

# Now showing at the home cinema

WHEN Keith Swadkins and his family fancy watching a good film in the evening, they neither have to troop down to the local video shop nor queue outside a picture house. Just through the kitchen door at Keith's home is a small cinema which he can boast is literally on his doorstep.

The fan-shaped auditorium with its sloping carpeted floor, plus red seats and screen hiding behind sparkling white lame curtains is the epitome of the movie houses of the 1950s — an era which Keith loved and longed to re-create in the comfort of his home. In Disley.

The comfortable 20-seater cinema with four-track stereophonic sound, discreet spotlights and twin projectors, is a symbol of Keith's passion for the movie world which started at the tender age of four with a toy theatre and blossomed into a lifelong dream.

Keith, a TV cameraman, explained that when he moved to Manchester in 1977 he looked specifically for a house with room to build a cinema, as he had done at his former home in London. It was completed two years ago.

The oak-framed seats, which Keith and his wife Brenda have lovingly renovated (and from which they have removed woggles of chewing gum) come originally from the circle of The Ionic at Golders Green, London, and most of

the electric, such as the mechanism operating the curtain, have come from an old mill at Glossop.

The layout and decor is based on the London Casino of the 1950s, though naturally on a reduced scale, with an ingenious screen — one of only two in the country — some 12½ ft. by 5½ ft. which can be altered by motor to six pre-set shapes and sizes from CinemaScope to Cinemascope to Cinemascope.

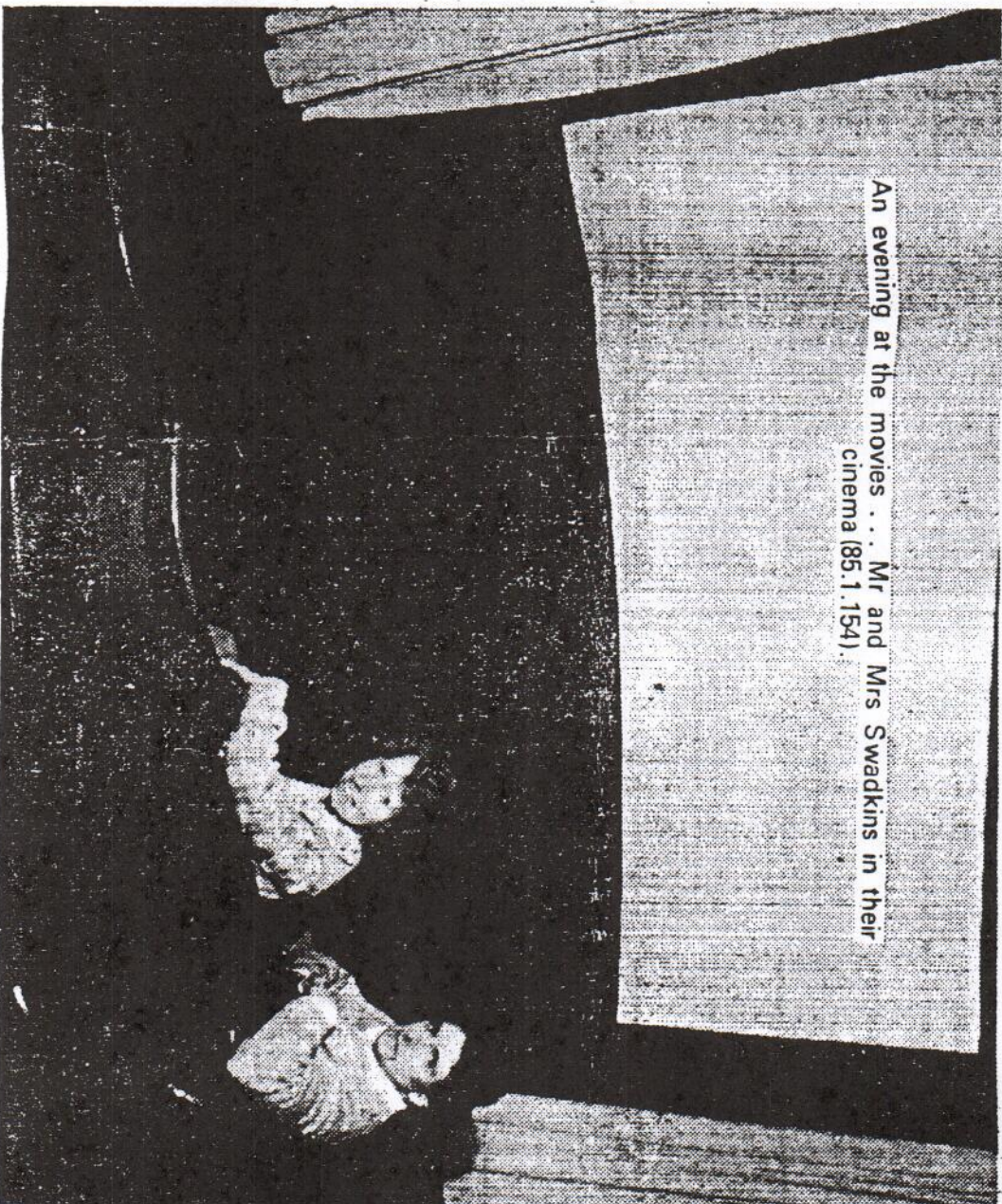
"The '60s is the time of the cinema I loved," Keith explained. "It was exciting and had the showmanship that is sadly missing today. In my home it lives on."

Keith's favourite pictures, all on Super 8 — the only Gauge on which you can legally buy films — include "Johnson's Story,"

"That's Entertainment" and "An American in Paris." He is now eagerly awaiting a delivery from MGM of the "Showboat" musical which he has had on order for two years.

Although many of Keith's 150 films, which include some very rare cartoons, have appeared on television several times, he claims that "the box" can

An evening at the movies . . . Mr and Mrs Swadkins in their cinema (85.1.154).







Mr Keith Swadkins in the projection room of his cinema. (85.1.153).

## An evening at the movies

\* Continued from Page 1  
never capture the true essence of these Hollywood Greats on the big screen.

Frames from the Cinemascope pictures are severely chopped for TV showings and, Keith believes, this can spoil the whole effect of the epics. Another difference is that in the cinema, there were intervals every 20 minutes for a change of reel.

Getting hold of the films is never easy since there are just three main importers of pictures into this country. The choice is very

restricted, depending on the quirks of the movie industry.

Some of the more up-to-date releases include "Rocky," "Some Like It Hot," "The Wizard of Oz" and a couple of the side-splitting Carry On films.

And so, with the music of the old movies playing to fade in the background and the lights dimming in the cosy auditorium, the film started rolling in the projection room and our reporter Lisa Birchwistle sank back into one of the sprung

seats for a brief screen show.

Trailers to "E.T." and "The Revenge of the Jedi" flashed by. The stereophonic sound in a clip from "Raise the Titanic," as the magnificent ship was dynamited from the bottom of the ocean, was extremely vivid as the speakers beneath the floor shook the seats.

An excerpt showing the famous chariot race from that marathon epic "Ben Hur" was displayed in all its modern Cinemascope

glory, without the side bits missing, as happens on TV. All the fury and gore were there, as the movie moguls had intended it to be shown.

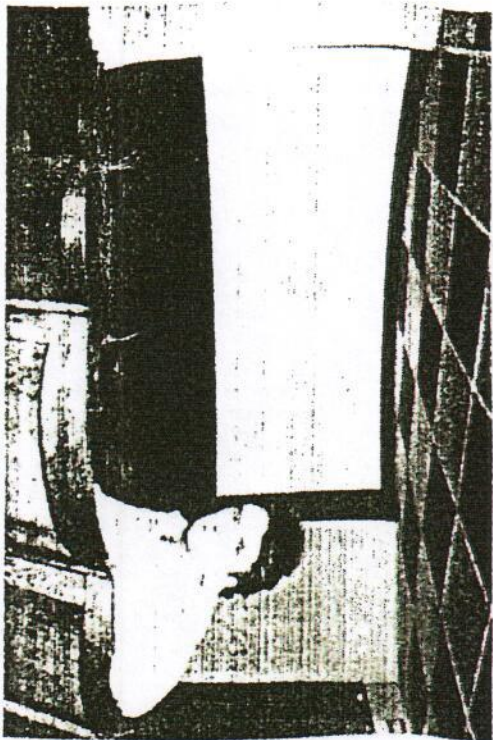
The final reel was a "ride" on the big dipper, swooping and soaring and flying round the hairpin corners. It was a dizzying spectacle.

The entire set-up is quite fantastic, except for one detail. Keith has not yet managed to persuade his wife to come round with ice creams in the interval!



# The big film's just starting at Keith's

IF YOU'RE lucky enough to go to the home of TV cameraman Keith Swadkins, don't be surprised if he sells you a ticket... you'll step into a Fifties cinema.



Keith has created a 20-seater with council planning permission—they called it a "carpeted garage." This has been a five-year project similar to one in his old home in Luton.

And it's very posh, with upholstered seats from the old Ionic in Golders Green.

"Cinema is my passion," says Keith, a film projectionist before joining the BBC 25 years ago.

He has 150 titles, with such golden oldies as *An American in Paris*, *The Jolson Story* and *Oh Mr Porter!* Plenty of Tom and J., and the original trailer for *The Jazz Singer*, first talkie to circle the globe.

Is Keith swimming against the video tide collecting Super 8?

"Video isn't the same thing at all," he replies. "Most films look better on the big screen"—in his case 15ft.

The Disney job, complete with stereo sound, is Keith's most sophisticated yet. And he doesn't seem at all envious of the man who fitted out his home cinema with dentist's chairs!

