



PRESS RELEASE

05 November 2007

Touching History

Local people will have the chance to touch history in Clevedon later this month, when the Curzon Community Cinema opens its doors for the last of its 2007 Open Days of its collection of historic projection equipment and artefacts, celebrating over 100 years of cinema. The Curzon Collection is the largest such exhibition in any working cinema in the UK, and offers the chance to view artefacts not on public display anywhere else.

Curzon Collection Administrator Maurice Thornton said, "Lovers of cinema, heritage, nostalgia or social history will all find something to fascinate at our open days. Everyone of whatever age is guaranteed a unique and intriguing trip back in time through the history of cinema."

At the event on Sunday 25th November (10:30 to 13:00, admission free), visitors will see projection and other equipment across the range of gauges including 8mm, 9.5mm, 16mm and 35mm. There is even a very rare 28mm silent projector dating back to 1911 – even older than the Curzon Cinema that houses the collection, which is believed to be the oldest purpose-built, continuously operated cinema in the world. Centrepiece of the exhibition is a reconstruction of a mid 20th century projection box wall layout within one of the Curzon's original projection rooms. Further details are available by calling 01275 790559 or visiting www.curzon.org.uk.

Later the same day, local people will be able to travel back through time to see how our area looked years ago, in a specially tailored archive film show being run in partnership with The South West Film & Television Archive (SWFTA).

The "Past Times" archive film show will include footage from across the last century of the local area including Clevedon, Weston-super-Mare, Bristol and Somerset, providing a glimpse of life across the region as seen through the eyes of local amateur and professional cameramen.

Both work and leisure will take a starring role, including paddle steamers, parades and an early Butlins film. There is even footage of a very unusual Royal Family visit. Highlights will include a 1939 film of the British Legion Parade winding its way through Clevedon's sea front and main streets – you may even recognise some people! Staff from SWFTA will be on hand to introduce items, with the silent films being accompanied on the Curzon's Compton Melotone Organ.

This special archive screening takes place at The Curzon on Sunday 25 November, starting at 3pm, with doors opening at 2.30pm. Tickets are priced at £6 for adults and there is a family ticket available at £18 for 2 adults and 2 children. Tickets can be booked in advance by calling 01934 632989, and all proceeds from the event will be shared between The Curzon Restoration Fund and the SWFTA, both of which are registered charities.

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Notes to Editors:

1. *The Curzon is thought to be the oldest, purpose-built, continuously operated cinema in the world and, throughout this year, we are celebrating our 10th anniversary as a community cinema. We are committed to providing a high quality film experience and to be a thriving centre for cinema and the arts.*
2. *The Curzon has plans for a full restoration of this heritage treasure, at an estimated cost of over £5M. You can see details of our restoration plans on www.curzon.org.uk.*
3. *The SWFTA houses approximately 110 thousand film and video items. The archive includes a large collection of television material from the BBC and from Independent television broadcasting companies in the South West region including regional news output, documentaries, and programmes on issues of local interest as well as films by amateur cinematographers, corporate and publicity films, government information films and films by other local organisations.*

**If you have any questions regarding the content of this press release please call
Chris Brain on 07919 018753 or Gareth Negus on 01275 879115.**

The Curzon Clevedon Community Centre for the Arts is a Registered Charity No 1058389
For all the latest film news visit www.curzon.org.uk