

Annie People



The Little Orphan Annie Fan Club Newsletter

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ANNIE'S AT GOODSPEED -- 20 YEARS LATER

Back in the summer of 1976, it was a miracle that the brand-new musical about comic strip heroine Little Orphan Annie by Martin Charnin, Charles Strouse, and Thomas Meehan got going at the Goodspeed Opera House at all.

Hurricane Belle came through mid-Connecticut the night of the dress rehearsal and blew out all the power.

Opening night was an interminable three and a half hours long, and from that point on throughout the run, dialogue, songs, and whole scenes were cut.

The first Annie, Kristen Vigard, was in the title role for only two weeks before she was replaced by one of the Orphans who displayed a tougher edge making the character of Annie more street-smart and believable by the audiences. Her name was Andrea McArdle.

Additionally, a few days before, a truck backed up and ran over Sandy, making it questionable whether he would be up and around at all for the opening performance. But Sandy made it, and he performed for the whole Goodspeed run--and the Kennedy Center run and the Broadway run too, right up until 1983.

This year's 20th Annie-versary production of *Annie* has started considerably more smoothly, and all is well so far. Audiences love the petite 13-year-old Cassandra Kubinski from Enfield, Connecticut as Annie, and all in all, the cast is excellent and well-received. The show is expected to play at the Goodspeed up until Christmas.

Again, Martin Charnin is directing the production himself. We ran into him outside the theater, and he compared now to 1976 by saying that at least this time they are dealing with a known quantity; twenty years ago none of them knew what they were getting into, having no idea whether it would be a hit or not.

Bill Berloni has a whole new generation of *Annie* dogs now, and the one in the Goodspeed production is Sparky, who, like the others, was an "orphan" in a humane society when Bill found him and brought him into the *Annie* family. Since being adopted in 1993, Sparky has played Sandy several times in *Annie* national tours.

Besides Sparky, we noticed several other familiar names of recent *Annie* alumni performing at the Goodspeed: Christy Baron (Grace Farrell) was in the ensemble of the Off-Broadway *Annie Warbucks* and played Grace several times. Bobby Clark (Rooster) was in the ensemble of *Annie 2: Miss Hannigan's Revenge* in Washington in 1989-90. Ron Holgate (Oliver Warbucks) played Warbucks in Seoul, Korea last March. Alene Robertson (Miss Hannigan) played the same role in West Virginia last year, and she created the role of Commissioner Doyle in *Annie Warbucks* in New York. Ron Wisniski (FDR) played the president

before in one of the former *Annie* national tours, and he has also played the same role in a production of *Annie Warbucks*.

The original orchestrations for *Annie* by the late Philip J. Lang are adapted for a small combo (violin, reeds, trumpet, trombone, keyboard, and percussion) by Keith Levenson, who was the conductor for the Off-Broadway *Annie Warbucks*.

There is a familiar voice during the show as well: Under the pseudonym "Archie T. Tridmorton," Martin Charnin performs the voice of H. G. Kaltborn heard over the radio at the beginning of the Cabinet scene ("...in short, Mr. President, if you are listening...").

For most of the Orphans, Samantha Diaz-Hennessey (Molly), Tiffany Provencher (Pepper), Evin Diaz-Hennessey (Duffy), Nora Blackall (July), Kaitlyn Ashley (Tessie), and Courtney Leigh (Kate), this is their first *Annie*. Cassandra Kubinski has played Kate in *Annie* before, and she has also played in *Meet Me In St. Louis*, *Scrooge*, and *Finian's Rainbow*.

The logo artwork (Annie hugging Sandy as drawn by Harold Gray; see page 3) is the drawing from the cover of *Arf! the Life and Hard Times of Little Orphan Annie*, which was used as the art on the act curtain for *Annie Warbucks* Off-Broadway. The same act curtain is used at the Goodspeed. The art is flopped, that is, reversed as if in a mirror. Another odd thing about the logo on the program cover is that the "Annie" type was taken from the version that has the full figure of Annie standing between the second "n" and the "i." The figure has been removed, but the "i" wasn't adjusted back to its proper width and is too wide.

The Orphanage set (designed by Peter Harrison) is all in black and white and gray. This monochromatic color scheme is extended to everything in the Orphanage scenes: the costumes (designed by the original *Annie* costume designer Theoni V. Aldredge) as well as the props are also in black, white, and gray tones. Color first really appears in the green and gold Mansion set and the green uniforms of the Warbucks staff.

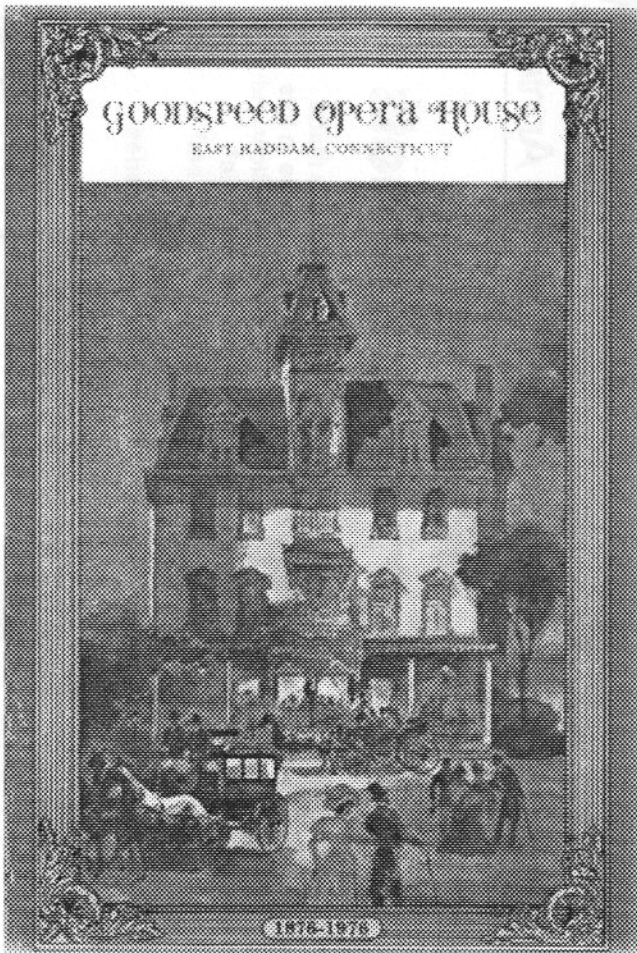
We also noticed some minor changes to the show this time around: "NYC" now ends more like on the cast album, with the chorus finishing the last note. After the applause, the chorus starts a reprise of the last verse, and that's when the policeman shouts, "Hey, keep it quiet down there!" "Easy Street" now has a tag ending; after the applause, Miss Hannigan, Rooster, and Lily reprise the last little bit.

The Goodspeed Opera House was built as a theater in 1876 by William H. Goodspeed, but after his death, the building was sold and for a while was used as a storage depot by the State Highway Department (!). It was supposed to be demolished in the late '50s, but fortunately, local preservationists rescued it and worked to restore it as a theater. We hope many fans will get to Connecticut to see this historic anniversary *Annie* production.

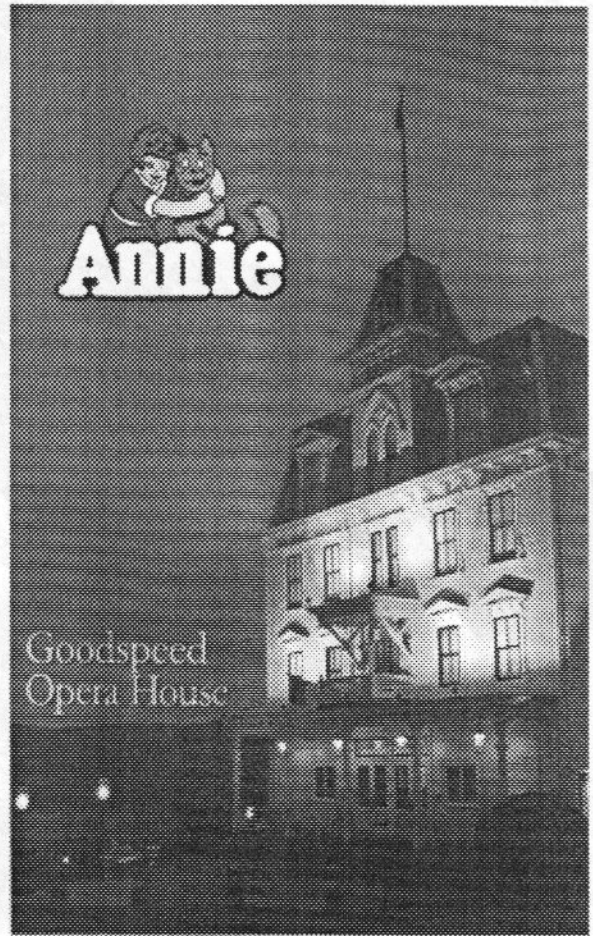


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In the 72 years of the Little Orphan Annie comic strip, we have seen Annie's hair *died* to a different color for one reason or another, but I believe this is the first time ever we have seen Annie's curls actually *cut off*. At this point this fall in Leonard Starr's strip story, Annie was in an accident and has amnesia (something that has happened to her often through the years), and she does not know her name or remember Sandy at all.



cover from the original August 1976 production



cover from the 20th Anniversary production



The photo on the left appeared in a 1980 *People* magazine article on Michael Price, executive director of the Goodspeed. This is the only picture we know of that shows Kristen Vigard as Annie. (She was replaced by Andrea McArdle during the run, and in Martin Charnin's book *Annie—A Theater Memoir* Kristen is never referred to by name.) Reid Shelton (before he shaved his head!) was Warbucks, and Sandy Faison played Grace Farrell. Raymond Thorne was FDR from the very beginning through the closing of Broadway in 1983 and continues to play the role. In August 1976, the Orphans were not yet given names in the program: Laura Dean (The Tallest), Diana Barrows (The Happiest), Danielle Brisebois (The Littlest), Janine Ruane (The Quietest), and Andrea McArdle (The Toughest). And of course, that is Bill Berloni's original Sandy in the Christmas box, who also played the entire run of the Broadway show.

LEAPIN' LIZARDS

This coupon entitles the bearer to \$1.00 off the original cast album of "Annie."

ONE



ONE

Good tonight only at the concession stand of the Alvin Theatre.

BUCK

Daddy Warbucks

ONE

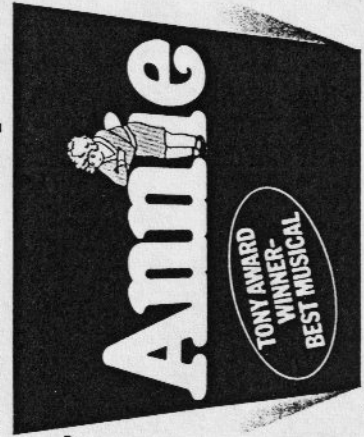
ANNIE

A buck from Warbucks.

Daddy Warbucks knew there'd be trouble — throngs of frustrated fans leaving the theater, demanding to take "Annie" home with them — the music, that is. So together we came up with a new deal: you buy the album right now, and we give you a dollar off the price!

Daddy felt he couldn't give you a better gift. (After all, you can't hum a diamond stickpin.)

"Annie": The original Broadway cast album, on Columbia Records and Tapes.



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these two ads appeared in 1977 issues of *Playbill* magazine. © Columbia Records and © Springs Sheets



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Annie fans will be delighted to know that now Annie has made her debut on Springmaid sheets. She's at her most lovable in this gay and colorful pattern in predominant shades of red, yellow and green, on easy-care cotton and polyester Wondercale®.

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Annie's legacy lives on Broadway stage

By MICHAEL RIEDEL

Daily News Staff Writer

Andrea McArdle has a new role: stage mom.

The Broadway actress, who shot to fame in 1977 as the star of "Annie," now spends her days shuttling her 8-year-old daughter, Alexis, to and from the Imperial Theatre, where the youngster is appearing as Cosette in "Les Misérables."

"I have become a glorified limo driver," jokes McArdle, whose other Broadway credits include "Starlight Express," "Jerry's Girls," and the recently shuttered "State Fair." "After doing this for a week, I have a new appreciation for what my own mother did for me when I was a kid."

This is Alexis' first foray into show business. She was bitten by the performing bug four years ago, when McArdle herself did a turn in "Les Miz" as the doomed prostitute Fantine.

Alexis sat through the musical every night and learned Cosette's song — "Castle on a Cloud" — by heart, says mom, who is married to composer Edd Kalehoff. About two years ago, she started asking her parents if she could try out for the show.

Having been through the rough-and-tumble of the acting life, McArdle was reluctant to let her daughter enter the profession.

But Alexis persisted, so McArdle had her audition for "Les Miz," executive producer Richard Jay Alexander.

"I don't hire kids just because they have a famous relative," says Alexander. "These days, there isn't a producer alive who would gamble on a person with no talent. Alexis gave an excellent audition. She has a pretty voice, she's smart and she's focused."

"I was a little nervous about her first performance last week," he continues, "but she seemed very comfortable on stage. And unlike other Cosettes I've hired, she didn't throw up before her song."

With her round face, sad eyes and long thin hair, Alexis bears a remarkable resemblance to the image of Cosette that adorns the advertisements for "Les Miz."

Bouncing into the Edison Cafe for a turkey sandwich after a matinee, she points to a "Les Miz" poster on the wall and says, "That's me. I'm in that show!"

Asked if she feels like a star, she nods her head and says, "Uh-huh," without elaborating.

Her mother, meanwhile, is adjusting to life in the wings. She knows how not to behave, having been around many monstrous stage mothers during the run of "Annie."

One mother, she recalls,

tried to further her daughter's career by taking up voodoo. McArdle says the woman stuck pins "in a doll that looked like me."

Another woman, furious that McArdle was getting more attention than her daughter, who was playing one of the orphans, tricked McArdle into picking up a piping hot glue gun.

"These people were sick," says McArdle.

"They really messed up their kids. Believe me, that's not going to happen with Alexis. We aren't putting any pressure on her at all. And the minute she starts putting too much pressure on herself, she's getting out of the business."



CAN'T MIZ OUT: Andrea McArdle, who was the darling of Broadway as star of "Annie" (left, with Sandy) in 1977, now watches her 8-year-old daughter, Alexis, play role of Cosette, whose poster image she resembles, in "Les Misérables."



ANDREW SAVULICH/DAILY NEWS



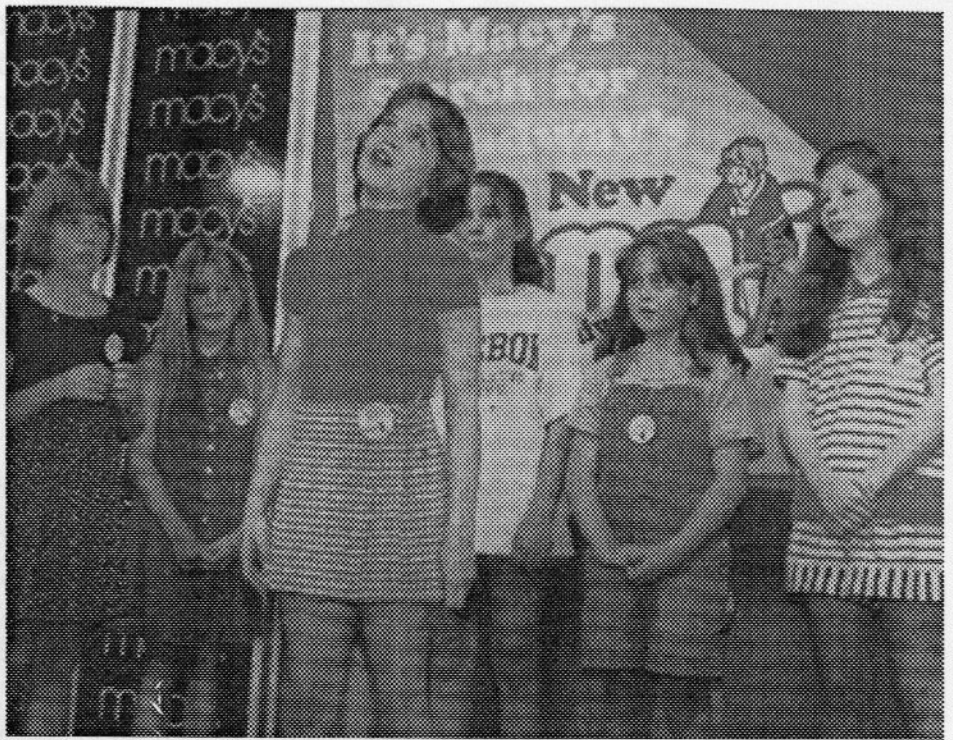
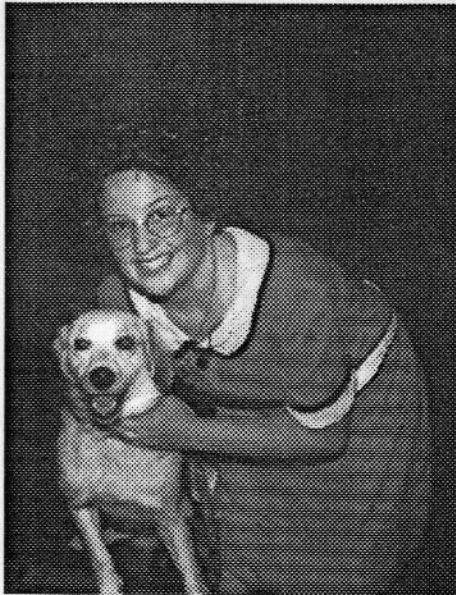
Annie Stars Since Annie



KATHRYN ZAREMBA is a regular on the *Jeff Foxworthy Show* on NBC-TV this fall. She plays the mischievous neighbor Nettie, and her first show was on September 23. One day later, on the 24th, Kathryn became a teenager....**ANDREA McARDLE** is now a stage mom! (see article on page 5) Her daughter Alexis is playing Cosette on Broadway in *Les Misérables* While *Annie* is enjoying its 20th Anniversary Goodspeed run, all three of the creators are as usual hard at work on various projects: **MARTIN CHARNIN** will direct "Montreal's first mega-musical" called *Jeanne La Pucelle* there this winter. The rock opera is based on the life of Joan of Arc and is being planned for a Broadway opening in the fall of 1997....**CHARLES STROUSE** won an Emmy in 1995 for the new Strouse-Adams song "Let's Settle Down" that was featured in the *Bye Bye Birdie* telecast last fall. Currently he is working on the words and music for a new musical *Palm Beach*, and is co-writing the book with Barbara Siman. He is also once again collaborating with Lee Adams on a musical based on Theodore Dreiser's *An American Tragedy*....**THOMAS MEEHAN** is working on the books to two future Broadway musicals and has collaborated on three screenplays....**SARAH JESSICA PARKER** is starring in *Once Upon A Mattress* on Broadway....**DEBBIE GIBSON** is playing the title role in *Funny Girl* in the national tour, which began in Pittsburgh in early October. She will also release her sixth album, *Deborah*, later this fall. Deborah is what she has always been called by family and friends; she uses Debbie only professionally....**JOANNA PACITTI** (sorry about last issue's misspelling) is in rehearsal for the tour of *Annie* which will play around the country before coming into Broadway in April to mark the 20th anniversary of the Broadway opening of the show in 1977. Before getting this role, she played Addie in *Paper Moon* at the Goodspeed Opera House early this summer....**MOLLY RINGWALD** is starring on ABC-TV in the new sitcom *Townies*. Before her three big movies in the '80s, *Sixteen Candles*, *The Breakfast Club*, and *Pretty In Pink*, Molly was an Orphan in the 2nd National Tour of *Annie*....**MONICA LEE GRADISCHEK**, who starred as Frenchy in *Grease* on Broadway, is now in the national tour of *Hello, Dolly* with Carol Channing. Monica is playing the role of Minnie Fay....**ROBERT FITCH** writes that he is playing Don Juan in Randy Newman's musical *Faust* in Chicago, with the hope that the play will come into New York....**RON HOLGATE**, who is currently playing Oliver Warbucks at Goodspeed, recently played Julian Marsh in *42nd Street* for Civic Light Opera in Pittsburgh....**LARISSA AUBLE** was recently noted in the Newark (NJ) Star-Ledger for completing 800 performances as Young Kim in *Show Boat* on Broadway without a single miss. She and her mom were once stuck in the Lincoln Tunnel, causing Larissa to miss the opening ensemble scene, but she has been Young Kim in the second act every time the show has played, starting two years ago....**MARGUERITE MACINTYRE** is in a commercial for the medicine Gas-X. A special effect is used to bloat her body to simulate the effects of the uncomfortable condition....Congratulations to **CAROL-ANN PLANTÉ**, who married Jeremy Licht in Los Angeles this year. You might remember Jeremy's TV show, *The Hogan Family*. Carol-Ann is planning to begin work on a second album soon....**ALLISON SMITH** appeared in the TV movie *Danielle Steel's Full Circle*, broadcast on NBC-TV in September....**EDWIN BORDO**, who played Drake in *Annie* from 1976 Goodspeed to 1983 Broadway closing, did the role again this summer in Atlanta with **KATHRYN ZAREMBA** and **MARCIA LEWIS**....A recommended new CD for all of us who enjoy the music of **CHARLES STROUSE** is *You're Never Fully Dressed Without A Smile - Jason Graae Sings Charles Strouse*. In addition to well-known songs from *Applause*, *Bye Bye Birdie*, and *It's A Bird, It's A Plane, It's Superman*, songs from *Annie* and *Annie Warbucks* are presented. "It Would Have Been Wonderful" is given a sincere presentation; in addition of the obvious necessity of changing "he" to "she" in the lyrics, the original line in the bridge "giving Chinese food a try" is changed to "watching summer weekends fly." Martin Charnin is thanked in the liner notes for "a perfect new lyric." "Fully Dressed" is given a swinging big band arrangement. "Maybe" is paired with "One Last Kiss" from *Bye Bye Birdie*. In an interesting concept, with just some minor pronoun shifting, the song about an orphan's plea about her lost parents becomes a man's longing for a girlfriend who left him ("her one mistake was giving up me") and wondering what her new boyfriend is like ("betcha he's young, betcha he's smart"). Charles also contributes liner notes.

North Canton, Ohio, August 1996
 Jessica Morris as Annie Warbucks with her Sandy

submitted by Cynthia Moser



Above photo and caption from *The Morning Call*: **Joanna Pacitti** (center), from Philadelphia, sings during tryouts for "Annie" in New York Thursday (August 8th). Pacitti was chosen to play America's favorite orphan.

submitted by Cathy Welsch



Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera, June 1996 Left to Right, Back Row: Adrienne Welsch (Tessie), Kelly Lynch (Pepper), Alece DeLuca, Rebecca Nance. Middle Row: Elizabeth Schaldenbrand (Duffy), Tara Blakemore (Kate), Caitlin Reilly (July), and Amanda Crocker. Bottom Row: Jessica McKenzie, Eliza Chetlin, Stephanie Maloney (Molly), Erissa Scalera.

from *The Morning Call*, Allentown PA
 August 10, 1996

■ ETERNAL OPTIMISM

There's only one 'Annie' and she's from Philly

They had names like **Kyla, Heidi, Justine, Kacie** and **Chelsea**, but there can be only one "Annie" — and her name is **Joanna Pacitti**, a 12-year-old from Philadelphia.

Pacitti was chosen Thursday after a three-month, five-city search to play America's favorite orphan in the 20th anniversary production of the musical which will arrive on Broadway next spring.

"It's a terrifying thing to have to break little hearts," said **Martin Charnin**, the show's director and lyricist, who had to console 13 other disappointed finalists, who were also present. "But when you hear Joanna sing, you will know why we chose her."

Pacitti, who wants to be either a veterinarian or an actress when she grows up, then belted out a ground shaking version of "Tomorrow," the show's anthem of eternal optimism.

Also present was **Andrea McCardle**, the original Annie, and **Zappa**, a 95-pound Irish wolfhound mix who will play **Sandy**, Annie's faithful canine companion. The dog, who was found in a Connecticut pound on the day rock musician **Frank Zappa** died, posed dutifully for photographers.

The new production of "Annie," which stars **Nell Carter** as the evil Miss Hannigan, opens this fall in Houston and will tour before coming to New York.

A REAL "SWEET" COLLECTIBLE A recent find was this candy wrapper from the early 1930s (shown actual size). The wrap is printed in blue, red and yellow on very thin waxed paper and was made by the Shotwell Manufacturing Co. in Chicago. We don't know what kind of flavored candy or chocolate came in the wrap or if it was perhaps shaped like Annie or Sandy.

How would you like to have a beautiful, unbreakable Little Orphan Annie Doll? Or a great, big Little Orphan Annie Color Book? We will send you your choice of either the Doll or the Picture Book if you will send your name and address to (SEE BELOW)

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THE SHOTWELL MFG. CO. CHICAGO, ILL.

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The Shotwell Mfg. Co., P. O. Drawer M, Chicago, Illinois, and enclose ten cents (10¢) in stamps or coin to cover cost of postage and handling. (20¢ for both.) Print your name and address plainly and be sure to tell us whether you want us to send you the Orphan Annie Doll or the Picture Book.

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**Little Orphan
Annie**

Leapin' Lizards!

A Pair of Annie Fans Form a National Fan Club

For Annie lovers, a cold Sunday afternoon, January 2, 1983, in New York City marked a sad end to "Annie"'s almost six-year run on Broadway.

But for New Jersey Orphan Annie fans Jon Merrill and Tricia Trozzi, that day was a beginning as well as an end. For it was then that the wheels of the Annie People Fan Club were first set in motion.

Before the 2,377th and final Broadway showing of "Annie" at the Uris (now Gershwin) Theatre, a group of fans were gathered at the stage door to greet the cast as they entered the theater for the last time. It was also at this time that they first met "Annie"'s creator and director, Martin Charnin. On this day, when Tricia and Jon started talking and comparing notes, they discovered that not only did they live only a few miles apart in northern New Jersey, but they both were proud owners of Annie rooms filled with mementoes and collectibles. A week or so later, upon discussing the fact that there was no existing fan organization for Annie fans, they both said simultaneously, "Why don't we start one?" And so, later in January 1983 they published the first issue of "Annie People." Now "Annie People" is the newsletter for the national Little Orphan Annie fan club, affiliated with the National Association of Fan Clubs.

The newsletter, which is read by fans and performers all over the U.S and Canada and comes out four times a year, covers all three parts of Annie fandom--the stage musical, the movie, and the Little Orphan Annie comic strip (written and drawn first by Harold Gray and then by Leonard Starr). Each issue features updates on what the Broadway, national touring company, and movie cast members are doing now, as well as photographs of casts of local and community productions of the play. There are articles on Annie collectibles, both modern day items and ones from the 1930s and 1940s that were offered as giveaways by Ovaltine, the sponsor of the old LOA radio show.

In the winter of 1990 the sequel to "Annie," called "Annie 2: Miss Hannigan's Revenge," played in Washington, D.C., and "Annie People" provided much coverage of that new show. Then in that summer the revised "Annie 2" played at Goodspeed-At-Chester in Connecticut. Later on, the sequel was retitled "Annie Warbucks" and toured the country before arriving at the Variety Arts Theatre in New York where it played until January 1994. Through these new stage musicals about Little Orphan Annie, yet another dimension was added to "Annie People" coverage, and Jon and Tricia followed these new shows as eagerly as they have always followed everything to do with the red-haired orphan.

Over the years both of them have kept up with the careers of the "Annie" stars of the past and have seen them in other stage productions, TV and film roles, and personal appearances. Additionally, they see as many local productions of "Annie" as they can and follow the careers of those casts as well (e.g., Monica Lee Gradischek, Pittsburgh's most famous and best-loved Annie during the '80s is now on Broadway in "Grease" playing the role of Frenchy). The two editors report that many former cast members subscribe to "Annie People" and loyally and enthusiastically keep up with the fandom for the show they loved so much when they were in it. And in the mid-'90s they both do the same thing with productions of "Annie Warbucks" and find the same loyalty and enthusiasm for it too. "Annie" is perhaps the only Broadway musical in history to still have an active fan club a dozen years after its closing.

Jon, 51, and Tricia, 31, each have rooms in their homes with several hundred different Annie items on display, items such as dolls, plates, buttons, posters, ceramic figurines, old Orphan Annie comic strip books, and music boxes, as well as dozens of autographed photos given to them by "Annie" cast members. Both of them have been interviewed on TV and have had feature articles in various newspapers done over the years about them and their home Annie museums. They also have large collections of videotape clips of "Annie" stars appearing on television over the last several years. Numerous "Annie" stars have come to see Jon's and Tricia's Annie rooms, including some from the Broadway casts.

To date they have each seen more than 100 productions of "Annie" including the post-Broadway national tours. Easily recognized at theaters in their black Broadway Annie jackets, the two fan club co-presidents are often asked what it is like to see the same show over and over again. "We love it every time we see it," they say. "Every production is different and it's always a lot of fun."

Now both Tricia and Jon, as well as their "Annie People" readers, are looking forward to more collecting, more contact with "Annie" stars and fans, and, most of all, more productions of "Annie" and "Annie Warbucks"! We are especially excited at the prospect of "Annie" coming back to Broadway in April 1997 for the 20th Annie-versary revival, which will star Joanna Pacitti.

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External Link - For more on Harold Gray's Orphan Annie comic strip.

Annie People

Quarterly Newsletter

"Annie People" comes out in January, April, July, and October, and is mainly devoted to Annie in the theater. We also have articles on the Annie movie, Little Orphan Annie collectibles, and the LOA comic strip. Click on the e-mail address on the home page to ask for info on subscriptions. Also, Annie collectors, ask about Annie memorabilia sales list. (Note: Memorabilia sales list delayed; our apologies.)

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"Annie" News - October 1996

"Annie" has begun at the Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam, Connecticut, where it will stay until just before Christmas. If you can possibly get to Connecticut this fall, this Martin Charnin-directed 20th Annie-versary production should not be missed! Annie is played by a very talented, very petite 13-year-old named Cassandra Kubinski, who has a great Annie singing voice and is one of the most talented actresses I have seen in the role. Alene Robertson is a wonderful Hannigan as always, and Ron Holgate as Warbucks has some particularly good moments with Annie. The troupe of Orphans, younger and smaller than usual in recent years, do a terrific job. Collectors should be sure to check out the gift shop adjacent to the theater to find some great Annie items.

While the Goodspeed show is going on in late 1996, a completely separate tour of "Annie" will open in Houston in November and run through March. This tour will star Nell Carter as Miss Hannigan. The first open call for Annie was held on June 2 at Macy's in New York, and on August 8 the winner was announced. Joanna Pacitti, a 12-year-old from Philadelphia, will play Annie. She had recently played Addie Loggins in "Paper Moon" at the Goodspeed Opera House this summer. This "Annie" tour is planning to move onto Broadway in April 1997, coinciding with the 20th anniversary of the opening of the original Broadway "Annie" production. This Annie-versary revival is planned to run for five months until September of '97.

More on Joanna and the other kids picked as Orphans will be forthcoming on this page.

"Annie" stars of the past - where are they now?

Andrea Mc Ardle, 32, Broadway's first Annie, recently starred in "State Fair" on Broadway. On June 2 she broke her ankle during a performance and had to leave the

show. Sarah Jessica Parker, 31, the third of 5 Broadway Annies, will star this fall in "Once Upon A Mattress" on Broadway, having just finished a Broadway run of in "How To Succeed In Business Without Really Trying." Aileen Quinn, 25, the movie's Annie, just finished touring in the national tour of "Fiddler On The Roof." Larissa Aule, 11, from the 1993-94 New York "Annie Warbucks" is now on Broadway playing Young Kim in "Show Boat." Larissa has played over 800 performances for two years without missing a performance.

- [Little Orphan Annie Home Page](#)

External Link - To read about Harold Gray's Orphan Annie comic strip.

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/jamerrill/anniepeo.html>

The Aileen Quinn Home Page

Spotlight on the young star who brought Little Orphan Annie to the silver screen in 1982. Learn about this remarkable actress up until "Annie," what went on during filming, and see what she has done since. Aileen will turn 25 this June and is still very much a part of show business.

A Short History

Born June 28, 1971.

Was introduced to show business by her mother Helenann who was doing theater when Aileen was little. Aileen begged to audition too, and she began to get parts near her home of Yardley, Pennsylvania, a small town north of Philadelphia on the Delaware River.

Aileen's first movie part was one line in "Paternity," starring Burt Reynolds.

At the time Aileen was picked for the movie, she was on Broadway playing the Swing Orphan in "Annie." The Swing essentially understudied various Orphan roles in the show and knew all their parts and had to go on stage at a moment's notice if one of the kids was sick and couldn't perform. Or, if the Orphan acting as Annie's understudy had to go on as Annie, Aileen went on as the understudy to the understudy.

She was chosen to be Annie over 8,000 girls. The final 3 were Aileen, Robin Ignico, and Angela Lee. Announcement was made in January 1981 by director John Huston, who introduced Aileen as his Annie to the world on nationwide TV.

"Annie" was filmed from April to September 1981. Aileen turned 10 during filming.

(For special trivia about the movie, click below.)

- ["Annie" movie trivia](#)

Aileen starred in one more movie after "Annie," but many of her fans never knew about it. She did "The Frog Prince" when she was about 14, but it was never released in theaters, only on videocassette. Meanwhile, she continued to do theater. A family member was running the theater at Fort Bragg, North Carolina on the Army base there, so Aileen was invited to star in several productions there. In 1985 she was Dorothy in "The Wizard Of Oz," and in 1986 she was Annie once again, except this time it was the stage musical. Opposite her as "Daddy" Warbucks was Harve

Presnell, who had played the role for years on Broadway and in one of the National Tours. When Aileen was a senior in high school, she starred in "A Day In Hollywood, A Night In The Ukraine" in Bristol, Pennsylvania. By this time her family had moved to Far Hills, New Jersey.

Aileen graduated in the spring of 1989 and did one year at Pitzer College in southern California before transferring to Drew University nearer home in New Jersey. Like numerous child stars before her, Aileen chose not to study show biz in college; instead she took a few years away from it and studied languages, especially Japanese and Spanish. She spent six months with a family in Chile as part of an exchange program in college and considered it one of her life's most rewarding experiences.

After graduation from Drew, Aileen once again took to the stage, much to the delight of her fans. In 1994 she played Bette in "Oliver!" at the famous Paper Mill Playhouse in Millburn, New Jersey. And at the end of 1995 she went out on tour in the National Tour of "Fiddler On The Roof."

Recordings by Aileen

In addition to the "Annie" movie soundtrack album--which went platinum in the summer of 1982--Aileen made a couple of other recordings which are of interest to collectors. My description of Aileen's "Tomorrow" single appeared in "Annie People" #3, May 1983.

45 r.p.m. Single, "Tomorrow" by Aileen Quinn and the Orphans, Columbia #18-02951

This record came out in June 1982, about a month after the movie soundtrack LP was issued. The single was reviewed in the trade magazines, but it did not get enough airplay to place it onto the Top 100 charts. As a result, it was stocked in very few conventional record stores. I found mine in a Kmart in Rutland, Vermont. The interesting thing about this single is that it is not the same cut of "Tomorrow" that opens the movie soundtrack album; it is a longer version of the song (2:21 instead of 1:35 on the LP), with an extra instrumental middle added. This rare cut of "Tomorrow" is available only on this 45 and is not on any album. It has a nice picture sleeve, resembling the front of the album, with another shot of Annie and Sandy on the back. Ask about it in large record stores that stock oldies; they might have it filed under "Annie" rather than "Quinn." The flip side of the 45 is "Let's Go to the Movies," the same cut as the one on the LP.

(c) Annie People, 1983

After Aileen finished filming "Annie," she recorded an album of her own in 1982 when she was 11. This album is extremely rare; there are probably fewer than a dozen copies of the LP in existence in the hands of Orphan Annie collectors, and

even fewer cassettes. The following was my original review of the album in "Annie People" #2, March 1983.

REVIEW: "Bobby's Girl" by Aileen Quinn, Columbia #ARC 38378

Aileen wrote me recently and told me, "I'm glad that you enjoy my new album. I had fun making it." That last statement of Aileen's is backed up all the way through her new solo LP on Columbia, released just before Thanksgiving. In fact, it is evident in anything that Aileen has a part in--acting, singing, dancing, even interviews--that she really does indeed love what she is doing. Perhaps it is her ability to show this feeling so thoroughly to her listeners and viewers that makes whatever she comes up with such a joy.

The album "Bobby's Girl" is a far better vehicle for Aileen's pleasant and true soprano voice than the "Annie" album, which had all the songs pitched too low for her to properly use her range. The average preteen child cannot be expected to get much tone quality out of an F# below middle C. Aileen really does have a very fine and pleasant vocal style, and "Bobby's Girl" brings it out.

Her LP contains many fine pieces of soft, easy-type rock, some of which have been hit singles before by others (example: "Keep On Singing," which was a hit for Austin Roberts in 1973 and by Helen Reddy in 1974). Up front in this collection is the title cut, which was a big top three national hit by never-heard-from-again Marcie Blaine in 1962. Aileen takes the song "Bobby's Girl" right up into the 1980s with a sort of mild Pat Benatar-Joan Jett type background, the song having been co-written by her producer, Gary Klein, more than two decades ago. In reviewing the album, People magazine said that song "is perfect for her, full of bounce and enthusiasm." I couldn't agree more. Why Columbia has not as yet released that cut as a single is beyond me.

The choice of material for her on the album is for the most part excellent; personally I would not have picked Leo Sayer's 1976 #1 hit, "You Make Me Feel Like Dancing," which sounds a little out of place on an album by an 11-year-old girl, although Aileen handles it just fine and the background music is rather catchy. I liked it far better than the original. "Songs" (recorded originally by Crystal Gayle on "Sesame Street Country") was a brilliant choice for an opener, and the Paul Williams composition from "The Muppet Movie," "I'm Going to Go Back There Someday," fits in beautifully.

The best material on the album is the new material, specifically the songs written by Michael Smotherman. "Nothing Quite Like Love" has some of the most touching lyrics I have ever heard on a soft rock song, and it has a memorable melody full of wide intervals, which Aileen handles expertly with precision, feeling, and ease. The song "The Great Big Difference" is an absolute gem, with a message that should be heard by every parent and anyone who works with youth in any way. I used to be an

elementary classroom music teacher, and that lyric hit home on the first playing.

Because of the lack of proper promotion in the trade magazines Cash Box and Billboard, record stores that are not familiar with Aileen from "Annie" have no idea where to file the album, so you may have to do a little looking. Some put her in with Queen and Quarterflash and Suzi Quatro; others have the album just in the "New Releases" for want of any other place to put it. Still others have put it in the kiddie section next to (gag) Smurf albums. This album deserves far better treatment than that. Stores with any sense at all put it right next to the "Annie" movie soundtrack; the association is still there, although Aileen's picture on the cover hardly resembles Annie at all. As for the cover, I did miss the old Annie smile, but the LP itself does represent a new and changing side of Aileen's talents, and the pose is still unmistakably Aileen of course. Anyone who likes the "Annie" soundtrack will thoroughly enjoy this extremely well done album. Let's hope it's Aileen's first of many.

(c) Annie People, 1983

More material forthcoming on this page

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"Annie" movie trivia

How the Bridge scene was done

The abandoned railroad bridge that Annie and Rooster climbed still exists in East Newark, New Jersey. It is clearly visible from I-280 looking north as you are crossing the Stickel bridge. It is also similarly visible if you are on the train going to or from Hoboken. That was NOT Aileen climbing way up high; it was an extremely short stuntman named Bobby Porter who makes his living doing movie stunts for children. He put on the red dress and climbed all the way up (Rooster and Punjab were also played by stuntmen in the scene). Aileen still had to climb up herself for the first few feet, however. Note in the faraway shots of the Bridge climb in the movie; Annie's muscular thighs are definitely not the thighs of a 10-year-old girl! The closeup bridge scenes were done later with the real actors on a mock-up of the top of the Bridge on a set in California and spliced in with the faraway shots by the movie editors. Mrs. Quinn told us that the Bridge model in the Burbank studio was still several feet off the floor, and she had to watch as Aileen dangled during the closeup scenes. The scariest part of the Bridge scene for Aileen was the landing. The stuntmen did the scene with the helicopter, but the landing at the end obviously had to be done with the real actors. This was accomplished by a crane off camera, with a dangling Geoffrey Holder holding Aileen 10 or 12 feet above the ground, and then being lowered into the arms of Albert Finney and Ann Reinking. A picture of how this was done is in the book "Annie on Camera."

A short tour of the Warbucks Mansion

The Warbucks Mansion is the administration building on the campus of Monmouth College in West Long Branch, New Jersey. It was rented out to the movie company for about four months during filming, and many of the administrative people were relocated outside in temporary buildings. For the ones who remained inside, however, they had to stop typing and talking whenever the siren sounded, which signaled that a take was being done. Only the first floor of the building was used, along with a couple of rooms on the second floor. The room where Warbucks confronts the Mudgetts was on the first floor, but his office where Annie flies the toy airplane is on the second floor. There is a balcony outside that room where Punjab throws the bomb, and also where Warbucks sings the "Maybe" reprise as the Mudgetts drive off with Annie and Sandy. Annie's bedroom is on the second floor, not far from the pipe organ she plays. Both my co-editor on "Annie People," Tricia Trozzi, and I, Jon Merrill, made an exhaustive search of the Mansion for Grace's dressing room, to no avail. Tricia met Ann Reinking several years later at a Broadway show Ann was doing, and found out that the dressing room was a set in Burbank and was not in the Mansion at all. The pool was in the basement of the Mansion, and we saw it about 1984, but a couple of years later it was closed over

and replaced with classrooms. All four sides of the outside of the Mansion were seen at some point in the movie. The Mansion can be visited anytime by "Annie" movie fans, but the catch is that it is open only on weekdays when college is in session. However, to see it up close is a real adventure for anyone interested in the "Annie" movie, if you live anywhere near it. If you plan on going, write first and ask us for "Annie People" #57, May 1992, which gives detailed information on how to find everything. (Back to the Aileen Quinn Home Page and then back to Jon Merrill's Home Page will give you the e-mail address.)

Other locations in "Annie"

The Radio City scenes and the New York Public Library scenes during the Orphans' run up 5th Avenue (Tessie: "I can't run anymore") were on location. Don't look for 987 Fifth Avenue, though; it doesn't exist. The only parts of "Annie" that were not filmed on location--other than Grace's dressing room--were the Orphanage scenes; that was a set in California. The New York street scene outside the Orphanage was built by Dale Hennesy for a million dollars and is a permanent set. It has been used in numerous movies and TV shows ever since "Annie," and sharp-eyed "Annie" fans have spotted it. Hennesy died during filming, and the street--for which he received a posthumous Academy Award nomination--was renamed The Dale Hennesy Street.

The "Missing Molly Mystery" solved!

After Annie is in bed at the Mansion her first night there, a shot goes back to the Orphans back in the Orphanage room where they each sing a line of "Maybe." You may have noticed that for some strange reason Molly is not in the room. Where is Molly? Did she have to go "bafroom" during that scene? Was she in the paddle closet? Why isn't she seen? Here is what Toni Ann Gisondi told us in 1984 about that scene: That scene was originally part of the opening scene that was eventually scrapped by the editors. Annie climbs up in the window and sings "Maybe," as we all know. However, in the scene as originally filmed, Molly climbs up too and joins her in the window during the scene. The Orphans in bed each sing a line of the song too. The reason Molly isn't in the room is because she is off camera in the window with Annie! The editors decided they didn't like the beginning having Molly up there too and decided to redo it with just Annie by herself, to make sure the audience zeroed in right on Annie's character immediately. In November 1981 Carol Burnett and Annie and all six Orphans--including Lucie Stewart from England--were called back to California to reshoot the opening scene up until "It's The Hard-Knock Life" begins. But the part with all the Orphans singing a line of "Maybe" was so cute that they decided to hang onto it and throw it somewhere else in the film, which they did. And so, the kids in the film were actually at their oldest in the opening scene (this is why Toni Ann's teeth are completely grown in during this scene, whereas at the Mansion where she faints in Punjab's arms--which was filmed six months earlier--her teeth are only partially grown in. The other scene which was

completely reshot after filming ended was "You're Never Fully Dressed Without A Smile"; this is why Rosanne Sorrentino (Pepper) is wearing Miss Hannigan's smock in all the publicity shots for the scene but not in the movie as we see it.

Other trivia

The other two girls who made the final cut of 3 were Robin Ignico and Angela Lee. Robin, as we all know, was given the part of Duffy. Angela Lee had the misfortune of resembling Aileen too much, and they thought this would be confusing to the audience, so Angela was merely given an role as one of the extras. Near the beginning of the "Hard-Knock Life" sequence, a girl is sound asleep on her feet at the top of the stairs; that is Angela Lee.

There were 37 kids in the movie including the Orphan extras, and among them during filming, they lost 24 teeth. Several of the Orphan extras went on to star in movies of their own, such as Shawnee Smith and Mandy Peterson. Some of the extras were brought in because of their gymnastics skills.

When Grace and Annie happily go out of Grace's dressing room singing "Let's Go to the Movies" and then down the stairs of the Mansion, they are traveling 3,000 miles and back in time several weeks! Remember, the dressing room was in California and the Mansion was in New Jersey, and the dressing room scene was filmed AFTER the Mansion scenes. Grace's underwear changes color at the split second between those two scenes; it is white in the dressing room and is black when she is coming down the stairs.

After Grace and Warbucks talk on the patio over breakfast about adopting Annie, Grace begins the song "We Got Annie." Look closely, and you'll see that she then has different shoes on. By the way, all that nice greenery and flowers was put there by the movie crews; you will not see it there if you visit today. Also, the song "We Got Annie" was NOT written especially for the movie; it had been part of the stage musical in its early pre-Broadway days and had been cut by the time the show opened on Broadway in 1977.

As we remember, Warbucks takes Annie to see "Camille" at Radio City Music Hall. "Camille" didn't come out until 1937, but this scene took place in June/July 1933! Oh, well....

The movie was the 9th biggest-grossing movie of 1982, making \$57 million. However, for a \$40 million production to break even, it would have had to do \$100 million. However, "Annie" did much better overseas later in 1982 than it did here, so it did make back its original investment thanks to foreign business. Today "Annie" remains one of the biggest-selling videocassettes, and one of the most popular rentals as well. As a result of some initial bad reviews, this movie may not

have been the huge blockbuster it was predicted to be (and of course "E.T." being out at the same time killed it), but it will be around for a long, long time.

And finally, if you can, watch "Annie" on laserdisc. On laserdisc--but not on videotape--the movie is "letterboxed," that is, the shape of the screen is the way it was in the theaters. All the stuff on the "sides" is lost in the videotape, and on the laserdisc you will see things in "Annie" you haven't seen since you saw it on the screen in 1982, like the Orphans doing back handsprings on the beds in "Hard-Knock Life," or Lara Berk (Tessie) working Toni Ann Gisondi's (Molly's) head like a ventriloquist's dummy in "Fully Dressed."

More material forthcoming on this page

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~~DELETED~~
June 15, 1997

Annie People

Quarterly Newsletter

"Annie People" comes out in January, April, July, and October, and is mainly devoted to Annie in the theater. We also have articles on the Annie movie, Little Orphan Annie collectibles, and the LOA comic strip. We have published 80 regularly scheduled issues so far since 1983. Click on the e-mail address on the home page to ask for info on subscriptions and e-mail us your snail mail address. We'll get the latest issue right out to you.

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Annie News - June 1997

LATE NEWS ON THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY BROADWAY "ANNIE"

By some miracle, the 20th Anniversary Broadway production is still running; I say that because it has been beset with problem after problem ever since its opening. All the Joanna Pacitti stuff before the opening was bad enough publicity, but troubles still plague what should have been a joyous occasion and celebration.

First of all, the producers made a decision fairly early on to cut the show by about 15 minutes. This was supposedly done because they are trying to reach children with this show, and they claim that the show is too long for kids who become antsy. As a result, the material has been seriously compromised: All references to the Depression or other history have been excised from the script throughout. The entire Hooverville scene and song is gone. The Cabinet scene dialogue is shorter. And on and on. Broadway is showing only 7/8 of "Annie." And there are rumors that the radio show scene may be the next to go.

Numerous problems within the cast abound: The New York Post reported in late May that Nell Carter and Molly's mother got into a shouting match over the fact that Ms. Carter allegedly has treated Molly, 6-year-old Christiana Anbri, much too roughly on stage. Molly's mom reportedly filed a complaint with Actors Equity and stated that if this sort of thing doesn't stop, she would "call the cops." Ms. Carter has denied mistreating Molly, but the atmosphere backstage among the cast and crew has been described by the Post as "scary."

The show is scheduled to run until September, at which time a tour will go out. It is not known whether it will be this cast going out or a different one. It is also not known if the new 7/8 version of the script will be used on tour, or if the tour will use the full unabridged script.

"Annie" was nominated for one Tony for Best Revival, which it predictably lost to "Chicago." The "Annie" matinees are doing OK, but the weekday evenings have a lot of empty seats. The media are treating the show like a national joke, and the National Enquirer printed a very uncomplimentary piece about Brittny's beauty pageant past.

What can be done? First, the creators of "Annie" should somehow work with the producers to revert back to the original script and no longer compromise the material. Martin Charnin never wrote this to be a "kids' musical," and it shouldn't be turned into one--not on Broadway! A lot of "Annie" fans are going to the show and coming away disappointed--not in the quality of the cast or their performances, but because of the cuts in the script. If time is really an issue, put back Hooverville and take out "You Make Me Happy," which didn't even enter the score until this production anyway.

Up to date "Annie" news can be found at Playbill Online (<http://www.playbill.com>).

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- [Little Orphan Annie Home Page](#)

External Link - To read about Harold Gray's Orphan Annie comic strip.

<http://ourworld.comuserve.com/homepages/jamerrill/anniepeo.html>