



CINEMA  
THEATRE  
ASSOCIATION

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

# BULLETIN

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November / December 2022



The former Tower in Hull (East Yorks) which has closed after only four months as a ballroom – see Newsreel p18; photo taken July 2005



The Adam Smith Theatre in Kirkcaldy (Fife) which is having a revamp – see Newsreel p18; photo taken March 2004



## FROM YOUR EDITOR

I'm sorry to have to begin with a moan. I have asked this before but please can you make sure anything you send me has the correct postage. Anything bigger than A5 [that's half a Bulletin page] or thicker than normal almost certainly needs more postage. If in doubt, please take it to a Post Office. If it is underpaid, it costs the CTA an additional fee as well as the postage due and I have to make special arrangements for it to be delivered.

Please don't include requests for other committee members with your submissions – please refer to the list on the right and contact the appropriate person directly. One letter I had this time asked me to pass on information to publications, casework and membership. That would have involved me in three additional tasks. One request was to be included in the draw for the *Mercia Bioscope* magazines mentioned in the last Bulletin. With having to pay excess postage and then postie going on strike, I didn't receive it until after the deadline. The magazines were, in fact, sold to the sole enquirer.

Can I remind you of the CTA's mission statement [opposite] – “promoting serious interest in all aspects of cinema buildings.” I tend not to include items about film studios, television or live theatres, unless the venue has shown films, the CTA has visited or there is another special reason.

On the facing page you will see the events notice for a double bill of talks on 26 November. I have been told that the CTA Bookstall will be at this event. There wasn't room to fit that on the page itself so I thought I'd mention it here. You can choose and purchase from a selection of books and magazines associated with cinema history.

I owe an apology to David Barker. In my last editorial I said I had run out of holiday snaps. Well, I found the two I have printed on p27 during a tidy-up of my hard disk. I think I now really have exhausted my supply so any more would be welcome. If you have sent some in previously and I haven't printed them, please contact me and I'll have another look or simply send them to me again.

I am still looking to retire as Bulletin Editor after over 24 years in the post. The situation is becoming more urgent so if you feel like taking over, please contact me to see what is involved. You need to be computer literate and have DTP experience. Most DTP programs will do the job but we can provide a copy of Serif PagePlus X9 if required. There is a more modern version – Serif Affinity – but that will not handle cross references or footnotes, both of which I use. For graphics editing I use GIMP, which is Freeware – and very powerful. I can provide copies of my cinema photos and Bulletin resource material.

Finally, I may probably be the first to wish you all a Happy Christmas. There is a suitable graphic on p27.

Harry Rigby, CTA Bulletin Editor

## Quick Guide to CTA Social Media



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



[www.facebook.com/cinematheatreorguk](https://www.facebook.com/cinematheatreorguk)



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[www.ticketsource.co.uk](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk)



Zoom talks and presentations platform

### Useful CTA Contacts

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[info@cta-uk.org](mailto:info@cta-uk.org) : general enquires  
Amazon Smile link : [smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/1100702-0](https://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  
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DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE  
TUESDAY 20 DECEMBER

# VISITS AND EVENTS

## Join Us for A 'Double Bill' Of Talks

The CTA is delighted to announce the return of in-person talks at the Gallery (at Alan Baxter's Gallery, Farringdon, London). We will be presenting two fascinating talks about different aspects of cinema history.

**Saturday 26 November at 5:30pm (doors open 5:00pm)**

**THE NATIONAL FILM THEATRE / BFI SOUTHBANK**

An illustrated talk by Allen Eyles



Telekinema, precursor to National Film Theatre on Southbank (1951)

Allen will discuss the history of the National Film Theatre (NFT) since its inception as the 'Telekinema' on the Southbank in 1951, resulting from the Festival of Britain. A successful campaign for a permanent venue prevented it from being closed. It underwent several changes and extensions including being rebranded as the BFI Southbank in 2007 when it formed a working relationship with the BFI. Appropriately, it is also the venue where the CTA was founded in 1967.

Our speaker Allen Eyles is a celebrated author of many books associated with film and cinema history and is a founder member and patron of the CTA.

\*\*\* PLUS \*\*\*

## WHEN CINEMA LET IN THE LIGHT (II)

An illustrated musical talk by Martin Cleave

After delighting the CTA audiences with the first part of his celebration of light orchestral music's contribution to the cinema-going experience of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century, Martin returns with more choice examples of music to help you reminisce about the glory days of cinema. Recreating examples using historic recordings, this presentation will feature luminaries from the world of light music whose careers provided part of the distinctive sound of cinema. From the orchestras of the silent era to the music and organists of the super cinemas, accompanied by images of historic picture palaces where these musicians performed.



Sidney Torch was a leading musician, organist and composer of the cinema era

Martin, who is Pianist and Music Director at the Royal Academy of Dance and has a lifelong interest in cinema history, will share his finest rediscoveries with us.

**Venue:** The Gallery, Alan Baxter Associates, 75 Cowcross Street, Farringdon, London EC1M 6EL

**Getting there:** On leaving Farringdon (old) Underground station (not the Turnmill Street exit) turn left – or when leaving Farringdon mainline (new) station, turn right - walk east 150 yards towards the 'Snappy Snaps' shop. The entrance to the Gallery is opposite; walk through the large gates, across the courtyard to the far end, turn right down the steps and you're there!

**Booking your ticket for the talk:** Please see box top next column.

## BOOKING YOUR TICKET FOR THE TALK

CTA talks are open to everyone – members and non-members alike.

**Admission:** £12 per person, including glass of wine or soft drink.



Booking is done on-line using TicketSource:

[www.ticketsource.co.uk](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk)

Simply enter 'Cinema Theatre Association' into their Search Box.

## A Christmas Celebration in Swiss Cottage

**Tuesday 13 December at 5:45pm**

Organised by Richard Gray

For the first time since the horrible pandemic lockdowns, we are able to arrange a Christmas celebration. This will be in the first-floor bar – formerly the balcony foyer – of the Odeon (now Luxe), 96 Finchley Road, Swiss Cottage, London NW3 5EL.



The cinema opened on 4 September 1937 and originally seated 2,115, the largest London Odeon at the time, although quickly overtaken by the Odeons in Leicester Square (but only by one seat!) and the larger Edgware Road Odeon (information from Allen Eyles in *Odeon Cinemas 1*). Allen continues: it "brought the Harry Weedon [architectural] team to London to revise or replace a Robert Cromie scheme developed by a company called Eldorado; Basil Herring was the assistant in charge. For the exterior, the lack of faïence and the reliance on red brick certainly suggests Cromie rather than Weedon. The construction of a full fly-tower was quite exceptional and the inclusion of an organ a rarity. The curvaceous sweep of the orchestra rail and its jazzy decoration were also atypical. But this cinema's location in an exclusive inner suburb, with no immediate competition, may have encouraged a more deluxe treatment than normal and it became a top money-maker for the circuit".

During the summer of 1964, while the Royal Festival Hall was being enlarged and externally remodelled, the Odeon became a temporary venue for the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Sir Malcolm Sargent conducted a series of classical concerts, with an acoustic shell erected on stage to project the sound into the auditorium. So popular were they that Rank, the then operator, continued the concerts together with opera and ballet films until 1969.

In 1973 the cinema became a triple screen operation and three further screens were added in 1992. Further changes came in 2011, with the installation of an IMAX auditorium and, in 2017, recliner seats were brought in to provide a Luxe operation.

We hope to tour the screens before the party (wine or soft drinks and 'nibbles').

**Getting There:** This couldn't be easier as the Odeon is hard by Swiss Cottage Tube station on the Jubilee line.

**Tickets:** At £15.00 available through TicketSource: [www.ticketsource.co.uk](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk). Please enter 'Cinema Theatre Association' in the search box and by Sunday 4 December please.

Any enquires to: Richard Gray, 020 8981 7844



## 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

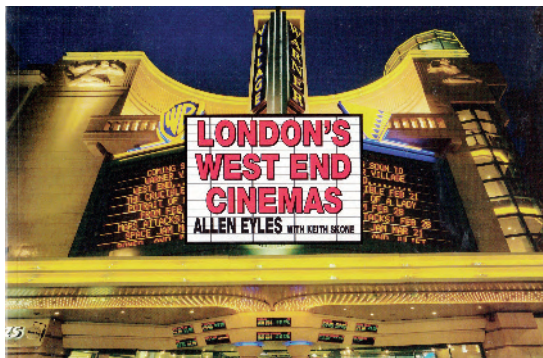
As the variety of our cinema related subjects broadens, we would be pleased to receive offers and suggestions for more talks and presentations.

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](mailto:RichardNormanCTA@aol.com)

## 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 p8

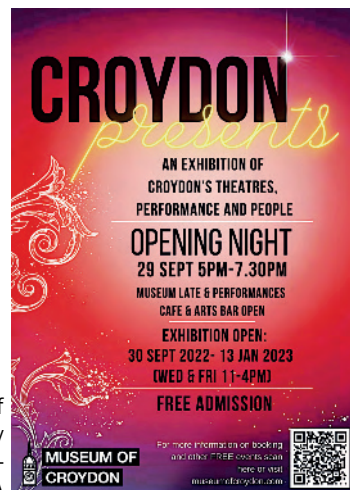
## OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

not organised by the CTA

**Croydon Presents – an exhibition of Croydon's theatres, performances and people.**

Croydon Clockhouse,  
Katharine Street, Croydon  
CR9 1ET  
Open now until 13 January  
Wed and Fri 11-4pm  
Free admission,

Includes a historical display of Croydon's cinemas, with many photographs from the CTA Archive, which was organised by CTA member Kevin Gooding. For more information:  
[museumofcroydon.com](http://museumofcroydon.com) Tel: 020 8253 1022



## CARTOON CORNER



From ABC Film Review; sent in by Ben Doman

## INTERNET CORNER

- ★ [tinyurl.com/cumbria-cinemas](http://tinyurl.com/cumbria-cinemas) From the Westmorland Gazette: Cumbria's most popular cinema and theatres.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/marple-regent](http://tinyurl.com/marple-regent) A page from the Manchester Evening News about the Regent Marple. {23948}
- ★ [tinyurl.com/sheffield-covid](http://tinyurl.com/sheffield-covid) An article from now then - a magazine for Sheffield: Sheffield's cinemas come back after Covid.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/cannon-fitzrovia](http://tinyurl.com/cannon-fitzrovia) From Flashback.com: A photographic tour of London's Fitzrovia in the Late 1980s. Near the bottom is a photo of the Cannon Tottenham Court Road [now Odeon]. {6243} above four items sent in by Terry Hanstock
- ★ [tinyurl.com/bfi-change](http://tinyurl.com/bfi-change) From the bfi – 38 pictures showing how British cinemas have changed in the past 100 years.
- ★ [youtu.be/9wiNbX0aAsk](http://youtu.be/9wiNbX0aAsk) & [youtu.be/gRsr8IDR\\_NMA](http://youtu.be/gRsr8IDR_NMA) Two 3½-minute videos from Cineworld explaining 4DX and IMAX.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/cinema-ocean-monarch](http://tinyurl.com/cinema-ocean-monarch) A [copyright] photo of the cinema on board the Ocean Monarch liner, new in April 1951.
- ★ [youtu.be/IKHuw06B4W4](http://youtu.be/IKHuw06B4W4) Reel Stories – An Oral History of London's Cinema Projectionists. A 55-minute video, trailed here before.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/mcr-cinemas](http://tinyurl.com/mcr-cinemas) From the Manchester Evening News – The Way We Were: Cinemas. 24 b/w photos.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/sheff-cinemas](http://tinyurl.com/sheff-cinemas) From the Sheffield Star – 13 cinemas loved, lost and many demolished over the years. 13 b/w photos.
- ★ [tinyurl.com/bhx-cinemas](http://tinyurl.com/bhx-cinemas) From Birmingham Live – 15 photos of Birmingham cinemas.



# 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

A report from the architects on the new paint scheme has led us to object to certain flat colours to be implemented instead of the original more complex and textured treatments. There are apparently insufficient funds for a complete restoration.

### STATE GRAYS

It's believed that conversion work to a pub being carried out by JD Wetherspoon has come to a halt. We will contact KDPA, the architects, to determine the cause of the hold up. However, see Newsreel p18.

## Grade II Listed

### EMPIRE HAYMARKET, LONDON



We believe the Crown Estate is considering revising or delaying the scheme approved in 2020. We have been invited to attend a meeting to discuss. *Photo taken August 2018.*

### RITZ NUNEATON

The building is decaying and the Nepalese owners have no funds for the previously proposed reuse. We have contacted the local Council's regeneration team. The Theatres Trust is also in dialogue with them about a theatre for the town and will raise the case for the Ritz.

## Not Listed

### PLAZA / ODEON GLOUCESTER



The Plaza/Odeon, which closed as a bingo hall in July this year, is in a Conservation Area and we will be in contact with the local authority regarding the building's future. *Photo taken May 2006.*

### ODEON HALIFAX



We are to investigate the status of this cinema, which closed in August. *Photo taken August 2011.*

### ODEON ASHFORD

The Council wishes to demolish the auditorium, to which we continue to object.

### REGAL / ODEON DARLINGTON

This closed cinema, most recently an Odeon Luxe, is in a Conservation Area that stretches from the town centre to a historic railway site. The Head of Regeneration for the area has spoken to us and said they are looking for a new use for the cinema. One suggestion is to convert the building into an art hostel comprising accommodation and studio space. Meanwhile it has gone on the market. See Newsreel p17.

### BRONTË HAWORTH

We are being consulted by Historic England regarding a recently submitted listing application and will write a supporting letter.

### DANILO HINCKLEY

We have approached the local authority to insist that the main façade is preserved.

### RITZ LEYTON, LONDON



The new proposal for a façade scheme is slightly better than the original but we would like the foyer balustrades salvaged. *Photo taken September 2004.*

### ODEON / HOLLYWOOD, NORWICH

We are writing a letter of support to aid a local campaigner who has submitted a listing application.

### ADELPHI SLOUGH

Slough Council, which has been declared bankrupt and taken over by commissioners, owns the Adelphi and has placed it in the hands of agents for sale. We have written to the leader of the local Council stating our belief that it would be better to sell off the car park alone rather than think of demolishing the cinema. See Late News p21.

*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.*



# WELSH CASEWORK

By John Skinner

## All Grade II Listed

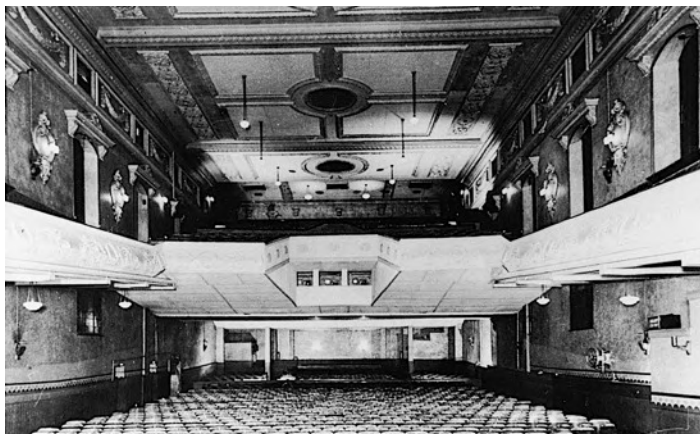
ALBERT HALL, SWANSEA



The project, led by Swansea City Council, is for conversion to a 1,000-capacity music venue, food hall and cafe on the ground floor with offices, studio spaces and serviced apartments on the upper floor. The building was last in use as a Mecca Bingo Hall, which closed in 2007 and was previously a cinema from 1922 until 1977.

Work commenced at the beginning of 2022 and funding requires completion by the summer of 2023. Work has revealed traces of earlier Music Hall configuration such as remnants of plaster ceiling in the original front of house area prior to the construction of a side lobby in the 1930s. Also revealed are second-floor joist pockets from the original double layer balconies. These aspects have been fully recorded.

A very regrettable and unsatisfactory element of the scheme is that listed building consent allows for the removal of the original ornate ceiling. Apparently, the developers were able to demonstrate that the scheme would not work with the ceiling retained, due to the new structure requiring fire separation and headroom to the new floors in the former balcony. CTA Cymru has expressed its concern and disappointment regarding the removal of the ceiling to CADW and to the Council's Conservation Officer, Stephen Smith. We have been assured that full 3D digital recording in situ of the ceiling will be carried out and that the Council is looking at the scope to retain some elements of the ceiling as decorative features.



The projection recess with port holes at the front of the balcony is being retained behind a glass section of balustrade so that the previous use of the building can be appreciated. The projection room and former film storage area under the balcony is also being retained as meeting rooms for the new offices. The original balustrade to the balcony, which extends around both sides of the auditorium, will be visible once refurbishment is complete. The Albert Hall was unusual in having balcony projection as opposed to the more conventional arrangement of the projection box being at the rear of the auditorium above the balcony. This was also the case in other South Wales cinemas such as the former Plaza Swansea and Plaza Port Talbot.

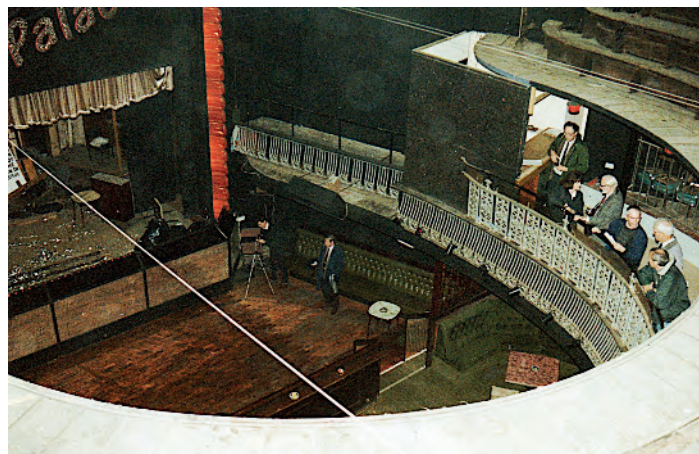
CASTLE CINEMA, SWANSEA



The building has recently been sold but currently continues as Laserzone, a specialised interactive war games facility. All traces of any original internal décor from its days as a cinema have been eliminated, although much had previously been completely removed in the 1960s to install a larger screen and the covering of the walls in fabric. The original paybox remains in storage, however, in an area at the rear of the building behind the stage.

The previous owner had acquired planning approval to convert the building into student accommodation but this never materialised, probably due to the oversupply of such accommodation in the City centre. Pre-application discussions are now taking place for mixed use conversion within the shell of the existing building with possible dormer additions to the pitched roof.

PALACE THEATRE, SWANSEA



The project has been fully designed to deliver a sensitively designed high quality office accommodation for small and medium enterprises, fully reversible for cinema and theatre use, which will assist in the regeneration of Swansea High Street and is coordinated by Swansea City Council, which owns the building. Funding has been sought from the European Regional Development Fund and the Welsh Assembly Government via their Transforming Towns Programme. A design team was appointed in early 2020 and Planning and Listed Building Consent has been approved. Work on the theatre commenced in October 2021 and is scheduled to complete in March 2023.

Works to date have been very much focused on the sensitive internal strip-out and demolition works. The building is currently fully scaffolded and sheeted. So damp was the interior that a temporary roof has been installed, permitting the removal of the existing roof to enable the building to commence drying out, as it had been subjected to much water ingress over the years. The scaffolding internally has been fully expanded on all floors to provide access and crash decks. Demolition works are now nearing completion, stripping back before any rebuild and refurbishment.



The stage area has been removed revealing an orchestra pit, which was infilled and is now fully exposed. The stage house area has control panels, switch gear and pulleys all now fully exposed before being carefully removed, cleaned of asbestos and reinstalled. The plaster strip has almost been completed on all floors including stairwells. Removal of plaster has revealed original doorways that had been blocked up and unknown to have existed. The building fabric is protected and the decorative cast iron railings on the second-floor balustrade have been carefully removed for restoration. Removal of some internal walls and staircases not required as part of the internal refurbishment designs has been carried out. The former projection room at the rear of the upper circle is being retained.

Doff cleaning of the external facade is almost complete and the extensive raking out of brickwork mortar undertaken. Samples of Bath stone have been approved and the repair of masonry and brickwork is well under way. Lift shaft openings from the ground to fourth floor are being installed. A sun burner has been removed and is not in as good a condition as thought but details can be replicated. Internal historic features have been removed and carefully stored for the time being. The missing tower on the roof at the apex at the front of the theatre will be replaced by an identical replica.

## THE COLWYN BAY CINEMA / COSY

By David A Ellis

Colwyn Bay in North Wales became home to The Colwyn Bay Cinema in Conway Street, housing around 300 seats. It was designed by renowned architect Sidney Colwyn Foulkes, himself from Colwyn Bay. The hall made its entrance on 22 December 1911 and was run by Arthur Cheetham, who ran three cinemas in Rhyl. The cinema was constructed on the site of a former chapel and mews.



A change of ownership took place in 1917 and it was then run by J and Watson Hartley. They ran the hall until 1926. It then closed and had improvements done under new owners Cambrian and Border cinemas. It was back in business from 18 July 1927. The name was then changed to Cosy.

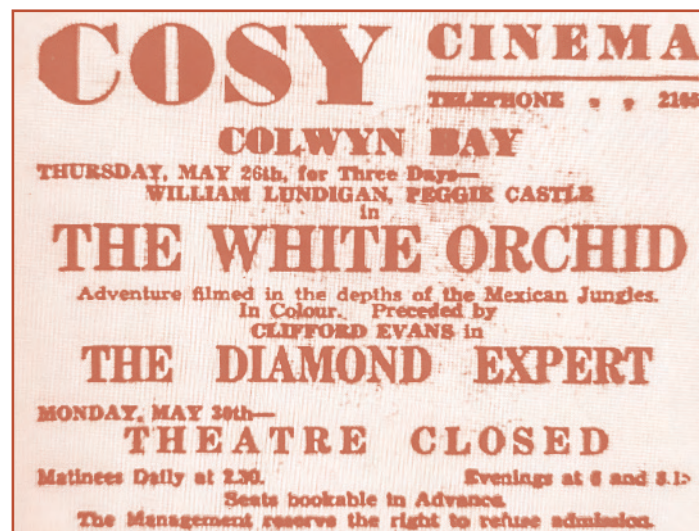
Under the new management the walls were tastefully decorated. A design in gold painting formed a frieze, which blended with a white ceiling. Thick carpets were put down on the floors and staircase leading to the balcony. More legroom was provided and concealed lighting was another improvement. The operating box was raised so patrons would no longer block the beam when standing. New Gaumont projectors were also installed. The first to manage the hall's new look was Mr Brook Richards, a well-known broadcaster. Films were changed twice a week and shows became continuous from 2:30 to 10:30. An orchestra called the Cosy Orchestra under the direction of Mr H Tidswell provided accompaniment to the silent movies.

In May 1929 sound arrived with the installation of Butcher's Electrochord sound system. This was changed in 1931 when Western Electric was employed. A projectionist by the name of S Rogers received severe burns in 1929 when a reel of nitrate film went up in flames.

In 1931 a company called Maples did some improvement work. 1935 saw more work done when Gaumont British Equipments of Manchester secured the contract for the installation of new stage lighting, new stage curtains with electric controls and decorative neon lighting on the exterior of the building.

In 1937 it was taken over by the Kenyon family, owners of the Princess cinema. It was registered as Cosy Cinema (Colwyn Bay) Ltd. Mrs Kenyon, who was very much involved with the business passed away at the age of 76 in 1938. One of her sons Frank Kenyon was responsible for management and film bookings.

The cinema closed for good on 28 May 1955 with the films *The White Orchid* and *The Diamond Expert*.



### VINTAGE NEWSPAPER REPORT – OPENING CEREMONY

Tomorrow (Friday) the public will be admitted into the handsome new Cinema, in Conway Road, Colwyn Bay. This is Mr Cheetham's latest addition to his series of picture theatres in North Wales, those at Rhyl being perhaps best known. As our readers are well aware, the old Mews in Conway Road has been taken down and on the site has been erected some handsome shops and offices as well as the Cinema, which Mr Cheetham will conduct with his proverbial enterprise. Mr Cheetham has struck a sympathetic chord in the town that the whole of the first day's proceeds shall be devoted to popular local institutes.

At three-o'clock the first matinée will be held, at which Mr Francis Nunn will perform the opening ceremony and the whole of the admission money and a collection will be given to the Cottage Hospital. In the evening, at 6:30 and 8:30 respectively, there will be two performances, the entire proceeds of which will be handed over to the Town Advertising Association. The performance will be continued daily at 3, 6:30 and 8:30 and there will be an entirely fresh programme on Boxing Day and again on Thursday. As is well known, the Old Mews embraced the first chapel built at Colwyn Bay. This fact lends great interest to the most attractive souvenir brochure which Mr Cheetham has issued, in which he pays the high compliment to the architect Mr Sidney Colwyn Foulkes.

Kiné Weekly – Friday 22 December 1911



The Cosy Colwyn Bay in July 2014



# 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 50th 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.

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

## BULLETINS

We can supply back numbers of most Bulletins from Volume 21 (1987) to date. Prices for issues from 1987 to 2020 are £4.00 per year (6 issues), individual copies are £1.00 each. Prices for issues in 2021 and 2022 are £5.00 per copy. All prices include postage. There are some issues available from earlier years - 1967 to 1986. Please send enquiries to the Sales Officer.

## Ordering

For post and packing: total order value up to £20.00 please add £3.40, total order value from £20.01 to £40.00 please add £4.40, total order value from £40.01 to £60.00 please add £6.40. For larger orders and overseas, please contact the Sales Officer, email: [sales@cta-uk.org](mailto:sales@cta-uk.org). Orders to Jeremy Buck, CTA Sales, 34, Pelham Road, London, N22 6LN. Cheques/POs payable to Cinema Theatre Association, or send credit/debit card number with expiry date and security code. A complete sales list is available by sending an SAE and all the books can be seen on the CTA website [www.cta-uk.org](http://www.cta-uk.org) where you can also place your order using PayPal. A sales list is sent with every order.

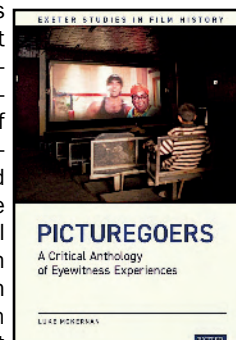
## Also Available (but not from the Sales Officer)

**The Final Curtain** by Darren Holden. 42 pages, paperback, illustrated. £10.00 from: [the-modernist.org](http://the-modernist.org) or 58 Port Street, Manchester, M1 2EQ.

This slim volume contains around 36 full-page photographs of the interiors of abandoned UK cinemas and theatres. There are 12 different properties featured, including the Forum/ABC Liverpool, the Ritz Nuneaton and, more up to date, the Showcase in Manchester. There is no text, just the photographs, which, although very atmospheric, have reproduced rather on the dark side. They don't compare with the well-lit photos we are used to seeing in books by other authors on the same subject. In the reviewer's opinion, the volume seems a bit overpriced for what it is and whilst it is good to have another book of derelict cinemas, wouldn't it be nice if someone could produce a book celebrating the many successful restorations that have taken place both in the UK and overseas?

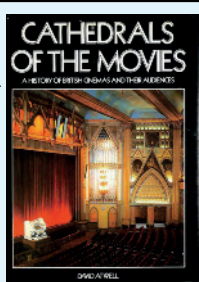
**Picturegoers: A Critical Anthology of Eyewitness Experiences** by Luke McKernan. 248 pages, hardback, illustrated. ISBN 9781804130124. About £80.00, available from Amazon, etc

The high price of this book suggests that it is intended more for the academic market but it may be of interest to CTA members. The description states: "This book is a carefully selected, thematically arranged collection of eyewitness accounts of seeing motion pictures - from the 1890s to the present day and from countries across the globe. Included are essays, diaries, memoirs, travel accounts, oral history interviews, poems and extracts from novels. These verbatim accounts - from both professional and amateur writers - have been selected not only for what they tell us about the historical experience of cinema in many countries but also for their literary value. Here is evocative testimony that shows how deeply cinema touches emotional needs and the huge impact that the cinema has had on modern society. While most film history studies are centred on films or those who produce them, *Picturegoers* puts the voices of the audience first. It analyses and celebrates the audience's point of view, shaped by time, experience and place, providing a rich, entertaining portrait of a medium that became so transformative precisely because anyone, rich or poor, educated or not, could share in it. The book will appeal to scholars interested in the relationship between cinema and society, those engaged in audience studies and general readers interested in world cinema history". (Some sample pages can be viewed by finding the title on Amazon and selecting 'look inside this book'.)



## Second-Hand Books

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





# NATIONAL CINEMA DAY

By Mike Whitcombe

Did you celebrate National Cinema Day on Saturday 3 September 2022? Cinemas in America, Canada, the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland all participated in the scheme, which offered movie fans a ticket for either £3 or \$3. The day proved to be a big success on both sides of the Atlantic and helped an industry still struggling from post pandemic blues fill auditoria and make people remember just why the big screen is the only place to see the latest blockbuster.

National Cinema Day proved particularly successful in America as it fell on Labor Day Weekend, notoriously a slow few days of trading. There are 5,400 cinemas in America, of which 3,000 (boasting a total of 30,000 screens) participated in the offer. On the Friday and Sunday, cinema admissions in America were 1 million and 1.7 million respectively. But on the Saturday, National Cinema Day, that figure skyrocketed to a staggering 7.28 million admissions. In Canada, 820,000 patrons took advantage of the offer, bringing the total for North American admissions to 8.1 million on a single day. That amounted to a total box office of \$24.3 million, which, despite the discounted ticket prices, was 9% up on the previous Saturday.

The number one film on Labor Day weekend was *Top Gun: Maverick*, Tom Cruise's action-fuelled sequel to *Top Gun*. It took \$6 million on the Saturday and a total of \$7.9 million over the weekend, bringing its domestic total to \$701 million after 15 weeks in theaters and £1 billion – yes, that really does say billion – globally. If you still haven't seen *Top Gun: Maverick* on the big screen – where it truly deserves to be seen – go see it now! It deserves all the accolades it's received and proves how influential Tom Cruise is as an actor and a producer. In tenth spot was *Jaws*, released in 3D. This 47-year-old Steven Spielberg masterpiece only debuted at select sites but on a per theater basis, it actually outperformed every other movie making £2.6 million at the Box Office. "The event outstripped our biggest expectations," said Jackie Brenneman, president of the Cinema Foundation, a non-profit arm of the National Association of Theater Owners. "The idea of the day was to thank movie-goers for an amazing summer and now we have to thank them for an amazing day."

On the United Kingdom mainland (England, Scotland and Wales) 570 cinemas, that's about two thirds of UK cinemas, participated in National Cinema Day. Admissions totalled 1.46 million, a 243% uplift on admissions for the previous Saturday and around three times the number of admissions normally seen on the first Saturday in September before the pandemic. This figure also exceeded the record of 1.34 million admissions recorded in 1997, when the UK last held such an event. UK Box Office takings for National Cinema Day totalled a very healthy £4.38 million. In Northern Ireland admissions totalled 153,000 while in the Republic of Ireland admissions were 53,000, creating a total of 1.6 million admissions for this side of the Atlantic.

All the major cinema chains operating in the UK participated in National Cinema Day, including Odeon, Vue, Cineworld, Empire and Picturehouse as well as many smaller, independent cinemas. Some cinemas just advertised the promotion on their website but others were determined to make it a day to remember. Staff at the Odeon Port Solent dressed up as iconic cinema characters, which their younger patrons in particular really enjoyed. The number one film in the UK was the highly entertaining *Minions: The Rise of Gru*. This was not surprising as with tickets at just £3 each, it was affordable for families to attend. In fact, a family of four, say, could watch a film for the price of an adult ticket. *Top Gun: Maverick* also did well, just like it did in the States.

"The appeal to cinema audiences of the true cinema experience is universal, enduring and deeply rooted," said Iain Jacob, chair of industry body Cinema First. "We wanted to celebrate this with a big 'thank you' to audiences and a great offer to everybody in the UK. The cinema experience has always been the most enduring and positive form of escapism. By combining the joy of cinema with an amazing accessible price we are proud to have supported our audience at this incredibly challenging time."

The whole point of National Cinema Day was to put butts on seats, as the old Hollywood moguls used to say. In that respect it clearly worked and proved that the industry is growing in strength following the devastating pandemic. Around the time of National Cinema Day, the media broke the story that Covid had killed cinema after Cineworld announced they would be filing for bankruptcy. But in a world of misinformation, the truth is very different. It's true Cineworld were financially hit by the pandemic but they were hit harder by their own mismanagement, which included their failed acquisition of Canadian cinema chain Cineplex that led to legal action and the Ontario Supreme Court of Justice ordering Cineworld to pay CA\$1.4 billion in damages. Elsewhere, though, things look more encouraging. Summer Box Office totals in the US, for instance, might be 21% down from 2019 when they hit a record \$4.25 billion but at \$3.35 billion, they're up 91% from last year. And here in the UK, Box Office admissions are currently at 80% of what they were in 2019, before government regulations forced our favourite picture palaces to close for months at a time.

Many in the industry want National Cinema Day to become an annual event. Will it? Maybe. For cinema chains it certainly makes sense. Cinemas make most of their profit from their inviting, if overpriced, concession stands. If the put-upon parent with a gaggle of screaming kids or the youngster on a zero-hour contract and minimum wage only pays £3 for a ticket, they have more to spend on coke, popcorn and hot-dogs. Cinema chains, who must give large percentages of their Box Office to distributors, then make more money. No wonder it's called show business! Here's to the next National Cinema Day!



Is it Judy Garland, Clint Eastwood or an Avengers superhero? No, it's staff at Odeon Port Solent on National Cinema Day! (photos by the author)



# CLASSIC FITZALAN SQUARE, SHEFFIELD

By Tim McCullen with images from CTA Archive



The Electra Palace Sheffield, later to become the Classic

The Classic Fitzalan Square, Sheffield, opened as the Electra Palace on 11 February 1911 (Architects Hickson and Farmer) initially with 670 seats, reducing to 587 in about 1938. It was taken over in June 1945 by Capital and Provincial for alterations, to reopen as a News Theatre on 8 September 1949 with 491 seats. The building also had a basement with five pool tables, which became the Queen's restaurant, run independently in 1953.

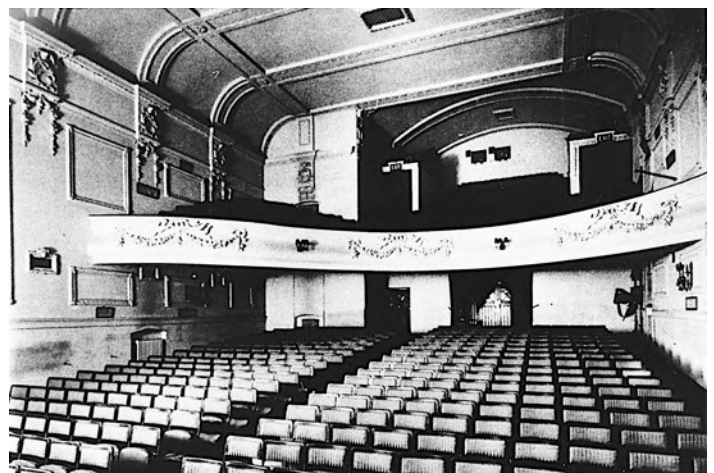
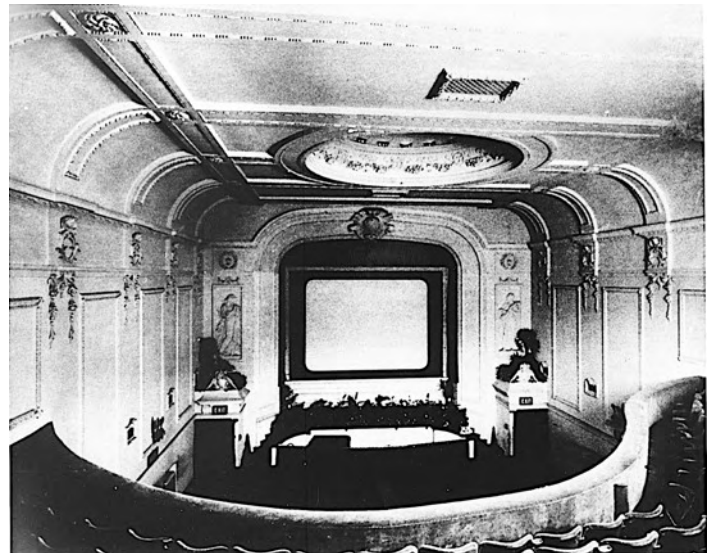


The Classic Sheffield with the cladding on the façade

Just ten years later, on 15 January 1959, it became the Classic Cartoon Theatre, only to be relaunched on 15 January 1962 as a 484-seat Classic Cinema. According to David Atwell, in his book, *Cathedrals of the Movies*, "The interior was smashed to bits by Classic Cinemas" during the modifications, which included new cladding on the façade. Many buildings over the years have been clad (rather a controversial issue at the moment) but like it or loathe it, the Classic Sheffield's cladding certainly proved rather iconic and unique.

Classic was taken over in 1971 by the Tigon Group, headed by Laurie Marsh, with a proposal to create twin cinemas in the Classic Sheffield, a plan which was never to materialise. Then, in April 1979, planning permission was granted to triple the building along with two shops, when Classic owned Associated Communications Corporation, headed by Lord Grade.

In April 1982, Cannon, an American Cinema Circuit, took it over with plans to modernise various sites; however, they refused to rule out the closure of less profitable sites. Some of these Cannon-Classic sites were expensively refurbished with very comfortable seats. Possibly, the Sheffield Classic with its planning permission to triple and refurbish, was anticipated to succeed. Sadly, it was not to be and the Classic closed on 24 November 1982. A serious fire broke out on 15 February 1984 and, despite an attempt to get the building listed, it was regrettably demolished in favour of shops.



The original interior of the Classic Sheffield

A contributing factor in its closure was undoubtedly the monopoly held by two major circuits in the City, which obtained the first-run films at the time, resulting in diminishing attendances and viability for the Classic. Whether if the building had been divided into two or more screens, it would have enjoyed a longer life, we will never know. The local newspaper cuttings at the time pointed to the building being of an unusual shape (please see seating plan at final refurbishment, top next column), inferring that it was not divided for that reason.

Then there is the question of the basement, which saw billiards and then a restaurant! How big was this area and did any member ever venture in this area for billiards? Did the restaurant last as long as the cinema? Was that where the extra screens were to be? Are there any plans around how the two or three-screen proposal would have been achieved? Are there any internal pictures of the basement and the auditorium after its severe modifications, which the CTA archive would value in its collection? The author may have seen one at a CTA slide show at some point.





**SHEFFIELD**

C I R C L E

J	1	2	3	4
H	1	2	3	4
G	1	2	3	4
F	1	2	3	4

K

K	5	6	7	8	9	K
J	5	6	7	8	9	J
H	5	6	7	8	9	H
G	5	6	7	8	9	G
F	5	6	7	8	9	F

				E	5	6	7	8	9	10
		D	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
C	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
B	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

E	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	E		
D	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	D	
C	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	C	
B	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	B	
A	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	A

## STALLS

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S C R E E N

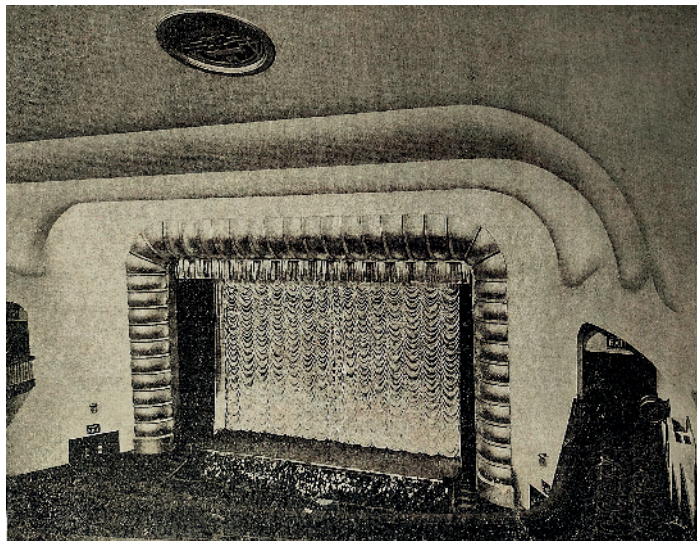
Overall, cinema history in the City of Sheffield since 1980 has not been too kind. The following is a rather melancholy summary of closures and demolitions:

- ★ **ABC ①** : 1,327 seats. Surprisingly, considering what EMI were doing elsewhere, the 1,327-seat auditorium remained single until the end. Were there any plans to subdivide here? This closed on 28 July 1988 and was demolished.
- ★ **ABC ②** : 94 seats from 1975 – from the former restaurant.
- ★ **Cinecenta / Penthouse / Cannon / Fiesta** : Two screens seating 189 and 141. Became part of the Odeon Arundel Gate Multiplex.
- ★ **Cineplex / Anvil** : Three screens: 1) 65, 2) 76, 3) 110. Closed 3 November 1990 – part of hotel complex.
- ★ **Gaumont** : Three screens: 1) 737, 2) 1,144, 3) 144. Closed 7 November 1985, redeveloped with twin-screen Odeon in Burgess Street.
- ★ **Rex Intake (outskirts)** : 1,300 seats. Closed 23 December 1982. Demolished.
- ★ **Sheffield Film Theatre** : One screen: 264 seats. Used for other purposes in 1996.
- ★ **Studios ⑤, ⑥ & ⑦ The Wicker** : Three screens: 1) 275, 2) 109, 3) 121. Closed 29 November 1982. Reopened 1986 to 20 August 1987. Demolished.
- ★ **Odeon Burgess Street** : Two screens: 1) 500, 2) 324. Opened 20 August 1987. Closed 20 February 1994. Business relocated to Flat Street Odeon multiplex. Believed to be in use as a nightclub for a while. Now looking for re-use.
- ★ **Odeon Arundel Gate** : Opened 5 March 1992, including **Penthouse / Cannon / Fiesta**. Initially seven screens, later nine screens and finally, tenth added: 1) 252, 2) 229, 3) 248, 4) 113, 5) 113, 6) 129, 7) 171, 8) 148, 9) 150, 10) 120. It may be interesting to note that the roles changed from the **Fiesta Night Club** to **Odeon Cinema** and that the **Odeon Burgess Street** became a nightclub for a period.
- ★ **AMC / UCI Crystal Peaks (outskirts)** : Ten screens. Opened 15 May 1988. Closed 20 March 2002. Demolished.
- ★ **Vue (Ex Warner) Meadowhall** : Eleven screens. Opened 26 March 1993.
- ★ **Virgin / UGC / Cineworld Broughton Lane (outskirts)** : Twenty screens. Opened 5 November 1998.
- ★ **Curzon** : Three screens: 1) 66, 2) 55, 3) 40. Opened 9 January 2015.
- ★ **Showroom** : Four screens: 1) 83, 2) 110, 3) 178, 4) 282. Opened 27 March 1998.

## MAJESTIC ABERDEEN

By David A Ellis

The people of Aberdeen were given another entertainment venue when the Majestic opened its doors in Union Street. Designed by Thomas Scott Sutherland the five sets of double doors were opened on 10 December 1936 with the film *Eliza Comes to Stay*. The cinema was run by Caledonian Theatres Ltd. On 4 January 1938 it was taken over by Aberdeen Cinemas Ltd. The company was founded by James F Donald, who passed away in 1934 at the age of 64. They ran twelve cinemas in Aberdeen.



The Majestic replaced a cinema called the La Scala. This closed on 18 May 1935 and was visited by the demolition hammer. It opened on 30 April 1914. Opening films included *Butterflies*, *Any Port in a Storm* and *Experts Secret*. No doubt none of these now exist. Projection at the La Scala was from under the balcony.

There were two payboxes to cater for the large audiences of the day. Four further sets of doors gave access from the entrance vestibule into the inner foyer. Each side of the foyer there were beautiful panelled staircases to the upper foyer. The front part of the balcony seating was in gold and the rear of the balcony green. In the stalls area seating was coloured rose and gold. There were 2,000 seats, 800 of them in the balcony. At the opening 1,400 were taken by invited guests, which included business people, the Town Council and cinema trade; the rest were taken by the general public. The colour scheme in the auditorium was cream. One of the main features was a number of ceiling coves extending across the width of the hall and partly down the side walls. At night the whole building was illuminated by neon lighting. There was a shop on both sides of the cinema.

The long window panels, characteristic of the architect, were set in side panels on the building's Kemnay granite front. Neon stripes were placed between each column. At the top of the front elevation was the sign **MAJESTIC** in neon. Below the sign, in the centre was the space to advertise the cinema's programme. The thirty-foot proscenium opening was framed by an attractive surround and was finished in burnished silver. At the opening a pageboy stepped onto the stage to present Mrs Paton with a bouquet. During the day the cinema received many telegrams of congratulations from well-wishers and big film producing and distributing companies. The hall was equipped with the famous Holophane auto selective lighting system and could be controlled from either the stage or operating box. The operating box was equipped with Simplex projectors, Western Electric sound and Peerless arcs. Hard of hearing patrons were able to make use of the Ardenite deaf aid equipment.

Showmanship was high on the agenda and in 1937 a man dressed as an Arab went around the City with a donkey. On the back of the donkey were placards to advertise the film *The Garden of Allah*. The building housed four dressing rooms to cater for occasional stage shows. Like many 1930s cinemas there was a café. Closure came on 29 September 1973 with the film *Kelly's Heroes*. The cinema and adjacent Clydeside Bank were demolished. An office block was built on the site called Caledonian House. That was opened on 25 February 1976.



# A LYME REGIS PHOENIX

By Mike Whitcombe

The former entrance foyer of the Regent cinema in Lyme Regis has been converted into a coffee lounge called the Phoenix. The entrance foyer and façade of the Regent (William Henry Watkins, 1937) which lies at the top of Lyme High Street is the only part of this once beautiful art deco Grade II listed cinema to remain standing following the now infamous inferno that broke out on the afternoon of 21 March 2016. This devastating fire, which was caused by an electrical fault following a comprehensive refurbishment, led to the auditorium being completely destroyed and then demolished for safety reasons. The fifty firefighters who attended the scene were able to prevent the blaze spreading to the entrance foyer, which, in the six years since the fire, gives the impression to anyone standing outside the Regent that a tragedy has not occurred.



The upper floor at the Regent

Walther has said he still hopes to build a cinema on the site but in an article written by Francesca Evans on 13 May 2022 for *Lyme Online*, he was quoted as stating: "There has been no definite scheme agreed on as yet but when it is agreed upon, there will be a consultation and a presentation to the Town Council, with hopefully some positive consensus on bringing the former cinema into a new and exciting use for us all to enjoy."



Two views of the coffee lounge in the Regent

Hopes were initially high that the owners Scott Cinemas would quickly rebuild. But after much secrecy, speculation and a public appeal by the CTA in June 2021 for rebuilding to commence, WTW-Scott Cinemas accepted an offer in August 2021 from local businessman Seb Walther to buy the site. Walther, who also owns the nearby Marshwood Garage, announced he wanted to rebuild the cinema but twelve months on from his purchase no proposals have been submitted.

During this time, local youths vandalised what was left standing and, in response to this, Walther leased the ground floor to fellow Lyme Regis businessman Steve Postles, part owner of the eatery Deli Weli situated on the Cobb. Postles has been given the lease for a year and in June 2022 he opened a smart, welcoming coffee lounge in the former ground floor entrance foyer. The upper floor, which used to be the circle foyer, is still being decorated and will hopefully soon be available for local community groups.



The murals and the staircase

Despite now housing a coffee lounge, the former entrance foyer still recalls those cherished days when local cinema-goers could get their weekly film fix at the Regent. Movie posters, including a much sought after one for *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, which was actually filmed at Lyme Regis, occupy the walls. Stairs to the former circle lead to what is hoped will be an area for community use but which was originally the cinema café. A mural on the wall that now closes off what would have been the doors into the auditorium features dinosaurs. The beaches around Lyme Regis are famous for their fossils and tourists flock to the town in search of all things related to dinosaurs. A blue plaque honouring projectionist Cyril Wellman, who was on duty on opening night and then worked at the Regent for over half a century, proudly remains above the entrance doors.



All photos taken by the author.

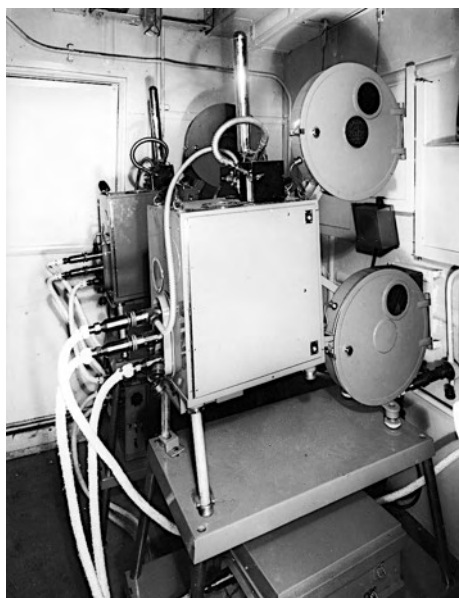
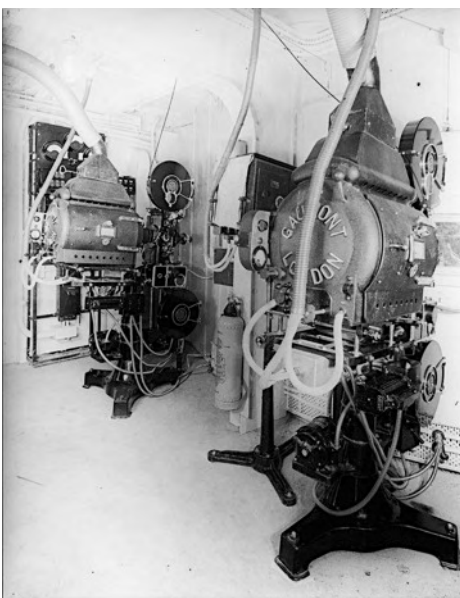


# CINEMA ON THE *RMS QUEEN MARY*

By Kevin Wheelan

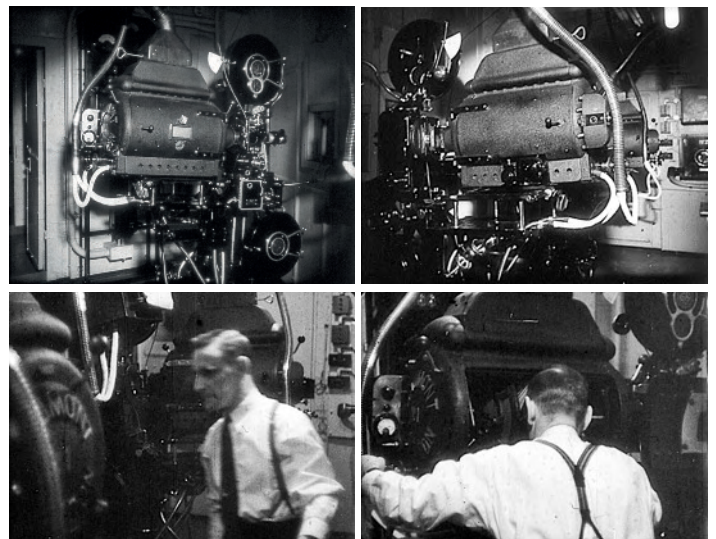
You mentioned a possible article about cinemas on ships, so you might be interested in the attached pictures of the First Class cinema auditorium and box on the *RMS Queen Mary*. The second and third class passengers had their own cinemas.

The liner is now a floating hotel in Long Beach, California. The cinema was removed to gain additional space.



The *RMS Queen Mary* as a floating hotel in Long Beach  
photo taken 1978 by Harry Rigby

The four pictures below are frame enlargements from a 30-minute documentary in my collection, *Floating City*. It does not have a copyright date and I can find no reference to it, but it is post-War and on nitrate, so from the latter half of the 1940s. A friend transferred it to Blu-ray and I had the projection room sequence copied to 35mm safety film. There was no film of the auditorium, unfortunately. You can see the short clip of the projection room on my YouTube channel, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=uf6BmQSG\\_Ds](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uf6BmQSG_Ds)



Three stages of equipment in the projection room of the *RMS Queen Mary*



# CINEMA BUSINESS

## WETHERSPOON SALE



Pub chain JD Wetherspoon has put 32 of its hostelries on the market. The mix of 10 freehold and 22 leasehold units, all of which are based in town and city centre locations, is being considered for sale either individually, in small packages or as an entire portfolio. The only two that were previously cinemas are the Grade II listed Capitol Forest Hill in South London (which they have tried to offload before) {2428} and the Malthouse in Willenhall, West Midlands (pictured above) which was formerly the Dale cinema {37408}. The full list can be seen at [tinyurl.com/wetherspoon-sale](https://tinyurl.com/wetherspoon-sale). The pubs will continue to operate as Wetherspoon outlets until they are sold. See also Newsreel p18.

*Business Live* – 27 September; sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken April 2007

## EVERYMAN

Everyman cinemas has bucked the national trend by increasing box office revenue by 22% (January – July 2022) compared with a 20% decline in the wider UK cinema industry. Admissions totalled more than 1.7 million generating £40.7 million in revenue; however, the company still made a loss of £798,000 though this compared favourably with a £9.1 million loss in the same period last year.

*Evening Standard* – 28 September; sent in by Tom Laughlan & Anthony Willis

## CARD ONLY

A couple tried to use cash to pay for food and drinks at the new Curzon cinema in Canterbury but were told they couldn't. The chain has since claimed that the refusal to accept cash is due to a decision to go cashless following the Covid pandemic but the couple accused the brand and the town in general of focusing on students while pushing out older generations.

*Yahoo! News* – 25 September

## CINEWORLD

Cineworld has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in the US. Including leases, the chain owes its creditors £6.6bn. It will honour all customer memberships and pay staff wages whilst in bankruptcy after a US judge granted it access to £679m of funds. The firm has 127 cinemas in the UK and operates in ten countries; it recently bought the Regal chain in the US. It has said its UK operation will be unaffected by the move. Shares fell sharply by 60% to 3.9p – before the pandemic they were trading above 300p. The chain also said that attendances rose “slower than expected”, blaming a “weak range of films”. Shares fell a further 5.6% taking losses for the year to above 90%.

*Daily Mail* – 18, 23 August, 7, 8, 10 September, 1 October; sent in by Margaret Burgoine, Ian Patterson, Barry Quinton, R David Simpson & Tom Laughlan

## UK GIVES DISNEY MONEY TO MARVEL AT

Disney has partly shot its latest *Marvel* movie at Pinewood Studios and therefore has reclaimed up to 25% of costs incurred using the Government's Film Tax Relief scheme. Disney's accounts show that in the 13 months to the end of September 2021, it received a £20.6m tax credit from £103.6m of costs. The windfall is set to be even higher as filming only ended in May this year.

*Sunday Express* – 4 September; sent in by Barry Quinton

## BBFC

Natasha Kaplinsky has become the new president of the British Board of Film Classification.

*Daily Express* – 1 October; sent in by Tom Laughlan

## CASINO SHARES ON LOSING STREAK

Shares in Rank Group, owner of Mecca Bingo and Grosvenor Casinos dropped 3.4% to 85p on news of “unexpectedly softer trading” in the first six months of 2022. The bleak outlook came despite the company swinging to a £74.3m profit for the year to the end of June from a £107m loss a year ago.

*Daily Mail* – 19 August; sent in by Barry Quinton

## AMC

US Cinema operator AMC had the misfortune to debut new shares on Wall Street. The shares promptly fell 30% after investors were spooked by Cineworld's gloomy news. AMC did however manage to raise \$1.8m (£1.5m) last year to help it survive the consequences of the pandemic.

*The i paper* – 22 August; sent in by Tom Laughlan

## SCHOOL TRIPS

Theatres are trying to get school trips back through the doors amid rising fears that the soaring cost of living could result in a fresh crisis. Headteachers say that with ever tightening budgets they can no longer afford to subsidise visits – although most theatres offer hugely discounted tickets. In London, the Globe and National Theatres said visits play a “vital role in ensuring children are creatively stimulated”.

*Daily Express* – 8 October; sent in by Barry Quinton

## SECRET CINEMA SALE

The events company Secret Cinema has been bought by US ticketing platform TodayTix for \$88m. The move is set to benefit the UK Taxpayer, which became a shareholder in Secret Cinema in 2020 following a Covid bailout. Secret Cinema attracts as many as 70,000 visitors for each of its productions. It asks members to turn up in fancy dress and adopt a persona linked to the film. It is currently showing *Guardians of the Galaxy* in Wembley Park.

*Financial Times, Daily Telegraph* – 23 September

## APPOINTMENT

Gary Stevens has been announced as the new General Manager of Staffords Gatehouse Theatre. Gary previously held the position of Operations Manager at the venue for the last year. Opening in 1982, the theatre programmes both professional and amateur shows and throughout the year presents plays, musical theatre, music and comedy nights, ballet, dance and opera.

*Gatehouse Press Release* – 30 September

## MISCELLANY

### PEDAL POWER

The Dolphin Shopping Centre in Bournemouth hosted a bicycle-powered cinema event on 2 September. Powered by four pedal bikes, the films shown were Disney's *Mona* and the classic *Grease*. The centre's management team took turns on the bikes. Admission was free.

*Bournemouth Echo* – 30 August; sent in by John R Forster

### BUMS ON SEATS

Theatres are detailing their seat dimensions so larger audience members can see if they will fit into them. The Chorley Theatre in Lancashire now lists seat width, depth and legroom measurements on its website, under a section titled “Fat Accessibility Information.” Other venues posting seat dimensions include the Gulbenkian in Canterbury and the Grand Theatre in Leeds. Plus-sized comedian Sofie Hagen has campaigned for venues to publish the information and vowed to snub those that fail to do so.

*The Sun* – 3 September; sent in by Margaret Burgoine

### AUCTIONS

Hans Solo's blaster, used by Harrison Ford in *Star War: A New Hope* is expected to fetch up to \$500,000 (£412,000) at auction. The prop was previously missing and presumed lost but has been rediscovered.

*Daily Telegraph* – 13 August; sent in by Barry Quinton

Sir Sean Connery's 1964 Aston Martin DB5 has sold for more than £2m, nearly twice the estimate of £1.1m. The cash will go to a charity fund set up in his name.

*Daily Express* – 20 August; sent in by Barry Quinton



# REWINDING BACK

Sent in by David A Ellis

## The Midlands

### NEW CINEMA ORGAN AT NORTHAMPTON

After four weeks of hard work, the assembly of a new Wurlitzer organ at the Exchange Cinema Northampton was completed during the weekend. The opening ceremony was performed on Monday night by the mayor of Northampton, Alderman A Burrows. Between the two performances the Mayor and Mayoress were introduced by Mr PJ Thornton the manager and before declaring the new organ open the Mayor paid a tribute to the proprietors of the cinema for the splendid films that they were presenting. Mr Frank Slater, the organist, played a selection of popular musical comedy tunes, in which he demonstrated the full power and range of the new instrument. The Wurlitzer organ has two manuals and eight units and is built on the latest system of electrical action. It is a full orchestra in itself, capable of producing all kinds of effects, including the xylophone, glockenspiel, drums, cymbals and the harp. This range of tone and volume is remarkable. The console is gilded and has suitable lighting effects. The stop tablets are of various colours to distinguish the different qualities of tone.

By reason of its name the Wurlitzer organ is commonly believed to be a German instrument but it is originally the invention of an Englishman named Robert Hope Jones, who was organist at St John's Birkenhead and an electrical engineer by trade. Hope Jones rebuilt his own organ at the church on an electrical system and later opened up in business himself as an organ builder. Musical interludes by the Exchange cinema organist Mr Frank Slater will now be a regular feature of the programmes and is hoped to arrange for broadcasts in the near future.

*Mercury & Herald - 19 April 1935*

### NEWS CINEMA FOR COVENTRY

Coventry's first news cinema will probably be opened about February of next year. It will accommodate almost 400 people. As previously indicated in these columns, it is to be erected on part of the site of No 27 Cross Cheaping, available after provision has been made for street widening. The promoters of the scheme are Capital and Provincial News Theatres Ltd, who were in negotiation with the original owners of the site through Messrs G Loveitt and Sons, the Coventry estate agents, before it was bought by the Corporation and through whom they have now effected their aim. It is expected that the contract between the company and the Corporation providing for the company leasing the site for 99 years at £600 per annum will be signed this week. Work will be begun almost immediately afterwards on demolition of the existing shop premises. Although the front part of the premises will be three storeys high, with a front elevation of about forty feet, the auditorium will be single-storey. The projection room will be at the rear of the screen.

*Coventry Evening Telegraph - 14 October 1936*

### DERBY CINEMAS AFFECTED BY MERGER

Two Derby cinemas are affected by the £15,000,000 amalgamation of the Odeon and County cinema circuits, announced today. They are the Odeon, which was acquired by Odeon Theatres Ltd in 1935 and the Hippodrome, which was taken over by Entertainments and General Investments Corporation. Odeon Theatres has acquired a controlling interest in the County Cinemas Circuit. Mr WE Holland, manager of the Odeon Derby informed a *Telegraph* representative today that the deal would not affect the administration of the two Derby cinemas, which would continue to be managed separately. The chief effect of the amalgamation would be, he said, that bigger and better films would be shown earlier in Derby. The elimination of competition between the two companies would improve booking facilities and new releases would therefore be available for provincial cinema more quickly than in the past. Mr Holland is the oldest resident manager in the Odeon group in years of service and he has recently been appointed North and East Midlands Area Advisor to the central organisation of the group. He came to Derby from Alfreton, where he was for several years the manager of a cinema that was recently taken over by the Odeon group.

*Derby Evening Telegraph - 6 May 1937*

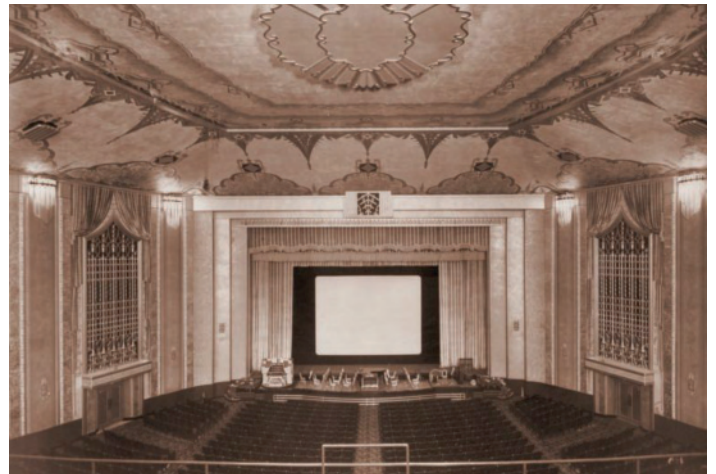
## Liverpool

### A NEW LIVERPOOL CINEMA

Reconstructed at a cost of over £5,000 the Cameo Cinema, Webster Road off Smithdown Road, Liverpool, which was closed seven years ago with the passing of the silent film, opened its doors again this afternoon as a new Gaumont British talkie house. The building was formerly an old Liverpool Welsh chapel, which, when converted for cinema purposes, was a popular rendezvous in the era of Wild West films and powerful melodrama. It has now been modernised and redecorated throughout, with new seating, carpets, furnishings British Acoustic sound system, ventilating and heating plants and up-to-date projection equipment. Accommodation is provided for nearly 700 and patrons attended in large numbers for the reopening today. Apart from alterations for the comfort of patrons, the chief feature of the renovations is the sound and projection equipment, which is claimed to be equal to any on Merseyside. The cinema under its manager, Mr WC Atkinson, formerly of the Park Cinema, Birkenhead, began its new 'Talkie' era with the showing of *Elephant Boy*, based on Kipling's story describing the thrills and adventure of an Indian boy in charge of "the biggest elephant in the world".

*Liverpool Echo - 25 October 1937*

### LIVERPOOL NOW HAS AN 'ODEON'



As from last Sunday 6 February, the Paramount Liverpool has been renamed Odeon. There was an informal press gathering at the theatre one night last week when the impending change was announced. LC Holderness, general manager of Odeon Birmingham was present and recalled that he presided at the Paramount opening in 1934. But the *Kiné* can go back a little further than that. Until within three or four days of the opening of this fine theatre, it was intended that it's title should be the Mayfair. As a matter of fact, that name was publicly advertised on the frontage. 'Tony' Lloyd had quite a hectic time getting out new bill matter and posters in time for the Paramount opening. Now it is the Odeon. Is it a record for a cinema to have three changes of name in one decade?

*Kiné Weekly - 10 February 1944*

### AUDIENCE DID NOT KNOW WALLS WERE BEING PULLED DOWN

Some Liverpool cinema audiences have recently enjoyed the show whilst some of the cinema walls were being demolished. This happened during a conversion job at the Futurist Lime Street. The directors had decided to install modern apparatus to facilitate the showing of films in CinemaScope. In order to accommodate the Miracle Mirror screen, 30ft wide by 11ft 3in high and the stereophonic sound system, it was necessary to demolish two walls behind the proscenium opening, dismantle the old screen gear and equipment - a total weight of 2½ tons - with a corresponding amount of counterweight balance gearing. Cranes were used and special muffling devices in order not to interrupt the continuity of the show. The circle patrons did not even notice that their seats were actually raised by seven inches to ensure perfect sightlines when the work is complete. The première will take place on Sunday 16 May, when the 20th Century Fox production in CinemaScope and Technicolor *King of the Khyber Rifles* will be presented. It is a thrilling adventure story based on the Indian Mutiny, starring Tyrone Power, Terry Moore and Michael Rennie.

*Runcom Weekly News - 7 May 1954*





# NEWSREEL

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

Allen has also added comments, where indicated.

Photos by Harry Rigby within entry, except where stated.

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

## ABERDEEN



The three-screen Belmont Filmhouse closed suddenly on 6 October after its parent company went into administration. It was built in 1896 as a Trade Hall and became a full-time cinema in 1910. It closed in 1953 and became a warehouse. It reopened in September 2000. A petition has been launched to save the venue. A local café owner has said he has plans to buy it. See also entry for Edinburgh p17. {26736}

*Press & Journal, Aberdeen; Aberdeen Live – 7 October; photo taken September 2008*

## ABINGDON (Oxon)

The Abbey cinema opened in December 2018. The current lease from the Council expires in November and there have been some “issues” concerning the renewal. It is run by Ian and Sue Wiper, who operate the Regal Evesham. {59171}

*The Herald Series – 30 August*

## ALTON (Hants)

The owner of the Palace announced his intention to retire a year ago and has not changed his mind. It is on the market for £850,000. Both the projectors are no longer supported by the manufacturers for both hardware and software. He has had two firm offers to buy them to salvage spare parts. He has said they will be available one month after the cinema has closed. Meanwhile, the owners of the Sugarloaf Café in Anstey Park will show family movies once or twice a month in their 60-seat auditorium. {24101}

*Alton Herald – 3 September, 1 October*

## ASHFORD (Kent)

The fourteen-screen Cineworld at Eureka Leisure Park was forced to close for the afternoon of 7 September due to damage caused by heavy rain leaking into the building. It reopened in time for evening performances. {24116}

*Kent Online – 7 September; sent in by Philip Stevens*

## BARNESLEY (South Yorks)

The new Cineworld opened in The Glass Works Square on 9 September. Among the thirteen screens are the circuit's own-brand IMAX, 4DX and ScreenX auditoria. David Bradley, star of the 1969 film *Kes*, was amongst the guests who cut the film ribbon – a 1 minute video is at: [tinyurl.com/barnsley-cineworld](http://tinyurl.com/barnsley-cineworld). {67704}

*The Star – 23 September; sent in by Terry Hanstock*

The two-screen Parkway (ex Odeon) has been rented since 2005 but the operator has now struck a deal to buy the freehold. Director Rob Younger said that negotiations held prior to a possible auction were successful. The move will safeguard the venue's future. It is one of the few cinemas left that can show 70mm. {6208}

*Barnsley Chronicle – 16 September*

## BASILDON (Essex)

The opening of the ten-screen Empire has been delayed yet again. It is hoped it will finally open in December.

*Basildon, Canvey & Southend Echo – 7 October; sent in by Margaret Burgoine*

The former ABC/Robins cinema could become workspaces for firms in the creative industries, as well as social and events spaces. According to a Council report, these could include places for immersive technology such as virtual reality, in addition to offices for firms in the screen industries, software and computer services. The project is dependent on the Council's bid for Arts Council funding. The cinema opened in September 1971 and closed in December 1999. {24134}

*Essex Live – 13 October*

## BOGNOR REGIS (West Sussex)



Arun District Council has granted an extra £3m to boost the Levelling Up Funds allocated for the refurbishment of the Alexandra Theatre. This means about £15.2m will be available for the project. The CTA visited in March 2009, when the above picture was taken.

*The Argus, Brighton – 6 October; sent in by Barry Quinton & Mike Whitcombe*

## BOURNEMOUTH

Emergency services attended a fire at the former ABC in Westover Road on 2 September. It is thought to have been started deliberately. There was also a false alarm just days after. The Fire Service has confirmed it is holding discussions on the safety of the building and the virtually adjacent former Odeon both of which are empty. Current fire safety legislation is limited in scope to deal with unoccupied buildings.

*Bournemouth Echo – 6 September, 10 October; sent in by John R Forster*

## BRIDGWATER (Somerset)

The two-screen Scott Cinema closed on 29 September. It was housed in the circle of the former Odeon; the bingo operation in the former stalls had already closed. It marked the final week of films with tickets at just £4.50 and some of the best films of 2022 brought back. Scott Cinemas will operate a new seven-screen cinema at Northgate Yard; It will have two 'lux' screens and two screens with Dolby Atmos. The opening was put back a week to 28 October as the seats hadn't arrived.

*Somerset Live – 17 September, 21 October; sent in by Ken Roe & Anthony Wills*

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



## BRISTOL



Plans have been approved to demolish the former Broadway in Filwood. It opened in 1938 and was refurbished in 1961. Cinema use ended in 1971 in favour of bingo. That closed around 1992 and the building has been empty since. The works will include structural support steels due to party wall issues, which delayed the demolition. It is expected that housing will be built on the site. {47281}

*Bristol World* – 2 September; photo taken March 2006

## CHELTENHAM (Glos)

The four-screen Tivoli celebrated its first anniversary on 24 September. In that time, it has shown 116 films and more than 30 live streamed cultural performances, as well as hosted special events and functions. There are some photos at [tinyurl.com/chelt-tivoli](http://tinyurl.com/chelt-tivoli). {66000}

*So Glos* – 29 September

## CHESTER

Work on the six-screen Picturehouse cinema in the Northgate development is continuing, despite its parent company Cineworld filing for bankruptcy in the US [see Cinema Business p14]. However, the company has pulled its on-site café plans. Part of the foyer will now have to be sectioned off to accommodate an independent food and drink outlet. No opening date has been given.

*Chester Chronicle* – 25 August

## COLNE (Lancs)



Plans have been approved for the expansion of the Pendle Hippodrome into a vacant pub next door. The venue first opened in September 1914 and closed in April 1965 in favour of bingo, which lasted until 1978. It reopened as an amateur theatre in December 1986 and shows some films. {29286} photo taken October 2004

*Lancashire Telegraph* – 19 September; sent in by Philip Crompton

## COVENTRY

Previous plans to demolish the former Paris and build student flats (see p23 Bulletin 55/10) were withdrawn following objections. Now revised plans have been approved, reducing the height from six to five storeys with commercial space on the ground floor. The frontage would be retained. {15736}

*Coventry Live* – 21 September; sent in by Philip Crompton

## DARLINGTON

'For Sale' signs have gone up on the former Odeon Luxe (ex ABC), which closed on 30 June. See Casework p5. {20950}

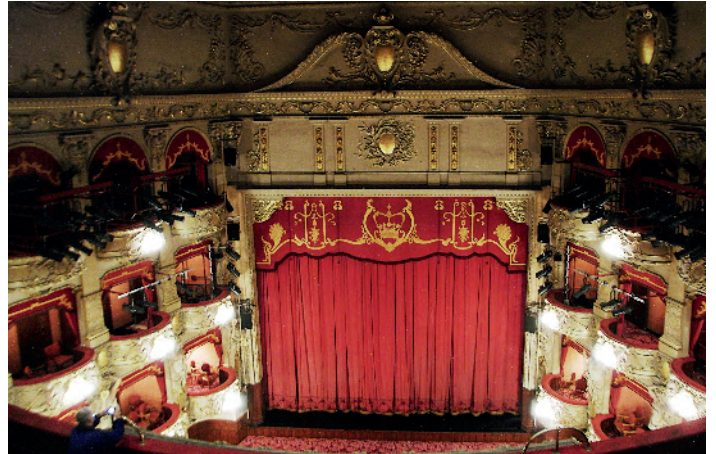
*Northern Echo* – 14 September

## DURHAM

Everyman has revealed plans to open a four-screen cinema this winter in the Milburngate development. It will include more than 300 seats, such as velvet sofas and armchairs and will be the group's 39<sup>th</sup> UK site.

*Insider Media* – 14 October

## EDINBURGH



The cost of refurbishment at the King's Theatre is likely to be 20-30% higher than the original budget of £25m. Stars including Brian Cox and Alan Cumming have issued a plea to save the theatre. {41761}

*Daily Record* – 25 August; sent in by Tom Laughlan; photo taken September 2008

The parent charity of the Edinburgh Film Festival has gone into administration. This means that the three-screen Filmhouse and also the three-screen Belmont Filmhouse in Aberdeen [see p16] will close immediately. Discussions are already underway to explore ways to keep the Edinburgh Film Festival going as an event. {23226}

*The Hollywood Reporter* – 6 October; sent in by Terry Hanstock;

*Daily Record* – 7 October; sent in by Tom Laughlan

## FAREHAM (Hants)

Work has now started at the Ferneham Hall. The original building is due to be demolished and the site redeveloped into a venue with an 800-seat auditorium and other performance spaces. Completion is estimated by spring 2024.

*Southern Daily Echo* – 3 October; sent in by Richard Hawkins & Ian Patterson

## GLASGOW (Hillhead)



A shortage of space has led Glasgow University to hire the two-screen Grosvenor cinema. Undergraduates will attend lectures in the cinema from Monday to Thursday each week. {27083}

*Scottish Daily Mail* – 26 September

## GLASGOW (Pollok)

The fourteen-screen Cineworld at the Silverburn Centre has added a new 468-seat IMAX screen. It has 4k laser projection and opened on 14 October. The multiplex itself opened in June 2015. {56054}

*Glasgow Live* – 30 September



## GOSPORT (Hants)



The former Criterion has been bought by the Borough Council and could return as a cinema, theatre and arts facility. It opened in May 1912 and bingo took over in 1968; that closed in March 2020 and the building has been empty since. Gosport is currently without a cinema or a theatre. {45030} photo taken May 2006

*Southern Daily Echo* – 27 September; sent in by Ian Patterson & Mike Whitcombe

## GRAYS (Essex)

Despite assurances just a couple of weeks ago that it would be pressing ahead with the project to turn the former State cinema into a showcase venue, pub chain Wetherspoons has now confirmed it is selling the building. A spokesman said, “JD Wetherspoon has reluctantly concluded it no longer wishes to continue with the project and has appointed CBRE and Savills to market the Freehold Grade II\* listed property.” There is no published asking price for the building. The estate agent’s webpage is [tinyurl.com/state-sale](https://www.tinyurl.com/state-sale).

Constructed in 1938 the State was one of the largest single screen cinemas within Essex, boasting more than 2,200 seats. The cinema closed in 1988. The property was acquired by Wetherspoon in 2015 with proposals to convert into a pub. Having achieving planning permission in 2018, work commenced in 2019 but halted due to the appointed contractor’s insolvency. Before a new contractor could be appointed Covid struck and conversion work stopped. In the interim Wetherspoons returned to the Council with a revised planning application, which was also granted. {1837}

*Thurrock Nub News* – 20 October; sent in by Margaret Burgoine & Gary Donaldson

## HAVERFORDWEST (Pembroke)



The owners of the Grade II listed two-screen Palace have said they will not renew their lease after operating the venue for over 20 years. They hope a new tenant can be found. It was built as a Corn Exchange and opened as a cinema in July 1913. {22971}

*Western Telegraph* – 6 October; photo taken April 2010 on CTA visit

## HULL (East Yorks)

The Grade II listed Tower has closed its doors again only four months after reopening as a ballroom. Events will be cancelled or moved to alternative venues. It opened in June 1914 and films ceased in September 1978. It has since been used as nightclubs and music venues. In October 2012 the two domes on top of the building (visible in the photo) were replaced by a team of mosaic specialists. The building is up for sale with a guide price of £595,000; the estate agents’ particulars can be seen at [tinyurl.com/hull-tower-sale](https://www.tinyurl.com/hull-tower-sale). {3278}

*Hull Live* – 29 July; sent in by David Alexander; photo on front cover

## KIRKCALDY (Fife)

The 475-seat Adam Smith Theatre is currently closed for a major refurbishment. The 120-year-old building has already had a new look and a technical upgrade to the auditorium. New seats will be installed in time for the reopening in June 2023. {67785}

*On Fife* – 25 July; sent in by David J Kay; photo on front cover

## LANCASTER



The auditorium of the Palace/ABC has been demolished. It was almost down when Google StreetView passed around the back of the building in March 2022. The front section/foyer is in retail use and will remain. Plans are to build student accommodation on the site of the auditorium but I’m not sure if that has begun yet. {6539}

*Sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken on CTA visit June 2008*

## LEOMINSTER (Hereford)



The bingo operation in the former Clifton was due to close on 28 October. The cinema opened in October 1936 and films ceased in March 1980. It became a bingo club, which continued under various operators until now. See *Picture House No 36* pages 37-38. {35646}

*Hereford Times* – 28 September; photo taken March 2008

## 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  
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### LICHFIELD (Staffs)

Plans have been put approved for a four-screen cinema in the former Debenhams store. It would have a mixture of small (up to 48 seats) and large (up to 120 seat) screens. Work is expected to start before the end of the year. An 'boutique' operator has been identified but not named.

*Express & Star – 6, 12, 20 October*

### LIVERPOOL (Orrell Park)



The former Carlton Cinema had closed in March 2020 as a bingo club due to Covid. In September 2022 it has reopened as a car wash and valeting service in the former front stalls and a retail shop in the foyer. {50786}

*Sent in by Ken Roe; photo taken July 2007*

### LIVERPOOL (Woolton)

The Woolton Picture House has been closed since the start of the pandemic. The cinema had announced it was closing for good in July 2020 but it was rescued by government funding and a GoFundMe campaign. In December 2021, the cinema's owners stated they were working towards opening in 2022. However, no further public updates were provided until last month, when the owners wished to provide assurance that they planned to reopen next year. {17451}

*Liverpool Echo – 9 October*

### LOFTUS (Teesside)



Plans have been submitted to demolish the former Empire and build 20 new apartments. It opened in 1911 and was completely rebuilt in 1937 with 811 seats. It first closed in May 1959 and had several years on bingo. It reopened as a cinema in December 1977 but final closure came in April 1983. It was later used for storage but has lately been empty. {48126}

*Teesside Live – 6 September; photo taken January 2007*

### LONDON (Bermondsey)

Following a tough couple of years with the pandemic and extensive building works around the Square, the 48-seat Kino Bermondsey Square has relaunched with new outdoor seating and plants, continuing to screen a carefully curated selection of films. It opened as the Short-wave in May 2009 and was taken over by Kino, who operate venues in Rye and Hawkhurst, in July 2017. [www.kinodigital.co.uk](http://www.kinodigital.co.uk) {28536}

*Southwark News – 13 October; sent in by Terry Hanstock*



### LONDON (Hampstead)



The two-screen Everyman closed for a month for refurbishment. It reopened on 21 September. {15982}

*Camden New Journal – 19 August; sent in by Tom Laughlan; photo taken March 2006*

### LONDON (Islington)

I happened to pass the Carlton today and found that the canopy had been refurbished to a good standard of workmanship. It now has new signs on all three elevations – they are in pronounced red and black letters and read **GRACEPOINT**. It does look smart. {15111}

*Sent in by Tom Laughlan*

### LONDON (West End)

A fund has granted a further £30m to a company that is looking to convert the four-screen Odeon Covent Garden on Shaftesbury Avenue back into a theatre and hotel. The venue originally opened as the Saville Theatre in October 1931 and was converted into twin ABC cinemas in December 1970, with both screens equipped for 70mm. It is believed the original stage house and fly tower are still intact. {911}

*City AM – 23 August*

The G Casino in Coventry Street has been renamed Rialto – the name the Grade II\* listed premises had as a cinema from 1924 to 1982. {2502}

*Sent in by Allen Eyles*

### MARGATE (Kent)

The Theatre Royal and Winter Gardens are currently closed whilst their long-term future is determined. There are proposals to expand the Grade II\* listed Theatre Royal into a building next door so facilities for food and drink can be created. It has been allocated £2m from the Margate Town Deal fund to help with renovation works. {25790}

The Grade II listed Winter Gardens has been allocated £300,000 for an appraisal report on the venue. It is currently boarded-up and deteriorating. Interest has been expressed by at least three operators. The Council has pledged that it will not be considered for any residential use.

*Isle of Thanet News – 14, 16, 23 September; sent in by Margaret Burgoine*

### NAIRN (Highland)



Work has started on restoring the gable of the former Regal. The art deco gable was retained when the site was developed in the 1980s into a supermarket. {44316}

*Forres Gazette – 5 October; photo taken September 2008*



### NEWTON ABBOT (Devon)

Councillors decided to hold off giving a further £600,000 to cover increased inflationary costs for the new four-screen cinema, currently the subject of a planning application. This will delay the construction. The Council is committed to construct the building before handing it to Scott Cinemas for fit-out.

*Herald Express, Torquay – 31 August, 14 September*

### NOTTINGHAM (Mapperley)

As reported in earlier Bulletins the original planning application for seven apartments in three buildings adjacent to the existing Majestic cinema was withdrawn by RAAM Properties Ltd. The apartments currently under construction are being built by Bela Structures Ltd but differ substantially in layout to the original proposals. However, no planning application taking these changes into account has been submitted. All very mysterious but at least the Majestic is still intact if a little woebegone. Incidentally the withdrawn planning application (22/00468/PFUL3) has links to a Heritage Statement (summarising the historic context of the site and the cinema) and a Design and Access Statement (has images of the proposed development including an aerial photo of the Majestic). Both Statements are linked from here: [tinyurl.com/maj-map-plan](https://tinyurl.com/maj-map-plan). {45066}

*Sent in by Terry Hanstock*

### NOTTINGHAM (Netherfield)



Plans have been submitted to convert the former Alexandra/Cosy and demolish a neighbouring house to build nine new homes. It opened in July 1911 and films ceased in April 1955. The building was last used as a workshop. {45059} *photo taken May 2006*

*Nottinghamshire Live – 13 September; sent in by Terry Hanstock*

### NUNEATON (Warks)

Early works have started on the new five-screen cinema in the town centre. No operator has been named.

*Coventry Live – 8 September*

### PORTSMOUTH

During the summer of 2022 the fourteen-screen Vue cinema had a complete reseat. Recliners replaced ordinary chairs in all screens. The first eight screens were refitted in August with the remaining six screens closed off and the seats replaced in September. {25249}

*Sent in by Mike Whitcombe*

### RAMSGATE (Kent)

The new operator of the Granville Theatre has been named as Westwood One Ltd – which operates Under 1 Roof Thanet in Pysons Road and Under 1 Roof Canterbury. The plans for the building are to return it to a single 600+-seat auditorium and bring it back into use as a theatre and cinema with café and community arts space. See p25 last Bulletin & p12/13 Bulletin 56/4. {15019}

*Isle of Thanet News – 27 September; sent in by Margaret Burgoine*

### READING

A consultation has been launched on a proposal to demolish part of the Oracle Centre and add 475 new apartments. This would include the ten-screen Vue but the consultation makes it clear that new facilities would be provided for Vue, meaning it would reopen on a site in The Oracle. {25255}

*Reading Chronicle – 31 August*

### REDCAR (Teesside)

A lack of space to sell snacks to filmgoers has been blamed for a further delay in the opening of the new three-screen Regent. Merlin Cinemas said a “hiccup” meant the opening of the Regent would be put back “a week or two”. The opening of the cinema, finished earlier this year, had been delayed during a lengthy search for a new operator. The new date was given as Friday 21 October.

*BBC News website – 3 September, 14 October; sent in by Margaret Burgoine*

### SOUTHAMPTON

The front entrance of the former Odeon multiplex at West Quay has now been fenced off to provide a new car park for vehicles to be exported from Southampton Docks. Demolition of the ‘giant metal box’ cinema is not expected for some time. Flats are to be built on the site. {25376}

*Sent in by Richard Hawkins*

### SUTTON COLDFIELD (West Midlands)

Permission has been granted to build 43 retirement apartments on the car park of the Grade II listed Empire (ex Odeon). Developer McCarthy Stone has committed £200,000 from the sale of the car park to be spent on the cinema’s revamp. It will include sofa seating in every screen and better access throughout the building. The 100-space car park has not been used since the cinema closed in 2020 due to the pandemic. {15012}

*Birmingham Mail – 29 September, 6 October*

### SWADLINCOTE (Derbys)

We announced on p26 of the last Bulletin that the former Empire was ‘to let’. Now it has been put up ‘for sale’ with an asking price of £485,000. {39091}

*Staffordshire Live – 14 October*

### TENTERDEN (Kent)

Plans for a cinema in the town have been abandoned as a suitable venue could not be found. The town’s last cinema, the Embassy, closed in 1969.

*Kent Online – 9 October; sent in by Philip Stevens*

### TORQUAY (Devon)

A planning application has been submitted to turn the former Odeon / Central back into a theatre. It closed last March when the operator Merlin Cinemas moved into a new thirteen-screen venue. {25409}

*Herald Express, Torquay – 14 September*

### TUNBRIDGE WELLS (Kent)

More than 70 people have objected to the £72million redevelopment of the former ABC cinema site. Earlier this year a proposal for an eight-storey retirement village with a café, outdoor space, hydrotherapy pool, spa and gym was submitted. The site has been vacant for 23 years. You can see an artist’s impression on the newspaper’s website at [tinyurl.com/tw-plans](https://tinyurl.com/tw-plans). {25782}

*Kent Online – 13 October; sent in by Philip Stevens*

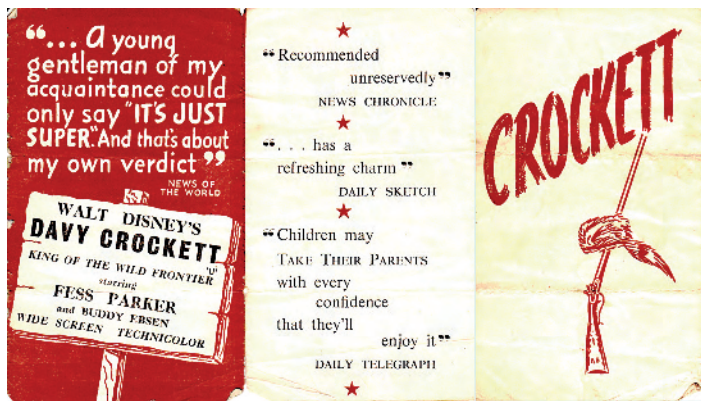
### WALLINGFORD (Oxon)



The 175-seat Corn Exchange is starting afternoon matinées on Wednesday and Saturday for a trial period, following an uptake in audiences. The Grade II listed building is run by volunteers. {42974}

*Oxford Mail – 12 September; photo taken March 2006*





## WALSALL

Listed building consent has been applied for to convert the Grade II listed former Imperial into 21 new apartments. The façade would be retained. It was built as an Agricultural Hall in 1868 and first became a cinema in January 1910. It closed in May 1968 in favour of bingo, which closed around 1996. It was converted into a Wetherspoons pub, which closed in 2016. {24723}

*Express & Star* – 14 September

## WIRKSWORTH (Derbys)

A report on p26 of the last Bulletin said that the former Wirksworth Cinema had been given planning permission to convert it into apartments and a shop. However, a later report says the building has been put on the market for £850,000 and a planning application is currently in the works. It is unclear if this refers to a revised application. The building was last used as a builders' merchants. {41668}

*Derby Telegraph* – 7 September

## WORKINGTON (Cumbria)

The former six-screen Plaza at the Dunmail Park shopping centre could be taken over by Parkway Entertainment, who operate cinemas in Barnsley, Cleethorpes, Louth and Beverley. They have applied for planning permission to new signage.

*News & Star, Cumbria* – 15 October

## WORKSOP (Notts)



The former Regal sold at auction on 13 September for £322,000 – £247,000 above the guide price of £75,000. More than 172 bids were submitted and eventually four parties battled it out. The identity of the buyer is not revealed but the likely outcome is demolition to build flats. It opened in 1926 as a Miners' Welfare Hall and was converted into a cinema in the early 1930s. It was tripled in 1972, closed in 1984, reopened in 1985 and finally closed in 2013; it has been empty ever since. There is a gallery of sad photos at: [tinyurl.com/worksop-regal](http://tinyurl.com/worksop-regal). {47911} photo taken September 2003

*Worksop Guardian* – 1, 15 September; sent in by Terry Hanstock

## OVERSEAS NEWS

### LOS ANGELES (USA)

It has been confirmed that the Cinerama Dome and the adjacent fourteen-screen Arclight cinema will not reopen until the latter part of 2023. Social media lit up in December 2021 when a public notice of an application to sell alcoholic beverages was posted outside the building; the application was approved this summer.

*The Hollywood Reporter* – 16 September; sent in by Terry Hanstock

## LATE NEWS

### ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE (Tameside, Greater Manchester)



An events company claims to have bought the former Metro and plans to refurbish it back to its original state and reopen it. It will show films and also be a live music venue. It originally opened in April 1920 and films ceased in 2003. The foyer was later used as an amusement arcade but the building has been empty for about ten years. {23553}

*The Correspondent* – 6 October; sent in by Terry Hanstock; photo taken June 2005

### BOGNOR REGIS (West Sussex)

Refurbishment works at the Picturedrome removed a false ceiling and revealed a full-height, oak vaulted ceiling and plasterwork. The extra space will now become home to the screen's projector, which has allowed the room that previously housed the equipment to be transformed into another set of toilets. {14782}

*V2 Radio Sussex* – 18 October

### CARDIFF

The independently run Premiere Cinemas announced its "untimely" closure on Monday 17 October. The five-screen venue, which opened as the Odeon Capitol Centre in the Capitol shopping centre in 2015, was popular among moviegoers in the City, offering screenings of the latest films with all general admission tickets priced at just £4. It also hosted special events, with the opening night of the Iris Prize, the world's largest LGBT+ short film competition, held at the cinema just days before its closure was announced. In a statement, the team behind the cinema confirmed the news "with a heavy heart", saying that the closure would be effective immediately. {6833}

*itv news website* – 18 October; sent in by Geoff Gill

### PRESTON (Lancs)

Campaigners are celebrating after plans to demolish the façade of the former Odeon were scrapped. The auditorium had to be demolished after a serious fire in May. {6542}

*Blog Preston* – 19 October

The Council has given the go-ahead for work to start on a new £40m leisure and entertainment complex, called Animate. It will include an eight-screen Arc cinema. No completion date has been given.

*The Business Desk* – 21 October

### RAMSGATE (Kent)

The sale of the Granville Theatre has been completed for £125,000. The building has now been transferred into the ownership of Westwood One Ltd – see Newsreel item on opposite page. They will soon be announcing their plans for refurbishment of the building.

*Isle of Thanet News, Kent Online* – 24 October; sent in by Margaret Burgoine & Philip Stevens

### SLOUGH

We have reported before that the Council bought the Odeon Basingstoke for £7.9m in 2019. It has now been revealed it made £611,245 income from the investment. Recent valuations reveal its property portfolio has dropped in value by £3.9m. It is now also considering selling of the Adelphi in Slough, which could be valued at over £13.5m; it has planning permission for 212 homes. The Council needs to reduce its £680m borrowing debt and fill in a £479m black hole. See Casework p5 and Letters p23. {14760}

*Slough Observer* – 19 August, 23 September, 14 October; sent in by R David Simpson





# LETTERS

## HM QUEEN ELIZABETH II



I took the attached picture on 14 September. The cinema is the Picturehouse Fulham Road in London which started life as the Forum.

Tony Williams

**Editor's Note:** I understand several cinemas showed the funeral free of charge. We saw it on a big screen in Norwich Cathedral.



Following the many tributes paid to The Queen, here is a photo that hung in the Granada Slough projection box for decades. The Chief Projectionist, Fred Slater gave it to me when he retired in the 1980; he is pictured on the canopy to the left of the flagpole. What great publicity for *A Queen is Crowned* – I gather the film broke records.

R David Simpson

## MURDER MUSIC AND MOVIES

Having watched an episode of Poirot, *The ABC Murders*, it was interesting to see the façade of the old Rex cinema in Uxbridge seen towards the end of the episode. As the killer is seen leaving the cinema the music played over the end credits is a piece by Anthony Mawer titled *Screen Prelude*, which comes from the Dewolf music library. Another cinema to crop up, which features in the 1987 film *Wish You Were Here*, is the Dome cinema Worthing, shown recently on Talking Pictures TV. Several shots, both interior and outside of the cinema, are shown. Although the film is set in the 1950s even the shots of the projection box look authentic of that period.

Staying with TPTV I have discovered two more pieces of music that avid viewers will recognize. The first is the music used for the ever-popular *Footage Detectives* and is a piece titled *Always on Duty* composed by Ziu Moran and recorded by The Original Orchestra. The next item is the Spaghetti western type theme used at the start and end of *Saddle Up* and is called *Western Hero*, composed by Andy Slatter. Incidentally the beginning of this piece can also be heard at the start of a pop music video by Megan Nicole called *Mascara*. All the music mentioned can be found on the YouTube music web site.

John R Forster

## NEWS/CARTOON CINEMAS

David Evans' excellent article in the last Bulletin concerning News Theatres and Cartoon cinemas brought back some memories. The Cameo cinema in Leicester operated as a news theatre/cartoon cinema but turned over to showing main films by 1960. When I started work in London in 1963, there were a number of these cinemas in the central area. I remember the cinema at Waterloo Station; it can be seen in the background in the excellent film *Terminus* (1960). However, by 1963 it had turned over to showing older films. I saw my first Will Hay film there, *Oh Mr Porter*. I do not remember any Will Hay films being shown on television at the time. The cinema was situated at first floor level over the outside roadway. The entrance to the cinema was from inside the station so one minute you were inside the station and the next you were in the cinema, which was slightly unnerving. After closure it remained empty for about 20 years before being demolished. It had one thing in common with the Victoria Station cinema as it did not have toilet facilities, something which would not be allowed today.

The Victoria Station news theatre / cartoon cinema was also situated at first floor level and had entrances both from the station and from Buckingham Palace Road. It opened early at 10:45am. One old man came in every day and was allowed to stay all day. It was leased from British Rail who refused to renew the lease as they needed space for the Gatwick line. It was still making a small profit and Classic, the operator, said at the time that they would have liked to have kept it going as the last of its type in the country. The closure of the cinema was mentioned as the last item on the main BBC news as the end of an era. This type of cinema with its newsreels cartoons and general interest films provided a cheap and useful distraction from everyday events.

I went to London in the late 1970s to visit the cinema as I realised that there could not be many of its kind left. *Tom and Jerry* looked better on a large screen. I took in the cinema at Piccadilly Circus at the same time; it eventually became sex cinema in the 1970s. Both cinemas offered easy travelling into central London with shoppers sometimes leaving their children in the cinema; I cannot imagine this happening today. I remember in the early 1970s there was a small piece in the local paper that the Classic Cinema in Above Bar, Southampton was intending to turn the first floor into a small cinema to be called the Tatler, which may be a news theatre/cartoon cinema. This did not materialise and the first-floor cinema became a cinema showing uncensored films for club members only. Both the Classic and the Tatler closed in the late 1970s; the ground floor cinema premises are now a Burger Bar.

Ian Patterson

## IRISH CINEMAS



Further to Bob Bradshaw's letter on p29 of the last Bulletin regarding Horgan's Picture Theatre in Youghal (Ireland) here is a picture taken by my parents while holidaying in Ireland in 1971, when the cinema was still open. These tiny cinemas seem to have survived much longer in the Irish Republic than in the UK. I imagine that, with what must have been limited finances, they would have run some interesting vintage equipment. All junked, I suppose.

Kevin Wheelan



## RITZ LUTON



I had a walk around to see how work is progressing on the old Ritz this morning. The work is almost complete and I attach some photos. There didn't seem to be any builders on site but there were people going in and out so not sure who they may have been! The commercial premises part of the building has surprised me as it looks really smart. I also liked the name plate so I photographed it. I hope the photos are of interest and when its finally finished it will be good to actually get a photo without a skip in it. {6247}

Margaret Burgoine

## ANDOVER ERROR

Further to the report in Bulletin 56/5 about the closure of the Mecca bingo hall in Andover, the 114-seat cinema referred to was never in the balcony but was built in the left side of the stalls and showed 16mm uncensored films to club members only and was known as the Tatler, opening in March 1971. From the following August the Tatler was restricted to the first half of the week and the cinema, renamed the Classic, was opened to the public and showed more general films. I remember seeing *Kes* and *The Wild Bunch* there after I had missed them when they were shown at Andover's Savoy cinema. Today the building lies boarded up awaiting its fate.

Ian Nash

## MULTIPLEX MASKING



On entering a multiplex auditorium I've become used to being presented with a fixed 'Scope screen with no variable masking. When a Widescreen item is shown the digital projection is relied on to present a firm line to black at the sides of the image. I was therefore very interested when I went to see an iSense presentation at the Odeon Luxe in Telford recently. We did indeed start off with a reasonably sized 'Scope screen with soft digital masking for Widescreen items; not knowing what to expect I was a bit disappointed at the screen size. But just before the feature there was the sight and sound of the hard masking changing dramatically to reveal the promised wall-to-wall and floor to ceiling screen. It was such a large area that 'ordinary' images would have looked lost in the middle. Of course, in olden days the movement would have been hidden by screen tabs but it was all rather nostalgic and, I felt, worthy of note. {23405}

Jeremy Perkins; photo taken October 2018

## SLOUGH ADELPHI

I was interested in Bill Gilbert's letter in the last issue about the Slough Adelphi. I worked for Granada Theatres from 1964-1988 but, like Bill, never worked at the Adelphi. When managers did their training, it included a week devoted to sales, visiting shops and cafes, ending on a Saturday evening with a visit to the Adelphi for ballroom training. I recall doing this in 1967, whilst based at the Granada Bedford. The Adelphi manager then was Brian Longley, who left Granada to manage The Tremeloes.

Sadly, I never saw any of the legendary pop shows at the Adelphi. When I managed the Granada Slough from 1974-1987, I visited the Adelphi to see cabaret acts after the bingo sessions. Artistes I saw included The Bachelors, Joe Longthorne, The Swingin' Blue Jeans and Chas & Dave. Hughie Green judged an Easter Bonnet contest. When I arrived, the audience was in the car park – there had been a bomb scare. The cabaret acts were financed by the breweries Granada traded with.

In the film *Three Hats for Lisa* (1965) there is a short scene (about five minutes) filmed outside the Adelphi, when Joe Brown steals a still from a poster frame outside. The poster on the left advertised wrestling, including Dr Death, who was wrestling promoter Paul Lincoln, who also ran the famous 2i's coffee bar in Old Compton Street, London, where many pop stars stared, including Tommy Steele. The poster on the right advertises the ballroom. Both look authentic.

The film is shown from time to time on *Talking Pictures TV* and is also available on DVD from Amazon [£6.89]. It is a musical film on location around London. It also stars Sid James, Una Stubbs, Peter Bowles and Eric Barker with choreography by Gillian Lynne, music by Eric Rogers and written by Leslie Bricusse and Talbot Rothwell.

R David Simpson

## ARCHIVE THANKS



I am very pleased with David Simpson (assistant archivist). He has searched out details about the Alhambra Dudley Port, Tipton, Staffs. It was here I attended Saturday morning film shows for children between the years of 1939 and 1945. Yes, there was a World War going on but the Alhambra survived until 1965 when it was finally demolished. The last film shown there was a Barbara Windsor one. {54842}

Mary Williams; photo courtesy Ned Williams

## MUSIC HALL FILMS

I recently saw two interesting films on TPTV: *A Little of What You Fancy Does You Good* (1968) and *Top of the Bill* (1971). Both featured interesting cinema and theatre buildings. Worth catching or obtaining the DVD if they are available.

Ian Patterson

## GRAFFITI



I spotted this on the old ABC cinema building in Chester. {24859}

David A Ellis



# SCOTTISH CINEMA COMPARISON



Peebles Playhouse {23291}



Nairn Playhouse {44315}



Perth Kings {51303}

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 over 30 years later. You can see how they have changed. We have given the Cinema Treasures reference numbers so you can look up their history.



Peebles Playhouse in May 2017



Nairn Playhouse on a rainy day in September 2008



Perth Kings in September 2006



# 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](http://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.

## 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.

## 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](https://twitter.com/CTA_Archive).

## NEW ACQUISITIONS

Adrian Gregory has had the great fortune to recently move into the former home of Robert Cromie, architect. What's more he found the following opening programmes in the property and he has kindly donated these to the Archive:

- ◆ Regal Golders Green – 1932
- ◆ Regal Bexleyheath – 1934
- ◆ Ritz Southend-on-Sea – 1935 [R]
- ◆ Royal Court Theatre Club – 1952



Three examples of Robert Cook photos  
[top] ABC Palace Eltham – 30 April 1972  
[middle] Odeon Highgate – 23 September 1972  
[Bottom] Classic Glasgow – 6 June 1974

Paul Hill recently contacted the Archive as he had come into the possession of the cinema photo albums of Robert Cook. He explained how Robert had devoted a great deal of time and money travelling vast distances to photograph cinema buildings and the albums he has donated to the Archive confirm this, as one day he might be photographing cinemas in the South of England and yet only a few days later be in Scotland or Wales, taking images of cinemas in those areas. Collectively the albums contain in excess of two thousand images taken between the early 1970s and early 2000s and contain many interesting and obscure cinemas, many while they were still operating

## 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](mailto:archive@cta-uk.org); if you do not have Internet access call 07971 752807.

Clive Polden, CTA Archivist



# OBITUARIES

## CEZAR DEL VALLE 1945 – 2022

A long-standing member of the CTA, based in Brooklyn, New York. Cezar passed away in August 2022. I first met him back in late-1999 when I decided in my capacity as Visits Coordinator for the CTA that a visit to New York would be a good proposition. So, looking at CTA members in the City who could possibly assist in arranging the visit, I decided to write to Cezar seeking his assistance. Little did I realise I had



certainly selected the right person as it proved to be that he was an ardent historian of the cinemas in New York and especially those in Brooklyn, where he resided. I arranged to meet up with him in New York and we began planning the visit named *Big Theatres in the Big Apple*, which took place over five days in November 2000, attended by 54 CTA members eager to visit the 13 theatres on the itinerary (plus many more exterior photo opportunities and attending the Radio City Music Hall Christmas Show). Cezar toured us for a day to Brooklyn theatres and did another 'Brooklyn Walkabout' on another day, which took us to the world-famous Coney Island.

This was the beginning of a friendship with Cezar and his partner of 30+ years Betty Sword, which has lasted over the years, with them offering me accommodation on the numerous visits I have made to New York. Each of my visits would include at least one day when we would head off on a cinema tour to different parts of the City, which Cezar had pre-planned for me. In October 2002, Cezar and his partner attended the *Tinsel Town Theatres* visit that I had organised for the CTA to Los Angeles, California in October/November 2002. In 2007 Cezar suggested to me that another visit to New York would be a good idea, as there was so much still to see, so again he assisted me with the *Another Bite of the Big Apple* visit in October/November 2007. One of the highlights was a visit to the Loew's New Jersey Theatre to attend an organ prelude and see Boris Karloff in *The Black Cat* at this 3,300-seat movie palace (it was Halloween, one of Cezar's favourite times of year).

In late-2019 Cezar accepted my invitation to present the first of a planned series of illustrated talks by international speakers at Cowcross Street to take place in early-2020. All was set for this to go ahead, then came the Covid-19 pandemic and we had to cancel. I was with Cezar & Betty for two weeks in New York in February 2022 and we decided that it would be most likely possible to reignite the idea of international talks and Cezar would again be first in the series. He had it all prepared and was ready to go. Sadly, this will now not happen.



Cezar jokes as he takes me to a Lower Manhattan straight bar to sample a Gay Beer, July 2019

Cezar had worked as a cinema manager in several Brooklyn Cinemas and published a two-volume book *The Brooklyn Theatre Index* plus a third volume dedicated to the theatres of Coney Island. The first two volumes were reprinted with updates and for the past couple of years he has updated them with more photographs and information and was preparing to publish them. I will miss our tours around Brooklyn, looking at former cinemas, now churches (there are lots of them) or car repair shops or supermarkets. Often Betty would come along to photograph them for Cezar and Cezar always used to ask my opinion and rate what he was showing me. He was fun to be with and the 23 years I have known him as a friend and fellow cinema enthusiast will never be forgotten. RIP Cezar.

Ken Roe

Both photographs courtesy Betty Sword, 2019

## PETER BAYLEY MBE, 85

Peter was a projectionist at the Phoenix, East Finchley, (formerly the Rex) for 50 years, from 1960 to 2010, having started his career at the Odeon, North Finchley in 1953. He was honoured with the MBE in 2001 for services to the cinema industry. Peter featured in a short documentary film *Behind the Light*, made in 2012, which can be viewed at:

[vimeo.com/51736470](https://vimeo.com/51736470)



## RICHARD SKLENAR 76

Richard was the first full-time Executive President of the Theatre Historical Society of America and helped establish their first permanent headquarters at Elmhurst, Illinois in 1991. He was active in the campaigns to save several movie theatres, including the Chicago Theatre. After retiring from THSA, he was a guide for tours of the Chicago Theatre and the long-abandoned Uptown Theatre, Chicago.



## JIM RIGGS 66

Jim was a very popular American theatre organist and was particularly associated with the Paramount Theatre in Oakland, California, where he was staff organist for around a decade from 1989. He did several concert tours of the UK and Australia and in 1996 came over specially to play for a CTA event at the Free Trade Hall, Manchester. Jim accompanied the silent film *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*, an event arranged by Gary Trinder and David Eve to celebrate 100 years of cinema.



Jeremy Buck

# NECROLOGY

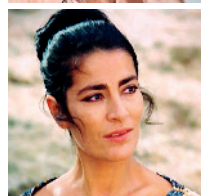
## DAME ANGELA LANSBURY 96

First seen on the big screen in *Gaslight* (1944) for which she was nominated for an Oscar. She was also nominated for *Picture of Dorian Gray* (1945) and *The Manchurian Candidate* (1962). Her other films included *Bedknobs and Broomsticks* (1971) and *The Mirror Crack'd* (1980). She most recently had a cameo role in *Mary Poppins Returns* (2018).



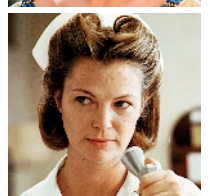
## IRENE PAPAS 93

Irene achieved fame for her roles in *The Guns of Navarone* (1961) and *Zorba the Greek* (1964). She was also in *Anne of the Thousand Days* (1969) and *Captain Corelli's Mandolin* (2001).



## LOUSE FLETCHER 88

Louise won an Oscar for her role as nurse Mildred Ratched in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1985) opposite Jack Nicholson. She went on to appear in *Exorcist II: The Heretic* (1977) and *Brainstorm* (1983). She also had many parts on the small screen.



## ROBBIE COLTRAINED OBE 72

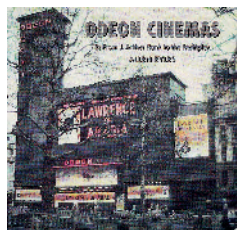
After many minor parts, Robbie appeared in *Nuns on the Run* (1990) and James Bond's *Goldeneye* (1995) and *The World is not Enough* (1999). He is probably best known on the big screen for playing Hagrid in all eight *Harry Potter* movies and on the small screen for *Cracker*, for which he received three BAFTA awards.





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

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## HOLIDAY SNAPS



In response to your request for holiday photos, here are two from a recent trip to Brussels. The Palace [L] is located in the main boulevard in the City centre. Sadly this appears to be a façade only, the interior looks to have been reconstructed. The Mirano [R] is located in St Joost on Avenue Louvain. It appears to be closed at present.

*Sent in by David Barker*



I photographed this building in May 2012 in the Hauptplatz in Leoben, Steiermark in southern Austria. It looks like a former cinema. Does anyone know?

*Harry Rigby*

## MEMBERSHIP

### NEW MEMBERS

We offer a warm welcome to the following new members: Steve Dunk, Lavinia & Neil Bond, Peter Knight and Thomas Allen.

### DONATIONS

Once more members have displayed their generosity by adding a donation to the renewal of their subscriptions. Our sincere thanks go to: JC Barnes, CJ Bird, P Brackley, M Cordner, RD Dakin, RG Dolling, JS Downs MBE, F Fitzjohn, M Gambles, HW Gibbs, P Hake, JL Howarth, MF Jones, MR King, CP Kisicki, S Klabish, A Lazou, PJ Littler, EL Marriage, N Mirza, IP Nash, PR Phillips, NA Pithouse, WR Pratt, G Reywer, JE Roberts, JT Rourke, AS Rossiter, HR Rowley, BC Sinclair, TJ Smith, FD Snart, M Tapsell, PJ Turner, JP Vaux and JP Walrond.

### IN MEMORIAM

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

Keith Skone from Eastleigh a member since 1972;

Peter Bayley MBE from Finchley a member since 1994;

Stuart Jarvis from Abingdon who joined in 1995;

Stewart Cusack from Seaton who joined in 2000;

James Clarkson from Birmingham who joined in 2006 and

Cezar del Valle from New York who joined the CTA in 2020.

We will carry an obituary for Keith Skone in the next Bulletin.

*Ray Ritmeester, Membership Secretary*

## 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

**FOR SALE:** Twenty 600ft 9.5 assorted films, all spooled and in cans. (probably home made). £10 the lot. Buyer collects (East Leeds). Harry Fisher; phone 0113 281 2992

### CINEMA CALENDAR 2023

with 12 colour photos of UK cinemas, taken this Century: Bridgend Odeon multiplex; Great Yarmouth Gem/Windmill; Halifax Odeon; Hanley Odeon; Hartlepool Odeon; Inverurie Victoria; Miles Platting (Manchester) Empress; Nottingham Cavendish; Sheffield (Wincobank) Palace; Sheringham Electric; Southend Rivoli/ABC; Tywyn Assembly Rooms/Magic Lantern.

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# CRITICS' CHOICE

By David Evans

On Saturday 31 March 1945 readers opening their wartime-thin, four-page *News Chronicle* would have found a review by Richard Winnington for a new film *Keep Your Powder Dry* at the prestigious Empire Leicester Square. In this Winnington made reference to the “face-slapping and tantrums of the principles” – Lana Turner, Laraine Day and Susan Peters – who had joined the US Women’s Army Corps for somewhat less than patriotic reasons. Winnington was one of the most respected film critics during the heyday of cinema-going in Britain, where what he wrote in the *News Chronicle* from 1943 to 1953 could sometimes make or break a film at the box office. In this capacity he was joined by two other powerful influences on audiences, Caroline Lejeune at the *Observer* (1928-1960) and Dilys Powell at the *Sunday Times* (1939-1976).



The *News Chronicle* 24 March 1945 – a week earlier than mentioned

Lejeune became film critic at the *Observer* after holding a similar position at the *Manchester Guardian* in the 1920s and gained a reputation for sharp, witty comments about a picture, *Madame Curie* (1943) for example, which she thought made the discovery of radium, by Greer Garson as Madame Curie, “seem almost as glamorous as an encounter with Hedy Lamarr” or the passion-filled Technicolor *Desert Fury* (1947) on which she commented “the only fury I could sense was in my corner of the balcony”. Luckily, for MGM she thought *Meet Me in St Louis* (1944) “a charming picture”.



When Noel Coward’s Technicolored *Blithe Spirit* was released in 1945 Lejeune called it “ninety minutes of concentrated fun” and Dilys Powell in the eight-page *Sunday Times* for 8 April 1945 wrote of it “glowing in Technicolor” at the Odeon Leicester Square. In the same issue, next to advertisements for clothes from fashionable stores such as Harvey Nichols and Dickins and Jones – all stating price and clothing coupon values – she dismissed *Hotel Berlin* at the Warner Leicester Square as having nothing to hold her attention.

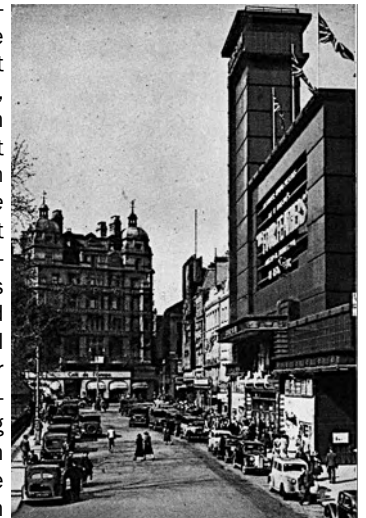


The Warner in 1946

Before this, in 1941, she had rated Disney’s *Fantasia* very highly, commenting that “it takes over two hours but, somehow or other, I’m afraid you have to take the time” and moviegoers did when the picture played its première UK run at the New Gallery Regent Street for five months from July of that year – all due, in no small way, to the positive reviews of Powell and other critics.

As you might expect, not all their reviews got things right. Take *All About Eve* (1950) on which Richard Winnington commented that it

“contains plenty of surface cynicism but no detachment, no edge and no satire...” for a picture that won an Oscar for its director, Joseph L Mankiewicz and which was one of the main attractions at the British box office in 1951. In Dilys Powell’s review for *A Double Life* (1948) she wrote that while “it is essentially skilled, yet the central situation is artificial” and this for a picture whose star, Ronald Colman, dominating the central situation of the plot, won an Oscar for his performance. Even a picture that some found compelling for its portrayal of two lovers with facial disfigurements, which cease to exist when they look at each other through adoring eyes, could be dismissed with faint praise from Caroline Lejeune as “a silly



A postcard of the Odeon Leicester Square in 1945

film with considerable charm...” Nevertheless, she certainly hit the mark when commenting on Orson Welles’ first two pictures – *Citizen Kane* (1941) and *The Magnificent Ambersons* (1942). When reviewing the former she commented that “this is probably the most exciting film that has come out of Hollywood in twenty-five years” and when reviewing the latter that it was “rich in ideas many will want to copy”. Neither was successful at the British box office but at least ‘Kane’ had a full release on the Gaumont circuit and ‘Ambersons’, although it did not have a release in a West End cinema, had a limited one via the same group.

Surely, to end this article, the comments made by Richard Winnington in his review for *Adventure* (1945) – Clark Gable’s comeback picture after WWII service – “fifty years of the cinema and this is where we have landed” demonstrate the ability of this generation of critics to sum up the worth of a picture in the small amount of space allotted to them in the ultra-thin newspapers of the time. They are sorely missed today...

**Editor’s Note:** I seem to remember that in 1965 some critic dismissed *The Sound of Music* as a “dim little flick”.