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Shane sparkles at summer ball

Actor Shane Richie, 2009 X Factor finalist Rachel Adedeji and dance act Cerebro were among the acts that entertained children and families at this year's Noah's Ark Children's Hospice Summer Ball at Alexandra Palace.

More than 90 life-limited and life-threatened children and their families attended the event, which was hosted by BBC television presenter Barney Harwood.

On arrival, the guests were treated to a 'red carpet' entrance and welcomed by well known cartoon characters, before enjoying a disco and mixing with the stars.

Shane Richie said: "I'm very proud to be an Ambassador for Noah's Ark Children's Hospice and today hit home exactly why I support them. Seeing all the children and their families having so much fun was just magic. I can't even imagine how tough their lives must be so it was amazing to hear so much laughter and to see so many smiling faces. It was a brilliant day."



Shane Richie spreads a bit of happiness at the Noah's Ark Children's Hospice Summer Ball. Photo courtesy of Noah's Ark.

Romance and glamour on and off the silver screen

Our article on the 75th anniversary of the Odeon Muswell Hill (*THE ARCHER*, August 2011) led Jeanne Wray, of Baronsmere Road, to send us her happy memories of cinema-going in north London.

All the local cinemas were our favourites during the 1940s and 50s. Although some of us worked in central London and usually most of Saturdays, whether mornings only or all-day, we did not have the funds for West End shows on a regular basis so we preferred to come home and make Saturday nights special in a semi-formal way.

The venues were exotic, often with a cinema organ and uniformed commissionaires plus usherettes showing us in to the cinema and ice-creams during the intervals.

One particular memory of the Odeon is a performance of 'Pandora and The Flying Dutchman' starring Ava Gardner whose glamour I admired. I was with a male friend whom I had met at a Saturday night dance at Hornsey Town Hall and I obviously felt that this romantic visit to the cinema would consolidate our friendship. Nothing came of it, however, as he was much older than me but I will never forget the excitement of the occasion.

I met my future husband later, when I was 20. I lived at the bottom of Muswell Hill and he lived in Islington and worked all-day Saturday in the Finsbury Park area so I often met him at the Odeon or the Ritz, now sadly gone, at the top of Muswell Hill, for a special evening out.

We also used to walk from Muswell Hill to the then Rex, now The Phoenix in East Finchley, or after we were married to the Gaumont, Wood Green. As none of us owned a car the furthest we went was from time to time to Dalston

and Mile End to The People's Palace to see foreign films, which often included what are now Bollywood productions.

Even now when I walk past the Odeon Muswell Hill, I remember those glory days. At that time, before we had TV, we would even be prepared to stand at the back of the cinema in order to see the latest films as the atmosphere was so 'out of this world'.

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