

What you said :

Nathan Williams : "Wow!! I hope this goes ahead. I remember going to this cinema with my gran and grandad all the time, what a place. The pure excitement of going through the double doors and smelling the popcorn, buying our tickets and running up the stairs to the screen. I miss the intermissions!! Can't wait to visit the cinema again when it is restored."

Sharon Pocklington : "I remember taking the children to see Care Bear movie and dropping off to sleep ha ha and all the kids screaming at arachnophobia don't know which frightened me more. Can't wait to take the grandchildren to a matinee."

Mel Darby : "I used to love the Saturday showing of kids films me and my brother would eagerly wait in line to be let in and then we'd take our seats for an afternoon of fun. I remember at Christmas Santa used to come on the stage part in the break."

Cheryl Parker : "I remember going when I was little. It was like a treat when we were younger and it would be nice to see it running again."

Stuart Henson-Pocklington : "I have great memories of the Byron and went there countless times as a youngster. It is a shame that this well-known local amenity has been left to rot."

Radio Interviewee : "Going to the cinema was a bit like going to the theatre, it was nice, people crowding in, crowding out I think it was just a nice social occasion."

Clem Humphreys : "In the latter part of the 1930s a new cinema, the Byron, was built which opened our eyes to unbelievable luxury. There were carpets and plush seats to a standard few of us had ever seen let alone experienced."

William Burton : "I remember a line stretching to the top of Duke Street to get in to see Saturday Night Fever !!! "

Bill Storey : "I remember the PG monkeys coming one Saturday probably early 1960s. Also in early 1970s we went most Sunday evenings to the horror movie then Across the road to the chippy . Great times."

David Newton : "My Dad taking me to see two Bond movies followed by a trip to the Wakes on the Rec - must have been very early 70's. Tub of ice cream at the interval from the lady with the tray."



Notable Events & Films from 1936

Edward VIII succeeds British king George V.

Fred Perry Champion of the All-England Club (Wimbledon Tennis)

Adolf Hitler opens 11th Olympic Games in Berlin.

The world's first regular high definition service began transmitting to the 100 or so TV sets available in Britain.

Noel Coward's "Astonished Heart" premieres in London.

The Hoover Dam is completed.

Spiffire makes its 1st flight (Eastleigh Aerodrome in Southampton).

"Peter & Wolf" premieres in Moscow.

Amy Johnson arrives in Croydon from S Africa in record 4d 16h.

Queen Mary completes its maiden voyage, arriving in NY.

Jesse Owens of US sets 100 meter record at 10.2.

A major breach of the Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal in England sends millions of gallons of water cascading 200 feet into the River Irwell.

Spanish Civil War begins, Gen Francisco Franco led uprising.

1st transatlantic round-trip air flight.

The first edition of Life is published.

London's Crystal Palace (built 1851) destroyed by fire.

Pacifist/anti fascist writer Carl Von Ossietzky sent to concentration camp, awarded Nobel Peace Prize.

Edward VIII signs Instrument of Abdication, giving up British throne to marry Wallis Simpson.

Edward VIII announces in a radio broadcast that he is abdicating the British throne to marry Wallis Simpson.

"Green Horne" radio show is 1st heard on WXYZ Radio in Detroit.

1st radioactive substance produced synthetically (radium E).

Felix the Cat, Cartoon Character, by Van Beuren from Otto Messmer.

The world's first superhero, The Phantom, makes his first appearance in comics.

1st flight of airship Hindenburg, Germany.

"Mr Deeds Goes to Town" Longfellow Deeds, a simple-hearted Vermont tuba player, inherits a fortune and has to contend with opportunist city slickers.

"Flash Gordon" Three earthlings visit the planet Mongo to thwart the evil schemes of Emperor Ming the Merciless.

"The Great Ziegfeld" This biography follows the ups and downs of Florenz Ziegfeld, famed producer of extravagant stage revues.

Rodgers & Hart's musical "On Your Toes," premieres in NYC.

International Surrealist Exhibition opens in London.

Empire State Building emanates high definition TV-343 lines.

The Jarrow March sets off for London.

Photo Credits

1937 Photo courtesy of the Cinema Theatre Association Archive (Front Cover)

2013 Photo © David Heathcote (Front Cover)

2013 Seating © richboxfrenzy via Flickr

THE BYRON CINEMA



1937 / 2013



* Visit: http://www.jannaludlow.co.uk/Art_Deco/Hucknall_Byron.html

* Facebook :

<https://www.facebook.com/byronprojectHucknall>

* Pamphlet Author : © J Anna Ludlow

THE BYRON CINEMA HISTORY

OPENING NIGHT—1936



After a 5 year delay, the Byron Cinema opened its doors to the public on Monday, November 2nd 1936. The film chosen for this great occasion was "The Littlest Rebel" starring Shirley Temple. Owing to the delayed opening, the Byron Super Cinema demanded the 'best of everything' for its 1,250 patrons. Luxurious surroundings, plush seating and carpets gave rise to the 'consensus of opinion that this was a delightful house of rest and amusement'. Ample leg room had been factored in to ensure the

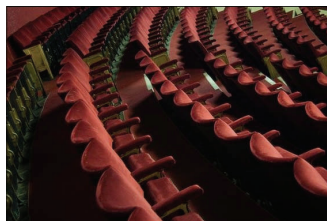
'utmost comfort' for patrons to enjoy the visual and acoustical extravaganza provided by the use of the latest in sound systems to accommodate the new sensational 'talkies'. Before taking their seats the patrons were met at the entrance by a doorman in appropriate livery and those lucky enough to attend on the first day enjoyed the hospitality, consisting of sandwiches and tea, of the cinema management team. They also received, on exiting the premises, a souvenir programme to remember their visit. But this was not all; in the interval the patrons were treated to a performance by the cinema's resident organist. Because of the luxury afforded by the Byron, the range of films and the prices to suit all pockets it proved an exceptionally affordable venue. Pathé newsreels and cartoons intermingled with popular 'Road to ...' films starring Crosby, Hope and Dorothy Lamour through to such classics as 'The Maltese Falcon' starring the incomparable Humphrey Bogart, Peter Lorre and Sydney Greenstreet, still enjoyed today.



20th / 21st Century Mixed Fortunes

One of the unavoidable global developments of the late 1930s was the advent of the second world war. The government immediately decreed that all cinemas and theatres should close owing to the numbers that might be killed if a building was bombed. This was quickly rescinded and The Byron retained its use as a cinema to disseminate information, keep up moral and provide respite to those involved in any form of war work. The armed forces, far from home, stationed close by and those returning for a much needed Rest & Recuperation period also found escaping to the cinema beneficial. The architectural style of the building allowed for a siren to be mounted on the roof. The patrons inside the cinema were advised (by screen flash) that the film would continue to run but that they were free to leave if they so desired (no mention of a refund is made).

Between the end of the war and October 1967 the Byron Cinema led an unexceptional existence despite offering a variety of entertainment in addition to showing films. There were 'live' shows featuring big bands, magicians, hypnotists and the like. But the days of 'a good night out' were numbered and the Byron closed for alterations.



When it re-opened three months later capacity had been halved and only the balcony area with 430 seats remained. The former stalls had been converted, like so many cinemas of this period, into a bingo and social club. Philosophically speaking this might have been the only

alternative to ensure the Byron's survival—from the Hucknall Torkard Times wise words "Better unsympathetic alterations than lose or possibly face the closure of Hucknall's only cinema." In 1971 the Byron was fitted with the latest in technical development, the floating screen across magnetic sound. Were the Byron's fortunes on the rise again? Unfortunately not, as only six years later in 1977 the cinema operation was closed for several weeks. New leaseholders, with experience of running the Savoy in Lenton, re-opened the Byron and it continued to function in a haphazard manner, survived further changes of ownership and even managed a 50th Anniversary celebration of the 1949 film 'The Bad Lord Byron' in 1999. In 2003 the cinema was promised another facelift and rejuvenation. On 28th January 2011 the Byron Cinema closed its doors for the last time.

On the last day of July 2013 a public meeting was convened which resulted in the formation of:

The Byron Project 2013 Mission Statement:

"The Byron Project seeks to re-connect the richly diverse community of Hucknall with its traditional and innovative heritage in the performing Arts by promoting and re-creating the Byron Cinema as a centre of excellence."

By reading this leaflet you will be helping to make the Mission Statement a reality.



Lord Byron

Famous for being infamous as well as a literary great, Lord Byron is buried in the churchyard of St Mary Magdalene in the centre of Hucknall.

Dennis Price is one of a long line of actors to have portrayed this colourful figure after whom the cinema is named.

The Scala Cinema

Hucknall's Scala Picture House originally opened as the Pilot Palace on 24th February 1913. In its heyday, The Scala provided two showings on Saturdays in addition to a matinee and another on Wednesday. Tickets ranged from three pence to reserved



seats for one shilling and three pence. The Scala survived when the Byron was built but another local cinema, the Empire, was turned into a dance hall. Both remaining cinemas had been equipped for the 'talkies' and it is recorded that

the Scala had been fitted with the British-Houston Sound Equipment re-opening with 'The Desert Song' starring John Boles. The 'Skay-la' as it was known locally underwent a facelift in 1930, proved a hugely popular venue during the Hucknall Carnival of 1935 and closed its doors in 1957. Demolished some 50 years later the Scala never regained its status as a cinema.

Eric Coates

Born in Hucknall Eric Coates (1886-1957) is fondly remembered for the iconic 'Calling all Workers' and even if you're not sure if you recognize his music the theme to 'Desert Island Discs' and the music score to 'The Dam Busters' are two of his most recognizable compositions.

