

THE-REX

M A G A Z I N E

APRIL 2007 ISSUE 25

www.therexcinema.com

DREAMGIRLS

WHAT'S ON
IN APRIL...

"possibly Britain's most beautiful cinema..." (BBC)

THE-REX

BOOKINGS &
INFORMATION

01442 877759

Mon-Sat 10.30-6pm Sun 4.30-6.30pm

April Films	11-23
Gallery	5, 7
Coming Soon	23
April Films at a glance	23
Dear Mrs Trellis	27, 28, 29

SEAT PRICES:

Circle	£7.00
Members & Concessions	£5.50
At Table	£9.00
Members & Concessions	£7.50
Royal Box (seats 6)	£11.00
or for the Box	£60.00

Box Office: 01442 877759
 Mon to Sat 10.30am – 6.00pm
 Sun 4.30pm – 6.30pm
 (Credit/Debit card booking fee 50p)

Disabled and flat access: by gate on High Street. Tel: 01442 877999

Some of the girls and boys you see at the Box Office and Bar:

Emily Doyle	Linda Moss
Christine Fressineau	Olivia Palmer
Jemma Gask	Julian Paredes
Holly Gilbert	Jeremy Read
Rosa Gilbert	Amberley Rose
Olivia Glasser	Charlotte Stephens
Beth Hannaway	Tina Thorpe
Sarah Holloway	Alex Tucker
Eva Jaurena	Olivia Wilson
Jo Littlejohn	Marie-Francoise Wolff

Sally Thorpe In charge
Alun Rees Chief projectionist (Original)
Jon Waugh 1st assistant projectionist
Martin Coffill Part-time assistant projectionist
Jacquie Rose Chief Box Office & Bar
Greg Tomkins Film director

Jane Clucas & Lynn Hendry
 PR/Marketing/FoH

Laurence Wiper Bar supervisor
Ian Muirhead Accountant

Alan Lambourne Caretaker

Resident creative builders
Darren Flindall
Michael Glasheen

Artists
Andrew Dixon
Paul Rowbottom

Advisors and Investors
Paul Fullagar
Alan Clooney

Ed Mauer Genius

Demiurge Design Designers 01582 791996
Allison Nunn Publisher 07786 540418
James Hannaway CEO 01442 877999

Betty Patterson Company Secretary and THE ORIGINAL VISIONARY of The Rex.

The Rex High Street (Three Close Lane)
 Berkhamsted HP4 2FG
www.therexcinema.com



Mr Rees makes a reluctant appearance to great applause 3.3.07

Alun Rees arrived here on his motor-bike in 1975. He stayed till the end. The ‘Old Rex’ showed its last film (Witches Of Eastwick) on 28 February 1988.

He is the only one with full and vivid memories of the place. If you think a queue into the High Street once a month is something; with tea, biscuits and ten staff...Imagine, in 1982 for ET of all things, he had to fight his way in, to open the doors, through a queue “around the block” for eleven weeks, with only two staff and bugger-all tea! A queue day and night for eleven weeks for one film is almost impossible to imagine now.

As it is Duran Duran in the charts! Perhaps that was why.

He steered The Rex’s heyday into the new two-screen ‘multiplex phenomenon’.

Sorry, I still think of the 80s as a year or so ago! Blousons (a blouse as a jacket, with the sleeves rolled up – worse, a real proper suit jacket with pushed-up sleeves!), mullets, and Kajagoogoo now sound like rations, rickets and steam. In 1988, the CD was the new great-white-hope and the car-phone, the size of a small shed, was derided as something from “Dallas” which would never catch on.

As chief projectionist, he ‘closed’ it, only to re-open it sixteen years later. Now at 75 he has trained, and oversees, a hardcore of juniors to do the donkey work, while he looks after the precision.

I don’t get too excited or feel too proud, but with Mr Rees, the excitement on hearing his “Splendid” in answer to my nervous ‘invitation’ to return to the projection box, still rings. We sealed it with a wee dram in his living room, only six weeks before we re-opened. Now, a mere two years on, he has licked a sharp team into shape and remains in charge.

Watch the curtains opening, see the first tweek of focus, the sound set and sub-titles sharpened-ish (this is the tiniest, narrowest balance set against the delicate sharpness of the action, through the same lense). Not to mention the ventilation – keeping the top rows as comfortable as our fresh air system allows. Then watch the curtains close perfectly across the last trailer, in time to bring up the introduction lights. This all happens by magic. The magicians: Mr Alun Rees and his junior apprentices – Jon Waugh and Martin Coffill.

Perhaps more behind-the-scenes; next month - the box office! Perhaps not. In anticipation, I sympathise with you trying to book tickets, and am embarrassed by the queues. Nevertheless, no matter how frustrating the phone lines and queues, do not shout at my staff. They are instinctively polite, surprisingly, if accidentally, enthusiastic and irritatingly cheerful, and I love them. Please take a deep breath. It’s not bread and toilet rolls on Christmas Eve. It’s ‘The Pictures’. You’ll get in.

ST ALBANS...

On going to press we can't predict the outcome, but at the Planning Referrals meeting at 7.00pm on 14th March, in the Council chambers (free and open to the public - come) the fate of the City centre cinema and housing development will be decided.

The Rex's actions to date:

1. Opposed the demolition of the Odeon, London Road. (Closed and derelict for 11 years, as was the Rex for sixteen).
Made a clear statement to Wattdown Developers (the site's potential developer, currently seeking demolition and permission for fourteen flats) of our willingness to take on the site as it stands and restore to its original use. Awaiting outcome of appeal to demolish.
2. Opposed development by Henry Davidson to build a seven-screen multiplex, 174 high-rise flats and four storey underground car park on City council land behind Alban Arena
3. In partnership with St Albans Civic Society, appointed architect (Dec 06) to draw up preliminary plans for a two screen design, with limited supporting development, inkeeping with the city's architecture and skyline.
Main Planning councillors have received this proposal.
4. Whatever the outcome, we will submit a formal planning application for the two screen project as soon as we were happy with finished designs.

In a survey published by St Albans Review & Obs (7.3.07) Henry Davidson Ltd, polled 329 locals aged between 16 and 25. 79% agreed with "the benefits" of a 7-screen multi.

This is totally inkeeping with the American ethos of multiplexes.

They were built solely for this age group. Based on late 70s market/demographic research, major studios/distributors and junk-sweet merchants

('concessions') colluded to make the most from high grossing figures on the first Friday of a blockbuster release. Together they showed formula movies to a popcorn, cola, captive audience (16-25 yr olds).

Then, this was the perceived free-spending age group to target. Not so now.

The Rex has built a following of every age group without pandering or targetting any.

Our ethos is simple. Come and see it all in a clean, caring environment, where profit is at bottom of the list, no group is targeted and the audience is not ransomed. The result is simple: everybody warms to respect regardless of age. We have become so used to the opposite, it is all we have come to expect and it is all Henry Davidson Ltd has on offer.

See film on: [myspace/savestalbansodeon](http://myspace.com/savestalbansodeon).

Herts Advertiser, Thursday March 01, 2007

Starring role for cinema

AIMEE BRANNEN
aimee.brannen@hertsad.co.uk
A DOCUMENTARY has been made about the historical and social worth of the former Odeon Cinema in St Albans.

Aspiring film maker, Ben Stevens, aged 24, from Barnet, has made the art deco building in London Road the subject of a 15-minute documentary which delves into its history and explores the prospect of it being restored rather than demolished to make way for flats.

He was spurred on to make the film after his sister, who lives in St Albans, told him about the campaign to save it as a cinema. Ben researched the cinema's history and scoured St Albans for people who remembered it in the old days.

He said: "St Albans currently has no cinema to speak of and yet a building like the Odeon with all its historic associations and links to the birth of film is considered for demolition."

James Hannaway, who successfully restored the Rex in Berkhamsted, features heavily in the documentary and speaks of

his interest in developing the Odeon. Ben, who studied media and animation at university, said: "The building is unique to the city. It has a lovely art deco facade and would make a perfect place for people to enjoy watching a film in style, not to mention that it offers another option to the impersonal feel of a multiplex."

The documentary, which can now be viewed online, took Ben about two months to make with help from two of his friends on the editing process.

He is currently in the process of submitting his film to various websites and channels and he also hopes to screen it in the city centre.

The film is online at www.ohfilm.co.uk and Ben has also set up a MySpace site at www.myspace.com/savestalbansodeon where the documentary can be viewed and a petition signed.

...but developer appeals over rejection of Odeon flats plan

DEVELOPERS have lodged an appeal against the latest refusal of planning permission for flats on the site of the former Odeon Cinema.

Wattdown, which owns the old cinema in London Road, St Albans, is contesting the district council's refusal of their bid to build 20 apartments. The St Albans planners rejected the application because they disliked the design and appearance of the proposed flats.

Wattdown maintains that was not sufficient grounds for refusal and are appealing on the grounds that their plans are in accordance with the statutory requirements. They say whatever the committee's opinion of the materials and balconies, the requirements outlined in the policy for building state that an application must preserve or enhance the area of which it will be a part.

The developer argues that the plans ful-

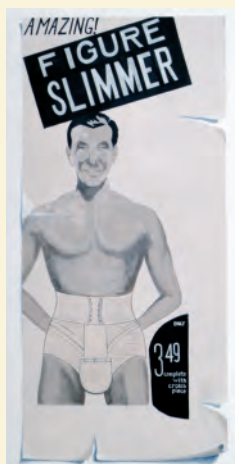
fill these requirements. In the written planning appeal Wattdown says: "The proposal would enhance the character and appearance of the St Albans Conservation Area and that as such it is an acceptable replacement building."

The firm has made two previous applications to develop the cinema site, one of which went to appeal, and both have been unsuccessful.

If Wattdown wins the current appeal it would spell the end of campaigners' hopes of James Hannaway, the owner of the successful Rex Cinema in Berkhamsted, restoring the Odeon with its Art Deco frontage to its former glory.

St Albans Civic Society spokesperson, Marion Hannam said: "We expected the appeal. We shall of course be staying where we are in opposing the application though our chief hope is that the Odeon can be saved"





Our trompe l'oeil (trick-of-the-eye) posters have caused quite a stir. What started as a little nonsense to brighten up the loos has spilled into the foyer; generating some small interest. So here's some forbidden 'pics from the other cubicle'. (Gents see p28)

First, one for the 'Ladies'...

(left) Pouch Man (c 1953 American girlie mags). Feeling frisky girls?

Meat, fruit and veg man (c same era)
(below)

Marilyn... caught in a draught (far left)





A P R I L F I L M S

Notes on a Scandal

Sun 1 6.00

Tue 3 7.30

Wed 4 2.00, 7.30

Matinee Warning: May contain babies

Back by great demand. Judi Dench should have won all the prizes for what must be one of the most complex and complete on-screen performance of all time - the lonely, manipulative, treacherous, vulnerable, pitiable but very scary, Barbara...

The acclaimed Richard Eyre teamed up with screenwriter Patrick Marber (who must never be forgiven for CLOSER) to adapt Zoe Heller's novel. When the new art teacher (Kate) enters into a torrid affair with one of the boys, the ageing History teacher (Judi), who senses a kindred spirit in the beautiful younger woman, uses her knowledge of the transgression to wield an obsessive power which soon threatens tragedy for everyone.

Brilliantly performed, the tension between Dench and Blanchett is palpable.

A gripping thriller.

"It is her refusal to play some kind of latterday Lady Macbeth that makes this portrait so subtle and so powerful...She is not just an ordinary villain.

We see her vulnerability, her loneliness and her desperation to be loved..."

(*Derek Malcolm* 29 Jan).

Over-shadowed, therefore overlooked, Cate Blanchett is fantastic and more than a match for Judi's brilliance.

The makings of a great double-act.

Director: Richard Eyre

Starring: Dame Judi Dench, Cate Blanchett, Bill Nighy, Alice Bird

Certificate: 15

Duration: 92 mins

Origin: UK 2006

By: Twentieth Century Fox



Charlotte's Web

Mon 2 2.00

Matinee Warning: May contain babies

Director: Gary Winick

Starring: Julia Roberts, Dakota Fanning, Oprah Winfrey, Steve Buscemi, Robert Redford, John Cleese

Certificate: U

Duration: 97 mins

Origin: USA 2006

By: Paramount International Pictures

You've only got to scan the cast list to feel sticky. What is Robert Redford doing here?... With Oprah ...Winfrey.

"E. B. White's much-loved children's classic reaches the big screen in director Gary Winick's charming combination of live action and animation. Wilbur the pig is scared of the end of the season, because he knows that is when he will end up on the dinner table. He hatches a plan with Charlotte, a kindly spider who lives in his pen, to ensure that this will never happen. Enlisting an all-star cast of vocal talents (including Julia Roberts, Steve Buscemi and John Cleese) alongside Dakota Fanning, Winick brings a classic children's story to life for a whole new generation..." (*City Screen*) Ho-hum.

Suffer your children to such gloom if you must, I'm off stalking pigs and thwacking spiders... According to the children in the box-office, who are sadly able to name, and describe, all the Ninja Turtles, you'll love it! We'll see...



Blood Diamond

Mon 2 7.30



"... a comparatively honest effort from Hollywood, but one fatally weakened by compromise. The plus point is that it has caused those who might be thought guilty of the blood diamond trade to issue disclaimers..."

In return for the treasure, Leo promises to get Djimon back to his family; a journey which will offer many unplanned chances of redemption for Leo's hard-hearted mercenary. Forced into labour (twice) in the sweltering diamond fields, Solomon Vandy (Hounsou) finds the pink stone. Danny Archer (DiCaprio) is a hired gun who specialises in so-called 'blood diamonds' used to finance uprisings, etc. A disillusioned American journalist (the improbably beautiful Jennifer Connelly), tags along. That's all you need to know.

"A brave one for Hollywood, it depicts Sierra Leone as a beautiful country in the process of being destroyed by a civil war of appalling ferocity in which children are forced to play their part, civilians are slaughtered without mercy and limbs are lopped off without a second thought..."

(Standard 25 Jan)

Come to see perfect teeth in action.

Director: Edward Zwick
Starring: Jennifer Connelly, Leonardo Di Caprio, Djimon Hounsou
Certificate: 15
Duration: 144 mins
Origin: USA 2006
By: Warner Brothers

Venus

Thu 5 7.30

Director: Roger Michell
Starring: Peter O'Toole, Jodie Whittaker, Vanessa Redgrave, Richard Griffiths, Leslie Phillips
Certificate: 15
Duration: 94 mins
Origin: UK 2006
By: Buena Vista International

The plenty O'Toole of beautiful English, perfectly timed, teams up with the ultimate smoothie: the "Well Hellaire" Carry-On leech king - Leslie Phillips. Together, they make an unexpectedly rich match.

In Venus they eke out a living 'playing dead'. Leslie's young niece arrives to 'nurse' them, played in perfect pitch by Jodie Whittaker.

She is the new world visiting the very old. As her part demands, she shows a complete absence of respect for the old (and status of her co-stars).

Maurice (Peter) shows her the sights and sounds of London while trying to teach the 'chav-child' a thing or two about life. All does not go according to plan...

"O'Toole and Phillips know exactly how to make the most of good lines and how to mask lesser dialogue... But even performances as good as these can't totally transcend material that hovers between mere farce and tragi-comedy without ever landing on a convincing level..."

Or "Sharply scripted by Hanif Kureishi, this is a funny and perceptive take on responsibility and growing old disgracefully..."

(Standard 25 Jan)

As ever, you will choose.



Charlotte's Web

Fri 6 2.00

Tue 10 2.00

Matinee Warning: May contain babies



You've only got to scan the cast list to feel sticky. What is Robert Redford doing here?... With Oprah ...Winfrey.

"E. B. White's much-loved children's classic reaches the big screen in director Gary Winick's charming combination of live action and animation. Wilbur the pig is scared of the end of the season, because he knows that is when he will end up on the dinner table. He hatches a plan with Charlotte, a kindly spider who lives in his pen, to ensure that this will never happen. Enlisting an all-star cast of vocal talents (including Julia Roberts, Steve Buscemi and John Cleese) alongside Dakota Fanning, Winick brings a classic children's story to life for a whole new generation..." (City Screen) Ho-hum.

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Director: Gary Winick
Starring: Julia Roberts, Dakota Fanning, Oprah Winfrey, Steve Buscemi, Robert Redford, John Cleese
Certificate: U
Duration: 97 mins
Origin: USA 2006
By: Paramount International Pictures

Hot Fuzz

Fri 6 7.30, Sat 7 7.00

Director: Edgar Wright

Starring: Bill Bailey, Timothy Dalton, Simon Pegg, Nick Frost, Jim Broadbent

Certificate: 15

Duration: 121 mins

Origin: UK 2007

By: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

"HOT FUZZ confirms that Wright and Pegg are two of British cinema's finest and funniest talents" (NC). So expect the worst.

While the rest of the world is making exceptional films; warm, detailed, caring, moving and funny, the British, like school boys in a toilet, tamper with light entertainment and usually fail at both. It is often heavy-handed and never entertaining, except as a three second saucy-seaside postcard. Short-lived gags and in-jokes are knitted throughout to disguise talent as look-at-us-being-funny.

This, alongside last year's Little Britain caper, Winterbottom's Cock & Bull Story, Severance and anything with Johnny Vegas, is made with an audience and age-group in mind.

Great story-tellers don't care who their audience might be, or what 'looks good'. These boys are stuck with TV minds. They've come up the wrong way, from adverts and pop-promos, each about 'looks' and nothing else. They're good at it. It is where they should stay.

PCAngel (Pegg), too good at the Met, is relocated to a sleepy West Country village.

Fetes and neighbourhood-watch replace the action of the city.

Partnered by an oafish PC Butterman (Frost), he is convinced there's foul play in the idyllic village. (Sunday BBC1 anyone?)

"It's charming and quintessentially British – but Pegg's cop caper never quite matches up to Shaun of the Dead. Still, some great gags and classic one-liners – even if the plot comes apart at the seams." (*Nick Curtis, Londonwide*) Case rested.



Night at the Museum

Sat 7 2.00

Matinee Warning: May contain babies



Apart from Gervais and Coogan, this is great fun from start to finish. Things begin to take a turn for the unlikely on night shift at the Museum.

Bumbling Ben Stiller at New York's Museum of Natural History inadvertently unleashes havoc when he triggers a dormant curse that fully animates the historical displays in this wild fantasy comedy.

Under the ancient spell of the pharaoh's tablet, Attila the Hun begins carving a swathe of destruction through the marbled hallways and the once-still gladiators and Neanderthals spring to life.

Now faced with the daunting task of restoring order before daylight, he turns to a wax replica of former president Teddy Roosevelt (Robin Williams O.T.T) to reverse the curse before exhibits scare the pants off modern-day museum goers.

Think Jumanji, its just as silly.

Director: Shawn Levy

Starring: Robin Williams, Ricky Gervais, Ben Stiller

Certificate: PG

Duration: 109 mins

Origin: USA 2006

By: Twentieth Century Fox

The Good Shepherd

Sun 8 5.00

Director: Robert De Niro
Starring: Matt Damon, Angelina Jolie, Alec Baldwin, Robert De Niro
Certificate: 15
Duration: 167 mins
Origin: USA 2006
By: Universal Pictures (UK) Ltd

Though “all cloak and very little dagger” De Niro (first time?) did well to keep most critics on the edge of their seats for most of its 165 minutes, and applauding. Told largely in flashback, it is ‘inspired’ by the true story of the C.I.A. In 1939, Edward Wilson (Damon), a bright, but principled, student, is initiated into Yale’s Skull and Bones Society - Ivy League blue-bloods, singing the Whiffenpoof Song - naked. (Freemasons: eat the other trouser-leg). Once in, he innocently ‘grasses’ on a professor thought to be attached to Nazi Intelligence. Thus, without seeing the blood on his hands, accepts De Niro’s offer to join his ‘new world order’. From flashback to near-now, he finds himself walking a tightrope between desperate honesty and a miserable double life. Damon is good as the no-hero, patriot carrying terrible, lonely secrets.

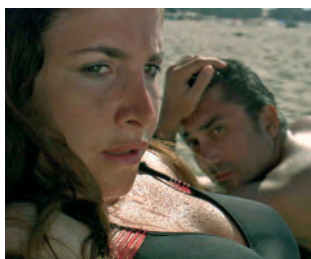
As for De Niro. He is an instinctive magician. He terrifies us with gripping yarns where everything feels like it could happen to us, and makes sure it does.

Now he tells us there are no heroes in the CIA – only Nazis. Best believe him.



Climates

Mon 9 7.30



Fans of Ceylan’s remarkable **UZAK** will welcome his latest work, a pared-down tale of what it means to be living and loving in Ceylan’s home city of Istanbul. Climates presents the break-up of a middle-class metropolitan couple, Isa and Bahar played by Ceylan and his wife Ebru (how very odd). We first see them on a beach not long before Isa suggests that they separate. Ceylan then explores with acute observation Isa’s mixed, complex and utterly recognisable reaction to the split.

His stories are small, his films modest - their impact, devastating. If their prevailing mood is specifically male disappointment, it is because Ceylan is a storyteller who investigates the great potential for loneliness and self-destruction within us all.

“Fine film-making from the director of ‘Distant’ and good acting too...” (Derek Malcolm).

Faint praise indeed, Derek.

“The best film of the year so far by a long stretch... it proves Ceylan is now one of world cinema’s most confident and impressive young(ish) filmmakers”. (Time Out)

And it’s mercifully short. So come and see.

Director: Nuri Ceylan
Starring: Nazan Kirilmis, Ebru Ceylan
Certificate: 15
Duration: 102 mins
Origin: France, Turkey 2007
By: Artificial Eye

Last King of Scotland

Tue 10 7.30

Wed 11 2.00, 7.30

Thu 12 7.30

Director: Kevin Macdonald
Starring: Gillian Anderson, James McAvoy, Forest Whitaker, Kerry Washington
Certificate: 15
Duration: 123 mins
Origin: UK 2006
By: Twentieth Century Fox

Back by extraordinary demand. It is rooted in the reality of Idi Amin’s brutal 1970’s Uganda.

Woored by the president’s generosity, charm and apparent populist appeal, young Scottish doctor (McAvoy) agrees to be Amin’s personal physician. Soon he is appointed number-one advisor on all manner of things, from architecture to foreign policy. Hugely flattered, he blocks out what is going on around him. By the time he catches up, it is too late. “A bold combination of uneasy comedy and mind-numbing horror, balancing psychological insight and historical fact...”

“Forest Whitaker gives a barnstorming performance in a bitter, juicy plum of a role... while McAvoy’s “white monkey” best performance yet, lifts the film from some unsteady early moments.” (Guardian/Time Out). Its worst feature and downfall – it is not true! It is a complete fiction set inside real events in real (recent) history, with real characters (okay, one!). Great performances wasted on a non-event.



Dreamgirls

Fri 13 7.30

Sat 14 7.00

Sun 15 6.00

Set in the turbulent era from the early Sixties to the mid-Seventies, **DREAMGIRLS** follows the rise of Effie (Jennifer), Deena (Beyonce) and Lorrell (Anika).

As you already know they form a thinly disguised Supremes - The Dreamettes.

At a talent show they are discovered by big-shot Curtis Taylor (Jamie Foxx; another thin disguise - Motown's Berry Gordy) who 'gifts' them their big break, backing James 'Thunder' Early (Murphy - James Brown by some slim chance? more like Little Richard!). Curtis gradually takes control of the girls' look and sound, turning them into the spotlight - as The Dreams.

"It is a sparkling music-drama boasting a stellar cast, a dazzling array of set-pieces, enough toe-tapping to keep you glued to the screen throughout."

"Showing a rare maturity and depth of feeling, Eddie Murphy's 'Thunder' is the best thing he has done for over 20 years, Beyonce is an entrancing presence (does that mean - she just turned up?).

The movie's big discovery is Jennifer Hudson as the honest, uncompromising Effie." (*Philip French, Observer*)

"An appealing, touching and spectacularly over-the-top tribute to one of the most sensational stories in pop music" (*Channel 4*)
You don't have to like Motown or The Supremes, but it will help.

Director: William Condon

Starring: Eddie Murphy, Jamie Foxx, Beyonce Knowles, Jennifer Hudson, Anika Rose

Certificate: 12A

Duration: 131 mins

Origin: USA 2006

By: Paramount International Pictures



Muppets Take Manhattan

Sat 14 2.00

Matinee Warning: May contain babies

Director: Frank Oz

Starring: Jim Henson's muppets

Certificate: U

Duration: 94 mins

Origin: USA 1984

By: Sony Pictures Releasing

From the dreadful 80s comes Jim Henson's heroes. The Muppets are here in a full-length musical comedy!

After graduating, they travel to Manhattan with their musical "Manhattan Melodies".

When it doesn't happen, the gang splits up. Kermit makes friends with Jenny (Juliana Donald).

Miss Piggy is jealous. Rowlf is a vet, Fozzie's living in a cave and Miss Piggy is working at a hotel.

She gets fired and comes to live next door to Kermit's workplace at Pete's with Jenny.

When Jenny and Kermit find producer-in-training Ronny Coleman (Lonny Price), he promises to produce their show.

The gang returns to Manhattan, and after several mishaps, much confusion and silly antics, things begin to come together for them... Great for kids who missed them... Even better for kids who remember them first time round!



Pan's Labyrinth

Mon 16 7.30

Director: Guillermo Toro

Starring: Doug Jones, Ivana Baquero, Ariadna Gil, Maribel Verdu, Sergi Lopez

Certificate: 15

Duration: 119 mins

Origin: Spain 2006

By: Optimum Releasing

This is one of the most unusual and exciting films of the year. How did it miss an Oscar for Best Foreign Film? A fairytale for adults inspired by the paintings of Francisco Goya and rooted in war. This is del Toro's most accomplished work even by his own standards. It is 1940s Franco's Spain. Finding her new life terrifying, amid the cruel excesses of fascist inquisitors, Ofelia seeks refuge in a labyrinth she discovers by the house. The guardian of the labyrinth, reveals that Ofelia is a lost princess. To discover the truth, she will have to complete three perilous tasks armed only with a piece of chalk! "Del Toro's startling vision rests on a profoundly moving story." Definitely not for children. It's not the 'monsters' who are frightening, as always, it's the men in uniform.

"The special effects are breathtaking, and the ghastly portrait of Franco's Spain, equally repulsive".

"A major achievement, beautifully acted and shot with almost unerring certainty" (mixed crits).

Cancel everything.

It is better than they say.



Miss Potter

Tue 17 7.30

Wed 18 2.00, 7.30

Matinee Warning: May contain babies



Unerringly beautifully from the first frame to the last, it will be in the programme for the rest of the year.

It is a magical tale following Beatrix Potter's rise to being the most successful children's author of all time. Despite delighting generations of children with her books, she kept her own story carefully locked away. The film reveals how she developed storytelling from a young age and rebelled against convention by refusing to marry. Her first book, *Tales of Peter Rabbit*, was a publishing phenomenon and led to a forbidden romance with her publisher Norman Warne (a most irritating Ewan Mc).

"MISS POTTER wrenches the heart...Sure it's shamelessly sentimental, but strangely moving" (*Channel 4*).

Or... "barely scratches the Dickensian surface of true female repression. Zellweger tries to make up for this with coy mannerisms, squinty-eyed grimaces and precision in studied 'period' gestures." (*Hollywood Reporter*)

Most comments on leaving refer to Renee as Brigid Jones - in costume. But all agree on its unaffected enchantment and charm. It is as her tales, a truly perfect escape. Come for this and the countryside.

Director: Chris Noonan

Starring: Renee Zellweger, Ewan McGregor, Bill Paterson, Emily Watson

Certificate: PG

Duration: 93 mins

Origin: UK 2006

By: Momentum Pictures

The History Boys

Thu 19 7.30

Director: Nicholas Hytner

Starring: Stephen Campbell-Moore, Richard Griffiths, Frances de la Tour, Clive Merrison

Certificate: 15

Duration: 109 mins

Origin: UK 2006

By: Twentieth Century Fox

It doesn't matter anymore what this story is about, everybody is still talking about it – play or film.

It tells of a group of bright History students being pushed through entrance exams for undergraduate places at Oxbridge. There's a young history teacher, a squirming headmaster, a huge Richard Griffiths, having fun as the all-groping, irreverently, queer 'General Studies' professor. The cast is extremely well marshalled, albeit by a lightweight director, Nicholas Hytner. Wouldn't you be after two years in the West End, playing the same parts?

The teenage boys – horrible, faceless and pubescent at first - start to grow on you. Inevitably, the grown-ups are fab throughout, with the brilliant Ms de la Tour shining. You can't wait for fatty Griffiths to be back on the screen with Clive Merrison's Headmaster peeking over his shoulder for great comic moments.

"The real strength of this appealing, intelligent and enjoyable film is Bennett's writing..." (*City Screen*). So it is 'the words' after all...?



Music & Lyrics

Fri 20 7.30, Sat 21 7.00

Apparently and luckily this film is not, as first thought, an embarrassment.

On the contrary, it is both a romantic comedy and a spot-on send-up of the shallow world of pop music. Washed-up '80s pop star Alex Fletcher (Grant) gets a chance of a comeback when diva Cora Corman (newcomer Haley Bennett) invites him to record a duet with her. But he hasn't written a tune in years and he has never written lyrics. Enter Sophie Fisher (Barrymore), Alex's beguiling plant lady. On the rebound from a bad relationship, Sophie is reluctant to collaborate with anyone, especially commitment-phobic Alex. As their chemistry heats up at the piano and under it (exit Jemima), Alex and Sophie will have to face their fears if they want to find love and success. Oh dear, and just when it was beginning to sound safe.

"Their banter is fitfully enjoyable, and Grant's dark asides still amuse" (*Time Out*)

"The pair are troupers at sustaining the charm. Grant does especially well out of the partnership, his Brit-out-of-water act still disarmingly sprung with self-deprecation" (*The Independent*)
 "If music be the food of love, this is a recipe for indigestion" (*Channel 4*)
 As always, your choice.

Director: Marc Lawrence

Starring: Hugh Grant, Drew Barrymore, Brad Garrett, Kristen Johnston

Certificate: PG

Duration: 104 mins

Origin: USA 2007

By: Warner Brothers



Happy Feet

Sat 21 2.00

Matinee Warning: May contain babies



In the world of the Emperor Penguin, a simple song can mean the difference between a lifetime of happiness and loneliness.

When a penguin named Mumble (Wood) is born without the ability to sing the romantic song that will attract his soul mate, he has to resort to some fancy footwork by tap dancing his way into her heart. A brilliantly animated romantic comedy from the writer of *BABE*, this affecting and hilarious tale of one penguin's quest for love, features an all-star cast of vocal talents, all singing their hearts out.

Oh no – this means terrible karaoke from Williams, Kidman, Jackman and Brittany.

However, Williams' Mexican rock-hopper penguin is very funny. *Happy Feet* tells the proper story of emperor's migration, mating and dependency upon each other – fish. Very clever, very funny, a little sad – with a strong environmental message. The animation is breathtaking... Children, don't let your parents miss it.

Director: George Miller

Starring: Robin Williams, Nicole Kidman, Brittany Murphy, Hugh Jackman, Elijah Wood

Certificate: U

Duration: 108 mins

Origin: USA 2006

By: Warner Brothers

Jean de Florette and Manon Des Sources

Sun 22 4.00

Film: Jean de Florette
Director: Claude Berri
Starring: Yves Montand, Gérard Depardieu, Daniel Auteuil
Certificate: PG
Duration: 121 mins
Origin: France 1986
By: Pathe Distribution

Film: Manon des Sources
Director: Claude Berri
Starring: Yves Montand, Emmanuelle Béart, Daniel Auteuil
Certificate: PG
Duration: 114 mins
Origin: France 1986
By: Pathe Distribution

A heartbreaking double bill telling of a hunchback and halfwit, water, stolen land, red carnations, an impossibly beautiful daughter and unrequited love.

The good are very good and the baddies very nasty. Only the French know how to tell stories like these.

A Hardy-esque story of greed, passion and retribution, beautifully performed by Depardieu, Montand, Auteuil and Emmanuelle Béart. Her Manon's aching beauty, made terrible in revenge, haunts the hillside above the farm stolen from her father... Tragedy inevitable. Don't miss. (First seen here 6.2.05)



Iraq in Fragments

Mon 23 7.30



Iraq in Fragments was nominated for Best Documentary Oscar. Fat chance! You have to feel sorry for the Academy's 'great and good'.

What could they do? Down to two dangerous choices – Barrabas Al Gore's diatribe of America's environmental woe or this Holyland saga of modern-day biblical tribes fighting over an occupied, un-promised land. They washed their hands and chose Barrabas... It's an old story – unplugged and crucified. Nevertheless, pushing beyond the form and frame of conventional documentary, Longley creates a view of modern-day Iraq which, while familiar, couldn't be further from the News. This is filmmaking rather than reporting.

Three chapters take us through Sunni, Shia and Kurdish territory.

During two years of filming, the immediate and personal stories take on a poetic life of their own.

Images and edits jolt and surprise.

Nearly every sequence provides a new way of looking at this invaded, occupied and divided country.

With its collage-like form and bold use of camera and sound, it sets out to tell us what's going on - but worse, makes us feel it...

Cancel everything.

Director: James Longley
Certificate: PG
Duration: 94 mins
Origin: USA 2006
By: Institute of Contemporary Arts

The Illusionist

Tue 24 7.30

Director: Neil Burger
Starring: Jessica Biel, Rufus Sewell, Edward Norton, Paul Giamatti
Certificate: PG
Duration: 109 mins
Origin: Czech Republic, USA 2007
By: Momentum Pictures

"As we have seen, Edward Norton can do a lot with a part. But he's curiously muted in Neil Burger's costume drama. Perhaps he's meant to be, since we aren't supposed to know whether he's a clever conman or has genuine supernatural powers until... the end". Taken from a Pulitzer-prize-winning short story by Steven Millhauser, it tells the tale of childhood sweethearts from different sides of the tracks. The ill-fated love between a cabinetmaker's son, Eisenheim (Norton), and aristocratic Sophie von Teschen (Biel) results in the heartbroken young man leaving Austria with his dreams of one day finding her again, never to fade. Fifteen years later he returns triumphant with reputation and renown. However...

"Beautifully shot by British cinematographer Dick Pope... It is intelligent but a little ponderous. It is odd, and irritating, that Burger allows half his cast to talk in broken English and the rest to speak their lines normally. All the same, it looks good..." (*Derek Malcolm*) as does Jessica Biel.

"A spine-tingling Philip Glass score... an elegant political parable where reality is more mystifying than illusion". (*Independent & Guardian*)





Director: Clint Eastwood
Starring: Kazunari Ninomiya, Tsuyoshi Ihara, Ryo Kase, Ken Watanabe
Certificate: 15
Duration: 140 mins
Origin: USA 2007
By: Warner Brothers



Letters from Iwo Jima

Wed 25 2.00, 7.30, Thu 26 7.30

Matinee Warning: May contain babies

This is not war movie. In his *Flags of Our Fathers*, Eastwood told the story of the boy-soldiers who planted that empty flag on an island nobody has cared about since.

Letters From Iwo Jima is told from the other side. It doesn't matter which side. Watanabe, the only professional actor in the film, portrays General Kuribayashi as an honourable soldier who knows he will die but worries about leaving his wife without finishing the kitchen floor. He devises a strategy of tunnels and deep foxholes to give his outnumbered troops an uncertain chance against the enemy (an eerie prophesy of the tactic used by the Viet-Cong against the same enemy twenty years later...)

The superior American forces believed the island would be won in five days (echoes of "home by Christmas" in Oct 1914 and Iraq 2003). It took five weeks and 27,876 lives, including those not accounted for, but not counting civilians. Nearly 800 kids a day! Why don't we know by now? Bastard war-mongers pretend heartbreak as none of their business. Perhaps we are governed by the offspring of dregs left alive from all wars.

The Japanese were outnumbered five to one. Out of 22,000 troops 20,703 were killed. 216 were captured. The rest were 'missing presumed dead'.

Of the 110,000 American soldiers, 5598 were killed. 494 were reported 'missing presumed dead'.

A terrible waste of young lives on both sides. The echo of endless future life-wasting, clangs in our ears still. The difference between American and Japanese values is underlined throughout, but the only truth is that soldiers are soldiers and that war is hell.

Their story is told from letters 'sent home' to loved ones, partly gathered from the many found buried on the island and left undiscovered for many years. It is said veterans and relatives scour the tunnels to this day, ensuring letters reach home sixty two years later... heartbreaking.

Clint has been loved or forgiven for over 47 years... From Rowdy Yates in Rawhide, through the Spaghetti to the monkey, while playing Misty, the Sondra Locke stuff to Dirty Harry and serious jazz in Bird. From the Outlaw Josie Wales came The Unforgiven and eventually a Million Dollar Baby. Somewhere in between he played Mayor in a fashionable one-horse town on the Big Sur.

Now to this: an anti-war, anti all-American heroics, double bill right under the dripping nose of the World's worst George.

At 76 he has sidestepped the ridicule earned by his juniors: Willis, Gibson and Cruise. Better, like Redford, he watched how to make a film and listened, while waiting for his cue.



Director: Julian Jarrold
Starring: Anne Hathaway, James McAvoy, Maggie Smith, James Cromwell, Julie Walters
Certificate: PG
Duration: 120 mins
Origin: UK 2007
By: Buena Vista International

Becoming Jane

Fri 27 7.30, Sat 28 7.00, Sun 29 6.00

“A tale of love, class and the struggle to defy convention in the name of artistic endeavour (wasn’t that Miss Potter???), *Becoming Jane* tells the story of the real-life love affair (didn’t happen?) which inspired the young Jane Austen to become a writer.



When the 20-year-old Austen (pretty good for the American - Anne Hathaway) meets the brilliant, roguish Irishman, Tom Lefroy (McAvoy), she falls madly in love. This little-known story is said to be the turning point in Jane’s life; from which she would emerge as the greatest romantic writer in English Literature (until Barbara Cartland). Nicely directed, it presents a fresh and surprising view of Austen’s early years to intimate how her romantic adventure with Tom would later inspire many of the male characters in her celebrated novels.”

(City Screen)



Jane Austen students will know what to believe. It makes no difference, you’ll come anyway. With all respect to the perfectly formed Ms Hathaway (do her parents still have a cottage in the West Midlands?), might not Rebecca Hall, Emily Blunt even Kiera or Helen McCrory (who is here as the ‘plain’ friend/sis/coz. On second thoughts – she’s too much all-woman!), have done just as well, perhaps better, without having to learn a new language to boot? As for the young McEvoy, he needs a day off. If he turns up in one more film, even middle-aged women will line up to punch him in the face. Mr Tumnus was okay, but it could all turn into that Cliff Richards overnight. Come to see who you would have cast. Better still, come for the gorgeous English (Scottish, Welsh, Irish, Manx) countryside and the language. They are, after all, the best reasons for a costume, period-piece on the big screen.

If twenty minutes of this film is anything like the truth, it turns *Pride and Prejudice* into autobiography. Perhaps “believe only half of what you see (the scenery) but none of what you hear”?



Thomas and the Magic Railroad

Sat 28 2.00

Director: Britt Allcroft
Starring: Alec Baldwin, Mara Wilson, Peter Fonda, Didi Conn
Certificate: U
Duration: 83 mins
Origin: USA 2000
By: Icon Film Distribution Ltd

Thomas the Tank' was one of first-born's favourites and ours. Second-born has not forgiven us for missing it. As narrator, on children's TV, it was Ringo Starr's greatest gig. His voice was so warm and beautifully deadpan, it let the engines come to life all by themselves. In this big film, little Lily (Mara) sets off to visit her lonely Grandpa (Peter Fonda – what???) but gets the wrong train. She meets the magical Mr (Fat?) Conductor (Baldwin), who takes her on an adventure to the island of Sodor to meet the World's favourite steam engine - Thomas the Tank Engine! In the ensemble are Didi Conn and Russell Means ('Grease' and 'Pocahontas' respectively). Who cares? They're silly American actors playing innocent, little English railway engines! Will they ever learn? Don't answer. Ringo did ALL the voices of all the engines, and the kindly but gruff 'Fat Controller' (neither allowed in pc world!). I hope its okay and better than we think. But listen carefully for shades of Ringo and imagine no other voice.



Babel

Mon 30 7.30



Director: Alejandro Inarritu
Starring: Koji Yakusho, Gael Garcia Bernal, Brad Pitt, Cate Blanchett
Certificate: 15
Duration: 143 mins
Origin: USA 2007
By: Paramount International Pictures

Babel deserved more than a Best Soundtrack Oscar. Put simply, it was Scorsese's turn and that's that. Still it could have been worse - Best Film could have gone to an aeroplane.

This, the third collaboration between González Iñárritu and writer Guillermo Arriaga. Alongside Amores Perros and 21 Grams, it continues the duo's interest in the consequences of random acts. When two boys fire a rifle at a tourist bus in Morocco, the 'butterfly' consequences collide across three continents. Brad and Cate are an American couple on the bus; Amelia (Barrera) is their Mexican nanny who decides to take their kids across the border for her son's wedding; and Chieko is a rebellious 'deaf-mute' student in Tokyo grappling with adolescence and the loss of her mother.

"A film of great immediacy and authenticity in which the global setting highlights the difficulties of communication and trust across all borders...but even if it edges towards the pretentious, the film-making is superb and so is the cast..." (Standard).

This is one you should see for yourself and disregard the rest.



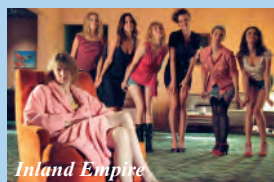
Coming Soon

New releases

Inland Empire
The Science of Sleep
Days of Glory
The Lives of Others
Bamako

Back by demand

Little Miss Sunshine
Babel
Miss Potter



Inland Empire



The Lives of Others



Days of Glory



Bamako

APRIL FILMS AT A GLANCE

Please check times carefully and watch out for early shows.

SUN 1	NOTES ON A SCANDAL	6.00
MON 2	CHARLOTTE'S WEB	2.00
MON 2	BLOOD DIAMOND	7.30
TUE 3	NOTES ON A SCANDAL	7.30
WED 4	NOTES ON A SCANDAL	2.00, 7.30
THU 5	VENUS	7.30
FRI 6	CHARLOTTE'S WEB	2.00
FRI 6	HOT FUZZ	7.30
SAT 7	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM	2.00
SAT 7	HOT FUZZ	7.00
SUN 8	THE GOOD SHEPHERD	5.00
MON 9	CLIMATES	7.30
TUE 10	CHARLOTTE'S WEB	2.00
TUE 10	THE LAST KING OF SCOTLAND	7.30
WED 11	THE LAST KING OF SCOTLAND	2.00, 7.30
THU 12	THE LAST KING OF SCOTLAND	7.30
FRI 13	DREAMGIRLS	7.30
SAT 14	MUPPETS TAKE MANHATTAN	2.00
SAT 14	DREAMGIRLS	7.00
SUN 15	DREAMGIRLS	6.00
MON 16	PAN'S LABYRINTH	7.30
TUE 17	MISS POTTER	7.30
WED 18	MISS POTTER	2.00, 7.30
THU 19	HISTORY BOYS	7.30
FRI 20	MUSIC & LYRICS	7.30
SAT 21	HAPPY FEET	2.00
SAT 21	MUSIC & LYRICS	7.00
SUN 22	JEAN DE FLORETTE AND MANON DES SOURCES	4.00
MON 23	IRAQ IN FRAGMENTS	7.30
TUE 24	THE ILLUSIONIST	7.30
WED 25	LETTERS FROM IWO JIMA	2.00, 7.30
THU 26	LETTERS FROM IWO JIMA	7.30
FRI 27	BECOMING JANE	7.30
SAT 28	THOMAS AND THE MAGIC RAILROAD	2.00
SAT 28	BECOMING JANE	7.00
SUN 29	BECOMING JANE	6.00
MON 30	BABEL	7.30



Now, one for the 'Gents'
(Ladies see p7)

Bond in among the bondage,
with no small trapping of his
own.

'Exotique' (top left) is actually in
the Ladies loo – for that
special woman. Thought the
boys might like it.

The threesome (top) is for
that special gent who enjoys
a little pleasure from a lot of
pain.

To Bond himself (left) in the
shallow end, sporting his
own rubber range.

(This wonderful mischief is
created by Andrew Dixon. "You
can't believe its not sellotape".
He's not cheap. He's the very
best. Ask at the box office).

RANTS AND PANTS



BRING SEXY BACK TO BERKHAMSTED...!

Dear James,
I am a regular visitor to your cinema and therefore an avid reader of the Rex magazine. Having read the letters and comments (R&P) section for a while, I must say that this is where the life and soul of Berkhamsted is discussed, argued and exposed. It has become a lively public debating forum for issues concerning not only the Rex, but also for the entire community. For this, I must congratulate you. Owning a boutique gives me the occasion to talk to many women in our community. Many of them have complained that they don't have many occasions to dress up and look fabulously sexy, to glam up and to escape the humdrum of the "school-run-shopping-laundry-cooking" cycle. Like myself – a mum, a wife, a business woman – everyone is always in a mad rush, there is just never enough time in the day to dedicate to ourselves. As we are the backbone, the lifeline, of an efficient household, the "je ne sais quoi" factor is always the last thing on our list. Are we all resigned to accepting this mediocrity of middle-age? I say no! I say rebel! Ferment rebellion in...!

So James, what is your part in this mutiny against mediocrity?

Would it be possible to arrange a monthly event dedicated to giving a reason to look fabulously sexy? Some suggestions: hosting a casino evening, red carpet Oscar evenings, independent British and French premieres...

Kind Regards,
Kuben Edwards, Sweet Rebellion.

Kuben, thank you, Special casino, red carpet, evenings are not anticipated in our programme.

A full and diverse catalogue of films takes top priority, seven days a week. However it is easy to plan-in glam films to create an Occasion: Red Hot Ballroom, Breakfast at Tiffanys, Moulin Rouge, Phantom of the Opera, even Rocky Horror and Dirty Dancing again, etc. Please suggest some and ask friends.

As for premieres, we will take them when they are offered.

Women looking fabulously sexy, now there's a thing. It is of course something of which we know little in this cloistered, meditative, pure environment. However, far be it from us to tell women how to

dress. A slack vest always does it for me.

As a pillar of the community though, (nee "local treasure") it is my duty to warn you of the pitfalls of such hedonistic and carnal desires.

In the meantime, Come sexy, come gorgeous, outrageous or cool, poured almost-in to some little this or that.

Yours, disgracefully...

Dear all

We have been to see Happy Feet this afternoon at your cinema and had to say that it was a brilliant afternoon out – granted the film was good but for us adults we loved the décor, ambience, fantastic leg room, chance to bring our cup of tea to our seat – the kids loved the chance to dance in the aisle (after the film!!) + the sweets – we'll be back, if you're not booked solid! From the Harris and Almond families (Harpenden) posted 28.2.07

Well done, those happy feet of the Harris's and the Almonds.

COMMENTS BOOK

Cinema like it should be!
Found the Rex by chance and had a thoroughly enjoyable evening. Excellent!
Frank and Mrs Kelly from West London (3.3.07).

Thank you Frank. They missed the raffle but were happy to wait. We managed to squeeze them in for Little Miss Sunshine. They had moored their narrowboat near the Crystal and casually asked someone on the towpath if there might be a cinema near by. Not knowing what to expect, they couldn't have chanced upon a better film, nor being overwhelmed by the hospitality of

RANTS AND PANTS

our boys and girls in the box-office and bars.

I know it worries some that The Rex's popularity might bring in 'strangers' but I love their faces as they see it for the first time. Nobody is taking over and we will always try to make room on the door – for everyone.

Best wishes, James.

From; Posy Clarke 06.03.07

Location: - illegible

Is it the Rex who has asked for the Berkhamsted Film Society (BFS) events not to be published in Berkhamsted Living? You are the only commercial cinema here & BFS did continue showing films during the dark years. If so, unfair. If not who did?

Sorry, can't help you Posy Clarke. The Davies' are good friends. Ian has run the BFS for many years. His wife, Anne was Conservation Officer at Dacorum BC. She did an extraordinary job, overseeing the restoration of the Rex. It was she who ensured Nicholas King Homes completed proper restoration works, and was nothing but fully supportive in everything I tried to do. The BFS have manned a membership stand in our foyer. They are always welcome, as are their flyers and programmes on our bars and tables.

As for 'Berkhamsted Living', I can't understand a word. 'Estate and agent, gym and interiors' perhaps, as for 'eternal and youth'...?

If it were more 'coarse' and tried 'bad language' instead of mediocre typing, or even have a 'gorgeous, pouting, inappropriate almost-nude' on the cover, then in my own dyslexic way, I might understand better. For now, I am happy to be occupied, appropriately, by the

notion of gorgeous, pouting and almost-nude.

TO ALL SWEET, SHY, CARING,
ESTATE AGENTS

Once again I see and hear The Rex is being cited in your understated 'literature'.

By all means use your considerable guile to boast of natural assets, hills and woodlands; of transport links and M25s, but leave us out. The Rex was not rescued to bump-up house prices or line pockets. Therefore, where The Rex is mentioned, you will be sent a bill, and a further charge for every house (sorry, 'property') sold. Some got under the wire by advertising on our screen through Pearl and Dean.

I have had no direct involvement

with this – until now. As soon as contracts are up, all further Estate Agents advertising will stop. Whatever revenue we have accrued by that date will be calculated, withdrawn from our funds and put into a separate fund. In due course, we will decide upon an appropriate Cause to endow. "I don't mind what a man does for a living you understand, as long as his interests don't conflict with mine..." (guess). Conflict is the word. The whole estate agent ethos conflicts with everything The Rex stands for. This is not high and mighty moral ground. We just want our money. It is simple, if you use our name to your advantage with, or without permission in a commercial and/or profitable transaction, you pay. Start counting.

How to get to Sanuk (Little Heath) from The Rex. Look for secret footpaths threaded through woods and across meadows. (map by Mary-Mary Casserley)

