

The Napier Operatic Society

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FRANK LOESSER'S BROADWAY SUCCESS

# Where's Charley?



Book by **GEORGE ABBOTT**      Music and lyrics by **FRANK LOESSER**  
Based on Brandon Thomas' "Charley's Aunt"

MUNICIPAL THEATRE, NAPIER  
MARCH 30th — APRIL 6th  
HASTINGS, APRIL 17th — 20th  
MATINEES:—  
NAPIER 30th MARCH and  
6th APRIL.

Produced by DAVID ROSSITER.

Souvenir Programme 1/6

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A foundation member of the N.Z. Federation of Operatic Societies.

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## “WHERE’S CHARLIE ? ”

### SYNOPSIS

First London Performance—Thursday, 20th February, 1958, at the Palace Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue.

### THE STORY AND BACKGROUND OF THE PLAY

“Where’s Charley?” is the musical adaptation of “Charley’s Aunt,” which must surely be the most successful play ever written. Theatregoers could be forgiven for accepting such a sweeping statement with a considerable degree of scepticism and so, in an endeavour to substantiate so extravagant a claim, and because it presents a fascinating slice of theatrical history, we sketch below a brief outline of the “Aunt’s” incredible background.

The author of “Charley’s Aunt,” Brandon Thomas, tailored the play to measure for W. S. Penley, one of the top comedians of Victorian England. They had met by chance on a train and Penley, who admired Thomas’ work as a serious dramatist and who was looking for something fresh for his own comic repertoire, asked him to write “. . . a pretty little three-act comedy with plenty of fun in it.”

Thomas jumped at the chance, for Penley’s name on a programme was almost a guarantee of full houses. He wrote “Charley’s Aunt” in three and a half weeks, but due to Penley’s other acting commitments it was two years before she first flounced on stage. It finally opened on February 29, 1892, in the small Suffolk town of Bury St Edmunds. It continued to play in the provinces for ten months, until a theatre became vacant in London. No backer could be found, however, who was interested in financing a London production, but at the last moment Thomas ran to earth a company promoter willing to guarantee the sum demanded to lease the theatre.

Finally, with second-hand sets and home-made costumes (the entire production costing no more than £100) the “Aunt” left the provinces and opened at the Royalty Theatre, Soho, on December 21, 1892. Next morning the critics pulled out their superlatives, and in the next few weeks hansom cabs and broughams were smashed in the crush of ticket hunters. The manager of the theatre next to the Royalty sought an injunction to stop the crowds blocking his doors, and Penley, sued for “carrying on the theatre in such a way as to cause a nuisance,” had to employ three policemen to handle the traffic. Within a month the play moved to the bigger Globe Theatre in the Strand, where it ran for 1466 performances.

Since that London opening the “Aunt” has never stopped playing—there has never been a single weekday when it has not been playing somewhere. At one time it was running simultaneously in forty-eight theatres in twenty-two different languages, among them Zulu, Gaelic, Afrikaans, Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Icelandic and Esperanto. It has been filmed five times, broadcast, televised, made into a musical, used as the basis for foreign language textbooks.

Brandon Thomas always retained strict control over the way the play was produced, and the rules that he laid down are strictly adhered to today by his son and two daughters. The Brandon Thomases will not issue a licence for the play’s performance unless a guarantee is given that the detailed instructions set out by their father are adhered to—even to the exact details of the “Aunt’s” costume.

What is the secret of the “Aunt’s” fabulous success? A comedy of errors, the play concerns the embarrassments of a man in woman’s clothing—and there is nothing new about that. The essence of the plot is the Victorian principle that two young ladies must not lunch alone with two young gentlemen. A chaperon is necessary. The young men are Oxford undergraduates, and a friend of Charley’s decides to create a chaperon by impersonating Charley’s aunt. Not only do the girls fall for the impersonation, but two elderly suitors fall for the startled “aunt.” Hardly the material, it might be thought, for the biggest box office success in the history of the theatre. Numerous reasons for its success have been proffered by innumerable critics, but in a nutshell it is simply this—it is a very funny play.

### “WHERE’S CHARLEY?”

In “Where’s Charley?” the only adaptation of the play so far permitted, some of the dialogue and a few minor characters have been eliminated in order to make room for the musical and dance numbers, and the impersonation of the aunt is done by Charley himself.

Charley and his friend, Jack Chesney, have invited two young ladies—Amy Spettigue and Kitty Verdun—to lunch during the commemoration week celebrations at Oxford University. Also expected is Charley’s aunt from Brazil, an extremely wealthy widow. When she fails to arrive, Jack persuades Charley to impersonate her as, if there is no chaperon, it will give Lawyer Spettigue all the excuse he needs to whisk the ladies home again. Spettigue’s interest in Amy and Kitty is that he is the uncle of one and the guardian of the other, and has control of their money until they marry—an eventuality he is determined to prevent as long as possible.

Another visitor to Oxford for the celebrations is Jack’s father, Sir Francis Chesney, who brings with him the bad news that his financial resources have suffered a severe setback. Jack suggests to his father that a possible solution to the problem would be to marry Charley’s wealthy aunt—meaning, of course, the real one who is still expected. Sir Francis, however, has the misfortune to meet the bogus “aunt” first, and though somewhat repelled by her odd appearance and behaviour, nevertheless makes a brave attempt to woo her.

Hypnotised also by the aura of so much money is villain-of-the-piece, Spettigue, who stalks the “aunt” relentlessly, determined to get his hands on her “cool twenty million in cash.” Charley, beset by the unwelcome attentions of the two elderly suitors, has the additional worry of placating his bewildered Amy who cannot understand why he keeps disappearing. Then the real aunt arrives and one would expect that to be the end of the mix-up. But no! Intrigued by the fact that someone is impersonating her she decides not to reveal her true identity and—but we will confuse you no further. Suffice it to say that Charley becomes deeper and more hilariously bogged down in his deception before the final curtain reunites him with Amy, Jack with Kitty, and—guess who?—with the aunt.

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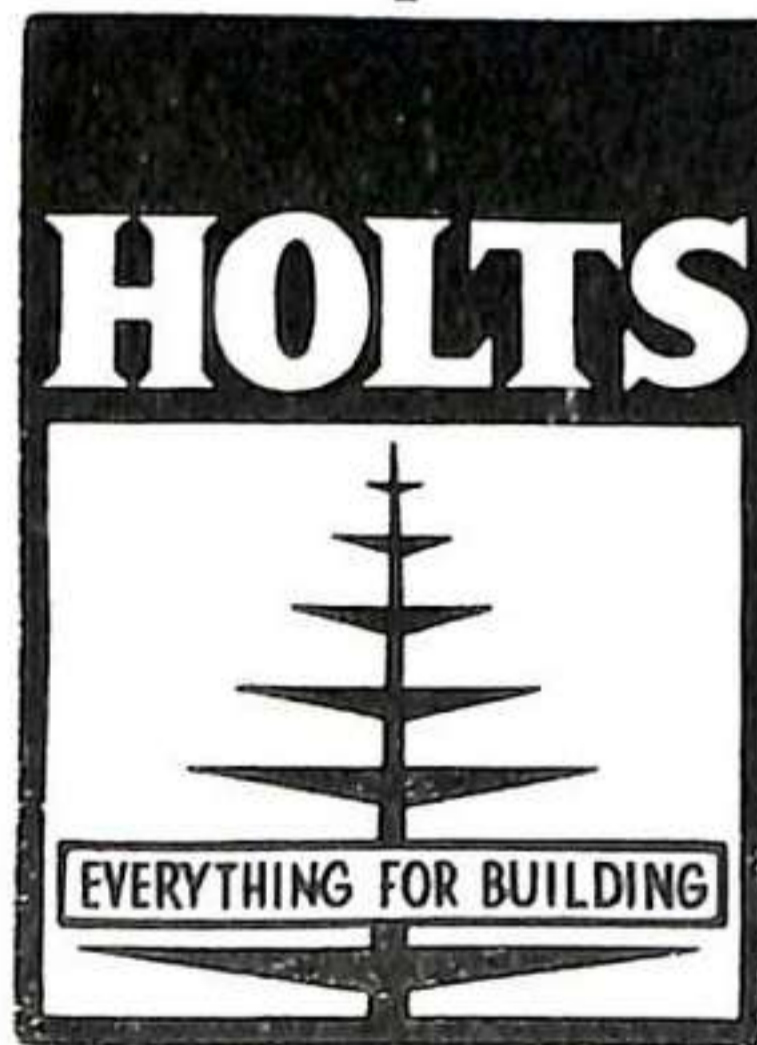
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**PRODUCER**

**David Rossiter**

Producer of the well remembered "Music Man" last year; born in England and, though having been in New Zealand only a short while, is already building a reputation of bringing to his productions latest techniques now popular on the English professional and amateur stage, these techniques already appealing so much to New Zealand audiences.

Has had acting experience on the London stage in both musicals and straight plays, together with broadcasting and T.V. appearances, followed by considerable experience producing in the English provinces.

Leaves Napier to produce in Wanganui and other centres before making a welcome return to Napier.



**MUSICAL DIRECTOR**

**Cedric White**

Has directed the musical side of the Society for many years. He was a member of the original "Kiwi" Concert Party and remained in England under a Government Bursary and passed through the Royal Academy of Music. He was a member of the Savoy Orchestra. He then moved to Paris and enrolled at the National Conservatoire and was in the Alhambra Theatre Orchestra. On his return to New Zealand he toured with the J. C. Williamson organisation, but eventually settled in Napier, where he is in practice as a public accountant.

**CHOREOGRAPHER**

**Betty Gray**

The society has been fortunate in securing the services of Betty Gray as Choreographer and Ballet Mistress for this production, "Where's Charley,"

An Associate of the Royal Academy of Dancing, being the first in Hawke's Bay to gain her Solo Seal Examination, the highest examination for a dancer, is also a graduate of the National Examination System of Dancing in Australia (Contemporary Dancing).

Betty Gray has danced leading roles in the ballets for the society's productions of "Chu Chin Chow" and "Oklahoma" before touring throughout New Zealand with J. C. Williamson as a professional dancer.

Betty has so impressed all who have worked under her with her friendliness and the manner in which she has been prepared to assist the producer with the principal and chorus dancing, so easily taking everything in her stride. We are certain her work will impress.

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**DON ANDERSEN** as Sir Francis Chesney

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**TERRY COYLE** as **CHARLEY WYKEHAM**  
and **JOCELYN McIVOR** as **AMY SPETTIGUE**



**ANNE CLIFFORD** as **KITTY VERDUN**  
and **YORK DAVIS** as **JACK CHESNEY**

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HEATHER BLACK as MARGARET  
PATRICIA ROUSE as EMMA BRASSETT  
JACK CRISP as BRASSETT

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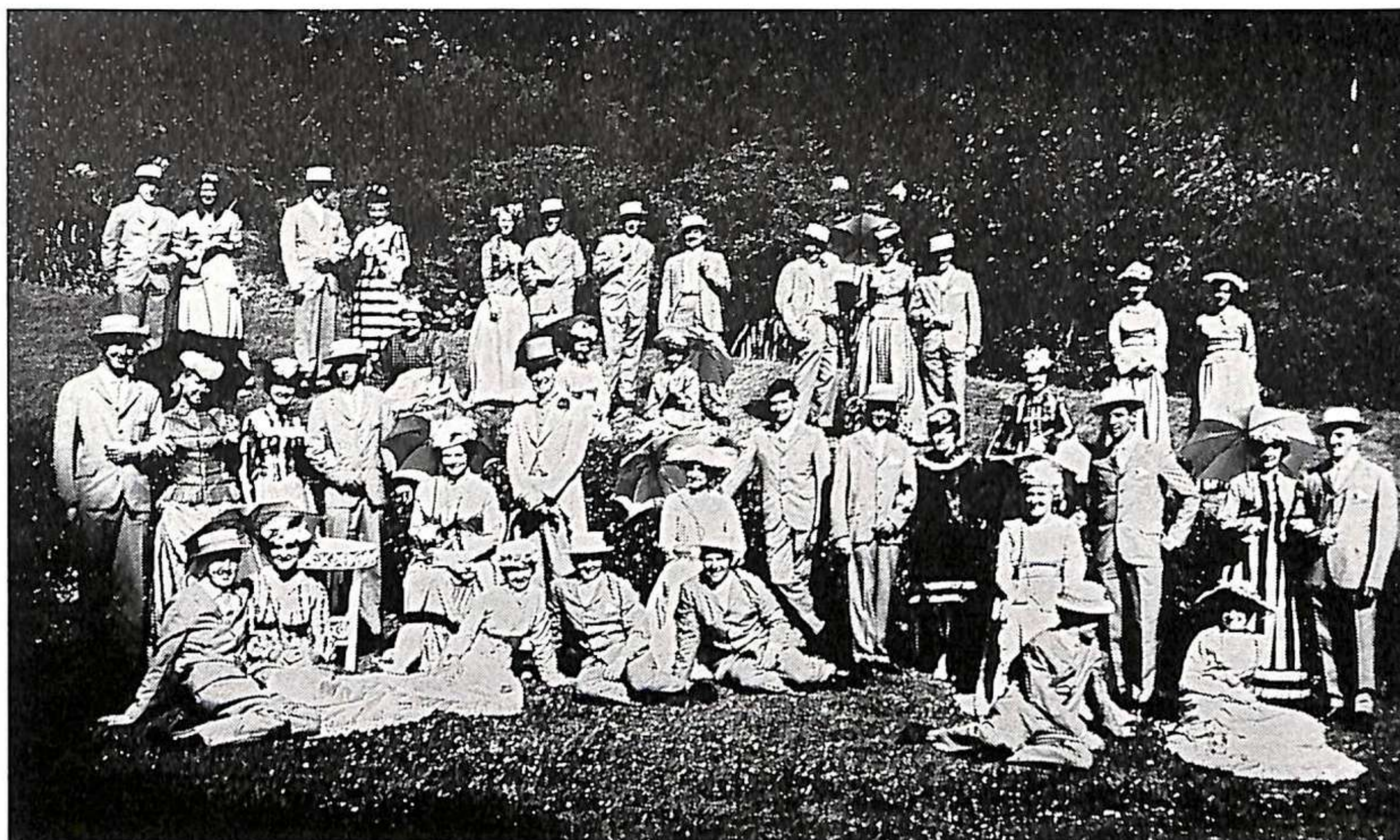
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CHARLEY'S AUNT'S TEA PARTY

# THE NAPIER OPERATIC SOCIETY [INC]

An Affiliate of the National Operatic and Dramatic Association, London. Foundation Member of the New Zealand Federation of Operatic Societies—Founded October, 1882.

Producer: DAVID ROSSITER. Musical Director:  
CEDRIC WHITE. Choreography: BETTY GRAY.

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ADAPTED FROM THE PLAY "CHARLEY'S AUNT" BY  
BRANDON THOMAS

# "WHERE'S CHARLEY?"

## THE CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

REGGIE, undergraduate at St Olde's College, Oxford	JOE CORRY
BRASSET, a College Scout	JACK CRISP
CHARLEY WYKEHAM, undergraduate at St Olde's College Oxford	TERRY COYLE
JAMES, also an undergraduate	BERNARD READE
JOHN, also an undergraduate	ALFRED CRADDOCK
BILL, also an undergraduate	NOEL BROWNE
JACK CHESNEY, also an undergraduate	YORK DAVIS
AMY SPETTIGUE, Spettigue's Niece	JOCELYN McIVOR
KITTY VERDUN, Spettigue's Ward	ANNE CLIFFORD
WILKINSON, a Professor	KEN REIPER
SIR FRANCIS CHESNEY, Colonel, late Indian Service	DON ANDERSEN
STEPHEN SPETTIGUE, Solicitor, Oxford	BRIAN HOWLETT
EMA BRASSETT	PATRICIA ROUSE
PATRICIA	PAM WALKER
MARGARET	HEATHER BLACK
MARY	AUDREY LONDON
DONNA LUCIA D'ALVADOREZ (from Brazil)	DAWN WRIGHT
THE PHOTOGRAPHER	BRYAN JOHNSON
PATSY	GILLIAN DAVIS

VICKY BETTINGTON  
CHRISTINE BIRD  
HEATHER BLACK  
JEAN BOWES  
BETTY BROOKER  
JOCELYN COOK

TREVOR BAILLIE  
NOEL BROWNE  
LEO BRUNTON  
JOE CORRY  
ALF CRADDOCK

VALERIE FLANDERS

JOCELYN COOK

LEO BRUNTON

Tango Girls  
Samba Girls

Pernambuco Boys

Boy With Hat

Pernambuco Duo

The Don

Stephen Spettigue

Butterfly Girl's Friends

Pernambuco Girls

JENNY BRAZIER  
DAMARIS McCONNELL  
NOEL BROWNE  
IAN McMASTER  
ANNABEL CRAWFORD  
CARINE JACKSON  
ANNE CLIFFORD

ANNABEL CRAWFORD  
JENNIFER DANIELL  
GILLIAN DAVIES  
PENNY ELLIOT  
GLENNIS FLAVELL  
DOROTHY FOSTER

JACK CRISP  
MIKE DOWNING  
RUSSELL DRIEBERG  
RICHARD HEATH  
GODFREY HUSHEER

JOANNE JENSEN  
LEIGH ROWELL

GILLIAN GORDON

RUSSELL DRIEBERG  
ROBIN RICKEY

VALERIE FLANDERS  
JENNY BRAZIER  
LESLEY WOLFE

YORK DAVIS  
ROBIN RICKEY

TONY YATES

LEIGH ROWELL and ROBIN RICKEY

TERRY COYLE

BRIAN HOWLETT

COLLEEN PATTERSON

JOCELYN COOK

HEATHER NICHOLSON

VALERIE FLANDERS  
JACQUELINE ROLLS  
JOE CORRY  
ROBIN NEWTON  
JOCELYN COOK  
HEATHER NICHOLSON  
YORK DAVIS

### Ladies of the Chorus

GILLIAN GORDON  
JEAN GORDON  
VALERIE HART  
CARINE JACKSON  
AUDREY LONDON  
HEATHER NICHOLSON

### Gentlemen of the Chorus

CARL JAMIESON  
DAVID LENNIHAN  
IAN McMASTER  
KEN REIPER  
DAVID ROSS

### CORPS DE BALLET

ASHMOLEAN  
College Girls

DAMARIS McCONNELL  
LESLEY WOLFE

Head Mistress JENNY BRAZIER

### Schoolgirls

CARINE JACKSON  
VIVIENNE JENSEN

Mistress

### Bandsmen

IAN McMASTER  
TONY YATES

Solo Boy ROBIN RICKEY

### PERNAMBUCO

JOANNE JENSEN  
LEIGH ROWELL  
JACQUELINE ROLLS

RUSSELL DRIEBERG  
RICHARD HEATH

Girl With Hat

TONY YATES

### Lucy

ANNABEL CRAWFORD  
GILLIAN GORDON

The Butterfly Girl

HEATHER NICHOLSON

### Red Rose Cotillion

JOANNE JENSEN  
LEIGH ROWELL  
RUSSELL DRIEBERG  
ROBIN RICKEY  
GILLIAN GORDON  
COLLEEN PATTERSON  
DAWN WRIGHT

### Members of the Orchestra

Musical Director CEDRIC WHITE

### Oboe

JANE OLDROYD

### Clarinets

DON MORI  
HAROLD BUSH

Flute ENID HOCKING

COLLEEN PATTERSON  
PAT ROUSE  
WENDY RIEPER  
PAMELA WALKER  
LESLEY WILDEY

TREVOR WAKELY  
TONY YATES  
JOHN VARGA  
MIKE POPPLEWELL

JACQUELINE ROLLS

HEATHER NICHOLSON

ROBIN NEWTON

DAMARIS McCONNELL  
VIVIENNE JENSEN

ROBIN NEWTON  
TONY YATES

JACQUELINE ROLLS

JOCELYN McIVOR

LESLEY WILDEY

JEAN GORDON

CARINE JACKSON

VIVIENNE JENSEN  
LESLEY WOLFE  
RICHARD HEATH  
TONY YATES  
JEAN GORDON  
LESLEY WILDEY  
DON ANDERSEN

### Trumpets

KEVIN KEOGH  
CYRIL GIRVAN

### Trombone

DOUG ROBINSON

Timpani and Percussion  
JOCK SETON

## SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

### ACT 1—

Prologue in the Grounds of Oxford University.

SCENE 1—A Room at Oxford University.

SCENE 2—A Street.

SCENE 3—The Garden.

SCENE 4—Where The Nuts Come From.

### ACT 2—

SCENE 1—The Garden.

SCENE 2—A Street.

SCENE 3—Where The Ladies Go.

SCENE 4—A Garden Path.

SCENE 5—The Ballroom.

TIME — 1892

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRODUCER

In this production of "Where's Charley?" I have attempted to bring to Napier audiences Mr Brandon Thomas' original ideas which have proved so popular on the English stage for so many years and which are so well known to me. With the cast, I feel I have been more than lucky in this aim, being able to present as many of the original situations of this world-famous "Aunt."

To all those concerned in the Napier Operatic Society, both on stage and back stage, I extend my sincere thanks for the wonderful co-operation extended to me, it has made my task not only easy but so enjoyable.

In particular, I would like to express appreciation of the Musical Director, Cedric White, and the Choreographer, Betty Gray, both of whom have worked with me so willingly and so readily accepted any suggestions I have made, thus making it easy for the production, music and dancing, to tell one complete story. Having also heard the Orchestra in rehearsal, which so delighted the ear, what more could a Producer wish for.



THE FULL DANCERS OF "WHERE'S CHARLEY?"

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## MUSICAL NUMBERS

### PROLOGUE

"Where's Charley?"

"The Years Before Us."

Male Chorus, Charley, Reggie, Brassett, James, John and Bill.  
Reggie, Brassett, James, John and Bill.

### ACT 1—SCENE 1

"Better Get Out of Here"

Charley, Amy, Jack and Kitty

### ACT 1—SCENE 2

"Ashmolean Marching Song"

Brassett, Emma, Patricia, Margaret, Mary, Girls' Chorus, Male Chorus and Dancers

### ACT 1—SCENE 3

"My Darling Mr Darling"

"Make a Miracle"

"Serenade With Asides"

"Lovelier Than Ever"

"The Woman In His Room"

Jack and Kitty

Charley and Amy

Spettigue

Donna Lucia, Sir Francis, Girls' Chorus and Male Chorus

Amy

### ACT 1—SCENE 4

"Pernambuco"

"Pernambuco Ballet"

James, Reggie, Patricia, Margaret, Patsy, Mary, John and Bill  
Charley, Amy, Dancers, Girls' Chorus and Male Chorus

### ACT 2—SCENE 1

"Where's Charley?"

Charley, Jack, Reggie, John, Bill, Emma, Patricia, Margaret,  
Mary, Brassett, Photographer, Male Chorus and Female Chorus

### ACT 2—SCENE 2

"Once In Love With Amy"

Charley, Jack and Male Chorus

### ACT 2—SCENE 3

"The Gossips"

Emma, Patricia, Margaret Mary, Patsy and Girls' Chorus

### ACT 2—SCENE 4

"At the Red Rose Cotillion"

Jack and Kitty

### ACT 2—SCENE 5

"Finale"

Jack, Kitty, Donna Lucia, Sir Francis, Dancers, Girls and Male Chorus

"Finale Ultimo"

Charley and Amy and Full Company  
Entire Company

The setting to the Overture which is a popular idea in England, has been devised and set by the Producer, David Rossiter, together with the Prologue, which does not appear in the original Musical but which was felt did commence the show on a lively musical note.



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ROBIN RICKEY, Principal Male Dancer



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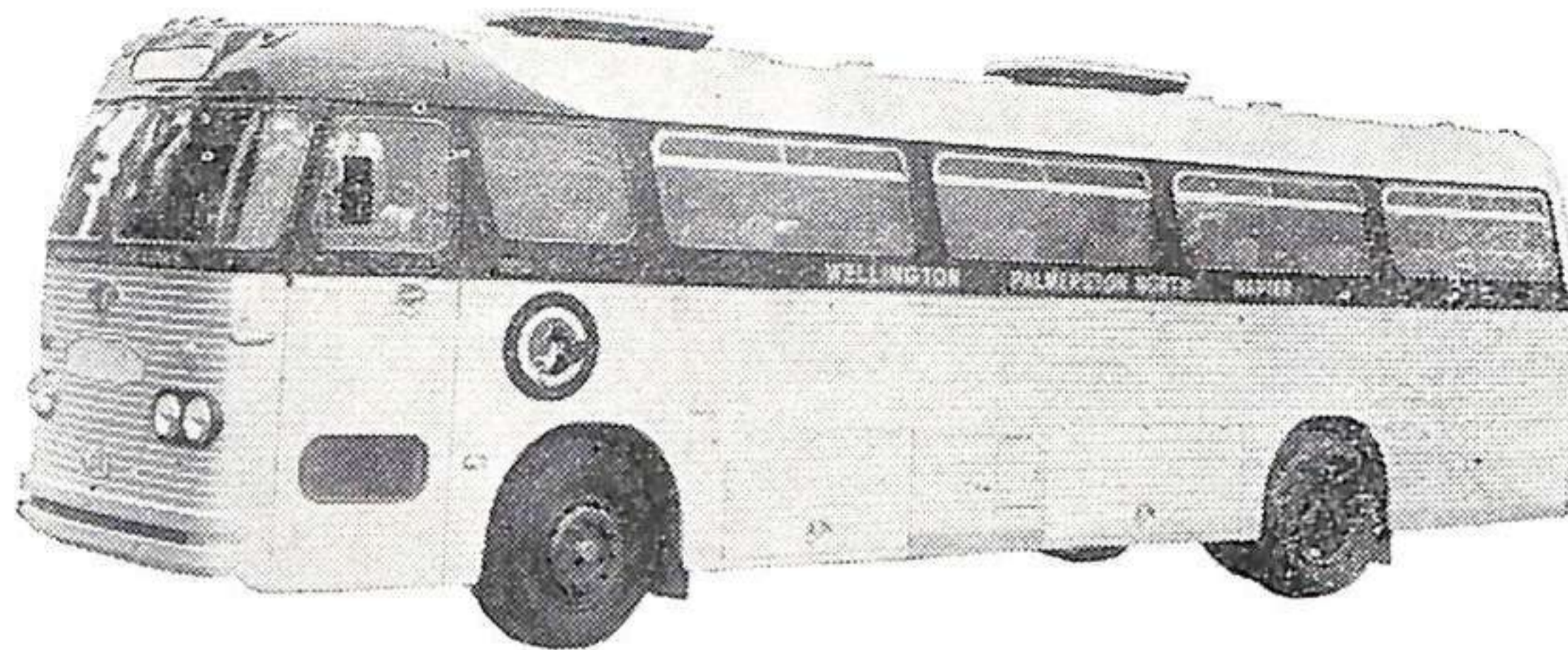
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# PRODUCTION PERSONNEL

## THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Producer	David Rossiter	Make-up Supervisor	Isobel Johnson
Musical Director and Chorus Master	Cedric White	Prompts	Kathleen Singleton, Elizabeth Pettit
Choreography	Betty Gray	Call Steward	Dianne Walkingshaw
Stage Director	Cedric Wright	Publicity	Ron Steel, Colleen Patterson, Reg Johnson
Property Master	Noel Tolhurst	House Manager	Peter Cox
Hon. Pianiste	Winifred Quarrie	Sound Effects	Graham Bowes
Assistant Hon. Pianiste	Betty Hague	Rehearsal Officer	Colleen Patterson
Wardrobe Mistresses	Rita Coyle, Pat Rouse	Secretary:	MURRAY WALL, Colenso Chambers, Emerson Street. Bcx 21. Phone 8149.
Chief Mechanist	Ira Owen		

## ASSISTANTS TO PRODUCTION PERSONNEL

**Stage Crew:** Lionel Clover, Ted Wildey, Allan Jones, Derek Pryce, John McKinnon, Harry Fraser, Graham Murray, Don Hurley, Don Andrews, Kerry Rushbidge, Joe Jenkinson, Barry Brown, Alister Flett, Peter Sagers, A. Dobbs, Les Dunnett.

**Properties:** Roly Cook, Rod Ingle, Noel Hatton, Jim Mayo, Bob Strickland, Fred Barton, Justine Cook, Pat Spriggs, John Kuiper.

**Wardrobe:** Marion Bettington, Peggy Budd, Elsa Alexander, Cathie Cox, Betty Hague, Mabel Salvigny, Dianne McCarthy.

**Make-up:** Gwynne Ace, Joan Colwill, Jo White, Mavis Steel.

**Front of House Staff:** Bill Quarrie, Reg. Johnson, Francis Smith, Mary Coyle, Rosemary Crump, Ann Roberts, Valerie Winter, Jean Apperley, Joy Sanderson, Dianne Gilmour, Bernice McCosh, Beth Graham, Kathleen Botherway, Joan Wilkinson, Joanne Reid, Erin Flemwell, June Fowler.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Daily Telegraph, The H.B. Herald-Tribune, Gwynne Ace, Kirkman and Rossiter, H.B. Paint and Varnish Co., The Napier Citizens' Band, H.B. Highland Pipe Band, David Etheridge (The Bike Man) for loan of Penny Farthing Bicycle, Allan Bowes Cycles Ltd. for loan of Tandem Bicycle, Raphael Studios for loan of Silverware and Furniture, Mrs W. Flavell and assistants for the many hours spent in tea making, Members of Vintage Car Club, Pioneer Marching Club, and all those members and friends of the society who have assisted in so many ways.



THE LADIES OF THE BALLET

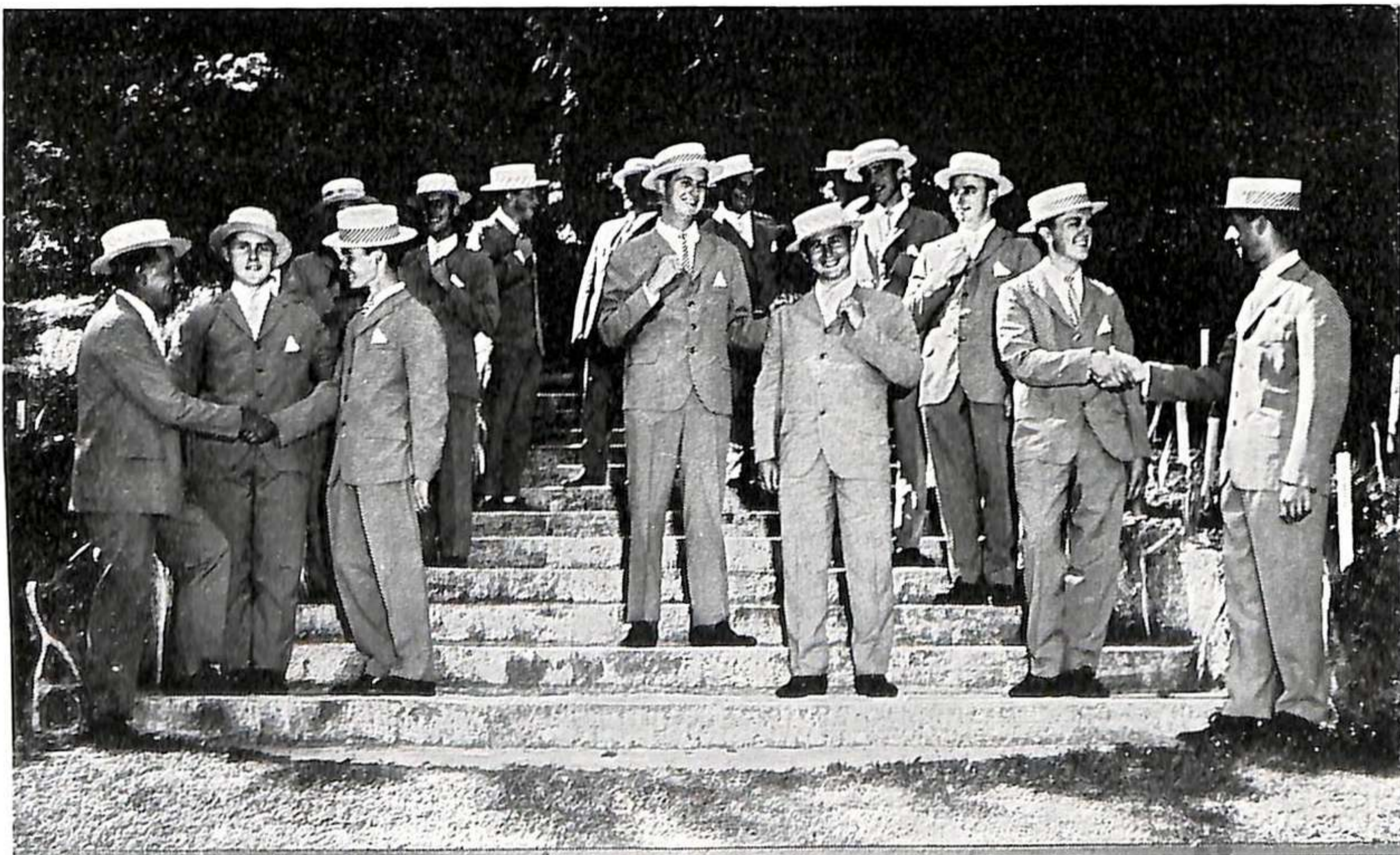
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