

From the Archives – 14th March 2024

Theatre and film parties at Roehampton Club in pictures

By Steve Riedlinger, Club Archivist

Noel Coward hosting the Roehampton Club Theatrical Garden Party in 1948 playing skittles with Margaret Lockwood – *Sketch Newspaper* photographs 7th July 1948.



JUNE 29.—O the wind and the rain at Roehampton Club! Occasion the Theatrical Garden Party. Host: Noel Coward in grey top-hat and accessories. He's playing skittles in my picture with Margaret Lockwood. Raymond Massey in picture on left tried to hook champagne bottle; with him was his wife. Actresses had had dresses specially built for this event, and were in fimsiest of fragile chiffons.

Cocktail Reception in London hosted by Sir Lawrence and Lady Olivier for the 1949 Theatrical Garden Party at Roehampton Club – *The Sphere* publication photograph and accompanying report of the event.

Photographs and report of Sir Lawrence Olivier, Vivien Leigh, John Gielgud and Joan Crawford attending the 1949 Theatrical Garden Party at Roehampton Club – *The Sphere* publication.

THE OLIVIERS HOLD COURT AND AN AUCTION : Eighteen Ambassadors, ten Ministers and Chargé d'Affaires and more than 300 stage and screen celebrities, thronged No. 96 Piccadilly, last week, at a cocktail party and reception in connection with the annual Theatrical Garden Party to be held in May in the grounds of the Roehampton Club in aid of the Actors' Orphanage. The principal event was an auction, with film-star Richard Attenborough acting as auctioneer. It was in 1943 that he scored his great success in the play, *Brighton Rock*. Film-star Anne Crawford, who appears in the above picture with the Oliviers, was noted as one of the best-dressed women of the evening in a dress of silver-grey slipper satin. Miss Crawford is another outstanding Gainsborough player and appeared in "Millions Like Us."



2. GAY QUARTETTE : Stewart Granger and Jean Simmons, with the hosts, John Gielgud and Gertrude Lawrence, at the Theatrical Garden Party



ROLL UP! ROLL UP! Sir Lawrence and Lady Olivier (Vivien Leigh) attracting custom at the Old Vic sideshow at the recent Theatrical Garden Party, Roehampton

1 and 2. ALL THE FUN OF THE FAIR AT ROEHAMPTON : John Gielgud and Gertrude Lawrence were the official hosts at the Theatrical Garden Party at Roehampton, and Sir Laurence and Lady Olivier were among the many celebrated stars of stage and screen who gave their help in extorting money from a willing public on behalf of the Actors' Orphanage to which the Garden Party proceeds go. One of the highlights of the day was the performance of Danny Kaye, who appeared as a "nervous amateur" at an audition conducted by Mr. Hugh Beaumont and which went on all the afternoon. London theatre managers acted as talent-spotters. At the end of his act Danny Kaye was dragged from the microphone by Sid Field, who told him as he concluded his shy performance that he undoubtedly had a future before him.



SIR LAURENCE AND LADY OLIVIER RECEIVE THE GUESTS : Greeting Anne Crawford, Gainsborough film star, at a reception at 96 Piccadilly

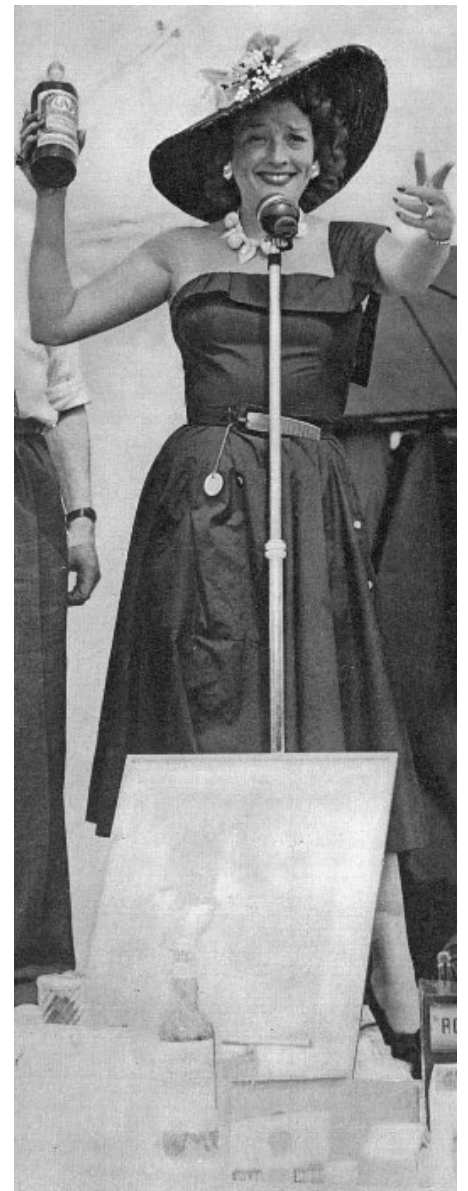
Photographs of Rex Harrison, Richard Attenborough, Vivien Leigh and various other actresses attending the 1950 Theatre and Film Carnival at Roehampton Club including a special photograph of HRH releasing a balloon with her name – *Sketch Newspaper* and *Dundee Evening Telegraph*



A cartwheel hat with matching cartwheel on wrist. Worn by Patricia Dare, of the "Sauce Piquante" revue at the Theatre Carnival at Roehampton Club.



"Who'll buy a nice basket of gooseberries?" cried Moira Lister, helping to swell the funds.



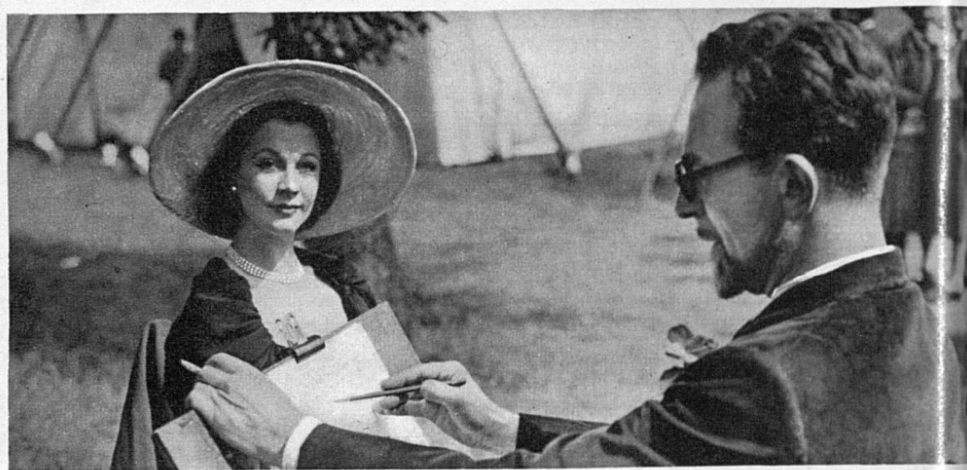
Cherry brandy for sale. . . . "Going . . . going . . ." the auctioneer, Margo Graham.



At the "Circus of the Stars" : Ringmaster Rex Harrison, with Ruby Vinning, Jimmy Hanley, Rosalyn Boulter, acted "barkers." Look below for their footwork.



On the set both ways you look at it: Richard Attenborough, Larry Parks, give a film test to Richard Todd.



Mr. Roger Furse, theatre, film décor artist, drew portraits; Vivien Leigh sat for him.



Lucky catch in the fishing contest for Lana Morris.



H.R.H. the Duchess of Kent released a balloon in the balloon race. Leslie Henson watched.