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**THE ROY BENTLEY COLLECTION:  
DOCUMENTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS**

**CX 165 and CP157**

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CX165

1936 -1993

**The Roy Bentley Collection - manager  
of the Odeon/Astra Cinema 1954 -1973**

Roy Bentley began his career as a theatre organist in the North of England. After five and a half years in the forces he returned to the Majestic Cinema Ashton in the 1940s. In the early 1950s he was the manager of the Gaumont Cinema in Coventry but with the amalgamation of Gaumont-British and the Odeon cinemas when they were bought by J. Arthur Rank the firm's policy was to move former Gaumont-British managers to Odeon cinemas and vice-versa. Roy Bentley was sent to the Odeon in Llandudno on a six month contract in 1954. He worked there as manager and sometime organist on the famous Christie organ until 1973. He died in 2003 aged 90.

The collection includes a Cost Sheet book containing articles and photographs pertaining to the Odeon/Astra, personal items belonging to Mr. Bentley, miscellaneous documents relating to various posts had held, personal letters, newspaper articles relating to the cinema and articles relating to cinema organs.

[See also CP157 & CXT5]

CX165/1

1955 -1957

**Scrap Book**

using a Circuit Management Association Advertising Cost Sheet Book in which articles from newspapers and photographs have been placed relating to the cinema and theatre chiefly the Odeon which later became the Astra cinema.

CX165/1/1

1956 Oct 6 -18

ARTICLES:  
in the Llandudno and District Advertiser (Oct.6) and the North Wales Weekly News about the Tory Conference. [PAGE 1]

CX165/1/2	1956 Oct 4	ARTICLE: in the <i>Weekly News</i> with the headline 'Llandudno All Set for Its Biggest Conference'. It relates to the preparations for the arrival of 4,000 delegates attending the National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations. [PAGE 2]
CX165/1/3	1955 Jan 15	ARTICLE: in the <i>Coventry Evening Telegraph</i> with the headline 'Cinema Manager's New Appointment' relating Roy Bentley's transfer to the Odeon Cinema, Llandudno. [PAGE 3]
CX165/1/4	1955	REPORT: and photos of the retirement of Mr. W. O. "Bill" Jackson from the management of the Llandudno Odeon due to ill health. The report is printed in the publication entitled <i>Circle</i> issue 11 dated 1955 - the house Magazine of the Circuits Management Association within the Rank Organization. A press photo shows Mr. Jackson being presented with a soda syphon by the Chief of Staff, Mr. Andrews with the rest of the staff looking on.
CX165/1/5	1955	ARTICLE: in the <i>Pioneer</i> dated Feb 24th in the section 'My Job and I' is about Jean Whitehead, Albert Hotel Madoc Street, Llandudno, the projectionist at the Odeon Cinema, includes a photo. There is a similar article and a photo from the <i>Circle</i> publication issue 11. [PAGE 5]

- CX165/1/6 [1955 -56] PHOTOGRAPHS:  
of a presentation of a tea set to Pat Williams, a salesgirl at the Odeon Cinema who was leaving to get married. The gift was presented by Evelyn Bevan " a great personal friend of the bride-to-be" whilst the rest of the staff including Roy Bentley looked on. One of the photos appeared in the publication *Circle* . [PAGE 6]
- CX165/1/7 1956 ARTICLE:  
and photos in the *Circle* publication issue 18 headlined 'Friends and Family' relating how Mrs. Boole and Mrs. Jones have attended every Sunday concert at the Odeon Llandudno since 1942 and almost always occupied the same two seats. The photos show Mr. Bentley presenting the ladies with a box of chocolates each.
- CX165/1/8 1955 Dec 17 ARTICLE:  
and photo in the *Llandudno and District Advertiser* showing Roy Bentley congratulating Jess Yates on his recent appointment as producer with the BBC TV service. The picture was taken in the Odeon Cinema where Mr. Yates had been the Children's Cinema Club organist. A press photo of the same shot is also on the page with the information that Jess Yates was responsible for producing the stage prologue to the film 'Cockleshell Heroes' on the occasion of its Royal Premiere at the Empire Leicester Square. [PAGE 8]

- CX165/1/9 [1956 Sep] ARTICLE:  
and photo with the headline 'Llandudno winner of the Weekly News £50 prize'. The *Weekly News* prize offered in conjunction with the Llandudno West Shore Lido's 'Miss Wales' competition was won by Mrs. Mary Edwards, 14 Dyffryn Road, Llandudno for guessing the winner. She was presented with the cheque on the stage of the Odeon Theatre on Saturday at 8.40pm. There is the photo of the winner of the 'Miss Wales' title, Miss Christine Yates. [PAGE 9]
- CX165/1/10 [late 1950s] NOTICES  
issued by the management of the Odeon theatre, Llandudno regarding improvements made to increase the temperature during the cold weather.
1. Showing alterations to the heating system..
  2. The erection of a shield of heavy curtain material over the rear of the screen and sound speakers. (Both notices mention photographs showing the work involved which are absent.)
  3. Asking the public to make comments about the improvements. [PAGE 10 -10A]

CX165/1/11

[late 1950s]

NOTICES

as for CX165/1/10.

1. Mentions the seamstress hand sewing heavy material used as a shield. Refers to a photo on opposite page [11A] showing portion of the 2,000 square feet of material used.

2. This notice refers to 2 photos on page[11A]

a) Scenery doors in the backstage area sealed with packing material and an old carpet to prevent draughts.

b) New type of extra strength door return spring that have been fitted on all main entrance doors. [PAGE 11-11A]

CX165/1/12

[late 1950s]

NOTICES

as for CX165/1/10. Information relating to photos on the opposite page [12A]

1. The main boiler

2. New type of motor on the circular pumps to increase circulating speed of hot water.

3. New type of electric pump for the underground boiler to enable it to operate fully even at times when high tides and heavy rain collide.[PAGE 12-12A]

- |            |             |  |
|------------|-------------|--|
| CX165/1/13 | 1955 Dec    | <p>ARTICLES:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Relating to Roy Bentley's appeal to patrons to hang toys on the Christmas tree which stood in the foyer of the Odeon Theatre. The toys were to be distributed among the young patients in the hospital on Christmas Eve.</li><li>2. Article and photo in <i>Circle</i> publication showing Roy Bentley presenting the matron of Llandudno General Hospital with a brand new radio "from generous friends at Llandudno Odeon" - re the appeal.</li><li>3. Article and photo relating to above printed in the <i>Llandudno &amp; District Advertiser</i> Dec 17 1955.[PAGE 13]</li></ol> |
| CX165/1/14 | 1955 Dec    | <p>ARTICLE:<br/>and photo in the <i>North Wales Weekly News</i> as for CX165/1/13.</p>   |
| CX165/1/15 | 1955 Dec 31 | <p>ARTICLE:<br/>in the <i>Llandudno &amp; District Advertiser</i> with the headline 'Christmas In Llandudno Was Gay' - a report on one of the busiest Christmases for many years in Llandudno. There is also a mention of Roy Bentley presenting the Phillips wireless set to the Children's Ward on behalf of the staff and patrons.</p> <p>Also included - a photo of the presents collected in the Odeon Christmas Tree Appeal.[PAGE 15]</p>  |



- CX165/1/16                      1955 Dec 31                      PHOTOS:  
1. In the *Llandudno & District Advertiser* showing Mr. Andrews, Chief of Staff handing a doll to a young patient at Llandudno Hospital on Christmas Eve whilst nurses , an usherette and 2 children look on. The gift was part of the annual distribution of present from the Odeon Theatre.  
  
2. Press photo as for CX165/1/13.  
[PAGE 16]
- CX165/1/17                      1956 Jan 21                      ARTICLE:  
in the *Llandudno & District Advertiser* headlined 'No Teddy Boys, Bop or Jive at Winter Gardens'. The management of the Winter Gardens Ballroom were refusing admission to an youths wearing 'Teddy Boy' suits and bop and jive were "absolutely forbidden". Also on the page a copy of a letter printed in the *Advertiser* from MRD, Mostyn Street, Llandudno. The author remarks on the pleasure s/he felt at the barring of Teddy Boys from the Winter Gardens Balroom. [PAGE 17]
- CX165/1/18                      [late 1950s]                      ARTICLE:  
and photo in the *Llandudno & District Advertiser* headlined 'Restoration of Odeon's Christie Organ'. According to the article - the organ, believed to be the only operating theatre organ in North Wales, was in bad condition. It also mentions that Roy Bentley often played the organ especially at Christmas time in connection with the annual appeal for Llandudno Hospital. [PAGE 18]

CX165/1/19

1956 Jun

ARTICLES:

1. From the *Circle* publication includes photo showing Mr. Bentley helping to replace a snare drum in the organ chamber during the recent rebuilding of the Odeon's £10,000 organ.

2. Two pages of the *Journal of the Cinema Organ Society* showing the stop key units of the Llandudno Odeon Cinema Organ with Norman Fowler fitting a new junction board to the complete pedal cable. [loose]

3. Article headlined 'The Organ in the Odeon Theatre Llandudno' by Norman Fowler. Mr. Fowler had been sent to work on this organ and gives a very detailed description of it. He also mentions Robinson Cleaver who held his famous Sunday concerts throughout the summer season at the Odeon theatre.

4. Four photos of aspects of the organ components including shots of Norman Fowler working on various parts of the organ. [loose] [PAGE 19]

CX165/1/20

1956

PHOTOS

of the Llandudno Odeon Christie organ during the restoration, some including Roy Bentley and Norman Fowler. [9 photos] [PAGE 20]

CX165/1/21

1956 Apr 21

ARTICLE

and photo in the *Llandudno & District Advertiser* headlined 'Cinema Staff Above Average Courtesy.'

The staff of the Odeon Theatre were presented with the 'service and courtesy star plaque'. The photo shows Roy Bentley receiving the plaque from the district manager Mr. A Keen whilst the staff look on. [PAGE 21]

- CX165/1/22                      1956                      PHOTOS:
1. Photo in the publication *Circle* issue 22 as for CX165/21.
  2. Press photo as above. [PAGE 22]
- CX165/1/23                      1956                      ARTICLES:
1. From the *Weekly News* Feb 16 headlined "'Season Only" Rating?' relating to a review of the rating system so that holiday premises could be rated on a seasonal and not a year-round basis. The review was staged at the Odeon Theatre on Feb 29.
  2. From the *Llandudno & District Advertiser* Feb 18 headlined 'Mass Protest Meeting Against New Valuation'. Staged as above.
  3. From the *Llandudno & District Advertiser* Feb 18 headlined 'Essays Won Them Prizes - Film Show to boost milk.' Reporting a special film show attended by thousands of children at the Odeon theatre where Councillor Charles Payne, chairman of the council, presented awards for the essay and painting competitions which were held in connection with the June Dairy Festival. [PAGE 23]

- CX165/1/24                      1956 Feb 25 -  
Mar 3                              ARTICLES:
1. From the *Llandudno & District Advertiser* headlined 'All Ratepayers Should Attend This Meeting' - relating to the mass meeting to protest against the rates revaluation held at the Odeon Theatre, Llandudno on Wed Feb 29th.
  2. From the above dated March 3rd. headlined 'Crippling Effect of Assessments on Seaside Traders - Four "Protest" resolutions Passed at Odeon Mass Meeting'. More than a 1,000 ratepayers from North Wales coastal resorts passed the resolutions protesting against the revaluation of their property.[PAGE 24]]
- CX165/1/25                      1956 Jul 13                      ARTICLE:
- from the *Pioneer* headlined 'Sid Phillips at Llandudno'. Sid Phillips and his band appeared in the Sunday Concert at the Odeon playing "Dixie Style" music. [PAGE 25]
- CX165/1/26                      1956 Aug 16 -  
18                                      ARTICLES:
1. From the *Llandudno & District Advertiser* headlined 'One Hundred Patrons Fainted During Film Showing'. It reports just under a hundred faintings during the 14 days run of the film 'Reach for the Sky'. The majority of the cases were men and they always occurred at the same time each evening. The paper reports a similar reaction at other cinemas.
  2. From the *North Wales Weekly News* dated Aug 16 with the headline 'First Aid at Cinema' reporting on the same phenomenon as above.[PAGE 26]

CX165/1/27

1956 Aug 9 -25

ARTICLES:

1. From the *Llandudno & District Advertiser* headlined 'Basements were Flooded by Torrential Rain'. It reports the flooding and power failure in the Odeon Cinema. "The water reached a depth of five feet at one time and some even seeped into the cinema organ".

2. From the *North Wales Weekly News* headlined 'Black-out in Llandudno' reporting on the electricity power cut which affected all properties between Gloddaeth Avenue and the Great Orme. The Odeon cinema switched to emergency lighting but the film show was interrupted for about one and a half hours. Down in the Winter Gardens Ballroom there was "dancing in the dark". The Palladium cinema's main film was also interrupted.[PAGE 27]

CX165/1/28

1956 Aug 9 - 11

ARTICLES:

in the *Weekly News* and the *Llandudno & District Advertiser* as for CX165/1/27. [PAGE 28]

CX165/1/29

1956 Sep 26

ARTICLE :

1. Headlined 'Weekly News £50 prize won by woman reader' - The *Weekly News* offered this prize for listing in order of merit the 7 winners of the weekly heats of the Lido bathing beauty competition and thereby help to decide to whom the Lido title 'Miss Wales 1956' would go. The winner Mrs. N.M. Hammerton, Jasmine, Dundonald Road, Colwyn Bay was presented with a cheque on the stage of the

Odeon Theatre Llandudno.

2 .Press photo of Miss Wales, Elizabeth Lee of Hoylake receiving a cheque from Mrs. Lilian Taylor (one of the Fayre sisters and producer of operatic shows) watched by Victor Williams Llandudno's Publicity Manager.

3. Press photos of Roy Bentley and his assistant Mr. H.B. Walker with Elizabeth Lee [Miss Wales 1956] who is signing the visitors' book after being crowned.

[PAGE 29]

CX165/1/30

[1956]

PRESS PHOTO:

of an unknown young girl presenting a bouquet of flowers to Mrs. Lilian Taylor whilst a young woman in a swimsuit [beauty queen] looks on - taken in the Odeon Theatre, Llandudno.

2. Page from the *Circle* publication showing the same photo as for CX165/1/29 item 3.

- |            |             |  |
|------------|-------------|--|
| CX165/1/31 | 1956 Sep 20 | <p>ARTICLE:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. From the <i>Weekly News</i> headlined 'Weekly News £50 prize won by woman reader as for CX165/1/29.</li> <li>2. Press photo as for above.</li> <li>3. Press photo taken at the Odeon Theatre L-R Roy Bentley, Mrs. Lilian Taylor, Elizabeth Lee, Mrs. Hammerton, (competition winner in Weekly News) and Victor Williams Llandudno's Publicity Manager.</li> </ol>   |
| CX165/1/32 | 1956 Sep    | <p>ARTICLE:<br/>as for CX165/1/29. Photos were also included with the article:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mrs. Hammerton receiving a cheque from the editor of the Weekly News with Victor Williams.</li> <li>2. Roy Bentley with Mrs. Lilian Taylor, 'Miss Wales', Mrs. Hammerton and Victor Williams.</li> <li>3. Press photo as for CX165/1/29 item 3.</li> <li>4. Press photo as for no. 1 above.<br/>[PAGE 32]</li> </ol>  |
| CX165/1/33 | 1956 Oct 13 | <p>ARTICLE:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. From the <i>Llandudno &amp; District Advertiser</i> headlined 'Grand Climax to Tory Conference'. It reports on the world-wide publicity given to Llandudno as the climax to the conference was relayed from the Pier Pavilion to the Winter Gardens Ballroom and the Odeon Theatre enabling delegates to see and hear the Prime Minister through a closed circuit television.</li> <li>2. Photo from the publication <i>Circle</i> of the Chief of Staff Mr. Andrews with Prime Minister Eden and Lady Eden visiting the Llandudno Odeon during the Conservative party conference.[PAGE 33]</li> </ol> |

- CX165/1/34                      1956 Oct 16- 20    LETTERS:  
1.From the Chairman of the Council to Roy Bentley thanking him for his assistance during the Conservative Conference.
- 2.From R. D. Matten, agent and secretary forthe Cardiff West Conservative & Unionist Association to Roy Bentley thanking him and his staff for their co-operation in connection with the party conference and in particular R.D. Matten's tasks at the Odeon [he was Chief steward for the Pavilion,Odeon Theatre and Ballroom.[PAGE 34]
- CX165/1/35                      1956 Oct 15 -29    LETTERS:  
1. From C.S. Streatfield, Secretary for the National Union of Conservative & Unionist Associations to Roy Bentley expressing gratitude for his co-operation during the party conference.
- 2.From Oliver Poole, Chairman of the Party thanking Roy Bentley for the "excellent arrangements at the Odeon during the Party Conference." [PAGE 35]
- CX165/1/36                      [1956]                      PHOTO  
of the front of the Odeon Theatre undergoing refurbishment with Roy Bentley in the foreground. [PAGE 36]



CX165/1/37                      1956  
Dec 13 -15

ARTICLE:

1. from the *Pioneer* (Dec 14th) headlined 'Cinema Patrons Help Refugees'. It reports that £80 was collected at the Odeon Theatre in aid of the Hungarian Refugee Fund. Roy Bentley also made an appeal to patrons to make gifts of money and toys to be hung on the Christmas tree in the Odeon foyer to be distributed among the patients of the Childrens' Ward of Llandudno General Hospital on Christmas morning.
2. Photo in the *Llandudno & District Advertiser* [Dec 15<sup>th</sup>] showing Councillor Charles Payne, Chairman of the Llandudno Council receiving a cheque for over £80 pounds from Roy Bentley for the refugee fund.
3. Letter from Charles Payne to Roy Bentley thanking him and his staff for "their efforts during the appeal for the Hungarian Relief Fund." [PAGE 37]

CX165/1/38                      1956 Dec 13

PHOTOS:

1. From the *Weekly News* as for CX165/1/37.
2. Press photo as above. [PAGE 38]

CX165/1/39                      1955

PRESS PHOTO:

1. Of the staff of the Odeon, Llandudno at a presentation of a [wedding] gift to a member of the staff.
2. Notice entitled- 'Annual Christmas Tree Collection 1955' informing patrons of the result of the Childrens' Ward appeal signed by Roy Bentley. [PAGE 39]

ARTICLES:

- |            |             |  |
|------------|-------------|--|
| CX165/1/40 | 1956 Dec    | <p>1. Article in <i>Llandudno Advertiser</i> entitled 'Gifts for the Christmas Tree?' As for CX165/1/39.</p> <p>2. Article in the <i>Weekly News</i> as above.</p> <p>3. Article in the <i>Pioneer</i> as above.<br/>[PAGE 40]</p>   |
| CX165/1/41 | 1956 Dec 14 | <p>ARTICLE:<br/>from the <i>North Wales Pioneer</i> headlined - 'Colwyn Bay Odeon to Close Knocked Out By Tax Demands'. It reports the closure on the 5th Jan of the 1,700 seater cinema "put out of action, say the Rank Organization by crippling entertainment tax." It also mentions that six months previously the town had 6 cinemas.</p> <p>Under the same headline is a column entitled 'This is serious says Mayor' - Councillor Knowles expresses his opinion on the closure.[PAGE 41]</p> |
| CX165/1/42 | 1956 Dec 15 | <p>ARTICLE:<br/>from the <i>Llandudno &amp; District Advertiser</i> headlined 'Colwyn Bay Odeon Closing' as for CX165/1/41. Also reports Roy Bentley stating that the Odeon Llandudno would not close. [PAGE 42]</p>   |
| CX165/1/43 | 1957 Jan 26 | <p>PHOTOS:</p> <p>1. From the <i>Manchester Evening News</i> with the headline 'Film Star - With Star to Prove IT'. It shows the chairman of the council Charles Payne, presenting a Rank organisation "Courtesy Star" to Miss Tansy White of Penrhynside, Llandudno who worked at the Odeon Cinema.</p> <p>2. Press photo of the above. [PAGE 43]</p>   |

- CX165/1/44                      1957 Jan 24 -                      PHOTO:  
26    and article from the *Weekly News* as for  
CX165/1/43.
- CX165/1/45                      1957 Jan 31 -                      PRESS PHOTO:  
Feb 14    1. Of [Lieutenant W.C. Rudd] and some  
ratings of Llandudno's Sea Cadet Corps]  
with Roy Bentley looking at an exhibition  
of photographs of R.W. Codman the chief  
ranger on the HMS Exeter in connection  
with the film showing at the Odeon entitled  
- 'The Battle of the River Plate'. Mr Bentley  
is pointing to the hat that belonged to the  
late R.W. Codman.
2. Article from the *Weekly News* headlined  
'A Film of Memories' - it reports that Mr.  
Herbert Codman and his wife of 'Rookery  
Nook', Cefn Y Bryn, Llanrhos were guests  
of Roy Bentley at a viewing of the 'Battle  
of the River Plate' - an event in which their  
son took part.
3. Article from *Weekly News* headlined  
'Famous Battle' - reporting 38 sea -cadets  
and their and their Co. Lieutenant W.C.  
Rudd accepted Roy Bentley's invitation to  
see the film 'The Battle of the River Plate.'  
[PAGE 45]
- CX165/1/46                      [1957]                      ARTICLES:  
1. From the *Weekly News* under the column  
'Coast and Countryside' headlined 'The  
Cinemas have a good case' by "Gleaner"  
commenting anout the recent closure of the  
Odeon Cinema, Colwyn Bay and the  
entertainment tax levied at cinemas.
2. From the above under the column  
'Letters' headlined Colwyn Bay's Future'  
sent by J. Davies. It makes mention of the  
closure of the Odeon Cinema. Colwyn  
Bay.[PAGE 46]

CX165/1/47	1957 Mar 9	<p>ARTICLE:  from the <i>Llandudno &amp; District Advertiser</i> headlined 'Closing of Cinemas - [Threat] to Resorts' reporting the closure of 300 cinemas over a period of 15 months with a mention of the Colwyn Bay closures. There is a quote from Roy Bentley regarding the "problem of Entertainment Tax and the importance of the cinema in a holiday town."</p>
CX165/2	1936 - 1998	<p><b><u>Memorabilia of personal items which belonged to Roy Bentley, Manager of the Odeon/Astra Cinema.</u></b>  <b><u>It includes personal documents, letters, newspaper articles with photos, and programmes.</u></b></p>
CX165/2/1	1936 -1978	<p>BUNDLE:  of personal items belonging to Roy Bentley including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.His driving licence.</li> <li>2.A bill for a new Vauxhall Victor De Luxe from Slaters Garage, Abergele.</li> <li>3.Letter regarding the lease of a flat - No.1 Birklands - from Henderson &amp; Hallmark, Solicitors, Llandudno.</li> <li>4. Two Odeon Theatres '15yrs' Loyal Service badges.</li> <li>5. Ration Book for fuel dated 1947.</li> <li>6. Roy Bentley's business cards (3 copies)</li> <li>7. Two business cards belonging to artistes.</li> </ol>

CX165/2/2	1940 -47	<p>BUNDLE: of miscellaneous documents relating to post Roy Bentley obtained mainly as an organist during and after the war including :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A post with the Royal Air Force - 'Ordre de Mission'.</li> <li>2. Telegrams</li> <li>3. Theatre Programme</li> <li>4. Letters</li> </ol>
CX165/2/3	[late 1940's]	<p>NEWSPAPER ARTICLE: in an unknown local newspaper covering Ashton-under-lyne, Dukenfield and Stalybridge area reporting Roy Bentley's return to the Majestic Cinema, Ashton as theatre organist after five and a half years in the Forces. Includes a picture of Mr. Bentley at the organ.[2 copies]</p>
CX165/2/4	1941 - 1947	<p>BUNDLE OF LETTERS: to Roy Bentley from personal friends. Several are addressed to him as Corporal Bentley, Ensa Entertainment, Upper Norwood, London and are from people who worked in cinemas in Yorkshire and Lancashire. Other letters are from touring provincial entertainers, friends he made during his time with ENSA, fellow organists and girlfriends.</p>

CX165/2/5

1973 -1976

BUNDLE:

1. Newsheets relating to various cinemas in Cheshire and Lancashire in the Astra/Hutchinson Group where changes have occurred ie. becoming multi-cinemas and or incorporating bingo halls.

2. Programme for 'Mother Goose' at the Opera House, Buxton and a poster for the same venue advertising two James Bond films showing in the cinema.

3. Supplement from the *Manchester Evening News* entitled 'The Good Old Days' included a photo of a young Jess Yates.

CX165/2/6

1994 Dec 1

ARTICLE:

from the *Weekly News* headlined 'Final Curtain Closes on a Backstage Star'. A report of the death of Miss Alice Cimatti at 83 yrs old. She had worked at the Llandudno Pier Pavilion for more than 50yrs. It also mentions that this was the year that the "run-down pier building was destroyed in a ferocious blaze".

CX165/2/7

1956 Oct

BOOKLET:

about the Conservative Conference held in Llandudno and how the Odeon Theatre and Winter Gardens were used as 'over-flow' halls during the conference. Proceedings were relayed from the main hall to Odeon through a 'closed-circuit' television link and pictured projected to the cinema screen. Voting results were reported through G.P.O telephone link.

During this time the theatre was using bannerettes, bulletin boards and quads to draw attention to the entertainment tax extorted by the government and the threat of closure to many cinemas because of it.

The booklet contains photos:

1. Of the equipment used for the relaying of the conference.
2. Various photos of Sir Anthony and Lady Eden, Hon. R.A. Butler and Peter Thomas (local MP Conway Division) some including Roy Bentley.
3. Photos of bannerettes, bulletin boards etc. re the entertainment tax.
3. Photo of a staff outing in 1956.
4. Copies of letters from members of the Conservative Party thanking Roy Bentley for the excellent arrangements and assistance during the conference.

CX165/2/8

1957 Jan 19

ARTICLE:

from the *Llandudno & District Advertiser* headlined 'With Their Best Wishes'. It reports on a presentation of a pen to Mr. Keith Walker, trainee manager at the Odeon Theatre, Llandudno from the staff. Includes a photo of Roy Bentley and staff.

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|------------|---------------------|--|
| CX165/2/9  | 1957 Feb 2          | <p>ARTICLE:<br/> from the <i>Llandudno &amp; District Advertiser</i><br/> headlined 'Local Man Took Range for First<br/> Shot on 'Graf Spee''. Referring to the<br/> viewing of the film 'Battle of River Plate'<br/> and Roy Bentley's invitation to Mr. &amp; Mrs.<br/> Herbert Codman of Rookery Nook, Vadre<br/> Drive, Llanrhos to see the film. Their son<br/> the late Richard Codman was the chief<br/> range-finder on the HMS Exeter - the first<br/> cruiser to open fire on the 'Admiral Graf<br/> Spee' battle-ship.</p>    |
| CX165/2/10 | 1957 Feb 16         | <p>ARTICLE:<br/> from the <i>Llandudno &amp; District Advertiser</i><br/> headlined 'Cadets see a Naval Battle'. It<br/> reports Roy Bentley's invitation to 38<br/> ratings of Llandudno Sea Cadet Corps<br/> accompanied by their commanding officer<br/> Lieutenant W. Rudd to see the film 'Battle<br/> of the River Plate'. Mr. Bentley also<br/> showed his guests the hat band worn by the<br/> late Mr. R.W. Codman of Llandudno who<br/> was chief range finder on the HMS Exeter<br/> which was engaged in the sea battle.</p> |
| CX165/2/11 | 1946 Sep 1-7        | <p>PROGRAMME:<br/> for the Odeon Theatre, Llandudno<br/> advertising Reginald Foort's 'Guest Night'<br/> and films showing that week. (Photocopy)</p>  |
| CX165/2/12 | 1959 May 27         | <p>PROGRAMME:<br/> for a 'Welsh Evening' at the Odeon Cinema<br/> - a concert for the Institution of Gas<br/> Engineers 96th Annual General Meeting.</p>   |
| CX165/2/13 | 1993 April -<br>May | <p>OBITUARIES:<br/> from the <i>Weekly News</i>, <i>Daily Post</i> and the<br/> <i>Independent</i> on the death of Jess Yates.</p>   |



- |            |             |  |
|------------|-------------|--|
| CX165/2/14 | pre 1986    | HEADED NOTE PAPER:<br>for the Astra Theatre Llandudno, General<br>Manager: Roy Bentley. [2 copies]   |
| CX165/2/15 | 1985 Dec 5  | ARTICLE:<br>from the <i>Weekly News</i> headlined 'Bingo<br>Hall May Replace Top Theatre' which<br>reports that the Astra Theatre will be turned<br>into a bingo and cinema complex unless<br>more than £250,000 can be found to keep it<br>open as a live entertainments venue. It<br>includes a model showing a layout of the<br>entire complex.   |
| CX165/2/16 | 1986 Nov 6  | ARTICLE:<br>from the <i>Weekly News</i> headlined 'Eclipse of<br>the Astra' - a report of the closure of the<br>Astra due to the owner [of 18mths] Apollo<br>Leisure Group's failure to secure a grant for<br>£250,00 to bring the venue up to standard.   |
| CX165/2/17 | 1986 Nov 13 | ARTICLE:<br>in the <i>Weekly News</i> headlined 'A Hard Act<br>to Follow' - a report on the demise of the<br>Astra Theatre, Llandudno charting its<br>history and [then] uncertain future. Includes<br>photos of Robinson Cleaver, Donald<br>Maxwell [of the W.N.O.] and Mr. Idris<br>Parry with one of the old stills projectors<br>and at the Christie Organ - the last theatre<br>organ in North Wales. |
| CX165/2/18 | 1986 Nov 13 | ARTICLE:<br>in the Arts section of the <i>Weekly News</i><br>headlined 'Eleventh Hour Bid to Catch a<br>Falling Star' - reporting the launch of an<br>appeal by David Sandbach founder member<br>of the North Wales Branch of Friends of<br>the WNO to save the Astra Theatre.   |

CX165/2/19	1986 Nov 13	ARTICLE: in the <i>Weekly News</i> headlined 'Billy's Big Send-off' - reporting on the last big star to appear at the Astra Theatre playing to a packed house.
CX165/2/20	1986 Nov 20	ARTICLE: from the <i>Weekly News</i> as for CX165/2/19
CX165/2/21	1986 Dec 4	ARTICLE: from the <i>Weekly News</i> headlined 'Astra Sale Mystery' - reporting on the sale of Llandudno's Astra Theatre to an unidentified buyer.
CX165/2/22	1986 DEC 11	ARTICLE: from the <i>Weekly News</i> headlined 'Astra Bought by Councillor' reporting that Brian Lawson and his Roman Homes Company had bought the Astra and proposed to build 20 flats and 2 penthouses on the site.
CX165/2/23	1987 Jan 1	ARTICLE: from the <i>Daily Post</i> headlined 'Astra - a Star Plagued by Philistines' by Ivor Wynne Jones. It is a scathing attack on the council and Welsh Office for allowing the Astra to be sold to a developer who wishes to replace it with a block of flats.
CX165/2/24	1989 Mar 9	LETTER which appeared in the <i>Weekly News</i> entitled 'An Ode to Our Astral Past' written by G. MacDonald, 41 Church Walks, Llandudno, lamenting the loss of the Winter Gardens and Astra Theatre.

- CX165/2/25            1989 Aug 3            ARTICLE:  
from the *Weekly News* headlined 'Site  
Noise Could Drive Visitors Off Say Hotel  
Owners'. Hoteliers living in the vicinity of  
the demolition site of the former Astra  
Theatre and Winer Gardens are  
complaining about the pile driving which  
could cause holiday makers to boycott the  
area.
- CX165/2/26            1989 Apr 27            ARTICLE:  
from the *Weekly News* headlined 'Fears  
Over Falling Debris at Astra Site' reporting  
debris falling into the street as the  
demolition of the Astra Theatre is in  
progress.
- CX165/2/27            1975 Oct 18            ARTICLE:  
from the *Llandudno Advertiser* headlined  
'Budding Organists'. It reports the first full  
meeting of the North Wales Organ Society  
held in the Conway Vale Hotel, Glan  
Conway. Roy Bentley accepted the office  
of president of the Cinema Organ Section.  
He is pictured with Mr. Carl Rowland-  
Tims of Valley Radio - president elect of  
the Electronic Organ Section and 2 children  
Bryan Ash, 13 and Loraine Stapleton, 12.
- CX165/2/28            1981 Oct 15            ARTICLE:  
from the *Weekly News* headlined 'That  
Glorious Sound of the Cinema' reporting on  
the popularity of the Christie organ in the  
Astra Theatre and a feature on Ken James  
who has played the Christie organ since  
1972. Includes a photo of Mr. James at the  
organ.

CX165/2/29	1981 Oct 15	ARTICLE: from the <i>Weekly News</i> in the column 'Personality Spot' headlined 'The Old Christie Organ Still Has Its Devotees'. It is a feature about Roy Bentley and the Christie organ in the Astra Cinema.
CX165/2/30	1986 May	POSTER: advertising a Theatre Organ Club event - a gala concert to celebrate the 80th birthday of the president Robinson Cleaver at the Compton theatre organ, Davenport Theatre, Stockport. Players included Roy Bentley.
CX165/2/31	1986 Oct 16	ARTICLE: from the <i>Pioneer</i> headlined 'Organ Sale "An Outrage" ' - reporting the plans of Apollo/Hutchinson Leisure owners of the Llandudno Astra to sell the 1936 Christie organ.
CX165/2/32	1987 July	ORDER OF SERVICE: for Robinson Cleaver former president of the Theatre Organ Club.
CX165/2/33	nd	HEADED NOTE PAPER: for the North Wales Organ Society with Roy Bentley named as one of the Presidents.[2 copies]
CX165/2/34	1992 Apr 5	LETTER: from K.R. Morgan to M. Burgess, R. Bentley and S. Rivers re the ex- Astra Christie organ and the refusal of the storage firm in Manchester to allow them a cursory inspection of the instrument.

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| CX165/2/35 | 1993 May 27 | ARTICLE:<br>from the <i>Weekly News</i> headlined 'Famous Organ in Demolition Shock' - it reports the Christie Organ 'once played by the stars of Llandudno's Astra Cinema' had been wrecked when a Manchester storage frim folded and some of its buildings were knocked down.               |
| CX165/2/36 | [1993]      | PAGES:<br>from [Organ Society Newsletters] with a report of the destruction of the Astra Cinema's Christie organ. (2 pages)   |
| CX165/2/37 | 1986 Jan 7  | ARTICLE:<br>from the <i>Daily Post</i> headlined 'Reprieve for Opera...But Closure May Be Waiting in the Wings'. It relates to the problems of the Astra Theatre since the death of Alan Hutchinson and the Apollo Leisure Group's disinclination to spend money on refurbishing the theatre. |
| CX165/2/38 | 1986 Sep 11 | ARTICLE:<br>from the <i>Daily Post</i> by Ivor Wynne Jones headlined 'WNO Facing Up to Harmony and Discord'.  |
| CX165/2/39 | 1986 Nov 20 | ARTICLE:<br>from the <i>Weekly News</i> headlined 'Barber Beats the Cuts' - it reports the WNO touring productions which will visit North Wales but not the Astra Theatre due to its closure. Includes a photo of Gwion Thomas as Figaro in 'The Barber of Seville.'                          |

CX165/2/40

1997 Feb 5

ARTICLE:

a column in the *Daily Post* entitled 'My Wales' with a headline 'Flying in on a wing and a prayer' by Ivor Wynne-Jones. He relates the fortunes of the WNO reminiscing on the opening night of 'Nabucco' in the Odeon in 1957. He mentions the Odeon manager, Roy Bentley and himself persuading the Rank Organization - then owners of the Odeon - to allow the WNO to return and the permanent reduction of the seating to 1643 to accommodate the WNO orchestra.

CX165/2/41

1957

BOOK

entitled 'The Movies' by Richard Griffiths and Arthur Mayer. "The sixty-year story of the world of Hollywood from pre-nickelodeon days to the present."

CP157	1930s - 1995	<p><b><u>Roy Bentley Collection</u></b>  This collection shows Mr. Bentley's interest in the cinema, and the theatre organ and the theatres they were housed in.</p> <p>[See also CX165]</p>
CP157/1	1950s -1960s	<p><b><u>Photographs taken at the Odeon Theatre, Llandudno when Roy Bentley was the manager.</u></b></p>
CP157/1/1	[late 1950s]	<p>PHOTO:  of the presentation of a gift to a member of the staff of the Odeon Theatre by the Assistant Manager, Mr. H.B. Walker whilst Roy Bentley and other members of staff look on.</p>
CP157/1/2	1955 Dec	<p>PHOTO:  of two of the Odeon Theatre staff decorating a Christmas tree in the foyer surrounded by Christmas gifts donated by the public in response to an appeal for gifts for the Children's Ward of Llandudno Hospital.</p>
CP157/1/3	1956 Oct	<p>PHOTO:  of the Prime Minister, Sir Anthony Eden, his wife and Roy Bentley in the Odeon Theatre during the Conservative and Unionist Conference. Also in the picture several unknown [party members] and 2 security officials.</p>
CP157/1/4	1956 Oct	<p>PHOTO:  taken on the roof top of the Odeon showing the method by which the television signal was reflected across Llandudno during the Conservative Party Conference.</p>

CP157/1/5	1956 Oct	PHOTO: of Sir Antony Eden speaking on the platform in the [Odeon Theatre] at the Conservative Party Conference. Also on the platform are his wife and other party members.
CP157/1/6	1956 Oct	PHOTO: of Sir Anthony Eden, his wife and other members of the Conservative Party outside the Winter Gardens entrance of the Odeon Theatre during the Conservative Conference.
CP157/1/7	1956 Oct	PHOTO: of an entrance into the Odeon Theatre with a banner informing the public that Entertainment Tax might force the theatre to close. This banner was prominent during the Conservative Party Conference.
CP157/1/8	[1960s]	PHOTO: of the stairs up to the kiosk in the Odeon, Llandudno.
CP157/1/9	1960s	PHOTO: of an unknown young man in motor racing attire sitting in an MG in front of the Odeon, Llandudno.
CP157/1/10	[1960s]	PHOTO: of Wyn Roberts, Conservative M.P. for Llandudno area on the [Odeon] stage giving a speech.



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| CP157/1/11 | [1960s] | PHOTO:<br>of an audience in the circle of the Odeon theatre during an interval.  |
| CP157/1/12 | [1960s] | PHOTO:<br>showing the interior of the Odeon cinema - a view from the stage into the auditorium. [2 copies]   |
| CP157/1/13 | [1960s] | PHOTO:<br>of a bar in the Odeon Theatre Llandudno.   |
| CP157/1/14 | 1968    | PHOTO:<br>of a Volkswagon Beetle between two flights of stairs in the foyer of the Odeon during the showing of the film 'Love Bug'.  |
| CP157/1/15 | 1968    | PHOTO:<br>as for CP/1/14   |
| CP157/1/16 | [1960s] | PHOTO:<br>of [Civic Night after-show gathering of the Llandudno Musical Players in the Odeon Theatre]<br><br>In the picture: Centre facing the camera Robin Williams, producer of LMP shows - woman on right of photo Ann Williams, his daughter and member of the Musical Players. [3 copies] |

CP157/1/17	[1960s]	PHOTO: as for CP/157/1/16. woman on right [Phyllis Huxley] member of Llandudno Musical Player talking to a councillor.
CP157/1/18	[1960s]	PHOTO: as for CP157/1/16. Rupert Spencer [president of the Llandudno Musical Players] talking to a councillor.
CP157/1/19	[1960s]	PHOTO: as for CP157/1/16. Rupert Spencer and councillor. [3 copies]
CP157/1/20	[1960s]	PHOTO: as for CP157/1/16. Robert Spencer in the centre of photo talking to a councillor and another unknown man.
CP157/2	1969 - 1970s	Photographs taken at the Astra Cinema formerly known as the Odeon Llandudno when Roy Bentley was manager.
CP157/2/1	[late 1960s - early 1970s]	PHOTO: from the <i>Weekly News</i> dated Feb 3 2000 in the ' Nostalgia ' section showing "a view over the rooftops of Llandudno....with the huge Astra Cinema on Gloddaeth Ave dominating the centre of the picture. The cinema site is now a retirement flats complex."

CP157/2/2	nd	PHOTO: of the projection room at the [Astra] showing a 'Peerless' projector. [colour]
CP157/2/3	nd	PHOTO: as for CP157/2/2. [colour]
CP157/2/4	[1970s]	PHOTO: of the Astra Cinema Llandudno taken at night. A large illuminated OO7 on the roof suggests a James Bond was being screened.
CP157/2/5	1971	PHOTO: of the entrance to the Astra Cinema taken in the evening. The main display board advertises a film shot on location in Llandudno entitled 'Unman Wittering and Zigo. Several unknown people are in the entrance. [2 copies]
CP157/2/6	nd	PHOTO: of a golden dragon part of the wall decor in the [Astra] cinema.
CP157/2/7	1973	PHOTO: of the entrance to the Astra cinema, Llandudno taken in the evening.
CP157/2/8	[1974]	PHOTO: showing the side view of the Astra cinema from Deganwy Avenue with posters advertising the Sunday Variety Show starring Wyn Calvin.

CP157/3	1963 - 1968	<b><u>Photographs of cinemas in Rhyl</u></b>
CP157/3/1	1963	PHOTO: of the front of the Plaza Cinema, High Street, Rhyl with several unknown people walking by. [Ground floor now a piazza cafe]
CP157/3/2	1968	PHOTO: of the Astra Cinema, [Rhyl] taken at night on the corner of Brighton Road and the High Street. [was formerly the Odeon Cinema and is now an Apollo Bingo Hall.]
CP157/4	[1950s -1960s]	<b><u>Photographs and negatives of the interior and exterior of the Palladium Cinema.</u></b>
CP157/4/1	[1950s -1960s]	PHOTO: of the interior of the [Palladium cinema] taken from the circle.
CP157/4/2	[1950s -1960s]	NEGATIVES: showing the front of the Palladium, Llandudno. [2 copies]
CP157/4/3	[1950s-1960s]	PHOTO: of the interior of the [Palladium] cinema - view taken from the stage.

CP157/4/4	[early 1960s] or [1972]	PHOTO: of the Palladium cinema inscribed on front cover 'original photos prior to conversion'. [This may be the conversion to a bingo hall around 1962 or possibly the second conversion in 1972 where a new ceiling was put over the bingo hall and a 600 seater cinema was installed above.
CP157/4/5	[1950s - 1960s]	NEGATIVE: of the interior of the [Palladium] taken from the circle looking toward the stage. [2 copies]
CP157/4/6	[1950s -1960s]	NEGATIVE: of the interior of the [Palladium] looking outward from the stage.
CP157/4/7	[1950s -1960s]	CD ROM holding to images of the [Palladium Cinema] [poor copies]
CP157/5	[1930s - 1995]	<b><u>Photographs mainly of Roy Bentley seated at various cinema organs.</u></b>
CP157/5/1	[1930s]	PHOTO: of Roy Bentley seated at a Wurlitzer Cinema organ.
CP157/5/2	[1930s]	PHOTO: as for CP157/5/1. [3 copies]

CP157/5/3	1946 May 28	PHOTO: of Roy Bentley playing a Wurlitzer organ at an unknown cinema venue. Inscribed 'Best wishes Roy Bentley 28th May 1946'.
CP157/5/4	1980s	PHOTO: of Roy Bentley and Robinson Cleaver sitting in front of the Christie organ at the Astra Cinema, Llandudno. [colour]
CP157/5/5	1980s	PHOTO: as for CP157/5/4. [colour]
CP157/5/6	[late 1980s]	PHOTO: of Robinson Cleaver and Roy Bentley seated at the Christie organ in the Astra cinema. [colour]
CP157/5/7	[late 1980s - 1990s]	PHOTO: of Roy Bentley at the Christie organ in the Astra Cinema, Llandudno.
CP157/5/8	[1980s -1990s]	PHOTO: of Roy Bentley seated in front of a Regal Theatre organ at an unknown location. [colour]
CP157/5/9	[late 1980s - 1990s]	PHOTO: of Roy Bentley sitting in front of an electric organ [at home]. [colour]
CP157/5/10	1995	PHOTO: of an unknown woman seted at a Wurlitzer organ in an Odeon cinema. Inscribed on dorse '1995 Pipergate'. [colour]

CP157/5/11

nd

PHOTO:  
of the Astra cinema's Christie organ.  
[colour]

CP157/6

[1940s]

Miscellaneous

CP157/6/1

[1940s]

NEGATIVE:  
of Roy Bentley in [air force] uniform.