



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



The Alhambra Dunfermline, which has celebrated its 100th birthday; 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 p5 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. 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. 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

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www.ticketsource.co.uk



Zoom talks and presentations platform

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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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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

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**

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.



Art Deco foyer and entrance to Ciné Lumière II

**Science Museum, Exhibition Road SW7 2DD
Presented by Mark Cutmore, Science Museum Group**

Keeping abreast 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.

**Most visits are for members only
See opposite [L] for details how to join**

HERITAGE CASEWORK

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 pannels 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.

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.

More Casework in the full Bulletin

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.



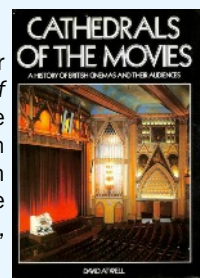
There are also available a few second-hand copies of out-of-print issues of *Picture House* 9, 10, 14/15, 20 & 23, priced £5.00 each, plus postage. A list of their contents was printed on p4 of Bulletin 52/2 or can be obtained by SAE or email from the Sales Officer or Bulletin Editor.

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.

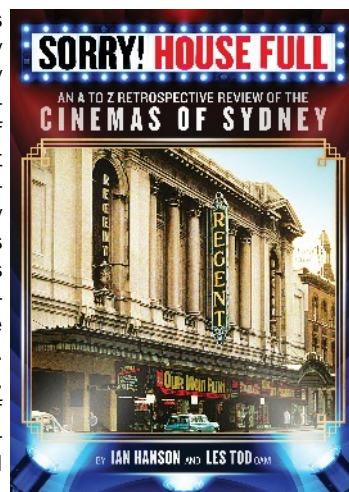
Also Available (but not from the Sales Officer)

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.



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.

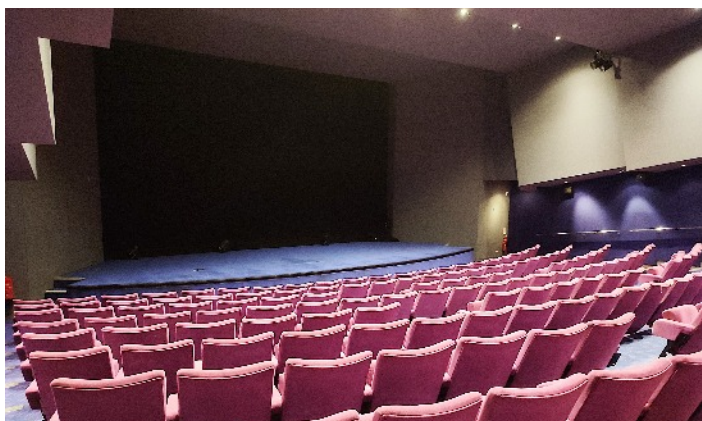
Three cinemas were on the schedule organised by Richard Gray, Ray Ritmeester and Mark Price, each venue a signature representation of an outstanding period in the development of cinema buildings and all three within a few steps of each other on the High Road.



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.

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.

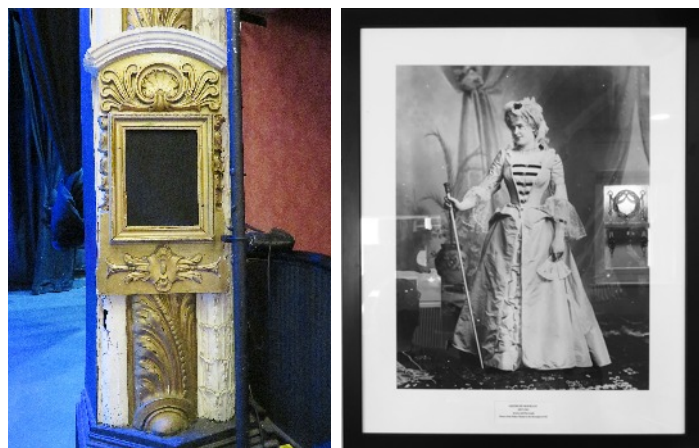
In early 1920 the **Palace** was acquired by Gertrude Mouillot, widow of impresario Frederick Mouillot. She had 'trod the boards' and she enticed many significant names to the theatre including Sir John Martin Harvey, Mrs Patrick Campbell, George Robey and Ivor Novello. By the 1930s it is clear from 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]

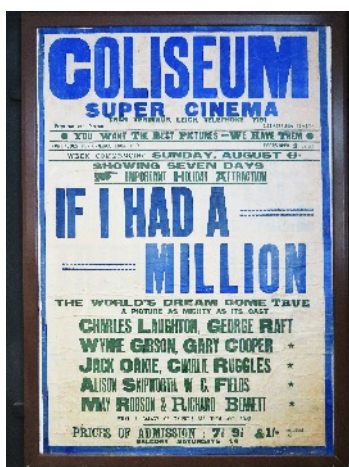
films. This was short-lived and the cinema closed on 21 November 1959. The building then went into use as an electrical wholesaler but was later converted for church use and is currently well looked after by the Southend Christian Fellowship. It was, unfortunately, not possible to have a look inside 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 commissioner 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

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)

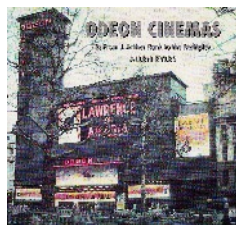
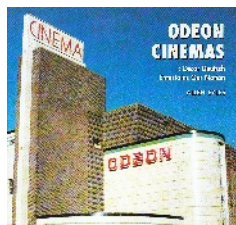


The Mecca bingo club in the former 867-seat Odeon was due to close on 14 August. The building opened as the Palace in 1926 and was taken over by Odeon in November 1935. It was one of the cinemas sold to Classic in December 1967 and was soon split with a 114-seat cinema in the balcony and bingo in the 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 p4.

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 hosteries. 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)

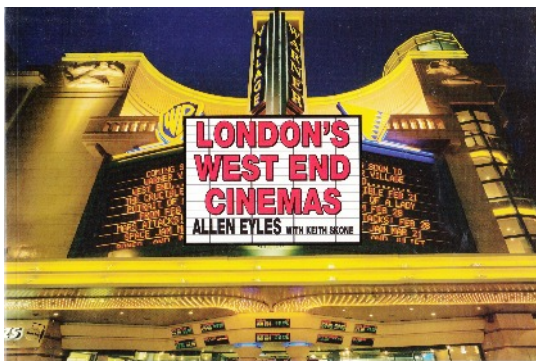


The two-screen Odeon (ex ABC) will not be reopening after being closed due to the pandemic, when the foyer was used as a Covid vaccination centre. There was a Costa Coffee outlet in the foyer, which has since moved out. The cinema was opened in August 1933 by County Cinemas as the **Regal** and became 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.

Another five pages of Newsreel in the full Bulletin

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.

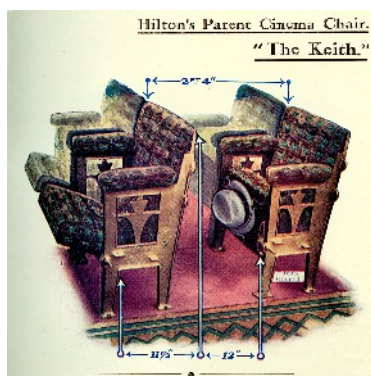
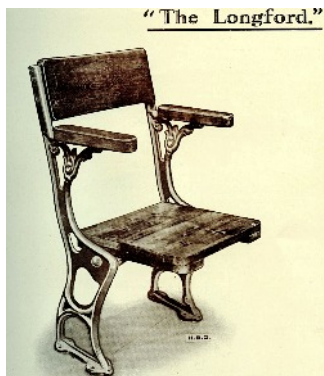
Large Format paperback, 210 pages, over 400 illustrations, £25.00 plus £3.40 postage, from the Sales Officer.

Published in 2013 in conjunction with English Heritage.

Ordering details on p4

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

Another page of letters
in the full Bulletin



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}



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