residential development on the site surrounding the cinema. See Newsreel p24.

RITZ NUNEATON

The CTA will ask the Nepalese owners if they intend to market the building and will also chase the Regeneration team at Nuneaton & Bedworth Council.

SAVOY BURNT OAK, LONDON

The Principal Planning Officer at Brent Council has promised to let the CTA know when conversion of the Savoy to a new use begins.

PYRAMID SALE, MANCHESTER

Repairs to the front of the cinema have now begun.

REDFIELD/GRANADA BRISTOL

An application to Bristol City council to replace the cinema with 44 mini flatlets has been withdrawn.

Not Listed

ODEON ASHFORD

The owner, the local Council, is committed to retaining the foyer but wish to redevelop the auditorium as a multi-purpose arts community facility. But the CTA wants it to survive and be used in this new purpose.

REGAL/ODEON DARLINGTON

The Odeon has now closed. The CTA will contact the Council to discover what the future holds for it.

WESTOVER BOURNEMOUTH

Libra Homes has sold the site to South Lea Developments. The CTA have been in touch with Bournemouth's Conservation Officer while the situation continues to be monitored. We hope that important and attractive original plaster details can be salvaged before any demolition takes place.

PALACE MARCH

This long-disused cinema was turned down for listing in 2015. The CTA has informed the Conservation Officer for the area that we will support any initiative to get it locally listed.

NEW VICTORIA PRESTON

A huge fire in May 2022 saw the auditorium of this cinema, disused for ten years, demolished after it became unstable. However, the front block and entrance façade survived. As they face the central Conservation Area, local campaigners, along with the CTA, have objected to an application to demolish what still stands.

GRANVILLE RAMSGATE

The CTA has written to the local Council to support a request from Kent Film Foundation to take over the cinema. See Newsreel p25.

GRANADA KETTERING



Following a request, this cinema will be placed on the CTA's Cinemas at Risk list on the website. *photo taken April 2007*

Wales

Grade II Listed

PALACE CONWY

The CTA has persuaded the owners to attend a meeting to discuss the building's future.

Past and present cinemas around the country are always under threat. The CTA Casework team is always happy to help another cinema from disappearing forever and your help could be vital in doing just that. If any member learns of a threat to a cinema, please let the Casework Committee know. You might just save a cinema for future generations.

PUBLICATIONS

Back Numbers Available

PICTURE HOUSE MAGAZINE

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

No 6	£1.50	Television in the Cinema; Atherley Southampton; Hippodrome, Blackpool.
No 8	£1.50	Sol Levy; Reginald Cooper; ABC in NW London.
No 16	£3.00	Dominion London; 3,000 plus; John Broadley remembers.
No 17	£3.00	Special Issue featuring the Cinemas of George Coles with 26 original photographs reproduced in sepia.
No 18	£3.00	Sydney Colwyn Foulkes; United Picture Theatres; Tivoli Wimborne.
No 19	£3.50	Co-operative Cinemas; Ideal Lambeth; Dursley; Alister Macdonald; Granada Tooting.
No 21	£3.50	100 Years On; Travelling Shows; Reggie Rea; Albert Hall Sheffield; Regal Wells; West End Adverts; Scotland.
all issues below have colour cover and inside pages		
No 22	£3.50	Burrell, Foley, Fischer; Palace Theatre London; David Nye.
No 24	£4.50	Oldest Cinema - Harringay; Cardiff Round-up; Odeon Miscellany.
No 25	£4.50	Oldest Cinema (Brighton); FE Bromige; Committee's Choice; Gaumont Managers; Carlton Swansea;.
No 26	£4.50	Paramount Newcastle; Edward Stone; Granada Men; E de Wilde Holding; Electric Portobello Road.
No 27	£4.50	New Victoria/Apollo; Whiteladies Bristol; Clark & Fenn; Compton Organs; Tim Foster Associates.
No 28	£4.50	James McKissack; WJ King; Torbay Cinema; Tabs.
No 29	£4.50	Cinerama in Britain; Braziers the Builders; John Fernée; Waller Jeffs; John Duffin's paintings.
No 30	£5.00	The Davis Family, Croydon; Apollo Hammersmith Organ; Norwich Roadshows.
No 31	£7.50	Special 84-page edition: Essoldo - A Family Business: Sol Sheckman and the Essoldo Circuit.
No 32	£5.00	Harry Myers Photographs; Cinemas at the Coalface; Shaws of Darwin; Edward A Stone.
No 33	£5.00	Theodore Komisarjevsky; Circuit & other releases of 1956; The case for saving the New Victoria Bradford.
No 34	£5.00	Beaufort Birmingham; Granada Tooting in 1934; Rank in post-war Scotland; J Braddon's Cinema life.
No 35	£5.00	Holophane lighting; Imitations of Odeon; Cradley Records; 1909 Cinematograph Act; Kingston Showmanship.
No 36	£6.00	Leslie Kemp; Jeremy Perkins on Brighton; The Clifton Circuit; Circuit Releases of 1960.
No 37	£8.50	Special 92-page issue; saving the Electric Palace Harwich.
No 38	£6.00	Northern Morris Associated Cinemas; Point Milton Keynes; Going to the Cinema in Birmingham; Palace Conwy; Carlton Haymarket; Military Cinemas; Cinema Murders.
No 39	£6.00	WWI and the Film Trade; Tale of Two Regals; Majestic Oxford; Odeon North Finchley; Films at the Royal Albert Hall.
No 40	£6.00	Tolmer Euston; Michael Stringer memories; West End in the 1950s; Stafford Entertainments; Will Onda & James Atroy; Stephen Waddingham - a Granada man.
No 41	£6.00	CTA's 50 th Anniversary; Plaza Stockport; Majestic Leeds; Grosvenor Rayners Lane; Pascal J Stienlet.
No 42	£6.00	Odeon Elephant & Castle, Plaza Crosby; Depot Lewes; Cineworld Chelsea; Gaumont Sheffield Figures.
No 43	£6.00	Virgin Cinemas; Peter Jewett's ABC memories; Scala Kings Cross; Picture House Campbelltown; Beeston/Nottingham memories.
No 44	£6.00	Village Cinemas of NE Scotland; William Keys' career; Bernard Snowball remembers Pt1.
No 45	£8.50	Classic Repertory Cinemas; Blackpool Cinemas; Thomas Jackson; Bernard Snowball remembers Pt2. Special 100-page issue.
No 46	£6.00	Cecil Clavering, Odeon Architect: Pavilion Hailsham; Working For Star; Focus Sevenoaks Figures.

BINDERS FOR PICTURE HOUSE MAGAZINE

These binders are to a new, revised design, which should allow easier storage for the more recent thicker copies of the magazine. The 'Wirex' system allows copies to be inserted easily and removed if required. There are twelve wires per binder, although the number of copies that can be inserted may vary depending on the thickness of the issue. The binders can also be used for the thinner, earlier copies of the magazine. Featuring a red leather-look finish and the magazine title on the spine in the current format.

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



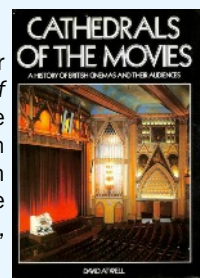
There are also available a few second-hand copies of out-of-print issues of *Picture House* 9, 10, 14/15, 20 & 23, priced £5.00 each, plus postage. A list of their contents was printed on p4 of Bulletin 52/2 or can be obtained by SAE or email from the Sales Officer or Bulletin Editor.

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.

Second-Hand Books

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



MERCIA BIOSCOPES FOR SALE

Mercia Bioscope was the newsletter of the Mercia Cinema Society, containing a wide variety of news items and historical matter. We have a spare set of *Bioscopes* comprising nearly every edition from 1980 up to 2009 - around 120 copies in all. The cost would be £15.00 including postage. (Only available as a complete set.)

If you are interested, please email the Sales Officer, sales@cta-uk.org or write to him at 34 Pelham Road, London N22 6LN. Please respond by 30 September; if there is more than one person interested a draw will be made and the successful applicant contacted for payment.

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.

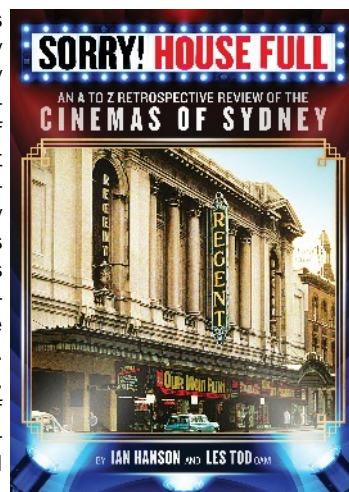
Also Available (but not from the Sales Officer)

Sorry! House Full - An A to Z retrospective review of the Cinemas of Sydney by Ian Hanson and Les Tod.

220 pages, over 400 photographs, ISBN 978-0-646-84854-9. Approx £40.00, not currently available through Amazon.

Information: www.sorryhousefull.com.

Members who went on the CTA's epic visit to Australia in 2006 may recall that our guide in Sydney was Ian Hanson. Ian has now co-written this definitive history of the cinema of Sydney, a project seven years in the making. It covers the City, suburbs and county from the early silent theatres through the grand movie palaces of the 1930s and 40s to the modern multiplexes and the humble open-air shows in the Rocks. There are plenty of illustrations, many not previously published, of cinemas, organists, tickets, programmes and ephemera, coupled with a lively, informative text.



SCOTTISH CINEMA COMPARISON



The Picture House Blairgowrie (Perth & Kinross) {51305}



The Regal Lanark {24306}



The Playhouse Perth {23065}

By Kevin Wheelan & Harry Rigby

In 1973 Kevin's parents, Henry & Doris Wheelan, toured Scotland. Kevin asked them to take photos of any cinemas they came across and this resulted in 25 pictures. Three are presented here on the left. Below are the same three cinemas, in the same order, as photographed by Harry in 2006 – 33 years later. You can see how they have changed. We have given the Cinema Treasures reference numbers so you can look up their history.



A SUNNY DAY AT THE CTA ARCHIVE!

A report on the visit to Southend-on-Sea on 23 July by Marion Kennett

Rail strikes, the heatwave and the race to occupy No 10 Downing Street were all forgotten by 20 members who were met by David Simpson and welcomed to Southend-on-Sea. Politics were briefly mentioned as the town had been given City status as a memorial to the Member of Parliament for Southend West, who was tragically killed on 15 October 2021. David Amess had been a passionate advocate for City status; the relevant 'letters patent' were presented to Southend Borough Council by The Prince of Wales on 1 March this year.

Our first visit was to the **Palace Theatre** and upon arrival we were served refreshments in an immaculate, light and airy foyer, which even housed a baby grand piano. This and the 100-seat Dixon Studio above were an addition to the **Palace Theatre** in 1982 when buildings adjacent to the theatre were demolished. We then moved into the main auditorium, which is very impressive and gave us an opportunity to admire the fine workmanship of the theatre, which opened on 21 October 1912. At that time, it could accommodate 1,500 patrons but today it holds just 603. The Grand Opening advertised 'Raymond's Entertainment' which included 'Cinema & Vaudeville'. Rather surprisingly the variety shows on which the **Palace** was founded ceased as early as spring 1913. The theatre reopened that May with a week-long run of a dramatic play, after which plays were the mainstay right up to the early 2000s.

In early 1920 the **Palace** was acquired by Gertrude Mouillot, widow of impresario Frederick Mouillot. She had 'trod the boards' and she enticed many significant names to the theatre including Sir John Martin Harvey, Mrs Patrick Campbell, George Robey and Ivor Novello. By the 1930s it is clear from the show listings that all was not well and all types of entertainment, including all-in wrestling, were tried. The theatre even became the full-time **Palace Cinema** but this only lasted from October 1932 to March 1933. Finally, in September 1942, facing adverse conditions during the war and no doubt, with Gertrude looking to retire, she gifted the **Palace** to the Borough on the condition that it remained a place of entertainment. A fine photograph of Gertrude hangs at the foot of the Grand Staircase.



The Grand Staircase at the Palace Theatre [DS]

Her husband, Frederick Mouillot was an entrepreneur/actor-manager who met many people connected to theatre and acting. This is how he met Frank Matcham and it was Frederick Mouillot who opened the **Theatre Royal Dublin** for him. Frank Matcham lived at Westcliff-on-Sea from the early 1900s until his death in 1920. A blue plaque shows where he lived.

Many architectural features are still to be seen at the **Palace**. In particular, set into the proscenium arches either side of the stage are Act Number Indicators, which would have been illuminated with the number of each variety act. Sadly, they are not working nowadays but they are a rare and unusual survivor of this Grade II theatre. The safety curtain had been raised to show the steep rake of the stage, which is 1:18.



[L] An Act Number indicator & [R] photo of Gertrude Mouillot [DS]

We then had free access to wander backstage and up into the Gallery and Dress Circle. The extensive archive collection is housed in two rooms at Gallery level, one of which used to be the Gents (it still says so!) The splendid original foyer features some fine coloured glass motifs within the doors and brass finger plates.



The Manager's Office [DS]

Re-boarding our coach, we headed to the sea front for our lunch break: no visit to the seaside is complete without fish and chips!

Suitably refreshed, we were on our way to the CTA Archive in Rochford, about a ten-minute journey from Southend but before that we made a photo stop at the former **Plaza** cinema. As we turned into Southchurch Road its dome was very visible. Opened on 6 March 1929 it had a 17ft deep stage and two dressing rooms. Clearly used for variety acts but, in August 1959, with a new name, the **State**, it was screening 'continental'



The auditorium of the Plaza in 2018 [FB]

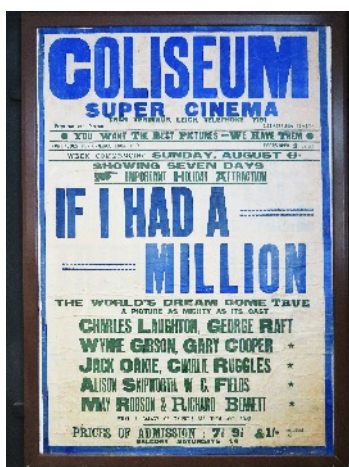
films. This was short-lived and the cinema closed on 21 November 1959. The building then went into use as an electrical wholesaler but was later converted for church use and is currently well looked after by the Southend Christian Fellowship. It was, unfortunately, not possible to have a look inside but from the coach, once we were again on board, the roof, which stretched many feet behind the shops built alongside, was clearly visible.

The collection of memorabilia has been a feature of the CTA since its very earliest days, in January 1967. As you would expect, the number of cinema-related articles, manuscripts, brochures, photographs and donations has grown over the years. The collection has had many homes during this period, sometimes for very short, limited times but now it is stored at Unit 1, Millhead Way, Rochford and this is where we were greeted by Roger Robinson, a commissionaire to rival our very own Mr Hardcastle, resplendent in uniform and peaked cap. We divided into two groups, the first being given a talk by our Archivist, Clive Polden, in the main storage room, whilst the other group were able to have refreshments in the main office and library, with more of a display element. Clive had put out for viewing some of the treasures the CTA archive holds and told us about how they catalogue items, which are mostly donated. If you are ever thinking of making a donation of cinema related items, please provide your name as this is also recorded.

Clive had been looking for a much more permanent home for the collection and the CTA has taken a five-year lease on the present location but we are three years into that agreement so let's hope our helpful and friendly landlord, Strings Direct, who occupy the rest of the two units, are sympathetic to us in the future. An awful lot of work by volunteers has been done to get the collection of memorabilia into good order and it is beautifully displayed and well looked after.

In particular, on the back wall of the main office are two very large posters with an intriguing story. In the 1930s they were pasted onto an outside wall in nearby Leigh-on-Sea, to advertise that week's attractions at the Corona and Coliseum cinemas. However, a wooden structure was built along the wall; no further posters were pasted on – but these were never removed! Many years later, Roy Dille, who donated much of his Southend collection for display at the Archive, heard that this 'temporary' structure was being removed – and he managed to chip these posters off the wall and painstakingly restore them! What a wonderful achievement!

Our thanks to David Simpson, Clive Polden and all the hard-working volunteers who have ensured that this very extensive collection is kept available for research purposes and for our enjoyment.



Coliseum Poster [DS]



Group Photo [NCT]

Photos: [DS] David Simpson; [FB] Fabian Breckels; [NCT] Neville Taylor

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.

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

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

A TRICYCLE MYSTERIOUSLY MUTATES INTO A KILN

A report of the CTA visit on 15 August
by Mike Wood; photos by Kevin Gooding

Okay, I will admit that I very nearly stayed on my sofa, made lazy by the CTA online Zoom events, discouraged by frequent public transport problems and the three venues had been visited not so long ago. However, it was the memory of that previous visit in 2006 that got me off the sofa and onto the train to London Victoria and onward to Kilburn.

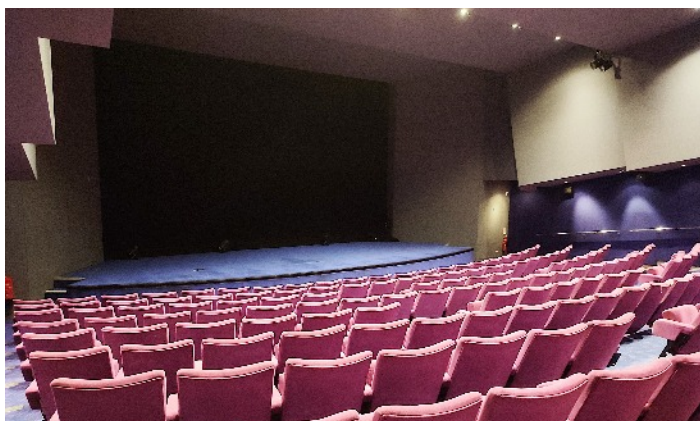
Three cinemas were on the schedule organised by Richard Gray, Ray Ritmeester and Mark Price, each venue a signature representation of an outstanding period in the development of cinema buildings and all three within a few steps of each other on the High Road.



The entrance to the Kiln cinema

Our early afternoon meeting point was the recently renovated Kiln (1998 – Tim Foster) a conversion of the Foresters Hall (1929) carried out in 1980 and then named the Tricycle Theatre. This became well known for alternative theatre productions, having grown from the Wakefield Tricycle touring theatre group. In 1980 this theatre was badly damaged by fire and was subsequently rebuilt to the designs of Tim Foster, who also designed the basement Tricycle Cinema, which opened in 1998. It seated 300 on one level, with a private box accommodating eleven situated alongside the projection box. As originally designed it featured cove-lit raked sidewall panelling and house tabs with a unique tricycle design.

The interior spaces have recently undergone a major refurbishment, with improved seating and upgraded stage facilities in the theatre. Unfortunately, the tabs in the cinema were not visible on our visit, either tucked away backstage or perhaps in storage following the locally controversial renaming from Tricycle to Kiln.



The auditorium of the Kiln cinema

Tea and coffee were laid on, which gave us a chance to catch up with some of the older faces and good to see some new ones too. Then it was the short walk to the towering landmark that is the Gaumont State (1937 – George Coles – Listed Grade II*). It is said that it was designed to resemble New York's Empire State building, however this theme did not extend to the interior, which, against the art deco trend at that time, is Italian Renaissance and very similar to earlier American movie theatres and of similar scale, being the largest cinema ever built in England and third largest in the UK.



The organ console and the lighting board at the Gaumont State

The grand entrance lobby staircase, beautifully restored and dominated by a huge crystal chandelier, eventually opens into the auditorium, originally seating just over four thousand in stalls and balcony, all beneath a vast domed ceiling, in which hides a large port for stage spot lighting and possibly film projection. The stage itself was one of the largest in the country and this was used often right through its theatrical life. Alongside is a four-manual Wurlitzer, which the current church owner still maintains in playable condition. The stage itself was closed off but we were given a glimpse of the original big Strand lighting board. Our hosts finished our visit with tea and coffee and a viewing of the original opening celebrations on 20 December 1937, which was a nice end piece to a good visit.

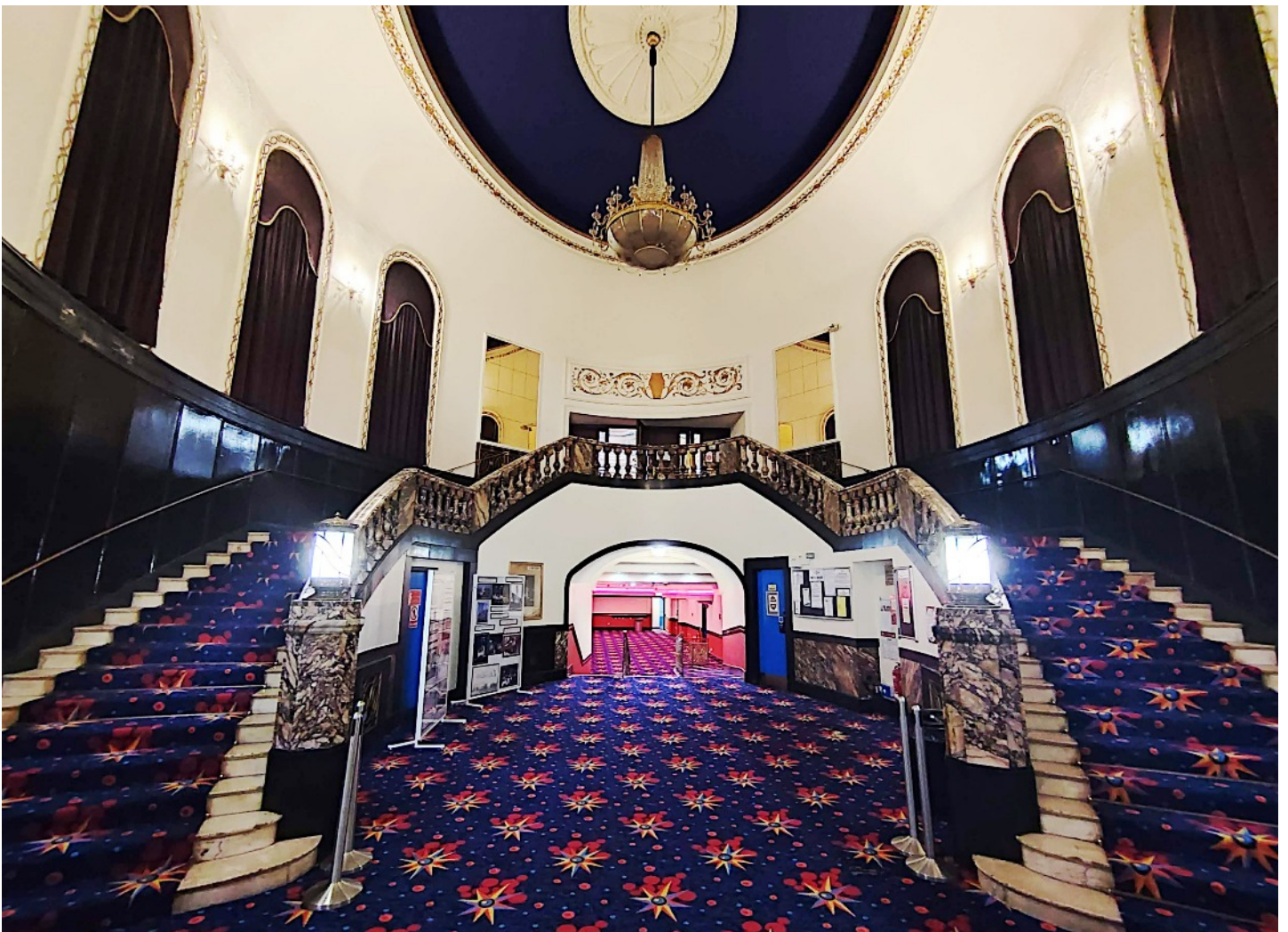


The façades of the Gaumont State [L] and the Grange [R] Kilburn

Ray had cautioned us beforehand, that the church owners of the Grange (1914 – EA Stone – Listed Grade II) might not permit photography and indeed that had been a problem on our 2006 visit. However, on crossing the road and only a minute or two waiting for the doors to open, we were welcomed with no such restriction – and why wouldn't they want to show it off, as the interior is in immaculate condition, from the circular lobby beneath the domed corner original entrance through to the auditorium, which has a gallery on three sides. The screen end now features a very well-integrated church podium in front of what looks to be the original proscenium of this, the largest cinema built in the UK at the time and a hint of things to come as we had just seen. Our friendly host in the chat, told us that he had come from the Finsbury Park Astoria and was an enthusiast for that building too; so maybe another visit is possible?

Richard Gray couldn't be with us on the day but Ray marshalled us without incident and on time, even winning photo opportunities when we thought it unlikely. Indeed, all of our hosts were welcoming and clearly pleased to show off their buildings.

As my memory flickered back to earlier times, I decided to take the 16 bus (sorry Ray, not a Routemaster any more) back to Victoria Station, a route that I took from Edgware Road daily in the 1970s, to tick the cinemas and theatres I knew back then. Of the eleven from that time, only one is left. So, congratulations and well-done Kilburn, I am so glad that I got off my sofa to see you again.



The inner lobby of the Gaumont State Kilburn



The auditorium of the Grange Kilburn

THE (1969) GOOD CINEMA GUIDE

By Ben Doman

No 27 – ABC FULHAM

Neill Ross takes over for a visit to ABC's cinema in Fulham Road, Chelsea. Opening as the Forum (sister theatre to the Forums at Kentish Town and Ealing) in December 1930, it had a stage, dressing rooms and a Compton Theatre organ. All three Forums were sold to ABC in April 1935.



The ABC Fulham Road in December 1967, showing *Lady in a Cage* in a double-bill with *Seventeen*, which has a London [X] certificate. The unit on the left of the entrance, covered in posters, was the original downstairs projection room, later an off-license and then a bar.

"This week, a look at another of London's main pre-release cinemas. And this week a let-down. The only memorable thing about this cinema is its size and that's no recommendation. With prices from 7/- to 9/- [£4.93 to £6.34 in today's value] one expects value for money. And one doesn't get it. The gloomy and forbidding exterior could easily be forgotten if the interior was at all attractive. But the antiquated style persists. Only the huge hoarding, with John Wayne, complete with eye patch, staring out of the ad into the Fulham Road, is calculated to make passers-by think the place may be worth visiting." No love for 1930s super cinemas here then!

The review continues – "The foyer is an unusual circular shape but it's a good start wasted because of no interest in décor. Instead of carpet on the floor there is a terrazzo style surface in brown and white... The stairs leading up to the circle area are covered in rubber and give you the impression you're in some corner of a large civil service building instead of a centre of entertainment."

Mr Ross was, however, quite impressed by the comfort of the seats, complete with padded arm rests and ashtray supplied for each one. The circle foyer was a let-down, "There are sofas, there are ash trays, there is a phone but if the atmosphere is uninviting, there will be few customers to take advantage of the facilities. The wallpaper consists of huge patterned flowers in magenta on one panel, yellow on the other. There is carpeting upstairs but the sort of thing you'd expect to find in a third-rate hotel. Only a board advertising a collection of EMI soundtrack recordings is aimed at interesting the cinema goer."

The staff were described as helpful and the cinema well-staffed. There was even a commissionaire for the circle. The cinema was described as perfectly clean but was let down by dull lighting – "... the lavatory was in glorious Technicolor ... or it would have been glorious if one could have seen properly."

Marks lost for catering here – "There's a pub down the road" was about all the change I got when asked where the bar was." Chocolates were available for those with a sweet tooth. Summing up the visit, "As a main pre-release cinema, the ABC could do a lot better. Some of ABC's provincial theatres are far more attractive. As for the Fulham Road branch, it's just the vastness one remembers. And you can forget that."

The cinema was split in 1974, with two screens in the former stalls and one in the circle, with a fourth screen added in the stage area in 1975. The circle screen was further split into two in 1977. Part of the backstage area was converted into squash courts in the early 1970s, in turn being converted to a sixth screen in the 2000s.

ABC refurbished the site in 1984 in a 1930s theme (see Picture House No 6 for pictures and article), picking out original features in the foyer. Passing shortly after to Cannon, MGM and then Virgin Cinemas. it was



The ABC Fulham Road after the 1984 refurbishment.

Both ABC photos CTA Archive.

sold to Cineworld along with the remaining Virgin city-centre sites. Virgin had converted the unit to the left of the entrance into a bar. Having been an off-license for many years, it had an appearance in an episode of 1990s TV's *Absolutely Fabulous*, when Patsy is seen stumbling up the steps for a bottle of 'Bolli'. Moving over to Cineworld's Picturehouse brand, the site was refurbished again, reopening in December 2019. Although most of the original auditorium décor has been lost, the outside and foyer areas have been retained and finished to a high standard.

In the 1969 article the cinema was given an overall score of 29 out of 50.

Taken from *Today's Cinema* issue 9,766, additional information from *Cinema Treasures*, *ABC The First Name in Entertainment* (Allen Eyles) and *Picture House* No 6.

No 28 – STUDIO BOREHAMWOOD

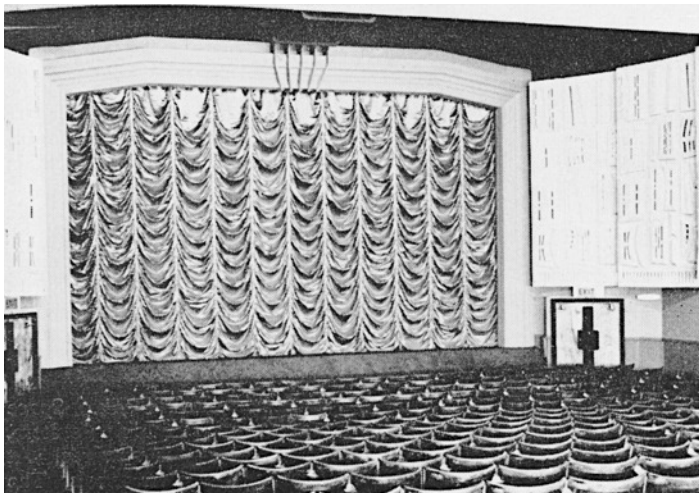
In reply to many letters in *Today's Cinema* complaining that the Good Cinema Guide concentrated on cinemas in larger cities, Louis Lowenthal decided to pay a visit to The Studio Borehamwood at "...the very centre of British film-making, midway between Elstree and Borehamwood..." He contemplates that, "Surely here I would find a level of theatre management in accord with what some critics call the seventies..."



The new 1966 frontage of the Studio 70. The dark shape of the original frontage can just be made out through the holes in the cladding, the tall central tower visible just above the 'DIO' of the name sign.

Ideal Kinema, 5 May 1966, CTA Archive.

The Studio Cinema had opened in March 1936 for an independent operator, with seating over stalls and circle. Shipman & King took over the cinema in 1937 and in 1966 closed the cinema for a complete refurbishment. The frontage, which had been a sort of severe-looking art deco, was covered with fibreglass cladding and the auditorium modernised. The cinema name was changed to Studio 70.



Studio 70 auditorium, with ashtrays just visible between every other seat back.

Ideal Kinema, 5 May 1966, CTA Archive.

"It is an impressive-looking house on a roundabout off the A1 and well-constructed with its own car park... The front hall is brightly lit and cheerful, there appears to be a good spirit among the staff..." On being shown to his seat by an usherette in a maroon uniform, he found the auditorium "large and the seats well-spaced, comfortable and with plenty of legroom".

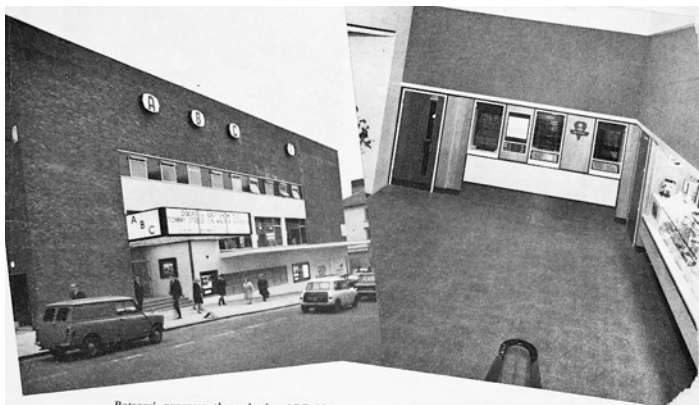
"The picture was well projected and both colour and sound were excellent... The cinema was obviously well cared-for and neat." The only complaint was that one had to walk down the entire length of the auditorium for the toilets.

On the catering arrangements, "There is no catering other than the sale of the inevitable hot dog, ice cream and fruit drinks. I make my plea once again for the quick-service coffee bar for which there is ample space..."

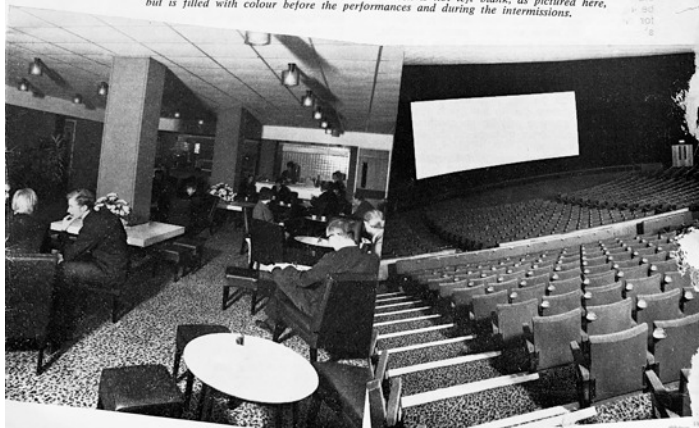
Passing to EMI, they closed the cinema in May 1981 and the building was demolished later in the year for two office blocks.

In the 1970 article the cinema was given an overall score of 30 out of 40.

Taken from Today's Cinema issue 9,768, additional information from Cinema Treasures.



Patrons' progress through the ABC Newport: from the approach down Bridge Street and beneath the cantilevered canopy, into the foyer past the paybox and advance booking office from ten a.m.; and finally into the stadium auditorium where the screen is a dramatic focal point in a vast curve of dark blue curtains. The screen is not left blank, as pictured here, but is filled with colour before the performances and during the intermissions.



Frontage, foyer, concourse and auditorium of the ABC Newport, winner of the 1969 Good Cinema Guide, with a top score of 92%, ABC News, December 1968

AND THE WINNER IS...

Announced in the 6 January 1970 issue of *Today's Cinema* was the winner of the 1969 Good Cinema Guide series. A variety of buildings were visited throughout the year, from 1930s supers to recently-opened luxury cinemas. Marks out of 10 were given for ambience, comfort, courtesy, cleanliness and catering, the cinemas being given a percentage score.

Top of the charts for 1969, with a total of 46 marks out of 50, was the ABC Newport. Opened in November 1968, there was a concourse where refreshments could be had from 10am, an underground car park for 35 cars and the largest screen in Wales. Philips DP70 projectors could show both 35mm and 70mm film on the giant curved screen and, instead of curtains, coloured lights played on the screen between films. The seats were set out in a stadium design typical of the ABC new builds of the time. Louis Lowenthal described the cinema as "quite charming".

Manager, Terence Buttle, was delighted to have come out on top. Mr Buttle said the success reflected the support and enthusiasm of his staff. Starting as a trainee manager at the Savoy Wandsworth in 1947, he had managed the ABC Cheltenham, Broadway Southampton and Rex Reading.

Throughout the series the two reviewers, Louis Lowenthal and Neill Ross, favoured newly-opened or refurbished sites, describing some 1930s and 1940s buildings as outdated monoliths. It's easy today to be shocked by this (and the *Today's Cinema* letters page had many letters in support of these old buildings) but reading the reviews in the context of the time, most of the older cinemas were well over 20 years old, looked outdated and suffered from poor maintenance. Homes had become more luxurious and the new build cinemas of ABC and Odeon, as well as the luxury refits of Essoldo and Classic reflected this. Even the emerging mini auditoria of Cinecenta and Star would have seemed luxury in comparison. There was a real sense of optimism in the cinema of the 1970s. The early twins and triples carried on with the luxury fit-outs, completely remodelling the existing auditoria. Economics soon took over and later conversions were done more cheaply, resulting in some very unsatisfactory auditoria. A situation that was only reversed with the start of the multiplex revolution in 1985.

Taken from Today's Cinema issue 9,768, additional information from Cinema Treasures.

The final result	
ABC, Newport	92%
Essoldo, Dewsbury	87½%
Essoldo, Cosham	
ABC, Norwich	86%
Colony, Torquay	84%
Embassy, Petts Wood, Kent	80%
Ritz, Crewe	
Cinecenta, Leicester	77½%
Classic, Glasgow	
Granada, Kettering	76%
Classic, Portsmouth	
Odeon, Bristol	75%
Odeon, Oxford St., Manchester	
Tower, Leeds	74%
Odeon, Sheffield	
Odeon, Kensington	74%
Odeon, Portsmouth	
Savoy, Brighton, re-visited	70%
ABC, Reading	
Regent, Brighton	67½%
Capitol, Cardiff	62½%
Odeon, Salisbury	60%
Cameo Arts, Colchester	
ABC, Fulham	58%
Picture House, Leicester	55%
Odeon, New Street, Birmingham	52%
Savoy, Brighton	42½%
Green's Playhouse, Glasgow	42%

The results are in for 1969. Top place for ABC Newport. 2nd place for two Essoldos at Dewsbury and Cosham – but the mighty Green's Playhouse comes in last place with 42%. *Today's Cinema*, 6 January 1970.



The newly finished frontage of the Odeon Sheffield, joint 8th place with a score of 75%. Originally a pre-war design, the construction was halted by the outbreak of WWII. Plans were updated and the building finally opened in 1956.

Ideal Kinema, 16 August 1956

THE GAUMONT / ODEON PRESTON

By Tim McCullen

Images from CTA Archive

The Odeon opened as the New Victoria on 17 September 1928 with 2,100 seats under the Provincial Cinematograph Theatres (PCT) banner. It was originally to be called the Regent or Coliseum but this was changed at the last moment.

On 22 September 1952 it became the Gaumont and in the 1960s it became the Odeon and the 2/9 Wurlitzer was removed and partly destroyed in 1960. The Odeon closed on 16 June 1962; it then underwent reconstruction and reopened as an Odeon with an extended circle seating 1,229. The stalls became a dance floor in the Top Rank Entertainment Centre. A second screen with 105 seats was added in April 1972 in the former café and was the first of Rank's 16mm mini cinemas.

THEATRE GAUMONT PRESTON FULLY LICENSED RESTAURANT OPEN WEDNESDAY NOON-8.00 PM

Lost Hour Hudson, Kirk Douglas "The Lost Hunter" (A) Colour 3-5, 8-35
2 Days William Sylvester "Information Received" (A) 3-25, 7-10

SUNDAY FOR 7 DAYS Continuous 1-35 (Sunday 6-30)

THE STORY OF A WOMAN WHO WAS BY LOVE POSSESSED
LARA TURNER, ZIMBALIST, JASON ROBERTS, JASON ROBERTS
BY LOVE POSSESSED 1-55, 5-15, 8-35 (Sunday 7-50)
TRANSATLANTIC 3-50, 7-10, (Sunday 6-30)

TRANSATLANTIC
PETE MURRAY, JUNE THORNBURN
AND "LOOK AT LIFE" — "WHY ALL THE RUSH"

Every Sunday at 3 p.m. (Doors Open 2-15) Top Rank Bingo and Social Club — Admission to members 2/6. Call in for Registration October 29th — "The Game of Nerve" — Advance Booking Opens Monday, 23rd October 2 — 8 p.m. for Circle seats only. Boys' and Girls' Club every Sat. at 10 a.m. New Members Welcome

First Choice ODEON PRESTON 555122/23298

Richard Gere, Julia Roberts PRETTY WOMAN (15) 2.00 2.30 (5.30) 8.00 IN DOLBY STEREO	Final Week... Gary & Martin Kemp THE KRAYS (18) 12.05 2.30 (5.30) 8.05
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0 INDICATES BARGAIN SHOW. ALL SEATS AT REDUCED PRICE EVERY DAY! AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT...BOOK YOUR TICKETS IN ADVANCE EITHER IN PERSON OR BY TELEPHONE (PRESTON 23298). WE ACCEPT PAYMENT BY ACCESS/VISA OR CHEQUE!

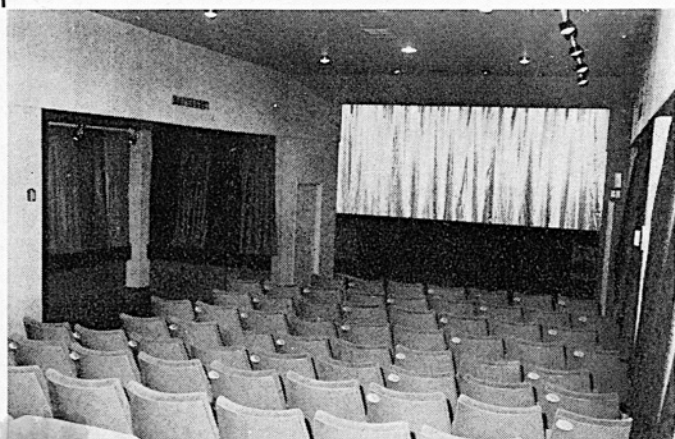
During the late 1980s and early 1990s, Odeon was shoehorning extra screens on many sites. According to press cuttings received on 30 and 31 July 1991 from the *Lancashire Evening Post*, Odeon had long held ambitions to expand the Preston site to five screens. However, these plans never materialised. The nearby ABC closed on 11 September 1982 to make way for a retail development, leaving the Odeon as a monopoly site in this large town; one wonders whether a multi-screen Odeon at that site would have worked in the long term?

On 9 March 1990, UCI opened with ten screens at Riversway and Warner opened on 18 October 1991 with seven screens at the Capitol Centre. Could Preston have supported twenty-two screens in the long term? We will never know. However, UCI is now an Odeon, the Warner is now a Vue and Arc cinemas is to open an eight-screen multiplex in Animate Preston [see tinyurl.com/3zcvm2w] that Light cinemas had been looking at.

The twin-screen Odeon closed on 10 September 1992 with *Lawrence of Arabia* and *Alien*, which was ten years and one day after the ABC closed. According to *28 Days Later*, the mothballed Odeon sat for thirty years until the building caught fire on 19 May 2022. According to a press cutting in the *Lancashire Evening Post* dated 16 February 1996, planning permission was granted to turn the former Odeon into a large ale house. These plans never proceeded. It is believed that the nightclubs below had been operating until about two years ago. As a result of the fire, which was not the first, the other being a couple of weeks earlier, most of the building has sadly now been demolished for safety reasons.

† An Urban Explorers' website. www.28dayslater.co.uk/search/637556

Rank's first 16mm mini-cinema



Odeon 2 Cine Lounge, Preston; the first of Rank Leisure Services' 16mm cinemas, seats 105, including 32 pullman armchairs.



ABC PRESTON 55566

RETAINED FOR SECOND GREAT WEEK
Starts 2 30 Last complete performance 7 50
(Sunday One Show only starts 7 15)
MICHAEL YORK JENNY AGUTTER PETER USTINOV
The First Motion Picture of the 23rd Century
LOGANS RUN
(A) 2 50 5 30 8 10 (Sun 7 25)
PLUS CARTOON
Childrens Film Show every Sat. 10 am

THE MAJESTIC REIGATE

By Tim McCullen

The Majestic in Bancroft Road opened on 14 May 1935 and was designed by architects Ward and Woolnough and David Barry (not well known) and developed by Shipman and King and Harry Bancroft, hence the street name. The cinema had a Christie organ costing £1,900, a café and swimming pool. The first film was *Fighting Stock*. This was the largest of the Shipman and King circuit, although it was not the flagship – that, it is believed, was the Embassy at Maldon.



The organ was removed in 1973 and bought by Mr Ted Ransom and installed in a showroom of Reliance Garage, Valingers Road, King's Lynn. This was sold in 1982 to a private museum at Strumpshaw Hall in Norfolk.

It is understood that the Jehovah's Witnesses wanted to lease the building in 1974; however, this did not go down too well and would have meant that the building would be of minority interest along with a lack of suitable car parking. The Borough looked at purchasing the building in 1975 but experienced the usual funding problems.

In 1976, plans were announced to triple the property with 325, 325 and 85 seats upstairs (configuration unknown – does anyone know?) and a supermarket downstairs. This no doubt would have been very ruinous of the building; however, it eventually got consent. Would the CTA consider a visit in the 1980s being carved up like that? With the closure of the nearby Odeon Redhill on 18 October 1976, which was only two miles away, admissions had increased at Reigate and it was commented by the then CTA Bulletin editor, the late Marcus Eavis, that given the increased attendances, the mini cinemas would not be big enough. (CTA bulletin Vol 10 No 4, July – August 1976.)

MOVIE-GOING IN THE 'GIN AND JAG. BELT'	Another event – please turn over
On Sunday, 31st October, we invade the stockbroker belt to taste the delights of movie-going in plush Reigate and leafy Cranleigh – a 'Rookery Nook' village, just a quick art-deco flip from town!	
2 pm, the Majestic, Bancroft Road, Reigate, Surrey. Opened in 1935 as a collaborative effort between the Harry Bancroft Circuit (hence the street name) and Shipman & King. The architects were the little known Ward & Woolnough and David Barry. It was the largest theatre under the S & K banner, sported a Christie organ and, very unusually, a swimming pool.	
At 4 pm, we are due at the Regal, Cranleigh Common. Built in 1936 as an independent concern, which it still is, although ownership has changed several times. The architect was Harry Weston, who was also a director of the owning company. The present proprietor/manager, Mr Tonks, is looking forward to showing us around his largely unaltered theatre.	
Reigate is 2 miles west of the A23 London-Brighton road at Redhill (do not go on the M23 as this by-passes both places). Cranleigh is on the B2127 about 7 miles west of the A29 London-Bosmer road (turn right just before Ockley).	
For those without cars, we are arranging for a coach to take members from the Majestic to the Regal, and then return to Redhill station at about 6.30 pm for trains to London (about 40 miles round trip).	
Please take off booking slip below and send to: R J H Gray, Hon. Secretary, CTA, 40 Winchester Street, London SW1V 4NP Enclosing a stamped addressed envelope for return of ticket(s), no later than 16 October.	
Please reserve me . . . seat(s), at £2.50 (non-members £3.00) each on the coach. I enclose a cheque/PO made out to the Cinema Theatre Association.	

CTA Bulletin Visit Announcement 1982

The CTA did visit the building on 31 October 1982 (my eighth visit) and the name stayed Majestic apart from having the EMI emblem on the front. The building was in very good condition with 1,531 seats and the carpets were in good condition too. I never managed to find the swimming pool on the visit – did it ever exist? Can anyone throw any light on this?



On the visit, to and from the Regal Cranleigh, there was speculation on what would happen with this large undivided property ranging from closure to bingo or tripling. If the tripling plan and the supermarket succeeded, how long would it have lasted and what would it be called now given all the subsequent managements of the former EMI circuit?

Sadly, the Majestic showed its final film on 11 November 1982 and closure must have been known at the time of the visit. It is understood that the Jehovah's Witnesses looked at the building again in 1983, however this did not happen. The building was demolished in 1983 and a new commercial development took its place and a new cinema, the Screen (now Everyman) opened in April 1988, seating 139 and 142. The CTA visited on 13 October 1991.



One would have thought that Reigate is a prosperous area, with a good catchment area, along with Redhill/Dorking etc, which lost their cinemas and a drop wall triple would have worked well as there was plenty of space under the circle to facilitate two minis. Reigate, however will have competition from the seven-screen Light cinema in Redhill, which is currently under construction.

It is interesting that the Jehovah's Witnesses should look at Reigate again. The Embassy Dorking (another Shipman and King property acquired from Gaumont) closed on 14 April 1973 and became a church from 1976 to 1983. This, despite many protests, was replaced by Council offices, hence they were looking at Reigate again. The few former cinemas that became Jehovah's Witnesses churches were very well maintained as buildings, which included much of the cinema architecture remaining.

MAJESTIC REIGATE 42948
Week. Comm. Sun, Oct. 28, 1979
QUADROPHENIA (X)
Mon.-Fri. 5.40, 8.30; Sat. 2.50, 5.40, 8.30; Sun. 5.10, 8.00
KING KENNY (A)
Mon.-Fri., 7.40; Sat. 4.50, 7.40; Sun. 7.10



ABC REBORN

By Mike Whitcombe

Associated British Cinemas – better known as ABC to its patrons and Another Bloody Cinema to the staff – dominated British High Streets for around half a century. Along with Odeon, their biggest rivals, ABC truly entertained the nation during depression, prosperity and a world war. Founded by solicitor John Maxwell in 1928 when he merged three existing exhibition circuits, ABC rose to prominence in the 1930s, thanks to several takeovers and an aggressive building plan overseen by the legendary cinema architect WR Glen. In short, if your town didn't boast a cinema with the famous ABC triangle, it wasn't worth living in!

That famous triangle disappeared from High Streets in 1989 when Thorn-EMI, who had owned the company originally founded by Maxwell for around twenty years, sold their 106 ABC cinemas to the Australian tycoon Alan Bond for £125 million. A week later, in a prearranged sale, Bond then sold to Golan and Globus' Cannon Cinema Group for £175 million – a tidy profit for seven days ownership. In 1991 a debt-ridden Cannon sold to Pathé Communications, who then secured Metro Goldwyn Mayer to form MGM Cinemas. Most former ABC sites still retained their Cannon frontage despite this new ownership and continued to do so in 1995 when Richard Branson's Virgin bought all 116 cinemas for £195 million. Branson, though, was only interested in multiplexes and in March 1996 he sold all the traditional High Street sites to Barry Jenkins for £70 million.

Jenkins was born in south London in 1941 and first made his name in the signwriting business. He was working for Lew Grade when Cannon took over what had been ABC and served as managing Director of the Cannon Group from 1986 until 1991 and as managing director of MGM Cinemas between 1991-93. He had always wanted to own a cinema chain and almost did so when MGM sold to Virgin – Branson offered £5 million more than Jenkins.

When Branson then decided he only wanted multiplexes, Jenkins returned to the negotiating table. With backing from venture capitalist company Cinven, he put together a consortium and clinched the deal. As Jenkins had acquired the rights to the ABC brand in the 1980s, he immediately rebranded all his cinemas as ABC. That iconic ABC triangle was suddenly back – although, to be fair, most cinema-goers had continued to refer to their old ABC as just that, despite the takeovers and rebrands.

The welcome sight of the ABC triangle representing the latest and best in cinema entertainment sadly didn't last long. Cinven, who had staked Jenkins' dream, were – and still are – a global private equity firm who believe in a fast return on their money. Capitalism doesn't believe in charity and when Cinven, who had assumed control of ABC in 1998, acquired Odeon from the Rank organisation in February 2000 for £280 million, they cynically merged these two old rivals.

The ABC sign again disappeared as those former ABCs that weren't closed were rebranded Odeons – a very strange sight for a cinema aficionado. The one exception was the ABC in Bournemouth, which proudly kept its ABC triangle until it closed on 4 January 2017. Almost ninety years after Maxwell had founded his firm, Associated British Cinemas were no longer visible on the great British High Street.



When Barry Jenkins relaunched ABC, he was determined everyone would know the brand. The cinemas quickly received new signage while staff were eventually kitted out in T-shirts and baseball caps that were proudly adorned with the iconic ABC triangle. The signage pictured bottom left is from the tail fin of the ABC Portsmouth (see photo) although it now takes pride of place in the author's garage where it prominently resides on a door. The T-shirt (which the author is modelling and is pleased to say still fits more than twenty years after he was given it) and baseball cap date from 1999. The 'under new management' stickers were stuck to entrance doors while cinemas awaited their new signage. To make the relaunched ABC brand family friendly, postcards were even produced that were left on tables in foyers. Our manager at the time looked a little like Mrs Sweet but we sadly didn't have a cinema cat – just mice and the occasional rat! These rodents were particularly fond of popcorn, often munching through cardboard boxes in our main store room to eat it. I'm still not sure what the parrot had to do with ABC Cinemas but there must have been a reason for it being included in the artwork. If anyone knows, answers on a postcard, please – excuse the pun!

All ABC memorabilia from the author's collection

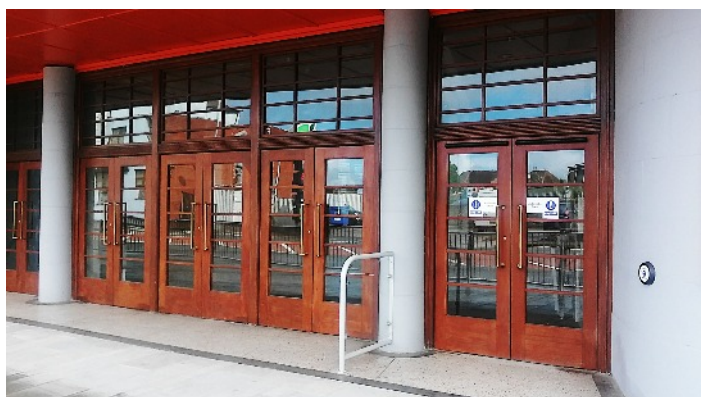


The ABC Portsmouth in 1996 showing the ABC logo at the top of the fin on the right, which is now in possession of the author

PLAZA PORT TALBOT

By John Skinner

Here are some images of the newly refurbished façade and foyer of the Plaza Port Talbot. The auditorium has been demolished.



FROM WARNER TO VUE TO ODEON

By Tim McCullen



The Warner in London's Park Royal area opened on 23 December 1994 with 1) 434, 2) 155, 3) 201, 4) 272, 5) 312, 6) 272, 7) 201, 8) 155 and 9) 424 seats.

This was one of the earlier Warner Multiplexes. It became the Vue as all the other Warners did. Closure came on 16 March 2020, partly due to the Covid lockdown and the Vue lease coming to the end of its life. Another possible deciding factor is that Vue operate two nearby multiplexes in Shepherds Bush and White City, which are only a few miles away.

While in the area on 6 July 2021, I wondered if the property was empty or still there at all. Well, it was still standing there empty and awaiting its future.

Then it was announced that Odeon was taken on the building as an Odeon Luxe on 17 May 2022. While in the area again on 18 August 2022, I saw that reopening was in an advanced stage. On speaking to a gentleman who was sweeping outside, I found that he was in fact the site manager and he said that it was to open on 18 August 2022. It was a tight eighteen-week construction programme to reopen with the building having to have a lot of gutting of the interior with new screens (seating reduced by 800 from 2,426), rewiring, sound equipment etc. The staff were already being trained and the final snagging well in progress.

Park Royal's previous cinema was the 1938-1980 Ritz / Odeon / Classic / Tatler and later the Paradise, also with some bingo as well towards the end. Demolished in 1983, it was on Ritz Parade, Western Avenue, which still exists but with a Premier Inn hotel on the site.

Editor's Note: Compare the photo above with that on p22 of the last Bulletin, showing it as a Vue in 2006.

INTERNET CORNER

- ★ youtu.be/Tdiuclcv6he & youtu.be/-8tH3qE53tU Both parts of a two-part training video for US military on 35mm projection – 27 minutes & 29¾ minutes.
- ★ bbcrewind.co.uk A new site with 31,534 vintage film clips from the BBC. A search for 'cinema' brings up 125 videos. Seems to have a bias towards Northern Ireland. *sent in by Terry Hanstock*
- ★ www.reelstories.org.uk An oral history of London's projectionists. Contains a 55-minute video, podcasts and interviews with former cinema employees, many of them CTA members. There is a special section on Cinema in Kingston. *sent in by Kevin Wheelan*
- ★ www.opumo.com/magazine/best-cinemas-in-london Does what it says on the tin. The usual suspects and good pictures.
- ★ tinyurl.com/blackpool-odeon 10 photos of the former Odeon (now Funny Girls). {1833}
- ★ youtu.be/Kj7EKIES0FM From Bradford Live – a 10¼-minute film on building the New Victoria Bradford. {3677}
- ★ tinyurl.com/edinburgh-lost From Edinburgh Live – Nine former Edinburgh cinemas and what they are today.
- ★ tinyurl.com/cardiff-cinemas From Wales Online – 16 pictures of Cardiff's long-lost cinemas.

CINEMA BUSINESS

CINEWORLD

Shares in Cineworld fell more than 60% as concerns mounted that the world's second largest cinema chain is about to file for bankruptcy. It is also looking at selling off parts of the business to raise cash and cut its debt of almost \$5bn. The company, which also owns Picturehouse in the UK also operates in the US, Poland and Israel with 9,189 screens across more than 750 sites and employs more than 28,000 people. It blames the pandemic and weak film offerings, with only a few blockbusters released, which it expects to last until November.

The Guardian – 17 August; *Daily Record* – 18 August; *BBC News website* – 19 August; sent in by Margaret Burgoine, Terry Hanstock, Tom Laughlan & Philip Stevens

EVERYMAN



The three-screen Everyman Broadgate (City of London) {60798}

Everyman has posted a large jump in sales for the first half of this year. A record £40.7m in revenue was up £11.8m on the same period in 2019, before the Covid pandemic hit. Profits rose £7.5m as the chain, which has 37 venues, embarked on another six openings. Its shares rose by 1.8%.

Daily Mail, Daily Mirror – 28 July; sent in by Barry Quinton

ODEON

Odeon has launched a Family Summer Saver pass. It provides four adult and four children's tickets for £40 to be used anytime between 1 August to 30 September.

Daily Mirror, Daily Record – 26 July; sent in by Tom Laughlan & Barry Quinton

SUIT YOU, SIR

A viral TikTok trend is costing cinema thousands of pounds in refunds. Groups of teenage boys dress up in suits to watch *Minions: The Rise of Gru* and shout and film themselves mimicking the Minions while the film is playing. The manager of the Vue in Worcester said he had to issue £1,000 worth of refunds in a single day due to complaints from customers. Odeon has banned groups of #Gentleminions.

Daily Mail, Daily Record, The Argus – 5, 6, 7, July; sent in by Tom Laughlan & Barry Quinton

STREAMING SUCCESS

Disney has become the world's biggest subscription TV streaming company after it overtook Netflix in total number of subscribers. It now has 221m total subscriptions across its three platforms against 220m for Netflix. Families are ditching streaming services to free up cash for holidays and going out. Subscriptions fell 4.2% but cinemas enjoyed a 5.3% boost in demand.

Daily Mail, Daily Mirror – 12 August; sent in by Tom Laughlan & Barry Quinton

CINEMA COURTS RAKE IN £30M

A decision to open temporary court rooms in cinemas during the pandemic has cost the taxpayer almost £30m. Odeon has raked in £26,166,092 over the last two years whilst Vue was paid £1,882,356 by the Scottish Courts Service. Some cinemas are still being used as justice centres are not expected to fully reopen until September as the service deals with a backlog.

Daily Record – 4 July; sent in by Tom Laughlan

BACK TO BLACK AND WHITE

A survey of 1,500 young adults found viewing tastes have changed, with four out of ten black and white film watchers consider themselves "artistic and cultured" and found the movies more atmospheric. James Stewart's 1946 *It's a Wonderful Life* tops the list with Hitchcock's *Psycho* at number three. Recent films also make the top ten with 1974's horror spoof *Young Frankenstein* at number seven.

Daily Mirror – 27 July; sent in by Barry Quinton

WEST END TICKETS ROCKET

The average cost of the most expensive West End theatre tickets has risen by more than a fifth as theatres reopen after Covid. It reached £140.85 this year – an increase of 21.3%. *Cabaret* proved that money does make the world go round with a top-price ticket costing £303.80. New productions have driven the rise in prices but long-running shows have seen prices fall – top tickets for *Wicked* at the Apollo Victoria fell by £58.

Daily Mail – 24 June; sent in by Barry Quinton

LIVE CINEMA

The National Theatre's cinema release of *Prima Facie* starring Jodie Comer has generated £2.2m at the box-office, making it the highest grossing theatre film in UK and Ireland cinemas since their Covid-enforced closure in March 2020. NT's *Fleabag* is in top position with £4.4m in ticket sales. It is estimated that more than 130,000 have watched *Prima Facie* in 700 UK cinemas so far, with thousands more watching globally.

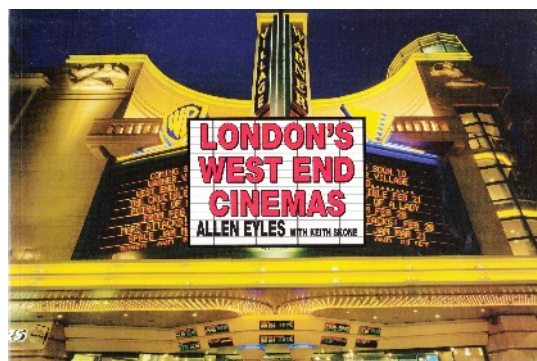
The Stage – 4 August; sent in by Barry Quinton

BAT'S ALL FOLKS

Warner Bros has scrapped the forthcoming movie *Batgirl* after audiences reportedly hated the film at test screenings. It is estimated it cost \$90m to make and was partly filmed in Glasgow.

Metro – 4 August; sent in by Barry Quinton

London's West End Cinemas by Allen Eyles with Keith Skone.



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

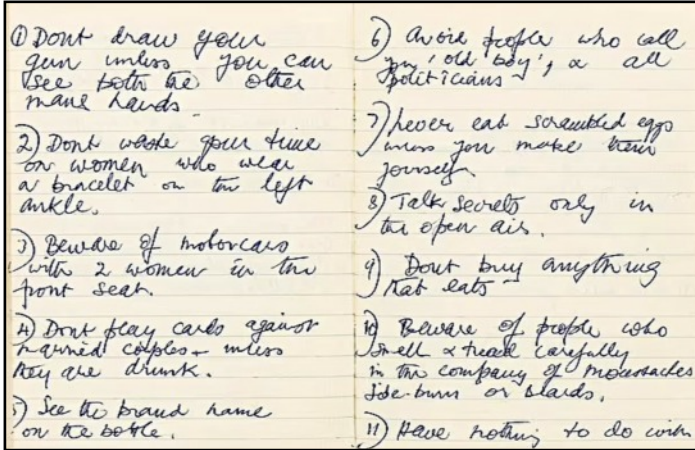
Large Format paperback, 210 pages, over 400 illustrations, £25.00 plus £3.40 postage, from the Sales Officer.

Published in 2013 in conjunction with English Heritage.

Ordering details on p6

MISCELLANY

FILM AUCTIONS



A notebook kept by Bond creator Ian Fleming when he was drafting *You Only Live Twice* in 1962 was expected to fetch £17,000. One piece of advice that would not be out of place in a Bond novel reads, "Don't draw your gun unless you see both of the other man's hands." The notebook also contains a 13-point 'How to Live' list with various pearls of wisdom, including "Beware of motor cars with two women in the front seat" and "Don't buy anything that eats."

Daily Express - 16 July; sent in by Barry Quinton

Clint Eastwood's gun from *The Outlaw Josey Wales* (1976) is expected to fetch £8,000. It is one of a pair of replica 1851 .44 handguns; the other is in America's Smithsonian Museum.

Two Cowboy hats worn by John Wayne are being auctioned for £25,000 each. The hats, from the 1948 classic *Red River* and 1973's *Cahill* will be sold alongside the coonskin cap he wore in *The Alamo* (1960); that is set to fetch a similar price. The buckskin jacket from the latter film and a dress cap from 1949's *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* will also be up for grabs for £12,500.

Daily Mirror - 14 June, 30 July; sent in by Barry Quinton

A 1947 contract with Twentieth Century Fox signed as both Norma Jean Dougherty and Marilyn Monroe is expected to fetch £6,500. At the time she was an unknown actress, aged 20, earning \$125 a month. But then she took a film executive's advice to change her name to Marilyn and she adopted her mother's family name of Monroe; the rest - as they say - is history.

Daily Express - 6 August; sent in by Barry Quinton

A collection of 496 *James Bond* toys has sold for £93,000. The items included merchandise from 1962's *Dr No* and a plastic model of a Lotus Esprit that fetched £2,400.

Metro - 15 August; sent in by R David Simpson

ISLAND WOES

The new owner of the Scottish island of Tannara Mòr, which inspired the cult film *The Wicker Man*, wants to set up a holiday destination, with new cottages, private chapel and a floating cinema. However, planning officers have raised concerns after construction was started without permission. He bought the island for £1.7m in 2017.

Daily Telegraph - 23 July; sent in by Barry Quinton

007 CELEBRATION

Dame Shirley Bassey is due to headline a charity concert *The Sound of 007 in Concert* at the Royal Albert Hall on 4 October. She sang the themes to *Goldfinger*, *Diamonds Are Forever* and *Moonraker*. Five-time *Bond* composer David Arnold will curate the event with the Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra, conducted by Nicholas Dodd. The date marks the 60th anniversary of the world premiere of the first 007 film, *Dr No* held on 5 October 1962.

Daily Record - 29 July; sent in by Tom Laughlan

LOST AND FOUND

A rare and long-lost Walt Disney film, titled *Sleigh Bells* from 1928, featuring the first ever Disney character, Oswald the Lucky Rabbit, has been rediscovered in the National Archives, the British Film Institute and Walt Disney Animation Studios announced. The character is a precursor to Mickey Mouse and was invented by Walt Disney in 1927. Until now, the film had been lost and unseen since its original release. With a run time of six minutes, the studio has now taken the print and created a new preservation print as well as digital copies.

The Wrap - 4 November 2015

HEATWAVE

Showcase cinemas were offering free seats to red-haired people during the heatwave on 18 & 19 July. Studies have found that red-haired people are more sensitive to the sun than others.

The Independent - 16 July

During the hot weather in July, the Prince Charles Cinema in London's Leicester Square had a message on its canopy:

SOD THE SUNSHINE, COME SIT IN THE DARK!

Metro - 20 July; sent in by Tom Laughlan

TICKLED MISSUS



The Grand Theatre Blackpool in June 2009

A sculpture commissioned in tribute to comedian Ken Dodd was unveiled at Blackpool's Grand Theatre on 22 July. The bronze sculpture by artist Graham Ibbeson is housed in the theatre's dress circle. Sir Ken's last appearance at the theatre was in October 2017.

The Stage - 28 July; sent in by Barry Quinton

SLOW DOWN BOND

Over the past 60 years, Bond villains have gone from being older than Bond to almost a decade younger. In the first film, *Dr No* was played by Joseph Wiseman, who was 12 years older than Sean Connery. In *The Living Daylights* (1987) the double-crossing KGB officer was just two years older than the British spy. Daniel Craig was 53 when he made *No Time to Die*, where his opponent is 12 years younger than him.

Mail on Sunday - 12 June; sent in by Barry Quinton

AMNESTY HAUL

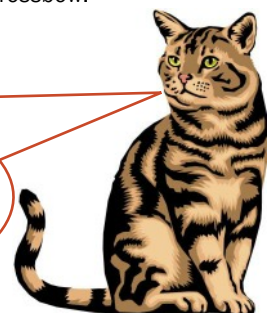
A *James Bond* gun was among weapons handed in to police during a firearms amnesty in Wiltshire. The Walther PPK model was used by 007 in films from 1962 to 1997. The haul also included twelve shotguns, nine handguns, six rifles and a crossbow.

Daily Mirror - 15 June; sent in by Barry Quinton

CINEMA CAT

If God had intended us to see 3D films, he would have given us one red eye and one green eye!

Anon



QUOTATIONS

Another cinematic quotation from the list sent by Gavin McGrath:

♦ I never forget a face - but in your case I'll make an exception.

Groucho Marx

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]

ALTON (Hants)

The Palace was due to close for a week from 22 August, blaming "a lack of new films". In a notice posted in the window, it is stated the cinema is currently showing *Minions*, which is six weeks old, and there are no new popular films due to be released. It adds: "You may wish to check out what the larger cinemas are screening – they too are showing older films." The cinema's website www.palacecinema.co.uk also stated its immediately forthcoming screenings are "to be updated". {24101}

Alton Herald – 8 August

ANDOVER (Hants)

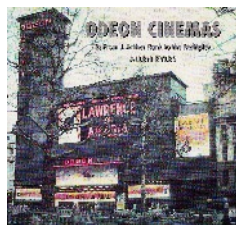
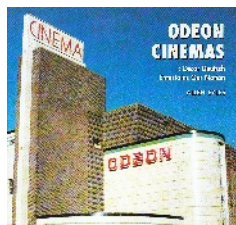


The Mecca bingo club in the former 867-seat Odeon was due to close on 14 August. The building opened as the Palace in 1926 and was taken over by Odeon in November 1935. It was one of the cinemas sold to Classic in December 1967 and was soon split with a 114-seat cinema in the balcony and bingo in the stalls. The cinema section closed in July 1971 but was used for children's shows up to June 1975. The subdivision was later removed and the whole building used for bingo. {27613}

Sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken March 2009

All you need to know about... ODEON

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



Now at reduced prices!

ODEON 1 – Oscar Deutsch Entertains Our Nation – £15.00

ODEON 2 – From J Arthur Rank to the Multiplex – £15.00

Buy both Odeon 1 & 2 together for £27 (plus postage)

Also available – THE GRANADA THEATRES – £18.99.

Last few copies!

Please add £3.40 to your order for postage.

Available from the Sales Officer – address on p6.

BARNESLEY (South Yorks)

The new thirteen-screen Cineworld is set to open in September. It is located in the Glass Works shopping and leisure complex, virtually across the road from the existing two-screen Parkway (ex Odeon). It will have an IMAX laser auditorium, a 144-seat 4DX screen and a ScreenX 270° screen.

The Star, Sheffield, The Business Desk – 27 July; sent in by Terry Hanstock

BEACONSFIELD (Bucks)



Wetherspoon has been granted permission to convert the former Chiltern cinema into one of its hostleries. The venue opened as the Picture House in September 1927 with 500 seats on a single floor. It was bought by the Council in 1960 and a stage was erected so occasional stage presentations could be held. It was renamed the Chiltern from November 1963. In 1978 the Council leased the building to the operators of the Plaza Margate; they re-seated the cinema, reducing the capacity to 277. It closed in September 1989 and became a children's play centre; that closed in 2012 and it was converted into a restaurant, which closed in 2020 due to the pandemic. {14764}

Buckinghamshire Live – 26 July; photo taken May 2006

BIRMINGHAM (King's Heath)



Plans have been announced for a two-screen cinema on the site of the former Kingsway/Essoldo. The original frontage is all that remains, following a fire in 2011. That would be retained and incorporated into the new build, which would also include 49 apartments. {19912}

Birmingham Post – 14 July; photo taken August 2004

BISHOP AUCKLAND (Durham)

Diggers have been seen on the Fieldon Bridge Retail Park site, which will be home to a new cinema, announced as a six-screen Reel. No timetable has been given.

Northern Echo – 29 July

BLACKPOOL (Lancs)

Planning permission has been granted to convert the ten-screen Odeon in Rigby Road into four food and drink units and a family entertainment centre. The developer lodged the application so that it could secure another use for the building if Odeon decides to vacate the premises when its lease expires next year; it opened in December



1998. It would ensure the new nine-screen 850-seat cinema complex being developed at Houndshill Shopping Centre would have less competition; it will have a giant IMAX screen. {24174}

Blackpool Gazette – 30 July, 2 August; photo taken June 2009

BRIDLINGTON (East Yorks)

We were recently in Bridlington and visited the now bingo hall, formerly the **Regal** cinema/theatre, where we received a warm welcome from one of the new partners who have taken the business over from Buzz. The signage has been replaced, with the name **Regal** restored and the foyer made more welcoming with new décor and the recent influx of fruit machines moved to the auditorium. {3224}

Sent in by David & Margaret Williams

BRIGHTON

It has been announced that the **Hippodrome** will reopen on 22 November 2024. The date marks 60 years since the last live performance at the Grade II* listed venue, which is currently being restored. Local DJ Fatboy Slim has said he wants to be the first to perform there. {36884}

The Argus, Brighton – 30 July; sent in by Barry Quinton

BRISTOL



The three-screen Watershed arts cinema has celebrated its 40th birthday. It is housed in two Grade II listed Victorian warehouses in the harbour district. {24284}

Bristol Live – 12 June; photo taken February 2006

Plans to redevelop the former **Granada**, last used as a Wetherspoons pub, have been withdrawn. It is understood most of the cinema is still intact. {27949}

B24/7 – 24 June

BURNHAM-ON-SEA (Somerset)

A planning application has been submitted to remove a huge street art display in the side of the **Ritz** and replace it with an electronic billboard. {3291}

Burnham-on-Sea.com – 1 July



BURY ST EDMUNDS (Suffolk)

Plans have been approved for a four-screen **Everyman** in the basement of the former **Debenhams** store. The venue would also have a smaller screen for private hire; there would be 306 seats in total. No time scale has been given.

Suffolk News – 19 August; sent in by Terry Hanstock

CANTERBURY (Kent)



The two-screen Odeon (ex **ABC**) will not be reopening after being closed due to the pandemic, when the foyer was used as a Covid vaccination centre. There was a **Costa** Coffee outlet in the foyer, which has since moved out. The cinema was opened in August 1933 by County Cinemas as the **Regal** and became an **ABC** in April 1935. It was closed due to wartime bomb damage from October 1942 to February 1943. It was twinned in 1972 with cinema upstairs and bingo downstairs; the bingo area was later converted into a second screen. The CTA visited in July 2006. {15034}

Kent Online – 24 August; sent in by Philip Stevens; photo taken September 2021

The new five-screen **Curzon** was due to open at the Riverside leisure complex on Friday 26 August. The names of the five screens have been inspired by *The Canterbury Tales*; *The Chaucer*, *The Merchant*, *The Friar*, *The Knight* and *The Miller*. Adult tickets cost £10 in the week and £13.95 on Friday evenings and at the weekend. It is not stated whether their existing three-screen operation in the Westgate Hall will continue or close.

Kent Online – 16 August; sent in by Margaret Burgoine & Philip Stevens

CASTLEFORD (West Yorks)



Plans have been submitted to turn the former **Picture House** into 25 high-end flats. The £2.2m project will also contain a gym, office space and a cinema room. The building has been empty and in a neglected state since it was the target of a suspected arson attack almost five years ago. It was last used as a bar. {6292}

Yorkshire Post – 24 August; sent in by Terry Hanstock; photo taken August 2005

CHESTER

A new six-screen **Picturehouse** is currently under construction at the Northgate development. Now an application has been submitted to increase the capacity from 716 to 800. It is due to open in the autumn.

Chester & District Standard – 21 July

CLEETHORPES (Lincs)



Planning permission has been granted for alterations to the Grade II listed former Empire. There would be a new retail unit on the ground floor and a restaurant and cocktail bar on the first floor. The building opened in 1896 and the final live show was in 1959. It then began showing films with the last screening in 1964. It was later used for bingo and then as an amusement arcade. {39425}

Insider Media – 13 July; photo taken June 2016

CLEVEDON (Somerset)

The false ceiling at the Grade II listed Curzon was removed in 2020 and now the balcony is to be restored, after being closed off in 1973. This will allow the cinema to increase its capacity by 30%. £60,000 of the £85,000 needed came from public donations. The work will feature restored 1920s light fittings. It is due to open in early autumn. {846}

Somerset Live – 20 July; North Somerset Times – 27 July

CROSS HANDS (Carmarthen)



The Grade II* listed Public Hall cinema is spending more money on energy bills than it is taking in ticket sales. The future of the building is at risk. A GoFundMe page has been set up at [tinyurl.com/cross-hands](https://www.tinyurl.com/cross-hands). The CTA visited in April 2010, when this picture was taken. {22956}

Wales Online – 5 August

DEAL (Kent)

Planning permission to redevelop the former Regent was granted on 18 July 2019. However, after three years this has now expired with nothing being done. The building is said to be deteriorating and the Council owners have not set a deadline for restoration. There was a fire inside the building on 7 June. Firemen suspect squatters inside the building dialled 999; the Police suspect arson. {32928}

Kent Online – 22 July; sent in by Philip Stevens & Martin Tapsell

DERBY

Further plans have been revealed for a new building for Derby Theatre on the site of the former Assembly Rooms, as the Council applies for government funding. Called Assemble, the building would be operated by Derby Theatre and is backed by Derby City Council and the University of Derby. The present Derby Playhouse was designed to exhibit films but after a time the cinema equipment was moved to other premises. The present building was accessed through a market, which was shuttered outside market opening times. This made the building less attractive than if it had its own street entrance.

The Stage – 4 July; sent in by John West

DEVONPORT (Plymouth)



Mecca bingo in the former Forum was due to close in August. The cinema opened in August 1939 with 1,800 seats. Films ceased in May 1960 and it has been bingo ever since. {40296}

Plymouth Live – 8 July; photo taken June 2008

DUDLEY

The campaign group fighting to save the Hippodrome has called for demolition plans to be put on hold, after 9 out of 10 of the 1,094 respondents to a survey said they support reopening it to the public. Plans to demolish the building and build a higher-education facility were approved in October 2020. {41631}

The Stage – 14 July; sent in by Barry Quinton & R David Simpson

DUNFERMLINE (Fife)



The Grade B listed Alhambra is 100 years old! It first opened in August 1922 showing a silent film called *Over the Hill* before a stage performance took place the following month. It became a full-time cinema in the 1930s with rear projection; this was moved to the rear of the circle when CinemaScope came in. Films ceased around 1965 and it became a bingo club. That moved to new premises in 2006 and a campaign was started to restore the 1,700-seat theatre, which reopened in 2008. The CTA visited in September 2008, when the above picture was taken. Exterior photo on front cover. {2135}

Dunfermline Press – 14 August

EDINBURGH (Portobello)

Plans to demolish the auditorium of the C-listed former County / George have again been rejected; the façade would have been retained. The report said, "The assessment concludes that the applicant has not sufficiently demonstrated that the building is incapable of meaningful repair and has not fully demonstrated that the potential for the building to be re-used as a cinema (or similar compatible community use) has been fully explored." {23292}

The Herald – 1 August

GAINSBOROUGH (Lincs)

West Lindsey District Council has acquired the land where the former Lindsey Centre was. A four-screen cinema is to be built on the site; no operator or time scale has been given.

The Lincolnite – 1 July

GATESHEAD (Tyneside)



Plans to build apartments on the site of the former Odeon have been rejected. The cinema opened as **Black's Regal** in February 1937 and films ceased in January 1975. It became a bingo club, which closed in 1995. The building was demolished in 2003 and the site has been vacant since. {52461}

The Journal, Newcastle – 18 July; photo taken September 2002

GOSPORT (Hants)

The Council has listed the former **Criterion** as an Asset of Community Value [ACV]. It opened in May 1912 and closed in 1968 when bingo took over. That closed in 2020 due to the pandemic and the building has been empty since. {45030}

Southern Daily Echo – 22 June; sent in by Ian Patterson

GRIMSBY (Lincs)

The **Parkway Entertainment Company**, which currently has cinemas in Cleethorpes, Louth, Beverley and Barnsley, has announced that it has taken on space at Freshney Place, being built as part of the Council's 'Future High Streets Fund' scheme. No further details or time scale has been given.

The Lincolnite – 15 July; Grimsby Telegraph – 16 July

HALIFAX (West Yorks)



The **ATIK** nightclub in the Grade II listed former **Gaumont** (Picture House, Top Rank Club, Astra, Surewin Bingo Club, **Liquid**) at Wards End has closed following its reopening after lockdown – business did not pick up sufficiently. {3332} *photo taken August 2011*

The **Mecca Bingo Hall** situated in the former Odeon on Broad Street was due to close on 14 August. It appears as if the closure is another example of trade not picking up sufficiently after the lockdown. {3330}

The **Theatre Royal** on Westgate, which has been empty for some time, may be turned into a hotel with the frontage retained. It became an **Essoldo** bingo club after closing as a cinema in the mid-sixties. More recently it was a nightclub; its last incarnation evidently saw some major alterations to the auditorium. {3329}

Halifax Courier – various dates; sent in by Peter Berry & Paul Smith; see Letters p29

HEXHAM (Northumberland)

The **Forum** was due to celebrate its 85th birthday on 23 August by offering 85p tickets. The films will be from the year the cinema opened – Janet Gaynor's *A Star is Born* and a matinée of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. {3148}

Chronicle Live – 30 July; sent in by David & Margaret Williams

IPSWICH (Suffolk)



Proposals for an extension that will enable the **Regent Theatre** to put on bigger shows have been granted planning permission, which its local Council said would "boost the longer-term sustainability" of the Grade II listed venue. It will see the creation of a separate building in the theatre's car park, containing dressing rooms, catering facilities and wardrobe spaces. The 1,539-seat venue opened in November 1929 and it closed as a cinema in March 1991. {13683}

The Stage – 1 July; sent in by R David Simpson & John West; photo taken July 2007

LIVERPOOL (Aintree)



The former **Palace** has been demolished. It opened in November 1913 with 960 seats on a single floor. It originally had a decorated stone façade but this was 'modernised' in 1954. Films ceased in June 1959 and it was converted into a supermarket. It was later used as a shoe store and a charity shop. The building suffered a fire around 2021. {44859}

Sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken July 2007

LIVERPOOL (Wavertree)

Lidl abandoned plans to demolish the former **Abbey** after it was listed Grade II in April 2021. Now they have published revised plans to convert the building into a store, which would include retaining and renovating the façade. A public consultation was launched. {44856}

BBC News website – 12 August; sent in by Terry Hanstock

LONDON (Croydon)

The founder of **Secret Cinema** has announced plans to turn the former **Alders** department store into an arts centre.

Evening Standard – 1 July; sent in by Tom Laughlan & R David Simpson

LONDON (Kennington)

"Since 2007 the **Cinema Museum** has campaigned to secure a permanent home at The Master's House, London, SE11. With no rights to renew, changing landlords, short annual leases that restricted access to grants and ongoing threats that our home was to be sold to the highest bidder – it was a long, hard, stressful slog. But it's over... well, almost! We have just signed a four-year lease with our landlords, **Anthology** (part of the **Lifestory Group**) – with an option to purchase the Master's House buildings for £1 million at any time over the next four years. That might not seem much to raise in four years but the buildings need many millions spending on them – so we have four years to raise a lot of money – but we are re-energised, reinvigorated and with your help, we will do it." You can make a donation at:

tinyurl.com/5wttnpe. www.cinemamuseum.org.uk

Cinema Museum Press Release – April 2022

LONDON (Kensal Rise)

The Lexi has added a 30-seat second screen, built on the car park. It has also refurbished the 75-seat main screen, following a fire. {25925}

Brent & Kilburn Times – 28 July

LONDON (King's Cross)

A blue plaque has been installed on the former Scala honouring some of the famous acts that have played at the venue. The cinema opened in 1920, delayed by WWI. It opened and closed under several names, before closing as the Scala in 1993. It is now in use as a nightclub. See *Picture House* No 43 (2018) pages 75-81. {2498}

Islington Tribune – 22 July;

sent in by Terry Hanstock & Tom Laughlan

LONDON (Shepherds Bush)



The new development on the site of the former Pyke's Cinematograph Theatre / Odeon ② also includes the stone panel at the side; whether that is the old one cleaned up or a new one I don't know. {3776}

Sent in by Tim McCullen; photo taken April 2006

LONDON (Streatham)



The Grade II listed Streatham Hill Theatre has been sold to the Ruach City Church, which also has the Gaumont State Kilburn (see p10). It opened in November 1929 and became a bingo club in 1962. This closed in 2017 and the building has been empty since, apart from a slot machine centre in part of the foyer. It has been on the Theatres Trust 'at risk' register since 2018. See also p31. {31611}

The Stage – 7, 28 July; sent in by Barry Quinton & R David Simpson

LONG EATON (Derbys)

Plans have been submitted to demolish the former Scala/Galaxy and build housing and commercial units. The venue first opened in August 1907 and films ceased in July 1964. It became a bingo hall, which closed in the 1990s. The empty building suffered a fire. It was reopened as a cinema with three screens on the ground floor but these closed around April 2012 and the building has been empty since. The CTA visited in May 2008. {24984}

Nottinghamshire Live – 10 August; sent in by Terry Hanstock

MALTON (North Yorks)

The independent Grade II listed Palace cinema celebrated 20 years under its current management with a charity screening. All tickets were £1. The cinema has three screens, seating 86, 51 and 12. www.palacemalton.info {3195}

BBC News Website – 16 July

MANCHESTER (Hulme)

Campaigners fighting to save the Grade II listed Hulme Hippodrome are going to court to challenge inactive owners. On 14 February Manchester City Council issued a Section 215 notice to the owners to make repairs and improvements to the exterior. It had 11 requirements, none of which have been carried out; the owners have appealed. The building opened in October 1901 but has been empty since 1986. It has changed hands several times. {55576}

Unrestricted Theatre – 25 June

MARGATE (Kent)

The film *Empire of Light*, which was shot around Margate and featured the Grade II* listed Dreamland cinema, will be released in the US from 9 December; in this country from 13 January, although it will have a gala European première screening in the London Film Festival on 12 October. The teaser trailer can be viewed at youtu.be/HdMPTgYiOw. After the impressive illuminations proved popular with locals, the production crew agreed they could stay when filming ended. They have since been removed after Council bosses decided they were not suitable for long-term use. {15123}

Kent Online – 17 July, 24 August; sent in by Margaret Burgoine & Philip Stevens

MARYPORT (Cumbria)

Plans, announced on p22 of the last Bulletin, to redevelop the former Carlton into a cultural hub have been approved. The works will cost £11m and be completed by April 2024. {46126}

BBC News website – 6 July; sent in by Terry Hanstock

MILTON KEYNES

The former downstairs bingo hall at The Point has been turned into a charity shop for the local hospice. It has been made available on a temporary rolling tenancy basis. {25085}

Willen Hospice press release; sent in by Margaret Burgoine

MINEHEAD (Somerset)

The Avenue cinema opened on Friday 8 April, with three screens (capacities 112, 60 and 60). It is operated by S&B Cinemas (Pat and Beryl Scott) who already run the Ritz Burnham-on-Sea and the Westway in Frome. It is a conversion of a former Lifestyle Warehouse building and is situated alongside the Regal Theatre; that closed as a full-time cinema in 1994 but presentations by the Regal Film Society run alongside the live shows. {67414}

sent in by David Simpson and Jeremy Buck

NEWTON ABBOT

Plans have been submitted for a four-screen cinema in Market Square. It would be operated by Scott cinemas, who will vacate their operation in the Alexandra. There has been opposition to plans to convert the Alexandra into a "multi-use" space with residents wanting it to remain as a theatre.

Herald Express, Torquay – 29 June

NOTTINGHAM (Central)

Once advertised as "the world's smallest cinema" the 22-seat Screen 22 closed in 2017. It was originally an adult cinema but in 2002 it started showing first-run films; it had 35mm back projection. Now it has reopened as the Mammoth after a five-year restoration. {21757}

Nottinghamshire Live – 6 August; sent in by Terry Hanstock

NOTTINGHAM (Mapperley)



Plans to build apartments next to the former Majestic have been withdrawn. A previous plan, which would have demolished the cinema, was also withdrawn. The building was last used as a haunted museum. However, a site visit shows that flats are being built next door to the cinema – see photo above & Casework last Bulletin – but there is no sign of any restoration of the Majestic. Pigeons have taken up residence on the external balcony / veranda, so not entirely neglected! {45066}

Nottinghamshire Live – 19 August; sent in by Terry Hanstock

NUNEATON (Warks)



The upstairs of the former Scala is to be turned from empty office space into a community hub. The downstairs foyer is in use as an amusement arcade. {34265}

Coventry Live – 18 August; photo taken August 2004

OXFORD

The Grade II listed Ultimate Picture Palace has been saved, thanks to a campaign that raised almost £313,000 in under three months. The 121-seat venue will be revamped with new tiered seating to allow a better view of the screen, improved access to the box office and projection room and upgrades to its audio-visual system. {19416}

Oxford Mail – 23 June

PENARTH (Glamorgan)

The former Windsor has been demolished. It opened in February 1914 and closed in May 1958. It became a garage but this had closed by early 2017. It will make way for a four-storey block of flats. {27765}

Sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken August 2007

RAMSGATE (Kent)

The bid by the Kent Film Foundation to take over the Granville has been rejected by the Council. Three others, of the total of nine submissions, have been rejected and five will now go forward to the short list. {15019}

Isle of Thanet News – 1, 17 August; sent in by Margaret Burgoine

Editor's Note: See the article *The Bid to Save the Granville Ramsgate* on p12/13 of the last Bulletin; Jan Dunn, the author of this, writes:

We are all a bit shocked and reeling to find out that they are not even considering our bid in taking it a stage further and offering a meeting with the panel. The business plan is entirely robust and very detailed and we also assured the Council that we have the funds to cover the overhead running costs of the building for two years whilst raising funds to refurbish it. We have a team including people who have excellent track records of raising high levels of funding. Also, we had put in a pre-emptive EOI submission to the Open Community Fund for the building and have been invited to submit a full application via a detailed email inviting us to do so and outlining that our bid had great potential. Probably because we have six thousand local residents in support of it and the history of community use of the building and the history of community work the charity has. All organisations viewing the building via the estate agents were told that any questions would be answered. None of our three reasonable questions were answered in advance of the submission of the proposal. One of those was asking for a reassurance that someone who understands the business of cinema exhibition would be on the panel. That way, even a very basic Google of some of the members of our team would reveal the A-list level of cinema exhibition backgrounds they come from. We will be writing to our MP and are currently compiling a press release. They have not even given us a reason to not take our bid further.

REDCAR (Cleveland)

The new three-screen Regent, which has been built on the seafront on the site of the former cinema, will be operated by Merlin cinemas. No opening date has been agreed. There is a gallery of interior photos on the Teesside Live website at tinyurl.com/redcar-regent.

BBC News Website – 2 August

SALE (Greater Manchester)

Refurbishment work has started on the façade of the Grade II listed former Pyramid/Odeon/Tatton Cinema. Scaffolding has been erected and the old render is being removed. Let's hope that Mecca decides to do the same with their Bingo Hall a few blocks away – this was the former Lido / Locarno Ballroom; that building is now looking very tatty.

Sent in by Richard Hagon

SHEFFIELD (Nether Edge)

We reported on p23 of the last Bulletin that the Grade II listed Abbeydale was forced to close due to a dispute between the operator and its landlord. We are pleased to hear that this has now been resolved and the building will reopen. {22681}

The Star, Sheffield – 1 July; sent in by Terry Hanstock

SITTINGBOURNE (Kent)



Mecca bingo in the stalls of the former Odeon was due to close on 17 August after the firm decided not to renew its lease on the building. The New Century cinema still operates in the former circle. {25352}

Kent Online – 17 July; sent in by Philip Stevens; photo taken July 2006

SLOUGH

Slough Council bought the former Adelphi in 2018 for £4.6m. Now it has put it on the market to "gauge interest". The cash-strapped local authority is attempting to offload £600m worth of assets to tackle its debts. The cinema opened in February 1930 and closed in January 1973 and was converted into a bingo club. It currently has a certificate of immunity from becoming a listed building. See letters p28. {14760}

Maidenhead Advertiser – 2 August; sent in by R David Simpson; additional information from Allen Eyles

SOUTHAMPTON



The former Atherley in Shirley has been put up for sale with a guide price to be announced. It opened in September 1912 and films ceased in November 1975. The stalls were converted into a bingo club and the small balcony into offices. Bingo closed due to the pandemic and the building has been empty since. A full history of the Atherley is given in Picture House No 6. {21350}

Southern Daily Echo – 2 August; sent in by Ian Patterson; photo taken May 2006

SWADLINCOTE (Derbys)



The former Empire is 'to let' again. It opened in December 1912 with 500 seats, all on a single level. It closed in the early 1960s and became an amusement arcade. It has subsequently been a succession of bars. {39091}

Staffordshire Live – 11 July; photo taken January 2003

SWANSEA



A gala night was held on 23 July to celebrate 125 years of the Grand Theatre. It opened in 1897 and became one of the City's first cinemas. It returned to live show use until 1933 and was again a cinema until 1947. Today it is a major live theatre venue. The report at tinyurl.com/swansea-grand contains a very full history of the building. {18922}

Nation Cymru – 10 July; photo taken August 2007

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

TUNBRIDGE WELLS (Kent)

Plans have finally been submitted to build 166 new homes on the site of the former ABC (etc). If approved, an eight-storey retirement village would be built, with a café, outdoor space, hydrotherapy pool, spa and gym. {25782}

Kent Online – 1 August; sent in by Philip Stevens

WELLINGTON (Somerset)

The Wellesley celebrated its 85th birthday on 12 July. In the 1950s its stage facilities were enhanced enabling it to be used for stage productions as well as movies; It has 472 seats in stalls and circle and is a rare example of a 1930s single-screen cinema that is virtually untouched. Since 2006 it has been run by Merlin Cinemas. {17960}

Wellington Weekly News – 6 August

WESTGATE-ON-SEA (Kent)

The management of the Grade II listed three-screen Carlton has issued a plea to cinema-goers not to remove their shoes and socks and put their bare feet on the seats. Bosses say this is "inconsiderate" to staff and fellow customers. {15032}

Kent Online – 18 August; sent in by Philip Stevens

WHITLEY BAY (Tyneside)



The Empress Ballroom in the Grade II listed Spanish City is to be restored with £3m of works set to get underway. It will host a cocktail bar, two floors of office space, entrance atrium, café and restaurant and a late-night 'cabaret' venue. Completion is scheduled for June 2023. The ballroom dates from 1908 and showed silent films during WWI. It became a bingo hall in 1961. We did visit this ballroom as a bingo club in October 2011 as part of our 'Tyneside Pilgrimage' when the above photo was taken. {36852}

The Journal, Newcastle – 27 July; Sent in by David & Margaret Williams

WIRKSWORTH (Derbys)



Plans have been approved to convert the former Wirksworth Cinema into apartments and a shop. It opened in March 1935 and films ceased in April 1967. It became a bingo club and was last used as a builders' merchants. {41668}

Derbyshire Live – 19 August; photo taken May 2008

YEOVIL (Somerset)

A £29m upgrade of the Octagon Theatre will not now commence until April 2023. The capacity of the main auditorium will be increased from 622 to 900 and a fly tower will be installed. There will be two smaller spaces, predominantly for film screenings and the usual refurbishments to the foyer, toilets, bar and café areas.

Chard and Ilminster News – 15 July

OVERSEAS NEWS

ANCHORAGE (Alaska, USA)



The 4th Avenue Theater in Anchorage, Alaska

photo: Carol M Highsmith, Wikimedia Commons / public domain

The 4th Avenue Theater is being demolished. The owners have deemed it too costly to restore, citing code compliance and safety issues. It was built in 1947 with 1,100 seats in stalls and balcony. It was refurbished in the mid-1980s and used as a banqueting hall. It has been empty for several years. {450}

Anchorage Daily News - 8 August; sent in by Robert Holden

LOS ANGELES (USA)

The Cinerama Dome is set to open under a new name (probably Cinerama Hollywood) along with the adjacent fourteen-screen ArcLight multiplex; no time scale was given. It closed at the start of the pandemic. A liquor licence was granted in June. The Cinerama Dome first opened in November 1963 with 937 seats and the world première of *It's a Mad Mad Mad Mad World* in 70mm. Three-strip Cinerama was installed in 2002. {33}

Los Angeles Times - 30 June

PHILADELPHIA (USA)



The 1,894-seat Logan Theater opened in January 1924 and closed in January 1973. It became a church but they moved out in 1992. It lay vacant until 2005 when it was bought by Dr Owen Williamson, who started to restore the building. The project became too expensive and it stood empty once more. Now it has been taken over by philanthropist Nolbert Brown Jr, who will continue the renovation. A 'soft' opening is planned for February 2023 with the official opening timed to coincide with the building's 100th anniversary. {5452}

Hidden City - 10 August; photo by Ken Roe



Belgian Cinema Tickets courtesy Martin Tapsell [pre-Euro]

REWINDING BACK

Sent in by David A Ellis

PROPRIETOR AND OPERATOR AT VARIANCE

The proprietor of the Frodsham Picture House was sued at Runcorn last week by his operator Paul Foreman for £3.15s. arrears of wages and £5 for alleged wrongful dismissal. Plaintiff said he was employed at 30s per week as operator, this being increased in September to 35s. At Christmas time his wages were reduced again to 30s with the understanding they would be 35s when business increased. On Monday 7 April he was dismissed and was offered a night's money and a week's wages in lieu of notice, which he declined. The defence was that there was no agreement between the parties and no promise had been made to pay 35s a week. The sum of £3.10s was paid into court in lieu of notice. The judge found that that met the case and entered judgement accordingly.

Kine Weekly - 26 June 1913

A CAPABLE OPERATOR.

At the Grand Cinema, Smithdown Road, Liverpool, our Liverpool correspondent was much struck the other evening with the quickness of the changing of each spool during the projection of Pathe's great film *Her Dreadful Secret* and was informed that it was owing to the ingenuity of Mr J Lomax, the chief operator. In the operating box, Mr Lomax has affixed a most ingenious arrangement to the apparatus, by which the changing of spools is made imperceptible, no break ever appearing on the screen, one spool following the other just as if it were one long film.

Kine Weekly - 6 November 1913

CABBAGE HALL PICTURE HOUSE LIVERPOOL

Saturday evening saw the Cabbage Hall Picture House Liverpool open its doors to the public under the management of Mr George Smith, whose long professional experience should stand him in good stead in this new venture. Situated at the corner of Townsend Lane and Rochester Road, the white structure has a striking and imposing aspect. The entrance hall, with its Tudoresque scheme of oak panelling, compels instant admiration, whilst the auditorium, sapphire blue and cream in colour with oaken dado, together with comfortable blue plush tip ups and heavy pile crimson carpet, suggests the highest artistry. The lighting is on the reflected principle and the handsome fittings that have been installed add not a little to the beauty of the hall. The fireproof operating chamber is fitted with two of Pathé's latest projectors so the performance is a continuous one. The architect, Mr EA Aldridge of 14 Castle Street, Liverpool, has planned a number of picture theatres but nothing better than the house over which Mr Smith presides.

Kine Weekly - Thursday 20 November 1913

CHESTER KINEMA TRANSFER

After a prosperous run of about twelve years the Glynn Picture Hall Chester, owned by Glynn Hill and Co of Wrexham, has been acquired by a public company. J White, who has for many years been associated with local entertainment halls, has been made managing director. The Glynn Picture Hall has done very good business throughout the slump and by its situation on the fringe of an industrial part of Chester there is reason to expect a continuation of its prosperity.

Kiné Weekly - 16 November 1922

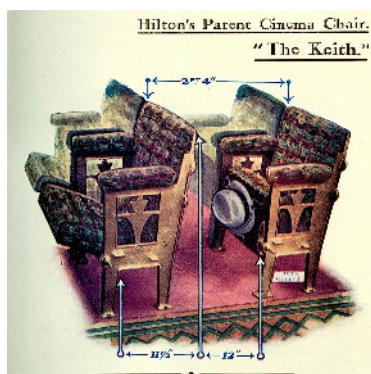
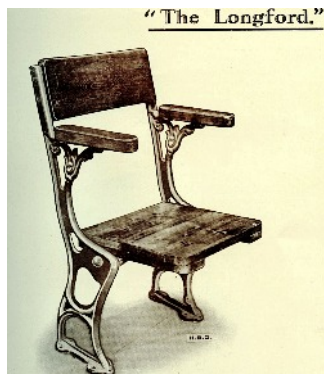
CHESTER CLOSURE

The Chester Picturedrome, which was the first picture house in the City, closed on Saturday 29 March owing to the expiration of the lease. Will Hunter, the lessee, formerly ran the Prince of Wales theatre at Mexborough. He has given many performances for charitable purposes and in this direction he claims that the Picturedrome was the first cinema in England to give a benefit night for the Prince of Wales' Relief Fund. Mr Hunter does not intend to give up business as a cinema proprietor and hopes to acquire another site for the establishment of a Picturedrome.

Kiné Weekly - 3 April 1924

LETTERS

SEATING CHOICE



Enjoyed the article on cinema seating by Mr Harte in Bulletin 56/3. Here are two illustrations from the 'Hiltonia' cinema seat catalogue issued in 1937 in Ireland. First is the bottom of the range, the 'Longford' – bringing real meaning to the phrase "the cheaper seats". Second, the top of the range the 'Keith', with hat-rack. Patented in both the UK and in Ireland.

Bob Bradshaw

CINEMAS IN STRANGE PLACES

A recent Zoom lecture event (talk 19) on 9 July covered Hotels with Cinemas. Could this lead to other lectures where cinemas are in unlikely places? I recently went for a short holiday to Plymouth and visited the Plymouth Art Centre, which featured a display on fashion. I later found out that they also had a cinema and *North by Northwest* was playing for one night only. This independent cinema with 118 seats was built in 2019 and is situated within Plymouth's College of Art main campus. But why link this film to the museum display? It was the fashions worn by the stars, Cary Grant and Eva Marie Saint. Cary Grant was dressed, immaculately throughout his escapades, in a grey worsted suit made by his tailor in Savile Row. Three identical suits were made. Hitchcock deviated from the usual 'in house' costume designer for Eva Marie Saint and took her on a spending spree to fashion houses in New York for her outfits. I again enjoyed this thrilling film but this time through the fashion lens.

Marion Kennett

Editor's Note: The Plymouth cinema was mentioned on p22 of the last Bulletin. I have already laid down the gauntlet for an article about cinemas on ships – any other ideas?

PALACE DEVIZES

Further to my article on the Palace Devizes in the last Bulletin I have an update for you. I decided to look on-line on the Palace website then I discovered the Palace Facebook page (do not know why I did not think of this before!) and it contained a lot of information as follows.

The cinema will revert back to a single-screen with 534 seats so in answer to your question in an earlier Bulletin, the 253-seat cinema circle conversion by Zetters in the 70s will go and become a balcony area again as part of the new cinema. This also answers my question about where the box will go – the original box will be used! Total modernisation of the cinema will take place following a structural inspection and live performances and film shows will operate there in the future. There was an open day last year, which I did not know about and sadly missed, so I will keep an eye out for another one in the future.

There is planning in for a structure at the back of the cinema for a rehearsal and changing area, which will really increase the backstage facilities.

For me this is all good news and when complete will take me back to the 60s, when it was a great place to see films and live shows. This is Wiltshire's oldest operating cinema site, operating from 1912 as the Electric Palace, sadly gutted by fire in 1932, rebuilt as the Palace and until the 70s a single-screen cinema, when Zetters converted it as a Bingo/Cinema operation. Looking back through my notes the cinema came close to closing on several occasions, due mainly to lack of support. Thankfully it has survived and with this latest investment looks set to survive the future.

David Reeves

ADELPHI SLOUGH

I had no idea or I had forgotten that the Council owned the Adelphi. It brought back many memories. I never worked at the Adelphi but my first job on leaving school was as an office assistant at the nearby Granada Slough. It was the initial stage for trainee management at £3 per week. You learned all the admin and backroom control of Theatre Cinemas. I had two years National Service in the RAF but on returning I was sent to the Alcazar (Century) Hounslow and Granada Aylesbury. I then came back to the Granada and Century Slough. I loved working in the theatres but wanted to be more involved in the wider movie/stage experience. I managed to transfer to the Granada Stage and Film Booking department under the legendary Herbert Fontaine. Although I was now at HO I kept in touch with the Slough managers but in typical Granada tradition of secrecy came news Granada had taken over the Adelphi which had for some years been under Union/ABC control. To internal surprise Granada hired Nigel Lockyer from I think the Odeon High Wycombe to manage the Adelphi. Although Granada now controlled the three main theatres there were barring problems with booking. Adelphi had the ABC release, Granada the GB release and the smaller Century the Odeon. About a mile and a half out of town was the Ambassador under CMA management taking Odeon release. When a major film appeared on the Odeon circuit, we could not switch the Odeon release from the smaller Century into the Adelphi or Granada because the Ambassador barred the Adelphi. The Century was literally only half a mile further.

The Adelphi was built in 1930 and I remember seeing pictures of a large orchestra to support silent movies just prior to sound. At the time the Adelphi promoted the fact that it had the deepest stage between London and Bristol. We decided to make more use of the stage with dressing room facilities. The fifties was the period of big bands – Jack Parnell, Eric Delaney, Ronnie Aldridge and the Squadronaires. Ted Heath and his singers were the most popular but we could never agree percentage terms. We booked the Luton Girls' choir, D'Oyly Carte Opera, Royal Ballet plus Pantomimes and the occasional circus. Alma Cogan, Rosemary Squires and Eddie Calvet could also fill the Adelphi. Throughout the fifties and into the sixties more pop shows were introduced at the Adelphi. Roy Orbison, Adam Faith, Billy Fury, Marty Wilde, The Dave Clark Five and the Beatles. Many top comedians of the day appeared. The Adelphi had a lovely sprung-floored ballroom. Nigel Lockyer recruited an excellent six-piece band and for some years Friday and Saturday night ballroom dancing was a complete sell out. I got married in 1957 and booked the ballroom for the afternoon wedding reception. Of course, I negotiated a discount! Johnnie Hamp was my best man who was heavily involved in artist bookings including The Beatles and went on to have a long career as Head of Light Entertainment for Granada TV. A few years back I joined a CTA group on a tour of the multiplex in the centre of Slough and the Adelphi, which was then Gala Bingo. I entered the disused ballroom now run-down and in neglected condition and quietly sat down, overcome with nostalgia. Despite many ups and downs, I loved my time working with Granada. It was my university! With the Granada, Century, Ambassador, Commodore (Essoldo) all demolished, I just hope some enterprising group can find a use for the building. Perhaps an Arts Centre?

Bill Gilbert

ANYONE FOR A CHOC ICE?

Remember when the usherette with an ice cream tray would wander around the auditorium? It now seems there could be a whole new generation in training. I found this in my local Aldi store in July 2022, priced at £12. Perhaps there's hope for those of us who want a choc ice but can't be bothered to leave our seat and fight the queue at the kiosk.

Mike Whitcombe



IRELAND ERROR



There is a small error in the July issue [p7]. The Regal Cinema in Youghal is in rude health, having reopened a couple of years ago, after a period of closure that seemed terminal. The former cinema that has had the problem with the roof is the former Horgan's Cinema, which was last used as a pottery shop but that had closed when I took this photo in March 2009. The last I recall of Horgan's, a potter called Jack O' Patsey (sounds like a made-up name) had a souvenir shop there.

Bob Bradshaw

Editor's Note: When I photographed Horgan's in 2017 it was operating as a Craft and Design Centre.

BIRMINGHAM MAILBOX

My apologies – David Simpson informs me that the Everyman in the Birmingham Mailbox opened back in February 2015, not very recently as I stated on p20 of the last Bulletin. I was misled by information received and the sight of building works on a Birmingham visit.

Allen Eyles

MATTERS ARISING FROM LAST BULLETIN

Greenock (p14). I don't know much about Greenock but the BB Cinema closed in the 1970s for bingo, then a night club. It never became an Odeon or a Gaumont. The Gaumont closed in December 1980 and was demolished. The Odeon closed in October 1969 and was demolished in 1973. These buildings are totally different ones.

Bridport (p17). There was a CTA member Frank Crescioli who lived in South London in the 1990s, who I understand has 'moved on'. Is this the same man?

Tim McCullen

SPOOLBOX VIDEOS

In the last Bulletin Internet Corner, two Spoolbox videos are listed. Fred Fullerton has produced a large number of these videos over the years and many provide the only record of cinemas that have long gone. May I suggest CTA members have a look at the page devoted to Fred's videos on the PPT website www.theppt.org/Fred-Fullerton-videos.html. All of Fred's videos are listed and linked to YouTube. Cinema videos are listed by location to simplify finding them and the list is regularly updated as Fred makes more available. One of my favourites is the 'Berlin Bali Kino' where a young female projectionist appears to be running the whole cinema single-handed and speaking amazing English.

Ray Sutton

HALIFAX NEWS

The former Odeon Halifax has been kept in beautiful condition by Mecca; no false ceiling and the original cinema seats are still in the rear circle. The other gem in Halifax is the former Regal (ABC), which is still original from circle level upwards, above the night club in the stalls. Within the last few years, the owner has taken away all the false walls and ceiling to reveal the foyer as it was when built. All original plaster work has been carefully restored and decorated in a stylish light brown, dark brown and gold. Dual staircases have been put back into use, leading to the circle foyer, which has been used as a small bar. The main entrance foyer has been turned into a stylish cocktail bar that compliments the décor. I was talking to the owner a few years ago and he thought the decoration of the Glen interior visible in the circle was fantastic and gave me the impression that he loved old architecture, hence the restoration of the main foyer. See Newsreel p23.

Peter Berry

UNKNOWN LONDON

Members may have seen the recent showing on Talking Pictures of the film *The London Nobody Knows*. Deriving from Geoffrey Fletcher's book of the same name, the film dates from the 1960s and shows a different side to the swinging 60s. Introduced by James Mason (in highly polished shoes) it shows different parts of London, starting off going around the derelict Bedford Camden Town, a favourite of Marie Lloyd and the painter Sickert. The building had become the home of tramps and vagrants (although they seem to have been removed at the time of filming). The sliding roof had been left open, adding to the decay. James Mason commented that it might have been better to have given the building a quick end rather than letting it slowly decay. Other scenes were shown of meths drinkers, public houses, market traders and street entertainers. The film is available on DVD [PG] and a later DVD is also available showing the building being demolished. In addition, the DVD contains a second film entitled *Les Bicyclettes De Belsize* a charming film about a boy and girl playing about on bicycles. Both DVDs are highly recommended for purchase or for viewing on TPTV.

Ian Patterson

TALKING PICTURES MUSIC

Following on from a previous item on *Talking Pictures TV* I have found two more pieces of music that can be heard several times during the day. The first item is the fanfare used over the *Talking Pictures Encore* trailer and is a piece called *Ceremonial Occasions* composed by Ronald Hanmer. The second is a piece titled *Fly Past* and can be heard either at the start or end of a film. Both these pieces come from the Josef Weinberger music library and can be found on the *APM Music* web site. Due to a mistake the piece *Ceremonial Occasions* is listed as *Title Music Achievements* on the Weinberger web page.

John R Fortser

GOOD SAMARITANS

I am 88-years old. Yesterday found me in Richmond, Surrey, in a wheelchair and desperately trying to find what our American friends call a comfort station. So I went to the Odeon and explained my dilemma. One member of staff took me to a side door where another member of staff was waiting with the key of the toilet for the disabled. What heroes! I was so impressed by their kindness – over and above the call of duty. The answer to a maiden's prayer!

Mary Williams

EMBASSY WALTHAM CROSS



EMBASSY WALTHAM CROSS 761044			
Week commencing Friday, July 17 (Sep. Perfs.)			
1	POLICE ACADEMY 4 (PG) Open week 3.00, 5.25, 8.10 Prog week 3.10, 5.35, 8.35 Open Sun. 5.00, 7.40 Prog Sun. 5.10, 8.05	2	THE SECRET OF MY SUCCESS (PG) Open week 2.20, 4.55, 7.45 Prog week 2.30, 5.05, 8.10 Open Sun. 4.30, 7.20 Prog Sun. 4.40, 7.45
3	STAND BY ME (15) Open week 3.00, 5.25, 8.10 Prog week 3.10, 5.35, 8.30 Open Sun. 5.00, 7.45 Prog Sun. 5.10, 8.05	4	EVIL DEAD II (18) Open week 2.50, 5.20, 8.05 Prog week 3.00, 5.30, 8.35 Open Sun. 5.00, 7.45 Prog Sun. 5.20, 8.10
ALL PROGS SUBJECT TO LATE CHANGE			
SMOKING IS NOW PROHIBITED IN ALL AUDITORIUMS			

Further to the report of the demolition of the Embassy Waltham Cross on p23 of the last Bulletin, it had a fourth screen added in March 1981 in the former restaurant, seating 83. It was initially video projection but later went over to traditional projection. According to Allen Eyles' book, *The Cinemas of Hertfordshire*, it had a spectacular frontage in the dark. This picture was taken on a CTA visit in November 1986. On a subsequent private visit, a Cannon sign had taken its place, so in the picture above, the neon only had weeks to last.

Tim McCullen

UNIDENTIFIED PHOTO

Re the photo identification on p26 of the last Bulletin. I would agree the gentleman on the left looks like Bill Kerr, although I cannot remember Patricia Burke ever being a regular on radio's *Hancock's Half Hour*. Moira Lister was the female in series one, Andrée Melly in the second series, then Hattie Jacques from series three. Patricia Burke will mainly be remembered as Jimmy Clitheroe's mum in *The Clitheroe Kid*. Bill Kerr did stand-up comedy on variety bills and Patricia Burke also appeared in variety, so it is likely that they shared billing in theatres and on radio.

R David Simpson

HOLIDAY SNAPS

By Anthony Wills

CINÉMA LE COLISÉE CARCASSONNE



This mythical cinema has just been ranked among the 50 most beautiful cinemas in the world by a famous British magazine *Time Out*. It sits in 34th position. The main projection room features an exceptional ceiling, mouldings and a stained-glass window. Built in 1914, this legendary building had been closed to the public for almost ten years for security reasons. The cinema has recently reopened and is one of the great alternative attractions in Carcassonne.

VOX CINEMA AVIGNON



In the City centre of the City of the Popes, in the shade of the plane trees, the Vox is a two-screen cinema intended for a wide audience with its first-run films. The cinema bar 'La Sperlongaise' is a place frequented by students and cinéphiles from Avignon; it is ideal for a refreshment before or after the session!

The Vox is part of the heritage of the city of Avignon. Created in 1922 by Joseph Bizot, it is to this day one of the cinemas in France whose continuity of operation by the same family is one of the oldest. With a total capacity of 270 seats for its two air-conditioned rooms, the Vox is a pleasant cinema, which shows the great films of the moment in French version or in the original version with subtitles. The Vox cinema is located in the very heart of the City, on the most important and liveliest square, opposite the Town Hall and 20 meters from the universally-known Palais des Papes.

By David J Kay

The 35-seat Cinema in Cromarty on the Black Isle in Scotland. [R] Opened 31 January 2020. Programming is arranged in association with the Eden Court in Inverness, which operates their ticket booking system. {61661}

By Malcolm Davis

I went to Paris in June. I was staying just off the Champs Élysées, so was able to take photos of the nearby cinemas.



The Publicis Cinemas [L] & the Gaumont Champs Élysées [R]



The UGC Normandie [L] & Le Balzac [R] just off the Champs Élysées



The Cineworld Plymouth – it lights up at night ! {60950}



NECROLOGY

MONTY NORMAN 94

Monty composed the *James Bond* theme tune, one of the most definitive pieces of film music in history (although arranged by John Barry). He also sang with bands such as Ted Heath and wrote musicals, including *Expresso Bongo* and *Irma La Douce*.

BERNARD CRIBBINS OBE 93

His film appearances include *Two Way Stretch*, three of the *Carry On* series and Hitchcock's *Frenzy* (1972). He played porter Mr Perks in the original *Railway Children* (1970). On TV he narrated *The Wombles* and was a regular reader on *Jackanory* from 1966 to 1991.

FRANK WILLIAMS 90

Frank played the Rev Timothy Farthing, the vicar in *Dad's Army* in the long-running TV series and in two feature films in 1971 and 2016. He was in many other TV series, frequently as a vicar and had bit parts in several films, often uncredited.

JAMES CAAN 82

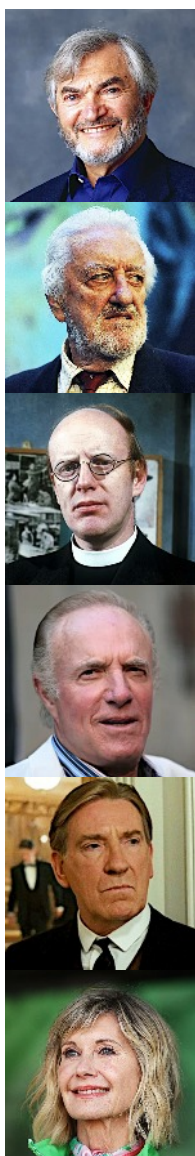
James came to fame when he played mobster Sonny Corleone in *The Godfather* (1972). He then appeared in a string of hit films, including *Rollerball*, *Apocalypse Now*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Kramer v Kramer* and *Elf*.

DAVID WARNER 80

David made a career out of playing villains. He was in *The Omen* (1976), the 1979 *The Thirty Nine Steps*, *Time Bandits* (1981) and *Tron* (1982). His final appearance was as Admiral Boom in *Mary Poppins Returns* (2018).

DAME OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN 73

Best known for her role as Sandy in *Grease* (1978) opposite John Travolta. She also appeared in *Xanadu* two years later. She was a prolific singer and had represented the UK in the *Eurovision Song Contest* in 1974 with *Long Live Love*, which came 4th.



The plaque on the Streatham Hill Theatre - see Newsreel p24

MEMBERSHIP

NEW MEMBERS

We offer a warm welcome to the following new members: Richard Vaughan, Russell Bulley and John Cresswell.

DONATIONS

Once more members have displayed their generosity by adding a donation to the renewal of their subscriptions. Our sincere thanks go to: IE Barrow, IJ Bellion, MJ Bigham, WC Birnie, RJ Buckler, RA Buckley, MJ Burke, M Charlesworth, J Clarke, DWT Corn, AM Harris, TA Harris, BD Hopper, M Hutton, HB Jones, PL Kent, AS Kidd, JM Lewis, SD Locking, JH Popey, J Ramsden, JJ Seabrook, G Snowden-Davies, PV Stevens, D Stirzaker, BP Stoveld, JB West, KS Wheelan, DR Williams and JE Williams.

IN MEMORIAM

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

Spencer Freeman MBE from Eastbourne, a member since 1983; Michael Oswald from Rochdale, who joined in 1986 and Martin Hickson from Bournemouth, who joined in 1999.

Ray Ritmeester, Membership Secretary

OBITUARY

FRANK LE-GROS 85

Frank was an early member of the CTA for a period, who recently passed away on 5 July. When he left school, he took up the position of trainee projectionist in 1950 at the Gaumont, Acton, London, which was a very large, early super-cinema, that had opened in 1921 as the Globe. He served there as a projectionist until its closure in 1959 and it was during this period that he met his future wife, Sylvia, who was a part-time cashier at the Gaumont.

The following year, he joined Rank Film Laboratories at north Acton and by the time I came to work there in the mid-1970s, he was supervising the film viewing department for quality control, where I first met Frank on being posted to this section. After the closure of the Laboratory in 1977, he went to work for the Imperial War Museum as a film technician, dealing with much of the archive material.

He maintained a life-long interest in projectors and cinemas, alerting me to the demolition of the Commodore, Hammersmith in the early 1980s, which he must have known as a boy, having grown-up in that area. His other great passion was steam railways, having visited with his family preserved lines in the UK and abroad.

A small collection of his photographs, mainly of the Gaumont, Acton in the 1950s, will be deposited in the CTA Archive – one of which is reproduced here, of Frank at the Gaumont, checking focus on a Gaumont Kalee 21. He had fond memories of that cinema and often reminisced about his period working there.

We maintained contact long after the Rank days, until earlier this year when his health deteriorated and I will certainly miss our conversations on the phone. Most modest in nature with a considerate friendly manner and a family man; Frank will be greatly missed by his family and friends.

Adam Unger



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IN THE NEWS

By David Evans

Cinematically, what do the following locations have in common – Leicester Square, London W1, Southfield Road, Southend-on-Sea, Victoria Station, London, Oxford Street, Manchester, Praed Street, London W2, Northumberland Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne and, further afield, the junction of W42nd Street and 5th Avenue, Manhattan? Well, along with hundreds of other locations throughout the world, each was once home to that long-gone phenomenon of the News Theatre. Here, patrons could spend an hour or so keeping up-to-date with the latest newsreels, all accompanied by a programme of short films such as travelogues and cartoons but by the middle of the twentieth century, with the gradual disappearance of newsreels, the necessity for these cinemas began to diminish. However, in their heyday – probably the 1930s and 1940s – they performed a vital service when the only way to witness recorded visual events of the day was from a cinema seat.



The Monseigneur News Theatre Leicester Square in 1955 [AH]

The locations mentioned at the beginning of this article were once home to the Monseigneur News Theatre Leicester Square, the Civic News Theatre Southend, the Victoria Station News Theatre Victoria Station, the Cameo News Theatre Manchester, the World's News Theatre Praed Street, the Tatler News Theatre Newcastle and the Embassy Newsreel Theatre Manhattan. In fact, to emphasise how popular these cinemas were, in 1949 there were actually five Monseigneur News Theatres in central London, including the one mentioned.



The Monseigneur Piccadilly during the war [IWM]

Although regular cinemas featured newsreels as part of their programme, the main function of news theatres was the screening of newsreels. In Britain there were several of these but the most popular were *Gaumont British News*, *British Movietone News* and the newsreel released by *Pathé*. In an era before television took hold, these were important complements to news from newspapers, magazines and radio. Although the BBC Television Service introduced a Television Newsreel in 1948, this had a somewhat limited audience until the rapid



The Monseigneur Piccadilly [JM]

increase of television households from the early 1950s. Up till then news bulletins were broadcast in sound only but all this changed, rapidly, when what we would recognise as modern-day news broadcasts started from around 1955. These offered viewers visual news of the day rather than on a newsreel weekly or bi-weekly basis and this meant the eventual disappearance of the cinema newsreel concept, although *Gaumont British News* survived until 1959, *Pathé* until 1970 and, surprisingly, *Movietone* until 1979.



The Victoria Station News Theatre and as a cartoon cinema [CT]

As the need for news theatres grew less and less, many closed or concentrated on showing extra cartoons in addition to other short films. Using this approach, the Victoria Station Cartoon Theatre, for example, carried on as the Victoria Station News Theatre until 1981. Others turned their attention to soft pornography with offerings such as *Danish Dentist on the Job* and something with perhaps a nod to the popular *Clockwork Orange* of the early 1970s – *Mechanical Bananas!* The World's News Theatre Praed Street in Paddington is an example of this transition, which went from advertising itself as offering one-and-a-half hours of delightful entertainment – interest, news, travel and comedy, all for sixpence or a shilling, in the late 1930s to soft porn programming when, under a different name, it closed its doors for good in 1986. However, in their heyday not all the news unfolding at news theatres was of the latest variety as before the immediate shock, horror approach of many of today's news providers, some of these cinemas – the Embassy Newsreel Theatre in Manhattan in late March 1946 for example – took a more leisured approach with the Embassy advertising Nazi Atrocities! Exclusive Showing! *Camps of the Dead*, all filmed by Allied cameramen the previous year.



The Tatler News Theatre Newcastle [NL]

The very idea of waiting for visual moving news on a weekly or bi-weekly basis seems very odd in our era where breaking news and constant updates are the lifeblood of news channels. However, in a less hectic age, the act of settling into a news theatre seat for a view of what was happening in the world was once a ritual enjoyed by millions.

Photos: [AH] Allan Hailstone; [IWM] Imperial War Museum; [JM] John Maltby; [CT] Cinema Treasures; [NL] Newcastle Libraries