

Annie People

A Newsletter for Annie Fans

No. 5, September 1983

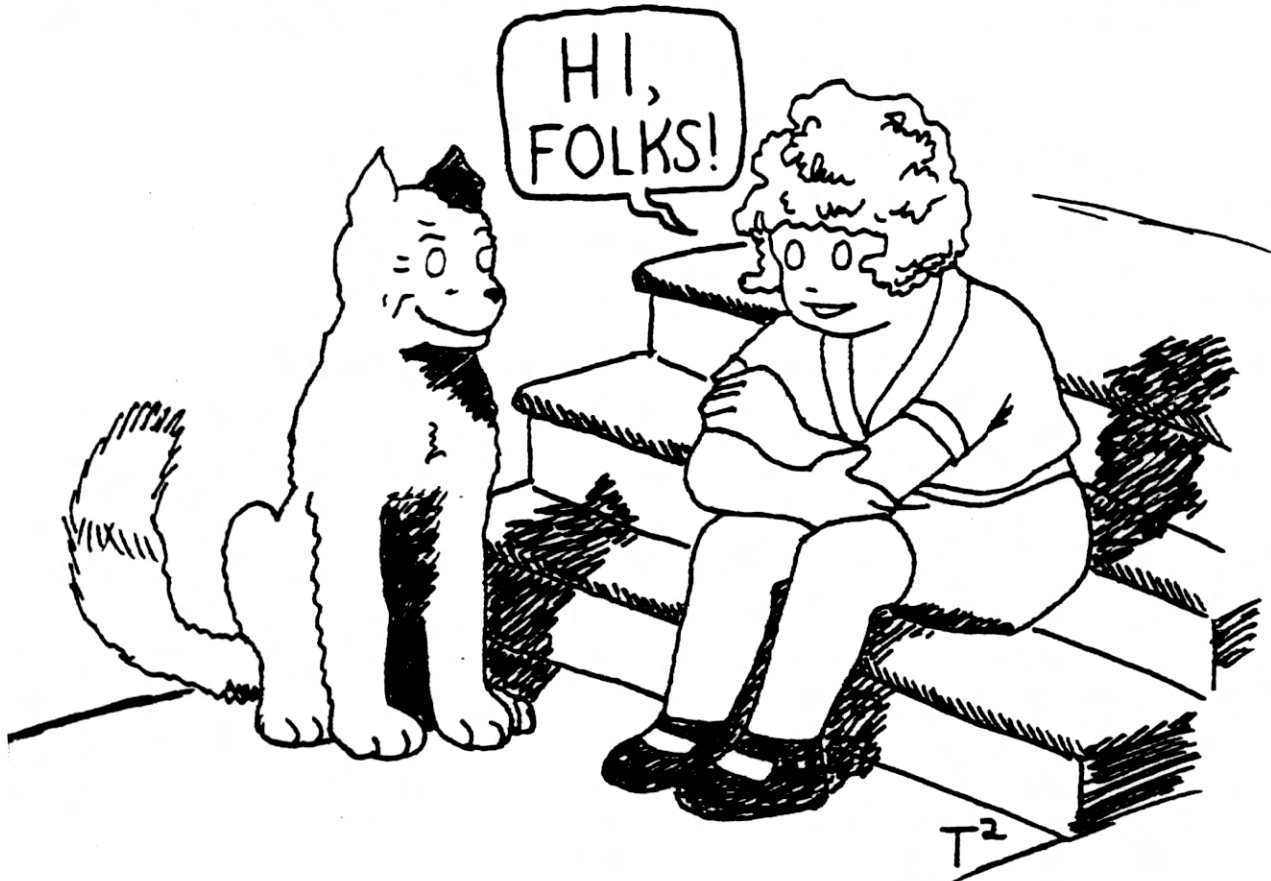
Published by Jon Merrill, Box 431, Cedar Knolls, New Jersey 07927

Artwork by Tricia Trozzi

Contents copyright (c) by Jon Merrill for the contributors

Price: Free

The long hot summer is at an end, and it has been a busy one here at Annie People. Our staff (all 2 of us) has seen several fine theater productions of Annie this summer, and there are more coming this fall. This issue is going out to more than 100 fellow Annie People; thank you all for spreading the word to other fans, and that includes thanks to the former national touring company Annies and Orphans who have been spreading the word among themselves. It is very pleasing to know that although it has been some time since they were touring in Annie, they are still fans today and are enjoying Annie People. I wonder how many other shows have had touring companies that still feel that way about the show years later. I think Mollie Hall said it best. She was Annie in 4th National and wrote recently and called Annie "a living tradition."





Thank you so much for sending me a copy of Annie People. It makes me feel good to know that there are other Annie enthusiasts out there! I was in the hospital for a month, and when my mother brought me the Annie People newsletter, it really brightened things up a lot...

Deana Brinkmann
Florence, KY

I think Annie People is great. I really love reading about all the people that were in Annie. Hi to Mollie, Theresa, Dee, Laurie, Kim, Jennifer, Heather, and the whole 4th National tour.

Kimberly Mucci
(Orphan understudy,
4th National)
Levittown, PA

Thank you very much for sending me those copies of Annie People. I'm mostly interested in the stage aspect of Annie although I fully enjoyed the movie! I never had the chance to be in Annie because by the time I had the chance to audition I had grown too tall! I enjoy acting, dancing, and singing, and along with millions of other young people I am waiting for my big break...

Jane Bouras
Narberth, PA

Thanks for another wonderful edition of Annie People. I love the feature "Annie Stars Since Annie" and also enjoy reading about future productions, etc., through Annie People. It keeps me up to date as to what's going on.

Steve Sizer
Caldwell, NJ

Dana Matles gave me your address...I was wondering if you could send me Annie People. If you could, it would really be great. Also, I just want to tell you that what you have going is really terrific...

Colleen Simon
(Duffy, 3rd National)
Columbia, MD

I'm writing this letter to compliment you on how well written and how interesting Annie People is. I really enjoy reading it and I'm always looking forward to every issue. It amazes me how you're able to find out so much information about what's going on with Annie...It's people like you who keep Annie a living tradition. I personally give you a standing ovation!

Mollie Hall
(Annie, 4th National)
Millersville, MD

UPDATE ON LARA "TESSIE" BERK
New York City, August 14, 1983

Onstage at Youngstars, a revue of professional young singers, Lara Berk was giving her all on "I'm Always Chasing Rainbows." Tossing her long blonde hair with every movement, she delighted the audience with her polished and exuberant singing style as she followed up that number with "Rock-A-Bye Your Baby With a Dixie Melody." Indeed, to us Annie movie fans in the Something Different children's cabaret that Sunday afternoon, thoughts of a wistful Tessie lying in bed singing "Maybe they're strict, as straight as a line..." came to mind. Lara is 11 now, and with the Annie filming two years behind her now, she is continuing to branch out and grow professionally, and obviously loving every minute of it.

Tricia and I found Lara to be extremely personable and enthusiastic, and eager to reminisce about the fun she had being part of Annie. Spending some time with her whole family after the Youngstars show gave us a chance to get to know Lara and find out what she has been doing since she was Tessie. She was in a TV movie called Grandma Didn't Wave Back, which aired last Thanksgiving, and she has also done a lot of commercials. Lara's very talented six-year-old sister, Missy, who is also in Youngstars and does commercials, was also lots of fun to talk to, and she told us that what she wants to do more than anything else is be in some stage production of Annie sometime. Both Berk girls saw Annie on Broadway at a very early age, and the seed was sown immediately. It is very obvious that Lara's love for Annie, as evidenced by what she wrote for Annie People last issue, goes way back to that time, and Lara is very sensitively influenced by her admiration for Shelley Bruce, the first Annie she ever saw. Oh, my goodness, I hope there are many roles ahead for young multi-talented Lara Berk!



Going all the way back to Annie People #1: Thank you, Lara, for clearing up the mystery about Angela Lee, the other finalist for the Annie movie role along with Aileen and Robin. Angela was not the Orphan in the movie I thought she was; that was Amanda Peterson. Lara said that Angela was the one who is seen asleep on her feet leaning on the banister at the beginning of the Hard-Knock Life scene.

If you are ever in New York, Youngstars is a delight for both children and adults alike. There are shows on weekend afternoons, and you will see several of the most talented singing youngsters (ages 5 to 16) in the New York area, veterans of the stage, movies, television, and commercials. Write or call Something Different, 1488 First Avenue (78th St.), New York, NY 10021. You will love the show, especially when all the kids come out at the end and do the Youngstars theme song.



Chris White is doing a terrific job on his fan club for Andrea McArdle. I highly recommend his Club for all Annie People readers who are interested in keeping up to date with the first Broadway Annie. It costs \$3.50 for initial membership (newsletter subscription and some really nice glossy pictures); write to Christopher White at 1010 Elm Street, St. Charles, IL 60174.

★ Annie Stars Since Annie ... ★

After a short break following the Broadway closing, ALYSON KIRK returned to her old role as Annie in summer stock, touring throughout New England. Her tour of Annie also featured ROBERT FITCH, Broadway's original Rooster, who had been with ALLISON SMITH's tour at Westbury Music Fair last spring. Come the fall, according to Alyson's mother, it's "back to normal life again" for a while for Alyson, back at school in Waldwick, NJ...It has been on-again, off-again lately, as to whether ANN REINKING will be starring in the new movie, The Pope of Greenwich Village. As of this printing, it looks as if someone else will be playing instead. However, Rastar Productions (remember them?) has decided to start again on No Small Affair, which was begun two years ago and then scrapped, and they have asked Ann to star in it...ALLISON SMITH will be singing "Tomorrow" at the annual kick-off for the United Way campaign in central New Jersey. Two Orphans from her tour are now appearing at the Paper Mill Playhouse in New Jersey, JENNINE BABO and TAMMY KAUFFMAN as Molly and Pepper, respectively. Annie is being played there by TARA KENNEDY, a former Broadway Orphan and Annie understudy...Another former Annie understudy on Broadway, STEPHANIE VINE, will play Annie on her home turf at Bucks County Playhouse in New Hope, Pennsylvania, in October and November...BERNADETTE PETERS is scheduled to play a series of Atlantic City casino dates with Andy Williams in the near future...LARA BERK continues with her younger sister, Missy, at Youngstars on weekends in New York (see article elsewhere in this issue). Lara turned 11 in July, and ROBIN IGNICO became a teenager on Aug. 19. And ANDREA McARDLE will be 20 on November 5. Where does the time go?... If you are watching TV and you suddenly hear "TOMORROW," you are seeing a commercial for the Energy Awareness Fund...Some of you West Coast AP readers may have seen LOUANNE as Annie in 2nd National and 3rd National. Later on she was in Oh God, Book II with George Burns, and on the TV series on ABC called Two Marriages...One of the nine movie Annie semi-finalists, AMANDA PETERSON, whom we saw hiding in Miss Hannigan's closet and who sang the line "Rover, when you think it over..." in the film will be seen in the new NBC-TV series Boone this fall...ALBERT FINNEY is now in Mexico filming another JOHN HUSTON-directed film, Under the Volcano...And, last but not least, I'm still waiting for confirmation on this one, but I have heard that filming of Annie II will begin this coming spring in California, with AILEEN QUINN assuming the title role once again. This will be Aileen's second movie for Columbia Pictures, replacing Full House, which is kaput.

* * * * *

Please keep this type of news coming in, especially you West Coast people! The success of this column depends a lot on you readers and your sharp eyes and ears. I would appreciate clippings wherever possible, so that I am reasonably sure of getting the facts correct when I put the column together. (But errors do sneak through once in a while--see below)

RED FACE DEPARTMENT: (Annie People #2, Page 3, Ages of Annie Movie Orphans)
The correct date of Lara Berk's birth date is July 12, 1972, not December 12. The Columbia Pictures press release last year about the Annie Orphans had the wrong date on it. It was actually Lara's sister, Missy, who was born on December 12, in 1976. Lara turned 9 during the filming of Annie and is now 11.

TALENTED YOUNG ACTRESSES SPEND THE SUMMER OF 1983 BEING ANNIE ORPHANS

ANNIE RUN ENDS for the Green Mountain Guild in Vermont - Top row from left, Elyse Allen (Annie), Kelly Dunleavey, Michelle Lee Blood. Middle row from left, Sarah Christie, Jennifer Coombs. Bottom row from left, Colleen Lynch (Annie), Jessica Hunt Mills. The troupe played in three theaters in New England for a week each in late summer. This group was the youngest I have yet seen; two of the Orphans were 12; the other five, including both alternating Annies, were all nine-year-old fourth graders. These young actresses, many of whom I had seen audition for Annie (see AP #4, page 4-5), were terrific as a team and seemed to have had much more experience on the stage than they actually have. This performance happened to be their final one, and during my interview with the girls just before they went on, all of them were unanimous in their feelings that they hated to see it all end. Having seen Annie umpteen times, I have to admit that there is always something very special about watching it on a tiny floor-level stage. Somehow the intimacy of the story is enhanced, being able to see the eye contact between Warbucks and Annie in "Something Was Missing."



FIVE MONTHS OF ANNIE - Neil's New Yorker dinner theater in New Jersey is still packing in audiences for Annie, which has been running since early June and will continue through October. There are three rotating groups of Orphans who play behind three different Annies, Jenice Gasior, 12, Tricia DeLalla, 11, and Laura Tubbs, 12. This production of Annie is an exceptionally polished one; these local New Jersey girls did not give the slightest impression that, for most of them, this is their first taste of professional theater. Annie sang her heart out while holding tight to a skittish and noisy Sandy, and the audience thrilled over each Orphanage dance number. A dinner theater atmosphere is a great way to experience Annie; keep an eye out for a show in your state. There seems to be no limit, at least in this part of the US right now, to the number of stage productions of Annie in 1983. ANNIE LIVES!!



Jon with one Orphan cast at Neil's New Yorker: from left, Jennifer Leonard, Jennifer Smith, Jenice Gasior (Annie), Cathy Trien, Ellen Caro.



Tricia with another group of Neil's Orphans: from left, Tricia DeLalla (Annie), Susan Hart, Corrie Safris, Rachel Coburn.

PORTRAIT OF A
YOUNG ANNIE COLLECTOR

- Sixth Grader Julie Shaflucas -

Shortly after I had finished issue #1 of Annie People last winter, I ran into Julie outside a local Howard Johnson's when she spotted the big Annie button on my jacket. It turned out that she was an Annie fan and collector, and I asked her if she would give me some pictures for an article in Annie People, since she is the youngest fan I have met that has an Annie room.

Julie Shaflucas is ten years old and is in sixth grade in Morris Plains, New Jersey. Her introduction to the world of Annie came when she saw the PBS documentary on TV about the making of the movie called Lights, Camera, Annie! in March 1982. Then she saw the movie when it came out and loved it, and that started her on the road to Annie collecting. "I can't really tell why I like Annie," said Julie, her eyes sparkling. "I think it's because of Aileen and the other actresses. They acted so much like the part and situation they were playing." As for her favorite scenes in the movie, she loved "It's the Hard-Knock Life," "I Think I'm Gonna Like It Here," and when the Orphans sang "You're Never Fully Dressed Without a Smile" in the Orphanage.



Julie Shaflucas, 10, surrounded by her Annie-ness

Julie also liked the scene in which the Orphans were running to "Daddy" Warbucks' mansion to warn Annie. "The reason I liked those were because they were 'action packed!'" She told me she liked the parts of Annie "where a lot was going on," and that's why the songs that went with those scenes are her favorite Annie songs from the movie.



"I've got Annie Fever!!"

Julie sat next to her Annie mansion with a lapful of Annie dolls and talked excitedly about her Annie collecting hobby. She loves hunting for Annie books, some of which she has had a hard time finding (her favorite book is Sandy: The Autobiography of a Star). But what Julie loves the most in her Annie room are her Annie dolls and records. "I have five Annie dolls, and I have other figures too," she said, smiling. "And I have two kinds of records, stories and music." Soon Julie got up and posed proudly beside her most prized collectible of all, her five-foot cardboard cutout of Annie and Sandy, which she got from the local videotape store.

How do Julie's family and friends feel about her case of Acute Annie-osis? "My family doesn't mind me being an Annie fan," Julie admitted, "and my friends just put up with me! My friends aren't all Annie fans, so I just have to 'Annie-Out' when they're around!"

I asked Julie what her big moments have been since she became an Annie fan, and she replied that one of the best was seeing the movie for the very first time, especially the Hard-Knock Life scene. Another was when Aileen answered a letter she wrote for Aileen's birthday. Julie swept her eyes around her room at her Annie movie posters. "I like her a lot. I think I could even call her 'my hero!'" She loves Aileen's album Bobby's Girl and hopes that Aileen will become a famous singer sometime.

Julie never did see the Broadway show of Annie, but she saw it on the stage at Neil's New Yorker dinner theater and loved it. She especially loved meeting Jenice Gasior and the other kids afterward. But Julie definitely won't miss the sequel--"I hope Annie II comes out very soon!"

Julie also likes tap dancing, likes to collect stuffed animals, and loves to write letters ("I am interested in being a writer when I grow up, so I really enjoy writing letters...") to other Annie fans. She said she loves to read Annie People and admitted that toward the

end of last year when the movie was no longer playing in the theaters, "my Annie spirit died down a bit." But finding out that there are other Annie fans around was "an inspiration." As for her advice to other young Annie collectors like herself, she thought for a moment and then stated with true Annie-style optimism, "Take your time--she'll be around for a pretty long time!"

She certainly will, Julie, and good luck with your continuing and never-ending searches for Annieness for your terrific Annie room. If you are a young Annie People reader and would like to write to Julie and compare notes on Annie, let me know here at Annie People and I'll put her in touch with you.



"Annie is tough, encouraging, lovable, and just driving me crazy!"

----- ANNIE FAN CLUB -----

Martin Charnin's office in New York has announced that a new Annie Fan Club is in the works. It's still pretty much in the planning stages at this time, but Lee Costello, assistant to Mr. Charnin, is sending out information about it. I urge all Annie People readers to write to her right away and inquire about the Club and show our support for this terrific idea. What makes the Club really special is that Shelley Bruce will be the president.

Send a STAMPED, SELF-ADDRESSED ENVELOPE and write to:

Ms. Lee Costello
Attn: ANNIE FAN CLUB
850 7th Avenue, Suite 803
New York, NY 10019

And don't forget the stamped, self-addressed envelope.



(Reprinted from The LOA Reader #5, August 1980)

MOTHER: Build Up Your Child This Summer

With Delicious, Ice-Cold Ovaltine

CHILD specialists say that summer is the ideal time to build up a child—to increase his strength, stamina and resistance. And no building-food is so widely recommended for this purpose as Ovaltine.

Not only does Ovaltine increase weight rapidly—often at the rate of a pound a week or more—but it has a marked effect in curbing nervousness and increasing appetite at the same time.

So let your child play Little Orphan Annie's "Shake-Up" game every day this summer. Give him all the Ovaltine he wants. Keep plenty of cold milk on hand in the ice box. You'll be surprised how the children love the delicious flavor of Ovaltine. And you will be amazed at the health-gain your child will make this summer.

OVALTINE
The Swiss Food-Drink
NOW MADE IN UNITED STATES

THE WANDER COMPANY
180 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Ill.

LITHOGRAPHED IN U.S.A.



WITH LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE'S VERY OWN SHAKE-UP MUG

HOW TO PLAY



ICE-COLD
OVALTINE
SHAKE-UP GAME

SEE NEXT PAGE

LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE'S SUMMER TIME SHAKE-UP GAME—AND HOW TO PLAY IT

A TALKING PICTURE IN 8 REELS
WITH LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE HERSELF.



AND REMEMBER—OVALTINE NOT ONLY TASTES GOOD—BUT MAKES YOU HUSKY, HAPPY AND HEALTHY JUST LIKE LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE HERSELF!

HAPPY ANNIE-VERSARY TO LEONARD STARR, creator of the current Annie comic strip: October 2 will be the date of Mr. Starr's 1400th Annie strip and will mark its 200th week in the newspapers. His strip officially began on December 9, 1979, but there were six transitional strips the week before that to work from the previous story (a Harold Gray reprint) into the new Annie strip. Currently, we are in Mr. Starr's 14th story. Will Brander King succeed in his dastardly plot to get Angela Pease's land away from her so he can drill for oil?

"AW, GEE..."
No Christmas Revival

Word comes from the office of Martin Charnin that plans for reviving Annie on Broadway for a run during the Christmas holidays have been dropped for the time being. "Not this year," says Lee Costello, assistant to Mr. Charnin.

ANNIE II STAGE MUSICAL PROGRESSING ON SCHEDULE
Spring 1984 Opening Planned

Word also comes that Martin Charnin, Charles Strouse, and Thomas Meehan are hard at work writing the Broadway sequel to Annie. They are reportedly about "halfway through" the writing of it, and they are projecting a release date of Spring 1984. Details upcoming in Annie People as they become available.

Annie People #6 will be out for Thanksgiving. As a special holiday treat, you will see the OFFICIAL ANNIE PEOPLE PAPER DOLL, an original by Tricia! None of us will want to miss that!! See all o' yuh Annie People in November!