

# Fife's place in history of cinema

by Leeza Clark

COULD AN early movie camera have made its British debut in Fife?

All will be revealed when the curtain goes up on a new exhibition focusing on films in St Andrews.

Lights, Camera, Action is the title of the Easter exhibition opening this weekend in St Andrews Preservation Trust Museum.

This event breaks new ground for the museum — curator Jennifer Reid has worked closely with the University of St Andrews Centre for Film Studies.

Together they produced a questionnaire to collect memories of local cinema, which had an excellent response.

Along with university students and lecturers, Jennifer has been delving into old newspapers to find evidence of early film and cinema in the town.

Evidence has been found that on Thursday August 22 1895, a “Grand Fancy Bazaar” was held in the grounds of United College by the Marquis of Bute to raise money to clear the debts of the St Andrews University students’ union.

It included a variety of different forms of entertainment, but, most interestingly, the programme included, as a local newspaper advertised: “Edison’s three latest marvels — the phonograph, kinoscope and kinetophone”.

Research suggests that this was the first time Thomas Edison’s kinetophone had made its debut in the UK.

The kinetophone was a box which housed a series of moving pictures, which, when viewed through a peephole, showed what we understand today as film.

The exhibition charts the rise of cinema in the town from this early screening to the



Curator Jennifer Reid at the St Andrews Preservation Trust Museum with Dr Tom Rice, lecturer in film studies at St Andrews University, with some of the memorabilia to be on show. Picture: Dougie Nicolson.

early La Scala cinema housed in a converted church, the purpose-built Cinema House to the only remaining cinema in the town, the New Picture House.

The exhibition is particularly of interest in bringing a flood of memories back to museum committee member, Frances Humphries, as her father Councillor Jack

Humphries was the last manager of the Cinema House.

The cinematic project will be continued after the exhibition closes, with events to follow later in the year.

The display opens on Saturday and runs to April 22, from 2-5pm daily, and admission is free.

## IN BRIEF

### Fears for future of play area

An action group is fighting to protect the future of a much-loved play area in Kinross.

Residents fear that Davis Park in Springfield Road will be damaged by plans contained in the draft development plan.

As well as organising demonstrations they are urging concerned people to lodge their thoughts about the future of the park with the council.

They believe if they don't speak up the park may disappear under a new road for housing if it is included in the finalised plan.

As the deadline for objections is looming — next Tuesday — the action group are urging residents to object via [noroadinthepark.wordpress.com](http://noroadinthepark.wordpress.com) where there is a link to the representation form or in writing to The Development Plan Team, The Environment Service, Perth and Kinross Council, 35 Kinnoull Street, Perth, PH1 5GD.

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